THAI INVOLVEMENT IN PASAI

by

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Malay writings from Sumatra and Malaya would seem to offer an ideal kind of evidence for Thai political and military operations in the Andaman Sea and Straits of Malacca during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries A.D. Besides numerous historical and fictional documents written during this period and later which mention Thai-Sumatran relations, records by foreign visitors and a number of tombstones appear to offer supporting and—more importantly— datable evidence[1].

What is thus presented as an accumulation of data which, once sorted, should form the basis of a history for northern Sumatra and its encounters with Thai military forces, immediately creates difficulties for the historian which have not yet been sufficiently accounted for. An example of the potential difficulty occurs in the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* (*HRRP;* "The Story of the Pasai Rajas"), which claims to describe the earliest beginnings of the Pasai royal family down to its last members[2]. *HRRP* itself contains no dates or specified periods such as reign lengths or lifespans. Even though the roughly contemporaneous *Sejarah Melayu* (*SM*) does have time periods and externally datable events, and also contains a similar version of the founding of Pasai with a description of its religious influence on the Sultanate of Malacca,

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[1] Besides works mentioned in this study, several other Malay manuscripts treat this geographical region: *Hikayat Acheh, Hikayat Asal Bangsa Jinn dan Dewa-Dewa, Hikayat Kelantan, Hikayat Malim Dagang, Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, and *Hikayat Patani*. Bibliographies for archeological, historical, and literary sources pertaining to Semudera-Pasai are found in the following: H.K.J. Cowan, "La legende de Samudra", *Archipel* V(1973), 261-263; G.W.J. Drewes, "New light on the coming of Islam to Indonesia?", *BKI* CXXIV (1968),433-459; A.H. Hill, ed. and trans., "Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai", *JMBRAS* XXXIII. 2 (1960), 208-215; and Ismail Hussein, *The Study of Traditional Malay Literature with a Selected Bibliography* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1974), pp. 31-75. I would like to thank Patricia O. Afable, Michael Vickery, and James Warren for suggesting comparative materials.

[2] Editions of *HRRP* based on Raffles MS 67 are: Edouard Dulaurier, *La Chronique du royaume de Pasey*, Collection des principales chroniques malayes (Paris, 1849); Aristide Marre, trans., *L'Histoire des rois de Pasey* (Paris, 1874); J.P. Mead, "Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai", *JSBRAS* LXVI (1914), 1-55; and A.H. Hill (see note 1 above). The edition by Abdullah Haji Musa, *Kesah Raja2 Pasai* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1963), has no apparent connection with Raffles MS 67 although it may be an elaborate retelling. Abdullah makes no claim as to his source. The editions of Mead and Hill have received much criticism, especially for their systems of romanization, but until an entire reexamination of the problem is done and there is a reconstruction of early Malay phonology, these criticisms must be set aside; see, for example, R. Roolvink, "Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai", *Bahasa dan Budaja* II. 3 (1954), 3-17, especially p. 4. I have likewise refrained from converting Hill's text into the current spelling system. General articles on *HRRP* are: R.O. Winstedt, "Place-names in Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai", *JSBRAS* LXXVII (1917), 181; R.O. Winstedt, "The chronicles of Pasai", *JMBRAS* XVI. 2 (1938), 24-30; and Ahmad Shah Mohd. Noor, "Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai penyelenggaraan Dr. A.H. Hill: suatu analisa", *Dewan Bahasa* XXI. 4 (April 1977), 243-252. Ahmad Shah argues for the complete historicity of *HRRP*, including the superiority of folktales over archeological evidence (p. 245).

it is unable to correlate the reigns of the two royal houses[3]. The genealogies of *HRRP* and *SM* also differ significantly in the listings of members of the Pasai family and their kin relationships. A third literary document, a folktale version published under the name *La Legende de Samudra (LS)*, gives yet another genealogy with variations both in the names and kinship relations, and has a radically different approach to patterns of royal succession[4]. Tombstones and travelers' reports also differ among themselves and with the Malay literary sources[5]. This kind of confusion within historical data, however, is similar to that found by scholars working with oral history and particularly with genealogies[6].

In order to see what kinds of information may be reliably obtained from these documents, I will examine the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, looking particularly at its genealogy and then at

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[3] At least 29 manuscripts of *SM* are extant, and there are a large number of related documents. See R. Roolvink, "The variant versions of the Malay annals", *BKI* CXXIII.3 (1967), reprinted as an introduction to C.C. Brown, *Sejarah Melayu: "Malay Annals"* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford, 1970), pp. xv-xxxi. Brown's translation originally appeared in *JMBRAS* XXV.2 and 3 (1953), and it is a translation of Raffles MS 18 as edited by R.O. Winstedt, *JMBRAS* XVI. 3 (1938). Editions based on other manuscripts are W.G. Shellabear, ed., *Sejarah Melayu*, Malay Literature Series No. 9, 3rd printing (Singapore, 1948), and T.D. Situmorang and A. Teeuw, eds., *Sedjarah Melaju menurut terbitan Abdullah* (Djakarta-Amsterdam, 1952). As no definitive edition has been yet produced, all further references are to the Winstedt-Brown edition which relies on the oldest tradition. For an examintion of *SM* and its relationship to *HRRP*, see A. Teeuw, "*Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* and *Sejarah Melayu*", pp. 222-234, and P.E. de Josselyn de Jong, "The character of the Malay annals", pp. 235-241, both in John Bastin and R. Roolvink, eds., *Malayan and Indonesian Studies: Essays Presented to Sir Richard Winstedt on his Eighty-fifth Birthday* (Oxford, 1964). See also P.L. Amin Sweeney, "The connection between the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* and the *Sejarah Melayu*", *JMBRAS* XL.2 (1967), 94-105.

SM has only one point where the Pasai and Malacca dynasties have contemporaneous, named kings; while some stories involve both states, the name of the Pasai king is missing except for the story of Pasai's Sultan Zainalabidin who requests aid from Sultan Mansur Shah of Malacca for regaining his throne from an un-named younger brother (Winstedt, *SM*, pp. 131-134; Brown, pp. 96-100). This tale gives an estimate of Pasai's army as numbering 120,000 based on one soldier per village. Nothing of this size would be expected from *HRRP*. Unfortunately for dating purposes, the ancestry of Zainalabidin is not indicated in *SM*. The events between his reign and those of Sultan Ahmad are therefore ascribable to Ahmad, Zainalabidin, or an intermediate king.

[4] H.K.J. Cowan (see note 1 above). *LS* was collected around 1931. Cowan's edition adds to the already immense problem of spelling, as he is neither consistent with the Dutch romanization nor within his own additions. His genealogy is also defective (as is Hill's), and does not place brothers in age rankings consistent with genealogical tradition. This arbitrariness hides the basic difference between *HRRP*, *SM*, and *LS*, namely that inheritance is by primogeniture in *HRRP*, but primarily by ultimogeniture in *LS*. *SM* appears to agree with *LS* in two instances: first, Sultan Zainalabidin is deposed by his younger brother; second, Nitatanam, youngest of three brothers who are descendents of Iskandar, succeeds the Raja of Palembang and takes the name Tan Sri Buana (Winstedt, *SM*, p. 56; Brown, p. 15). William Collins in an oral communication (1977) has suggested on the basis of his fieldwork that there may have been no rule of succession, as there often is none today. Parents are generally unwilling to give over their property until they are quite old. By that time the older children have moved away, and only the youngest child remains to inherit by a *de facto* rule of ultimogeniture. The situations in *LS* and *SM* are, however, more complicated than I have indicated here.

[5] F.D.K. Bosch, "Kwartaalverslagen van den Oudheidkundigen Dient", *Nederlandsch Indie Oud en Nieuw* I.3 (1915), 127-129; H.K.J. Cowan, "A Persian inscription in north Sumatra", *TBG* LXXX.1 (1940), 15-21; C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Arabie en Oost Indie* (Batavia, 1907), p. 15; R.A. Kern, "De verbreiding van den Islam", in F.W. Stapel, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indie* I (1938), 305-365; N.J. Krom, *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis* (Amsterdam, 1926), p. 392; J.P. Moquette, "De Grafsteenen te Pase in Gisee", *TBG* LIV.1 (1912), 541-547, and "De Eerste Vorsten van Samoedra-Pase", *Report van den Oudheidkundigen Dienst* (Batavia, 1913); J.P. Moquette and Hoesein Djajadiningrat, "Ein Merkwaardig, Ingewikkeld Raadsel op een Pasè'schen Grafsteen", *Oudheidkundig Verslag* (Batavia, 1923, eerste en tweede Kwartaal), pp. 20-28; and W.F. Stutterheim, "A Malay Sha'er in Old Sumatran characters of A.D. 1380", *Acta Orientalia* XIV (1936), 268-279.

[6] Laura Bohannan, "A genealogical charter", *Africa* XXII.4 (1952), 301-315; David Patrick Henige, "Quest for a chimera: The chronology of oral tradition", unpublished dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1973, pp. 24-102; and Judith N. Shklar, "Subversive genealogies" in *Myth, Symbol, and Culture*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Norton, 1974), p. 129.

various classes of events, particularly invasions, which it describes. By using a structural approach, I will try to show some of the rules which are present in the arrangement of the materials and to argue that much of what has previously been assumed to be historical and not mythological occurs in such a regular, patterned order that it cannot be used for purposes of dating in any further historical study. This is not to say that the events never happened, but that the form of *HRRP* is such that it cannot separate their actuality from fictitious events. Parallels from the *Sejarah Melayu* and *La Legende de Samudra* will be considered wherever they touch on the problems at hand, but each deserves a separate study before their historicity can be determined and before they should be used with other source materials[7]. Once the narrative patterns of *HRRP* are sorted out, it will then be possible to examine the purported Thai invasion in the fifth generation of the *raj*.

A number of aspects of *HRRP* suggest that the work was composed in several stages and possibly by different writers. Not least of these are three localities, Pasai, Majapahit, and Pulau Percha, which provide irreconcilable viewpoints for the telling of *HRRP*[8]. A.H. Hill in his introduction to the text has probed the question of its composition[9]. He finds three major parts consisting of pages 46-74, 74-93, and 93-106. I wish to review these sections, and to suggest on the basis of different criteria an alternative view which has a bearing on the consideration of whether *HRRP* is history or folklore.

Hill has recognized the difficulty of separating the text into sections having clear boundaries, for *HRRP* does not sharply or obviously break into a few major units; rather, it presents a series of episodic events. He postulates that each successive scribe smoothed over his own interpolations, and as Malay *hikayat* are "a succession of episodes often with only the most nebulous thematic connection"[10], the disruption between episodes, to be noticeable, must be enormous. He suggests that a study of the style may indicate changes of author[11]; however, this approach, while providing tentative divisions, also has its pitfalls and assumes that there is no unity to the text. While part two, in Hill's opinion, contains more folktales than any other part[12], it in no way contains all of the folktales. The origin of the 'Bamboo Princess' (Puteri Betong) in part one, or the tale of the water buffalo fight at the end of the *Hikayat*, are in no way less folktales than the stories about the exploits of Tun Beraim Bapa in part two. The archaic style of part two is followed by a more direct one in part three only "for the most part"[13].

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[7] Until a definitive edition of *SM* is available, it is premature to compare any one manuscript with *HRRP*, although this is of necessity what must be current practice. The genealogical tables in Hill, p. 17, leave out several important characters in both *HRRP* and *SM*, particularly in the later generations. Cowan, *LS*, pp. 256-257, besides ignoring most of generation VII in *HRRP*, reverses relative ages within generations.

[8] While *HRRP* is ostensibly a Moslem work, the Moslem city of Pasai falls to the Hindu Majapahit which in turn is defeated by the people of Pulau Percha. The religion of the latter is not stated, but the people do not have Moslem names.

[9] All page references to *HRRP* are from Hill's edition (see note 2 above).

[10] Hill, pp. 31-32. Roolvink, "Variant", p. xx, judges *HRRP* to be "not so much a historical work, although it contains a wealth of historical material".

[11] Hill, p. 32.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Furthermore, idioms, descriptions of battles, and Arabic phrases in part three are similar to those found earlier in the text[14].

What is certain about the composition of *HRRP* is that *SM* quotes from what seems to be an earlier version of *HRRP*'s part one, or from a source also used by the first writer of the latter work[15]. Secondly, the episode concerning the death of Tun Beraim Bapa in part two is similar to the story of Sri Bija 'diraja in *SM*[16]. Thirdly, the shifting of viewpoint from Pasai to Majapahit to Pulau Percha suggests that at least two or more authors wrote what now constitutes part three[17]. Finally, the graves found near Pasai are those of persons who presumaby occupy the middle and late sections of the genealogy.

These graves present the futher question of who, if anyone, listed in the royal family of Pasai really existed. The stones are for a Muhammad, also known as Maliku'l-Zahir, whom Hill identifies as either Maliku'l-Tahir or Maliku'l-Mahmud[18]. Coins indicate that Maliku'l-Zahir's successors were Ahmad and Zainalabidin, both of whom also bore the name or title of Maliku'l-Zahir[19]. A second stone is for a Maliku'l-Saleh, and a third records the death of a daughter of Sultan Zainalabidin[20]. This lack of precise correlation and the addition of new names suggests a corrupt textual tradition, or a deliberate rewriting of the events described.

This archeological evidence along with the writings of Marco Polo and other travelers demonstrates that the Semudera-Pasai line had some basis in fact, but what its acts were remains in doubt. The considerable amount of folklore is a definite stumbling block, but once the obvious folklore is stripped away, what remains of a historical nature in the work[21]? Hill sees the stories of the Bamboo Princess and the 'Elephant Boy' (Merah Gajah) as having been "adapted to fit historical ancestors"[22]. Because these two members of the royal house have no exploits attributed to them besides their deaths, they are essentially space-fillers in the genealogy. Their foster parents, Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad, who are biologically not part of the line, are of the same sort. In the third generation Merah Silu is pictured as a founder of cities — presumably archeological evidence might be found for some of them — and as a convert to and proselytizer of Islam. This role is not as straightforward as it might appear, for his position as the third member of the genealogy has a curious parallel in the *Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain (HIZ)*[23].

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14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 27.

17 *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

19 Krom (see note 5 above), p. 392.

20 Hill, p. 19.

21 De Josselin de Jong (see note 3 above), p. 238: "Were it not for a few phrases here and there like: 'He is known to the present day as Marhum Semudra', and were it not for external evidence that a Malik as-Salih and Malik az-Zahir really did exist, the Pasai Chronicles could just as well have been a collection of purely legendary tales: they are so formal, so conventionalized, so completely divorced from reality."

22 Hill, p. 27.

23 Khalid Hussain, ed., *Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1967). For the main edition of *HIZ*, see P.J. van Leeuwen, *De Maleische Alexanderroman*, diss. (Utrecht, Meppel 1937), and C. Hooykaas, "Review of *De Maleische Alexanderroman* by P.J. van Leeuwen", *TBG* LXXVIII (1938), 289-292. Alexander the Great is frequently listed as the ancestor of Malay royal families; see, for example, Roolvink, "Variant", p. xxviii, for Cod. Or. 3199(3) part 4. Also, R.O. Winstedt, "Alexander,the Great and the Mount Meru and Chula legends", *JMBRAS* XVIII.2 (1940), 153, and "The date, authorship and some new MSS of the Malay romance of Alexander the Great", *JMBRAS* XVI.2 (1938), 1-23.

In *HIZ* the ancestry of the hero Iskandar, or Alexander the Great, is much longer than that of Merah Silu; however, his grandmother, Puteri Humani, for our purposes generation I, attempts to kill her child, Raja Darab of generation II. Raja Darab has two sons, Iskandar and Dara, of whom the elder, Iskandar, is active in proselytizing[24]. In *HRRP*, the first generation successfully kills the second generation which has had two sons, the elder of whom is instrumental in the spreading of Islam; this parallel with *HIZ* suggests that many of the exploits of Merah Silu may be according to formula. This train of argument can be continued throughout *HRRP*, and raises the possibility that much of the non-folklore material is of a literary nature rather than of a strictly historical one. The most obvious difficulty with the genealogy is why the writer does not mention the continuation of the family past the Majapahit invasion, which occurs during the lifetime of generations VI and VII[25]. Subsequent rulers are ubiquitously implied by *SM*, *Hikayat Acheh*, the epigraphical sources, and *LS*. Where folklore and myth end, and history begins, is not clear.

The problems of trying to prove who the characters of *HRRP* were and what they did are immense. Hill's division of the text into three parts is a minimal reduction; as he points out, more than three parts are easily possible. An alternative approach is to exclude the events which are outside of the lifetimes of the Semudera-Pasai lines, and to examine patterns which affect this core of the work. This method still takes into account the events and persons in all three of Hill's sections, but it excludes the Islamic preface, the activities of Majapahit after the fall of Pasai, and the defeat of the Majapahit army by the people of Pulau Percha. This approach in no way negates Hill's divisions, but it may show that a unified system was used to write all three parts. If more than one person was responsible for the creation of the *HRRP*, and I assume this is true, then they shared a concept about what form a *hikayat* should take[26].

Both historical and literary works have one aspect in common: they both begin and end with events which are seen by their respective writers as having more significance with regard to the work as a whole than these or any other events may in themselves possess. The starting point should be where the very first instance or cause of the major theme occurs. The peculiarity of *HRRP* is that the introductory section emphasizes the importance of Pasai in the proselytizing movement of Islam. However, no event connected either with the first two brother kings, Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad, has any direct link with Islam, and the last ruling Pasai king, Sultan Ahmad Perumudal Perumal, is merely noted at one point for his sanctity. The events recorded after Pasai's fall to Majapahit forces and the stratagems of the people of Pulau Percha do not emphasize or mention Islam. Most of the work is thus only by default Islamic, and much is pre- or post-Islamic.

While a case can be made that the introductory and closing sections are loosely attached to the *Hikayat* proper, and constitute a *de facto* ring-composition by their appeal to or mention of Islam, it is at a different level, that of genealogy, that beginning and end events manifest

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[24] Khalid, *HIZ*, pp. 7-8.

[25] Hill, pp. 22-24.

[26] It may be more than mere coincidence that both *HRRP* and *SM*, the two earliest Malay historical writings of any importance, end with the *raja* being driven from his state by invading armies. Neither *SM* nor *LS* records an invasion against Pasai by Majapahit. Also, the reigning monarch at the capture of Malacca and Pasai is named Ahmad in both instances.

themselves as having a vital relationship with the events and people they enclose[27].   Although using the table provided by Hill (see table 1)[28], I have made a few alterations in arrangement and have expanded the number of persons named.   I have also assigned each generation in the lineage a number in order to facilitate analysis and discussion.   This genealogy is limited in that it contains no one mentioned after the fall of Pasai, a small but important portion of *HRRP*[29]. Using Hill's division of the text, all generations but VII are mentioned in part one; part two is primarily concerned with Tun Beraim Bapa of generation VII, and part three, while touching on Tun Abdul Jalil's death as the cause of the Majapahit invasion, mostly relates events external to Pasai and its kings.   The final rout of the Pasai forces is, then, with regard to this genealogy the last event affecting the lineage.   The difficulty is how this final event is related to the first generation of kings.

Table 1. **HRRP: The Semudera-Pasai Kings**

Generation

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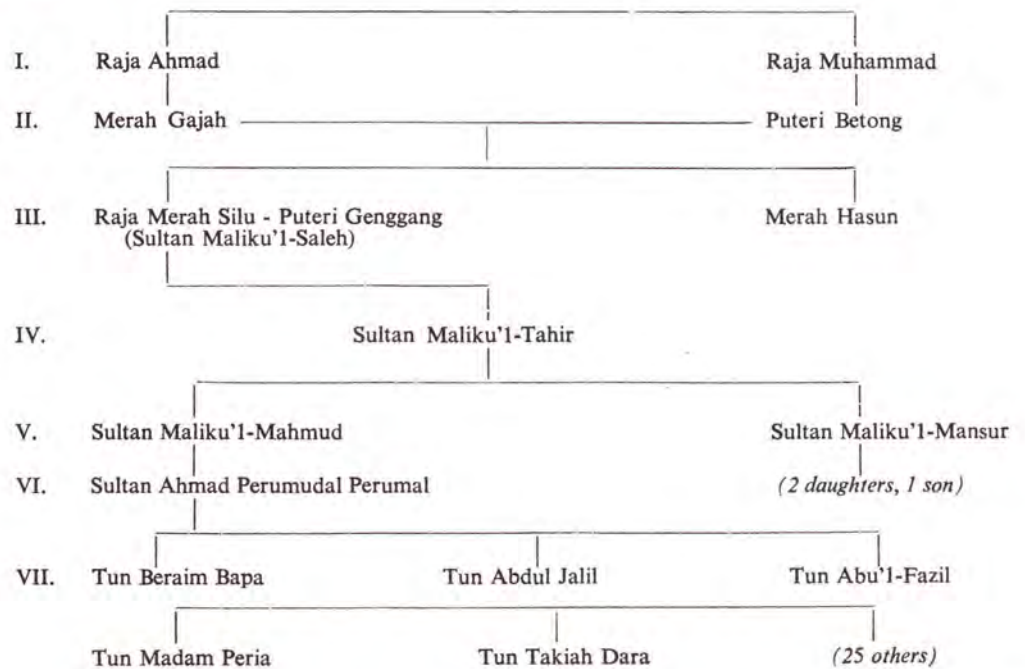
[27] The repetition at the end of a story or poem of events or ideas mentioned in the beginning is common in Greek and Latin classical literature, but insofar as I have been able to discover it is not a subject of scholarly research for the Malay classics. Cf. W.A.A. van Otterlo, *Untersuchungen über Begriff, Anwendung und Entstehung der Griechischen Ringkomposition* (Amsterdam, 1944), and Henry R. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (Cleveland: American Philological Association, 1966), p. 54, and 54 n. 28.

[28] Hill, p. 17.

[29] It comprises the last 6.5 pages of the 60 pages of *HRRP*.

In *HRRP* the problem of beginning the genealogy is that of finding an ancestor whose position is not without merit[30]. A great line of kings does not often claim to be descended from commoners, slaves, or fools. The kings of Pasai avoid the problem of ignominious ancestry by the miraculous discovery and subsequent adoptions first of the Bamboo Princess by the younger king, Raja Muhammad, and secondly the Elephant Boy by the elder Raja Ahmad[31]. The origins of the two brother kings are not stated. They simply become the first generation of the Pasai genealogy through their adopted children, the true biological founders of the lineage.

No member of generations I or II lives in Pasai or is a Moslem. The foundation of Pasai is reserved for Merah Silu in the third generation. One event, however, which is connected with the first two generations indirectly foreshadows the coming of Islam. When Raja Ahmad attempts to find the Elephant Boy, he is unsuccessful until Friday, apparently the only day when the elephant and Merah Gajah go to the river to bathe[32].

Even though Raja Muhammad finds Puteri Betong before Raja Ahmad discovers Merah Gajah, the succession to the throne is always through the oldest male child of the ruling monarch. After the founding of Pasai, it is only the older brother, as the successor to the throne, who resides in Pasai; the other brother, if any, lives elsewhere[33].

The foreshadowing of Islam, the prerogatives of the elder male child, and the right to reside at the central court are all important features of *HRRP* which are introduced in the first two generations. A more complex series of events, however, connects the first two generations with the last two. Merah Gajah has no activities connected with his life except the one which indirectly causes his death. He pulls a gold hair from his wife's head, and in so doing kills her. Her father retaliates by killing Merah Gajah. This act brings forth war between Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad, resulting in their mutual deaths. Restated, the male of generation II is the cause of his wife's death, and he is killed by a member of generation I. Then a war begins between the members of generation I in which they both die. This pattern is repeated by generations VI and VII.

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[30] Henige (see note 6 above), pp. 52, 70-72. Michael Vickery's dissertation (Yale, 1977) on Khmer and Thai chronicles discusses in a southeast Asian context many problems such as Henige has raised. Vickery has found massive instances of doubling, telescoping, lengthening of reign periods, and outright fabrication of rulers as well as borrowings from Thai genealogies into Khmer ones.

[31] *LS* often has inheritance by ultimogeniture, unlike *HRRP* which has primogeniture. In *LS* the son of the youngest king, Raja Ahmad, is the successor, but in *HRRP*, Raja Ahmad is the elder brother. See W.E. Maxwell, "The Raja of the Bamboo", *JSBRAS* IV (1887), 121-123, and Mohamed Taib Osman, "Mythic elements in Malay historiography", *Tenggara* II.2 (1968), 80-89.

[32] In *LS*, the six-month-old Tengkoe di-Meurah (Merah Gajah) is found on a white rock near a large elephant, p. 264, § 3. The genealogy in *SM* begins with two brothers, the elder Merah Chaga and the younger Merah Silu (see table 3 in the present article). Maliku'tl-Tahir inherits the throne from Merah Silu (Winstedt, *SM*, pp. 70-71). Cf. R. Roolvink, "The answer of Pasai", *JMBRAS* XXXVIII.2 (1965), 129-139 for Pasai-Malacca religious influences; H. Overbeck, "The answer of Pasai", *JMBRAS* XI.2 (1933), 254-260; and note 34 below.

[33] See below for discussion of spatial separation. Note that women who are biologically members of the royal family (see table 1 of this article) appear only in generations II and VII; all other women are left unnamed.
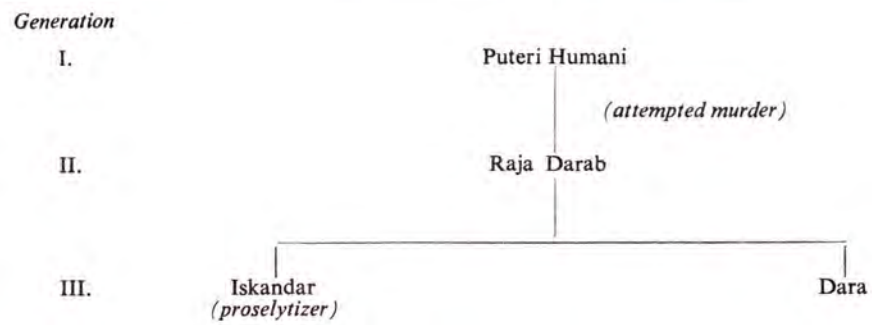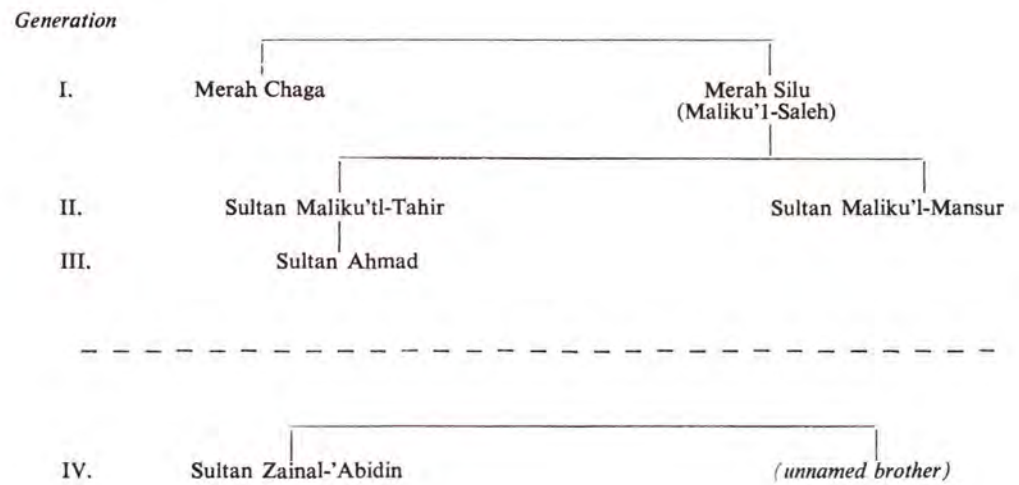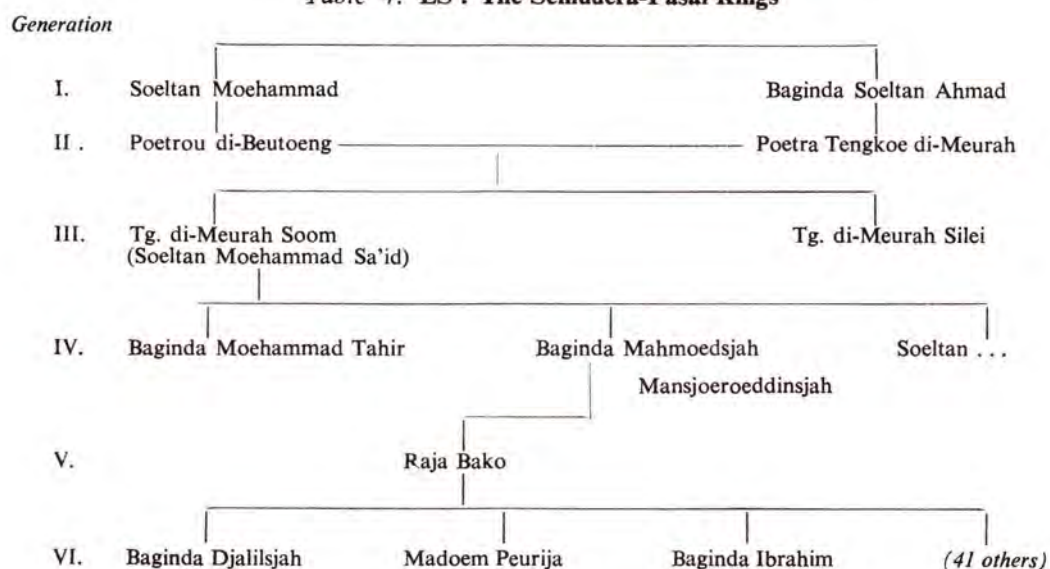
Table 2. **Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain**

Generation

I.   Puteri Humani

                          │ *(attempted murder)*

II.   Raja Darab

          ┌──────────────┴──────────────────┐
          │   │
III.   Iskandar   Dara
      (proselytizer)

Table 3. **SM (Raffles MS 18): The Semudera-Pasai Kings**

Generation

          ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
          │   │
I.   Merah Chaga   Merah Silu
                                        (Maliku'l-Saleh)
                          ┌───────────────┴──────────────┐
                          │   │
II.   Sultan Maliku'tl-Tahir   Sultan Maliku'l-Mansur
          │
III. Sultan Ahmad

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          ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
          │   │
IV.   Sultan Zainal-'Abidin   *(unnamed brother)*

Table 4. **LS : The Semudera-Pasai Kings**

Generation

I.	Soeltan Moehammad	Baginda Soeltan Ahmad
II .	Poetrou di-Beutoeng ———————————— Poetra Tengkoe di-Meurah	
III.	Tg. di-Meurah Soom (Soeltan Moehammad Sa'id)	Tg. di-Meurah Silei
IV.	Baginda Moehammad Tahir	Baginda Mahmoedsjah Mansjoeroeddinsjah	Soeltan ...
V.	Raja Bako	
VI.	Baginda Djalilsjah	Madoem Peurija	Baginda Ibrahim	*(41 others)*

There are several similarities between generations I and VI. Each contains one king named Ahmad; both brother kings live apart. Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad live in Semerlanga; however, they live on opposite sides of the forest: "....*Raja Ahmad selang beberapa lama-nya, maka baginda pun berbuat pula sa-buah negeri di-balek rimba itu, ada kira-kira sa-hari perjalanan daripada negeri adinda itu....*" ("Some time after this [Raja Ahmad] made for himself a city on the other side of the forest, distant about a day's journey from that of his younger brother.")[34] Sultan Ahmad is the only member of the sixth generation of his family; however, the king of Majapahit has a role which is structurally parallel to that of RajaMuham-mad of generation I. In the final debacle, Sultan Ahmad has already killed his oldest son Tun Beraim Bapa. The whereabouts of his third and only other named son, Tun Abu'l-Fazil, is unclear, being last mentioned on page 117, long before the death of Tun Beraim Bapa. Sultan Ahmad is uneasy about the succession to his throne, for he would prefer marrying the Majapahit princess, Puteri Gemerenchang, rather than allowing Tun Abdul Jalil to do so. Learning that Sultan Ahmad has put Abdul Jalil to death, Puteri Gemerenchang wills her ship to sink in the sea. Upon hearing of his daughter's death, the emperor of Majapahit declares war on Pasai, and in the resulting battle Sultan Ahmad is defeated, if not killed[35]. He and his family are not mentioned again. Thus the pattern of generations I and II is repeated by VI and VII. The women of generations II and VII die because of their husband or fiancé, and in an ensuing battle the king (I and VI) of the Semudera-Pasai line is forced to leave the throne[36].

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34 Hill, p. 47. In the section before this quotation, the younger brother Muhammad has first migrated to Semerlanga (p. 46); see table 5 which follows. Kings of the first generation both have Islamic names although conversion to Islam occurs in generation III, long after their deaths; see Drewes (note 1 above), p. 436.

35 Hill, p. 99.

36 De Jong, p. 239.

The one oblique reference to Islam in generation VII occurs in the tale of Tun Beraim Bapa's flirtation with Fatimah Lempau in his father's house[37]. The event takes place on a Friday while she is making a wreath of flowers for the mosque. This parallels Raja Ahmad's discovery of Merah Gajah on a Friday, the only other event whose day is given.

The first of the two major structures of *HRRP* thus involves the parallels between the beginning and end of the genealogy. The first two generations have several characteristics which are shared with the last two generations and further participate in a pattern of events whose details differ, but whose result is the same, i.e. the removal of two generations of the Pasai lineage. This does not prove whether *HRRP* was composed by one or more writers. If written by more than one, then the writer of the final events of the Pasai household fully understood the pattern underlying the events narrated by the person who wrote about the founding of the royal house. Furthermore, if the events surrounding generation VI and VII are historical, the indication is that those of I and II use VI and VII for a model.

The patterning of the narrative in the opening and closing events surrounding the Pasai lineage casts serious doubts upon the strict accuracy of *HRRP* as a work of history. Some may wish to ignore the earlier generations as being purely mythical, but there is hardly a section of the *Hikayat* which does not contain magical or miraculous happenings. Raja Ahmad obtains gold from worms[38]; Puteri Betong is born from bamboo[39]; Sayid Asmayu'd-din's head swims after Sultan Mansur[40]; and Tun Beraim Bapa rides a flying horse[41]. These are not normally events of historical fact. Nor is the young calf of Pulau Percha which defeats the giant Majapahit water buffalo[42]. Since the events surrounding the early and late members of the family are highly patterned, and also magical, if not miraculous, one might go on to ask whether there are not other repeated events which provide a structure for the *Hikayat*.

The number of kings in each generation indicates the second major structural system. All even-numbered generations have one and only one male eligible for the throne. Other than Sultan Ahmad, the members of these generations have few activities or characteristics which are attached to their names. Merah Gajah is discovered, weds, begets two sons, and kills his wife in three pages[43], and Maliku'l Tahir's brief life scarcely covers two pages[44].

All odd-numbered generations have two contenders with the exception that in the seventh generation Sultan Ahmad has 30 children of whom five, three boys and two girls, are named[45]. Each of these five children is of the same mother and has a major role in the story, except for the third son, Tun Abu'l-Fazil. He is fully described like the other two brothers; but after he is left to guard Pasai, while Sultan Ahmad makes his first attempt to kill Tun Beraim Bapa, he is not mentioned again. His disappearance though unnoted has the important effect of leaving

37 Hill, p. 83.
38 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
39 *Ibid.*, p. 46.
40 *Ibid.*, p. 71.
41 *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.
42 *Ibid.*, p. 104.
43 *Ibid.*, pp. 47-50.
44 *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.
45 *SM* lists no children for Sultan Ahmad, but in *LS*, Raja Bako, Sultan Ahmad's equivalent, has 44 children.

generation VII with only the two requisite heirs to the throne, Tun Beraim Bapa and Tun Abdul Jalil[46].

The odd-numbered generations have two other patterns. In the first is an alternation of relative hostility and friendliness[47]. A war between Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad in generation I results in their deaths. In the fifth generation Sultan Maliku'l-Mahmud is ultimately responsible for the death of his brother Maliku'l-Mansur. The hostility between these two brothers is perhaps attributable to the fact that Maliku'l-Mansur alone of the younger brother kings has the requisite number of descendents to fill the next generation, i.e. he has one son[48]. Although there are other deaths, none are fratricidal nor do they involve a reigning monarch. The even-numbered members of the odd-numbered generation, III and VII, have relatively friendly relations with each other. They also have the peculiarity that there is technically a disappearance of the younger brother, Merah Hasun in generation III and the already noted Tun Abu'l-Fazil in VII.

Table 5. **Rajas of odd-numbered generations**

Violent death	*Disappearance*
I. Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad	III. Merah Hasun
V. Maliku'l-Mansur	VII. Abu'l-Fazil
Younger brother migrates	*Older brother migrates*
I. Raja Muhammad	III. Merah Silu
V. Maliku'l-Mansur	VII. Beraim Bapa

The second pattern which occurs among the odd-numbered generations is that of spatial separation (see table 5). This was encountered among the warring generations I and VI. Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad were noted as living in Semerlanga on opposite sides of the forest, and Sultan Ahmad of Pasai was separated from his foreign counterpart, the emperor of Majapahit. The latter, of course, does not fit into the Pasai genealogy except with regard to the opening and closing patterns. In generation III Merah Hasun remains in Beruana, never to be mentioned again, while Merah Silu migrates and eventually founds Semudera and Pasai. Earlier in Beruana they lived on opposite sides of the river[49]. In the next odd-numbered generation (V) Maliku'l-Mahmud rules in Pasai and his brother Maliku'l-Mansur succeeds their grandfather in Semudera[50]. Generation VII follows the custom of spatial separation when Tun Beraim Bapa, the rightful successor to the Pasai throne, moves to Tukas while his brothers

[46] At least two interpretations are possible for explaining the anomalous presence of a third male in generation VII. Abu'l-Fazil may have had an important role in other folktales used to write *HRRP*. Alternatively, he may have been commonly thought to have existed, and the writer may have felt obliged to include him among Sultan Ahmad's children in spite of the pattern demanding only two males in odd-numbered generations. Neither *SM* nor *LS* lists Abu'l-Fazil.

[47] Hill, p. 83. If the pattern discussed here is more than coincidental, it offers an explanation for the lack of a clear statement about the fate of Sultan Ahmad--the next violent death of a reigning monarch can only occur in generation IX.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

[50] A. Teeuw (see note 3 above), p. 230: "In *SM* the ruler of Semudera is a direct descendant of the founder of Semudera and therefore of higher rank than the ruler of Pasai. In *RP* [*HRRP*], on the other hand, the ruler of Semudera is a younger son of the former ruler of Pasai, and thus ranks lower than his brother in Pasai. The evidence from the Pasai tombstones, however, led Moquette to the conclusion that the *SM* genealogy, rather than that in *RP*, was the right one."

remain in Pasai. In generations III and VII it is thus the older brother who migrates, while in I and V it is the younger.

It has been seen that several classes of events occur in accordance with the alternation of odd- and even-numbered generations, but conflict with Hill's sections. This is not surprising as these are predicated on the existence of three separate authors or groups of authors and on loosely defined stylistic changes. The same lack of correspondence, moreover, is found when some events are compared with the sequence of reigns. Conversions to Islam, for example, occur in generations III[51] and VI[52].

The giving or explaining of local and personal names, on the other hand, happens in odd-numbered generations. Merah Silu in generation III takes on the Moslem name of Maliku'l-Saleh, and his two ministers also acquire new names[53]. Merah Silu is responsible for naming Semudera and Pasai[54], and the place where Sayid Asmayu'd-din, the minister of Maliku'l-Mansur (generation V), was buried is named Padang Maya[55]. The major exception to this pattern happens when Sultan Ahmad in generation VI is given the additional name of Perumu-dal Perumal by a converted yogi from Kalinga[56]. The names of Padang Pauh Bengkok and Menangkabau are given after the extinction of the Pasai kings[57]. A reversal, then, occurs in the patterning of alternate generations: Sultan Ahmad takes on a new name when, by the established rules, it should have been his son. This reversal is one of several events accompanying the downfall of the royal family.

Now that the two major structural systems have been examined, it remains to look at their relationship with military attacks and invasions as a class of activity. Like naming ceremonies, spatial separation of brother kings, disappearances, and violent deaths, military events occur in the odd-numbered generations. The pattern is set by the war between Raja Ahmad and Raja Muhammad in the first generation. This is followed by an invasion against Merah Silu of generation III by Sultan Maliku'l-Nasar in a bid for the throne of Rimba Jeran[58]. In the next odd-numbered generation is the invasion from Siam.

The placement of this event into a time slot, that may be predicted solely by its member-ship in a set of invasions which regularly occur at specific intervals in the genealogy, is not the sole reason to doubt the value of its chronology or historicity. SM and LS give little support to its validity, the latter ignoring the event totally while the former provides a substantially different but confused account. As one of the longest and most detailed events in HRRP, the Pasai-Siam battle follows the standard patterning of shadow-play fighting: minor generals are unable to conquer the enemy until the arrival and participation of the hero. A messenger is sent out to find the reason for the arrival in Pasai of 100 ships[59]. He is told that they have come

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[51] Hill, pp. 57-58. HRRP and LS for Semudera, and SM for Malacca, argue that the king was a Moslem before he was converted. LS puts the case most clearly (p. 264, § 2.b): "The religion at that time in Shamtalira] was the religion of Ibrahim (Islam)."

[52] Hill, p. 74.

[53] Ibid., pp. 57-58.

[54] Ibid., pp. 55, 64.

[55] Ibid., p. 71.

[56] Ibid., p. 74.

[57] Ibid., pp. 100, 106.

[58] Ibid., pp. 54-55.

[59] Ibid., pp. 66-68.

to collect tribute or to destroy the kingdom. As the forces line up against each other during the following days of war, two generals, Barang Laksmana and Tun Rawan Permatang, can only hold their troops in line, and are eventually wounded. Tun Aria Jong then leads the army, but total rout ensues. Finally, Sultan Maliku'l-Mahmud assumes control; and when the Thai commander, Talak Sejang, is shot through the chest an arrow, the Pasai troops inflict total defeat on the enemy. Semudera is left unmentioned throughout the war.

SM, in a passage which confuses Semudera and Pasai[60], has no war, but Awi Dichu leading the forces of Siam on behalf of the Raja of Shahru'n-nuwi attacks Semudera and carries off the Raja of Pasai—some sections of the story say the Raja of Semudera—to Thailand where he is forced to tend the royal fowls. He is eventually brought back by Saidi 'Ali Ghitayu'd-din, the chief minister of Pasai. Thus the Thai involvement in Semudera-Pasai according to *HRRP* includes war and victory for Pasai, while *SM* depicts stratagem and victory for the Siamese.

The next round of military operations partly occurs in the expected seventh generation, and partly in the sixth. This displacement is similar to the one involving naming ceremonies which was noted above for Sultan Ahmad. The person who ought to handle the invasions is the eldest son, Tun Beraim Bapa. His superiority is demonstrated when he repels an attack of insolent Kalinga swashbucklers[61], but Sultan Ahmad has murdered him and his next brother Tun Abdul Jalil by the time the kingdom is under attack by Majapahit. The third and only other named brother, Abu'l-Fazil, has disappeared without further mention by the author. That Sultan Ahmad is structurally anomalous as a defender of Pasai is underlined by his own regret that he has killed his most able son[62].

The Thai invasion of Pasai can therefore be seen as a predictable event simply in terms of the rules of the patterned placement of events in accordance with the sequence of generations of the Semudera-Pasai line. Although the attack may have in fact occurred, the rules of the genealogy must place it in an odd-numbered generation. Even then, the positions in the first and seventh generations are taken up with events of a differently structured pattern, although the Thai battle could conceivably be rewritten to occupy these places. Corroboration from *LS* is lacking; *SM* gives an account differing in detail and outcome. When the final battle with Majapahit is used for a check on *HRRP* accuracy for battles, it would seem that unless further evidence is adduced to support a Thai invasion in the fifth generation of the *raj*, then the account in *HRRP* must not be included as usable evidence, for *LS* describes no such battle, but rather declares that Acheh took over control of the kingdom as no local leader was capable after a period of internal conflict[63]. *SM* reveals nothing of any battle, and does not state the parentage of the last named king, Sultan Zainalabidin, the only holder of the Pasai throne who is contemporaneous with a possibly datable Malaccan ruler. There is thus no way of ascertaining the historicity of, or of suggesting a possible date for, the Thai attack on Pasai from these literary sources.

60 Winstedt, *SM*, pp. 75-77; Brown, pp. 35-37; and Hill, pp. 185-186, n. 78.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 99. He also laments the loss of his sons after the drowning of Puteri Gemerenchang, p. 97.

63 *LS*, p. 278, §§ 59-60.