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OF PALM WINE, WOMEN AND WAR

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OF PALM WINE, WOMEN AND WAR

*The Mongolian Naval Expedition to
Java in the 13th Century*

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Cover photo (top): Scenes Sanggramawijaya defeated Mongolia after defeating Jayakatwang forces in staging the colossal dance drama Throne Wilwatikta by STUPA community in Yogyakarta Cultural Park Auditorium, 5 December 2012. This dance drama tells the story of the establishment of the kingdom of Majapahit by Narrarya Sanggramawijaya helped Duke Wiraraja of Sumenep by defeating forces Jayakatwang and Mongolia.

Source: TEMPO/STR/Suryo Wibowo, Indonesia.

Cover photo (bottom): Relief from Candi Jago, constructed near Malang, east Java, in 1280 in memory of a deceased king, Wisnuwardhana, by his son Kertanagara. The temple bears reliefs from a Buddhist text, Kunjarakarna, in which the main deity is Vairocana. This relief may depict Vairocana and a female deity in a garden. Courtesy of Professor John N. Miksic

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For my daughter Khulan
Охин Хуландаа зориулав

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Preface to the revised edition

The first edition of this book (entitled *Khubilai Khan and the Beautiful Princess of Tumapel: The Mongols Between History and Literature in Java*) was written and published under a number of constraints. A deadline for publishing that gave me seven months to finish it, technical difficulties that led me to eliminate all diacritics except umlaut and acute accent, and most of all an inadequate knowledge of Chinese and no knowledge of Javanese, Balinese or Sundanese. In this revised edition the diacritics remain absent except in Stuart Robson's essay as it would have entailed an enormous labor to track down all the original materials to identify where and what diacritics had been used, and my knowledge of the relevant languages has advanced only slightly: I am still indebted to translators and their translations. And that, I have come to realize, is a far greater problem than I had previously imagined.

A number of important publications have appeared in the years since 2002, including Heng's monograph on Sino-Malay trade and Yamaguchi's paper on Wolio genealogies. In addition to new publications, I have continued my search for relevant materials of older vintage, and this new edition not only makes use of Gaubil's *Histoire de Gentchiscan...* and Robson's translation of the *Desawarnana*, both works that I was unable to obtain in 2002, but also Robson (1979, 2000), Schurmann (1956), Mills and Ptak's translation of Fei Xin's Hsing-ch'a sheng-lan, Damais (1958), Reid (1996), Gonda (1976) and others.

One of the most important discoveries I made in the years since the book's first publication was the work of the Oxford philosopher and linguist Roy Harris, especially his 2004 monograph *The Linguistics of History* and the more recent *After Epistemology* (2009). *The Linguistics of History* raised many questions about the writing and understanding of history, not the least of which is the role of translation, not only across languages, but also across cultures, times and spaces. Tan Ta Sen's recent book *Cheng Ho and Islam in Southeast Asia* brought the issue of translation forcefully to the fore, but perhaps more importantly he brought attention to the importance

of the questions we ask of texts and histories. Since the first edition of the book it is this matter of questioning that has come to have an increasing importance for me. The writings of R.G. Collingwood and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy underwrote the first edition, and this revision has benefited from an intense period of studying the works of Roy Harris, whose writings of the past 35 years demonstrate the most relentless pursuit of questioning of foundations that I know of, and of Belgian philosopher Michel Meyer who has argued that questioning rather than ontology must serve as the basis for philosophy.

My most unexpected discovery followed upon a reading of Stuart Robson's 2001 essay on the *Kidung Harsawijaya*. Stuart Robson is Adjunct Associate Professor in the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, Monash University. I wrote to Robson asking whether he knew of any plans to translate either of the kidungs treated in my book, and in his response he mentioned that he had written his B.A. honor's thesis on the sources of the Mongol invasion of Java, a copy of which he subsequently sent to me. What he did in that thesis was to look at all the available sources with the intention of seeing what they could tell us, rather than following the only other existing approach which was to unquestioningly accept the story that fit a national ideology or an imagined other. It was sheer pleasure to read, and I am honoured that Prof. Robson has agreed to revise and publish in this volume a work that he had nearly forgotten about as only a school exercise of his youth.

In addition to the acknowledgements in the first edition, I offer my thanks to Stuart Robson for his contribution to this book and to my education, to Yamaguchi Noriko for translating some Japanese material for me, and to Geoff Wade not only for his translation of the relevant section of the *Yu pi xu zi zhi tong jian gang mu*, but for believing that this book deserved a new edition and a wider audience. Thanks also to Hawe Setiawan whose research in Indonesian libraries on my behalf was a wonderful gift from a stranger that has made the book more like the book I wanted to write but could not write on my own. And most of all my thanks to Burmaa Kaylin, Duudii guai, Chuka and Garmaa, without whom this book would never have been written, much less published.

David Bade
June 15, 2011
Joseph Regenstein Library
University of Chicago

Preface to the first edition

A number of years ago the books *Banjaran Singhasari* and *Banjaran Majapahit* crossed my desk as part of my work in the library. Their account of the Mongol army in Java in 1293 was very different from that which I had read in the passing remarks of historians of the Mongols, and I looked around a bit to see what else I could find. At the time, I could not get very far because of my lack of knowledge of old Javanese. The topic has remained in the back of my mind for eight years as I worked on Polish and Czech-Slovak bibliographies of Mongolian studies. I left the wonderful Southeast Asian collection at Northern Illinois University where I had access to everything I needed for studying Java, but very little for studying Mongolia, and moved on to the University of Chicago in 1995. When Professor Bira invited me to read a paper at the 8th International Congress of Mongolists in 2002, I pulled out the paper of 1994, my notes, photocopies and all that I could remember of the topic, and decided there should be enough material to make a decent short paper for the congress.

The most important text — the *Pararaton* — is now available in English, the translation having appeared in 1996, while the *Desawarnana* in English, and English and Dutch summaries of the *kidungs* have been around for many years. The interest in this incident among Indonesian and Javanese historians has been limited to just those aspects of the story and the texts written about it which are relevant to issues of Javanese medieval history, society and culture; very little has been written on the Java campaign by Mongolists, and apart from Rossabi's brief comments in his *Khubilai Khan*, the Javanese version of that campaign has never appeared in publications on the Mongols. The more I worked on the paper, the more interested I got, and the longer it became. The length increased even more when I decided to include translations and summaries of the relevant texts, since those texts are not readily accessible in Mongolia.

I have not written a philological treatise on the texts, nor have I attempted to make this an exhaustive historical study. It is intended as an

introduction. The only book written on the Mongols in Java to date is based almost entirely on the account found in the *Yuan shi* and addresses very different questions from those which I found myself asking.

There are several reasons for my writing this book. One is to introduce the Javanese version of the events of 1293 to Mongolists in much the same way that Groeneveldt introduced the Chinese version with his translations of the relevant sections of the *Yuan shi*. The existence of two markedly divergent historiographical traditions itself raises fascinating questions and the translations and summaries presented herein are intended as a preliminary gathering of materials until the time comes when all of the relevant texts will be available in a language more accessible to Mongolists than Old Javanese. I hope that better qualified students will take up the questions which I and others have raised, will themselves raise more questions, and bring the whole Javanese tradition into the arena of Mongolian studies alongside the works of Odoric of Pordenone, Wassaf, the Papal correspondence and the *Yuan shi*.

Another reason for writing is simply the joy of finding an entire tradition of historiography relating to the Mongols which is so unlike that which I have encountered elsewhere. The fact that these Middle Javanese versions of the Mongol campaign have been revived and taken center stage — literally! — in Indonesia in the late 20th century adds a literary and international aspect to the historical interest of the Javanese materials.

And finally I have a personal reason, a reason which has nothing to do with historians and philologists. I wrote the book as a gift for my Mongolian friends, especially those to whom the book is dedicated, in gratitude and appreciation of their friendship.

My thanks to Bill Alspaugh, Shintia Argazali, Tim Behrend, Abigail Cohn and Ete Olson for bio-bibliographical assistance, and to Robert Bird, Wayne Cristaudo, Judith Pfeiffer and Evrim Binbas for comments and suggestions.

David Bade
University of Chicago
July 2002

A note on transcription

Chinese words appear in pinyin in the text which I have written; in quotations they appear as they are in the original publication.

For all other languages, all diacritics other than umlaut and accent have been omitted everywhere except in the paper by Stuart Robson. Items in the bibliography appear in the script of the original publication rather than in transliteration.

Introduction: Views from the other side

Why views from the other side? Because no Mongol views have survived into our time.

When they had landed on the elected coast they gained possession of the island which is 200 parasangs in length and 120 parasangs in breadth through spreading fear of the fury of their sword ... His Majesty [Khubilai] did not permit that certain death should exercise his power here, but put his son [Kertanagara's son in law Wijaya] on the steps of the high throne. He bestowed on him a ceremonial dress of honor, and conferred on him much grace, and, against the payment of tribute and taxes in the shape of pearls and gold, he left the island in his hands. (Wassaf, translated in Spuler, 1988, pp. 168–69)

Wassaf thus describes the Mongol invasion of Java in what is perhaps the closest to an official Mongol version as is extant, having been written for the Mongol Ilkhans of Persia in the early 14th century. The Yuan dynastic history compiled under the Ming gives a very different account, as do the accounts written in Java. Even so, Wassaf's account — and all other accounts of the Java campaign — differ greatly in tone from his own and other accounts of the Mongol campaigns in western Asia and elsewhere. Although Wassaf claims that the Mongols “gained possession of the Island ... through spreading fear of the fury of their sword”, he concludes his account with the claim that Khubilai “did not permit that certain death should exercise his power here,” but installed a new king on the throne — Javanese, not Mongol — “conferred on him much grace” and left the kingdom in his hands. Compare the preceding description with his account

of the Mongol siege of Baghdad and Ibn al-Athir's account of the Central Asian campaigns:

The people were killed, both from inside and outside, or were carried away wounded ... In this way was Baghdad besieged and terrorized for fifty days. ... [T]hey razed to the ground the walls ... and filled in the moat which was as deep as the contemplation of rational men. Then, they swept through the city like hungry falcons attacking a flight of doves, or like raging wolves attacking sheep, with loose rein and shameless faces, murdering and spreading fear; ... The massacre was so great that the blood of the slain flowed in a river like the Nile, red as the wood used in dyeing... those hidden behind the veils of the great harem ... were dragged like the hair of the idols through the streets and alleys; each of them became a plaything in the hands of a Tatar monster; and the brightness of the day became darkened for these mothers of virtues. (Wassaf, translated in Spuler, pp. 116–21)

For several years ... I put off reporting this event. I found it terrifying and felt revulsion at recounting it... O would that my mother had never borne me, that I had died before and that I were forgotten! ... The report comprises the story of a ... tremendous disaster such as had never happened before, and which struck all the world... They killed women, men and children, ripped open the bodies of the pregnant and slaughtered the unborn. (Ibn al-Athir, translated in Spuler, pp. 29–30)

No such events are recorded for the Java campaign. Not by the Mongols, not by the Javanese, nor in Chinese sources such as the *Yuan shi*. The fear and horror which appears in accounts by European and Asian witnesses and chroniclers of the Eurasian campaigns does not appear in Wassaf's — nor Rashid al-Din's — account of the Java campaign. Some of the Javanese accounts describe battles which are noisy, violent and bloody, but with one exception the victims are the enemy soldiers, not the whole population. The Javanese authors neither “found it terrifying” nor “felt revulsion at

recounting it”, and in the Chinese sources, the worst of the matter was the wrath of Khubilai towards his own officers upon their return.

The earliest published Javanese account of the Mongols in Java appeared in 1817 in Raffles’ *History of Java*. It contains the following remarks about the “King of Tatar, called Sri Laksemana”, i.e. Khubilai, during his visit to Java:

Jáya Kátong, previous to the invasion of *Browíjáyá*, had promised his guest, the King of *Táatar*, whose name and title was *Sri Laksemána*, to give him his adopted daughter (wife to *Browíjáyá*) in marriage. This was however delayed. Several times did *Laksemana* press *Jáya Kátong* to fulfil his promise, but he never received a positive answer.

Laksemana therefore being informed that *Browíjáyá* of *Májapáhit* had attacked *Kedíri*, forthwith sent a letter to him, saying that he would co-operate with the people of *Májapáhit*, provided *Browíjáyá* would be on good terms with him. ...

In the heat of the action *Jáya Kátong* and *Laksemana* met, and a fierce encounter took place between these chiefs. *Jáya Kátong* threw his javelin at *Laksemana*, but missed him; and *Laksemana*, in return, struck him on the breast with his poisoned spear, and killed him on the spot. ...

Browíjáyá then eagerly went into the *kadáton*, and was received by his faithful wife. They embraced with tears of joy; and *Browíjáyá* was so enraptured at recovering her, that without taking further notice of the *kadáton*, he returned with his wife to *Májapáhit*. He invited the King of *Táatar* to visit him. On his arrival *Browíjáyá* received him with every attention, and made him a present of a beautiful virgin.

Laksemana remained for some time at *Májapáhit*, during which *Browíjáyá* gave him two or three grand entertainments. He afterwards embarked on board of his own vessel and returned to his kingdom of *Táatar*. (Raffles, quoted from the 2nd ed. of 1830, pp. 115–16)

Imagine that.

What the Javanese chose to record, how the Javanese record compares to the Chinese record, why they may have written thus, and what these various accounts mean for our — and their — understanding of the Mongol campaign to Java are of interest both as history and as a glimpse into the human act of meaning-making itself and the ways in which we know who we are.

Part I contains a discussion of Meng Qi's mission and a narrative of the expedition to Java. Part II, on historiography, is comprised of three sections: 1) Chinese histories, 2) Javanese texts, and 3) Western accounts and modern scholarship. The various sections of Part III explore the significance of the two complementary traditions and the notions of unity, universality, justice, peace, kingship, love, war and women implicit in or absent from them. The texts of the various sources appear in selections in English translation or summaries in the appendices which complete the book.