

Magic and Divination in Malay Illustrated Manuscripts

Arts and Archaeology of the Islamic World

Edited by

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Magic and Divination in Malay Illustrated Manuscripts

By

Farouk Yahya



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Back cover illustration: *Jin Pengikat Diri Hulubalang Tugal Setabang Alas*. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side A, second opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.

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In loving memory of Ismail Ibrahim



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Preface

This book is a study of the images that are found in Malay magic and divination manuscripts from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. These images – which include illustrations, symbols, diagrams, charts and tables – are very important for our understanding of Malay art, but yet have been little studied. This book thus aims to identify the imagery contained in the manuscripts, trace their sources and place them within the Malay as well as a broader Asian artistic and cultural context. At the same time it looks at the texts within the manuscripts, which not only provides an understanding of the images but also sheds light on the exchange of knowledge with other cultures.

The research undertaken has found that despite an earlier view that there is a lack of a Malay painting tradition, the magic and divination manuscripts provide a rich variety of imagery, including the survival of pre-Islamic iconography that has much in common with other cultures in the region. This provides an insight into how pre-Islamic and Islamic elements have not only co-existed but also fed on one another. At the same time, the transmission of foreign ideas into Malay culture involved a degree of indigenisation, where we find for example symbols deriving from the Islamic tradition being used in non-Islamic rituals, and conversely indigenous traditions being transplanted into practices that derive from the Islamic world.

Acknowledgements

This book is the result of many years' work and I could not have done it without the help and support of others along the way.

Firstly I am thankful to the following institutions and their staff for facilitating my research and granting access to their manuscripts collections that form the core of my book, as well as helping with the necessary images. At the Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu I would like to thank Raja Malik Raja Hamzah; at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka I would like to thank the Director-General Datuk Dr. Haji Awang bin Sariyan and the staff at the institute especially those in the Pusat Dokumentasi Melayu, particularly Kamariah Abu Samah and Mohd. Hiezam Hashim; at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia I would like to thank the Director Syed Mohamad Albukhary, and current and former staff including Azenita Abdullah, Heba Nayel Barakat, Assim Zuhair Mahmood Qisho, Nurul Iman Rusli and Ros Mahwati Ahmad Zakaria; at the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia I would like to thank the Director Hajah Nafisah Ahmad, former Director Dato' Raslin Abu Bakar, and the team at the Pusat Manuskrip Melayu particularly Faizal Hilmie Yusof and the former head Datin Siti Mariani S.M. Omar; at the Royal Asiatic Society I would like to thank the Director Alison Ohta and current and former librarians Kathy Lazenbatt, Alice McEwan, Helen Porter and Edward Weech; at SOAS I would like to thank the archivists Joanne Anthony, Winifred Assan, Ed Hood, Joanne Ichimura, Lance Martin, Sujan Nandanwar and the rest of the team at the Archives & Special Collections of the SOAS Library, John Hollingworth at the Brunei Gallery as well as Glenn Ratcliffe for the photography; at the University of Malaya I would like to thank Nor Edzan Nasir and Mohd. Faizal Hamzah at the Main Library of the university as well as current and former staff at the Perpustakaan Peringatan Za'ba, particularly Zaila Idris. I am also very grateful to

Aswandi Syahri and Dato' Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh for granting me access to their private collections, and to Aliff Redzwan for providing the images from the latter's collection. Special thanks are due to Jan van der Putten and Liyana Taha at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, Universität Hamburg for the images that were digitised under the British Library Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153: "Riau Manuscripts: The Gateway to the Malay Intellectual World". The following have also kindly helped with additional images and to whom I would like to say thanks: the British Library, particularly Jana Igunma; Cambridge University Library, particularly Grant Young; the Horniman Museum, particularly Fiona Kerlogue and Adrian Murphy; the Hull History Centre, particularly Judy Burg and Nicola Herbert; Leiden University Library, particularly John A.N. Frankhuizen and Lam Ngo; the National Library of Sweden, particularly Gözde Duzer; the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, particularly Bambang Hernawan; and the Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig, particularly Susanne Dietel. In addition the magicians and healers whom I had interviewed have provided much valuable information, and to them I am very grateful.

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Throughout my research I have gained valuable advice and insight from numerous scholars. I am indebted to all of them, but most of all I would like to give my utmost thanks to Anna Contadini for her expert help and guidance throughout my research and in the writing of this book. I have learned a great deal from her, for which I would always be grateful. Special thanks are also due to Annabel Teh Gallop for sharing her wide knowledge and for her constant encouragement. I would

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Notes to the Reader

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout this book.

Institutions and Collections

For brevity the manuscripts, printed books and objects are referred to using the following abbreviations of the institutions or collections in which they are currently held, unless otherwise indicated. Thus for example MS 13 in the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) is referred to as DBP MS 13. Some of the image credits are also abbreviated within the captions for this reason, with the full credits being provided below.

- Aswandi Private collection of Mr. Aswandi Syahri, Tanjungpinang, Riau.
Images courtesy of the British Library Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153, photography by Aswandi Syahri; reproduced with kind permission from Aswandi Syahri.
- BMKMR Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau (Riau Malay Culture Information Centre), Penyengat, Riau.
Images courtesy of the British Library Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153, photography by Aswandi Syahri; reproduced with kind permission from the Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.
- DBP Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literature Institute), Kuala Lumpur.
Images courtesy of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- IAMM Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.
Images © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

- Nik Mohamed collection Private collection of Dato' Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh, Kuala Lumpur.
Images courtesy of Dato' Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.
- PNM Pusat Manuskrip Melayu, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (Malay Manuscripts Centre, National Library of Malaysia), Kuala Lumpur.
Images courtesy of the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.
- RAS Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London.
Images copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
- SOAS Archives & Special Collections of the Library of the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), London, except for SOAS V.4. a.69.2/249414 which is in the general collection of the Library, and SOASAW 2010.0199.10 which is in the Brunei Gallery, SOAS.
Images courtesy of SOAS, photography by Glenn Ratcliffe.
- UM University of Malaya Library, Kuala Lumpur.
Images courtesy of the University of Malaya Library.

Books and Articles

- BKI *Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde*
- EI² *The Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, Leiden: Brill, 1960–2004
- ER² Jones, Lindsay (ed.), 2005, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2nd ed., Detroit, London: Macmillan Reference USA
- JMBRAS *Journal of the Malaysian (Malayan) Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*

- JSBRAS* *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JRAS *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*

Others

- AS *‘Alaihi al-salām* (‘Peace be upon him’)
 SAW *Ṣallā allāh ‘alaihi wa-sallam* (‘Blessings and peace be upon him’)
 SWT *Subhānahu wa- ta‘ālā* (‘The Glorified and Exalted’)

Translations and Transliterations

All English translations are my own, except where otherwise indicated. Translations of the Qur’an are based on the ‘Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Alī edition.¹

Although both Arabic and Malay employ the Arabic script the rules for transliteration for each are different. The Arabic transliteration here follows the system used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES),² however this book deviates slightly from the guidelines in that the diacritical marks for personal names and titles of works have been retained. As per the IJMES Word List certain Arabic words that are in the Merriam–Webster’s *Collegiate Dictionary* are not given diacritics or italicised, for example hijra, imam, jinni (plural jinn), muezzin, Qur’an, Sufi, sura and ‘ulama’. The Malay transliteration follows the system used by the Library of Congress,³ and Malay words are spelt as given in the website of the Pusat Rujukan Persuratan Melayu of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (note that romanised Malay does not employ diacritical marks).⁴ This includes loan words and terms of Arabic, Sanskrit and other origins, thus for instance *faal* rather than *fa’l*, *kitab tib* rather than *kitāb al-ṭibb*, and *rasi* rather than *rāṣi*.

Additional guidelines for the spelling of Malay names and words are based on those given in Annabel Gallop’s *The Legacy of the Malay Letter*.⁵ For instance names and titles of Malay persons are spelt according to standard Malay spelling, for example Ali rather than ‘Alī, and Syeikh rather than Shaykh (note that for Malay names *bin* is commonly used to denote ‘son of’). As a result two concurrent systems may be in use simultaneously, such as in the case of a work by a Malay author that has an Arabic title, whereby the author’s name uses the Malay system but the title uses the Arabic, for instance *Sirāj al-ḡalām* by Syeikh Abbas Kutakarang. There are certain exceptions to this rule whereby the usage of the Malay spelling of the title is more widespread, most notably in the case of the *Tajul Muluk* (rather than *Tāj al-mulḡ*) by Syeikh Ismail ibn Abdul Mutalib al-Asyi. The spelling of Sanskrit names and words are based on standard systems as found in publications such as Margaret and James Stutley’s *A Dictionary of Hinduism* and Susan L. Huntington’s *The Art of Ancient India*.⁶ Tamil is transliterated using the system in the *Tamil Lexicon*.⁷ Chinese characters are transliterated into the Mandarin pronunciation using the pinyin system. Names of places and kingdoms are not given diacritical marks.

In regard to the transliterations and translations of Malay passages and colophons from the manuscripts, as well as the titles of Malay works, the names of non-Malay individuals are spelt with the Malay spelling in the transliterations but using the Arabic/Sanskrit systems in the translations. Thus for example Bisnu, Jibrail and *Hikayat Yusuf* in the transliterations but Viṣṇu, Jibrā’īl and ‘The Tale Of Yūsuf’ in the translations. Also in the transliterations, certain Arabic phrases that are commonly found in Malay and are used within a Malay grammatical context are treated as loan words and spelt as per the website of the

1 ‘Alī 1999.

2 Available online at http://ijmes.chass.ncsu.edu/IJMES_Translation_and_Transliteration_Guide.htm, last accessed 19 February 2015.

3 Available online at <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsol/romanization/malay.pdf>, last accessed 3 February 2012.

4 <http://prpm.dbp.gov.my>, last accessed 6 March 2015.

5 Gallop 1994, pp. 192–193.

6 Stutley & Stutley 1977; Huntington 2006.

7 University of Madras 1928–39.

Pusat Rujukan Persuratan Melayu of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, for instance *'insya-Allah Taala'* rather than *'In shā' Allāh ta'ālā'*. The exception to these rules is with the names of Western individuals which are given in the Western form throughout, for instance Maxwell rather than Mikswil. Brackets () signify missing text in the

original due to scribal error that has been added by the editor, while square brackets [] are used for explanatory texts by the editor.

Note that in the footnotes and bibliography, most authors with Southeast Asian names (for example Malay and Thai) are usually cited and listed by their first names.

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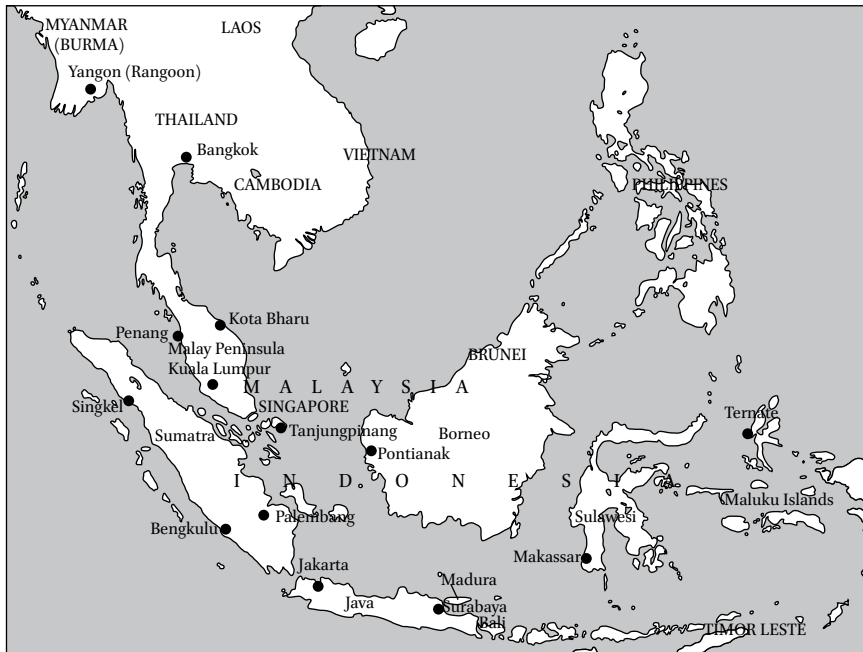
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MAP 1 *Map of Southeast Asia*



MAP 2 *Map of Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Western Borneo*

PART 1

Introduction and Background



Introduction: Malay Magic and Divination Manuscripts

Malay magic and divination manuscripts contain topics on magical rites and divinatory techniques that are compiled and used by magicians and other practitioners of magic (such as members of the religious milieu) for their work. As such they could be considered as personal notebooks of the magician and contain a variety of topics such as instructions on how to conduct magical rites, inscriptions and talismanic designs for the magician to copy, and divinatory charts and tables that the practitioner could refer to. They are one of the few genres of Malay text for which the manuscripts regularly contain images (the others include devotional works such as the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* and *mawlid* texts, as well as texts on mysticism, particularly the *Martabat Tujuh* ('Seven Grades of Being')) and are therefore very important for our understanding of Malay art.

In the context of Islamic art, these manuscripts provide an understanding of the relationship between text and image, together with the importance of images in the field of magic and divination. At the same time they also enable us to identify the types of magical and divinatory techniques employed by Muslim communities, and how such practices fit into an Islamic belief system. Furthermore, the manuscripts give us an understanding of the transmission of knowledge and ideas across cultural borders, as well as how images have been transformed to fit into a local context.

In order to make sense of the material there are basically three approaches that could be taken. Firstly, a general survey of the manuscripts in this genre is necessary in order to gain an overview of the material to see any overall patterns. At the same time, the manuscripts and their contents must also be studied at a micro level. Thus a second approach is to examine a particular text or image, while the third approach involves a study

of an individual manuscript. In this book all three approaches are employed simultaneously as they are in essence dependent upon each other – for instance it is difficult to study one particular manuscript without understanding the contents and placing it into a proper context within the genre as a whole, and conversely a generalisation of the material benefits from a detailed study of the types of magical and divinatory techniques that are found, as they help to inform on why certain texts and images are more popular than others.

For this purpose ninety-six Malay magic and divination manuscripts have been examined. Of these, around four-fifths have not been published, whilst those that have were only given brief descriptions in catalogues. They have been selected because the images contained are significant for elucidating the points raised in this book, and they come from a number of public and private collections in Malaysia, the UK and Indonesia. The Malaysian institutions include the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literature Institute, DBP), the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM), the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (National Library of Malaysia, PNM) and the University of Malaya Library (UM),¹ as well as a private collection, all in Kuala Lumpur. The UK manuscripts are from two institutions – the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (RAS) and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), both in London, which contain the collections of a number of European colonial administrators and scholars who had served in the Malay peninsula and Sumatra. The Indonesian collections that were investigated are in the Riau Archipelago, and comprise the

¹ These manuscripts were previously held in the Perpustakaan Peringatan Za'ba (Za'ba Memorial Library) of the University of Malaya.

collection of the Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau (Riau Malay Culture Information Centre, BMKMR) on the island of Penyengat and a private collection in Tanjungpinang, Bintan.² A catalogue of the ninety-six manuscripts can be found in the Appendix.³

This rather large number of examples is necessary in order to create a benchmark to gauge what are the most common texts and images that are found among the manuscripts. Nevertheless this is not intended to be an exhaustive account of all Malay manuscripts on magic and divination. During the course of this research an even larger corpus of material than this was investigated, but they do not contain images and thus fall outside the purview of this book, although they are still consulted for their texts which have been helpful in providing further context to the subject. It must be mentioned that since the field of magic and divination touches many facets of Malay culture, things like spells and incantations may appear in works of other genres such as medical texts. Thus here such works are included only if the magic and divination elements are fairly substantial. It is also worth noting that in the Malaysian and Indonesian collections there are magic and divination manuscripts in other languages such as Arabic. Although they are not in Malay, they provide an interesting study on the intercultural movement of manuscripts and the transmission of knowledge, and therefore are discussed briefly in Chapter Five.

2 The Riau collections were digitised in 2009 under the British Library Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153: "Riau Manuscripts: The Gateway to the Malay Intellectual World", headed by Jan van der Putten with photography by Aswandi Syahri. Details to the programme could be found here: http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_project.a4d?projID=EAP153;r=41, last accessed 28 February 2015. I am grateful to Jan van der Putten and Liyana Taha for granting me access to the images and the typed-up notes that accompany them.

3 Other Malay magic and divination manuscripts that are not part of this corpus will be referred to as 'ex-cat.'

Malay Magic and Divination Manuscripts

Magic and divination form part of the corpus of traditional Malay texts which covers a broad range of topics including religious tracts, histories, legends, poetry, legal codes, medicine and letters.⁴ Malay is used as a first language by the ethnic group whose territory roughly includes the Malay peninsula (Southern Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore), coastal areas of Sumatra (Indonesia) and of Borneo (which includes Brunei and parts of Malaysia and Indonesia). At the same time it must be noted that Malay is also spoken as a *lingua franca* within the broader region of maritime Southeast Asia, and thus rulers of non-Malay states would often use Malay to write to each other and to European powers. In addition, Malay is the language for religious discourse and scholarship across Islamic Southeast Asia, and as such is employed by other ethnic groups such as the Javanese for these purposes. It is also the court language of Aceh, and the written literature of that kingdom is in Malay as well as Acehnese. As a result, Malay manuscripts may in fact come from any number of places within the region.

In this book, the focus is mainly on magic and divination manuscripts from the Malay peninsula, partly because this (alongside coastal parts of Borneo and east Sumatra) is a core Malay ethnic/linguistic area (i.e. where Malay is spoken as a first language),⁵ and also because the number of manuscripts traced afforded a reasonable-sized corpus from a specific locality, on the basis of which certain observations could be made and conclusions drawn. Many of the manuscripts that were

4 For general surveys of Malay literature and manuscripts, see Winstedt 1996; Proudfoot & Hooker 1996; PNM 2002a; Braginsky 2004; Harun *et al.* 2006; Siti Hawa 2010.

5 In this book I will refer to core Malay ethnic/linguistic area as the 'Malay area' or the 'Malay region'. Note that the whole of maritime Southeast Asia (i.e. including Java, Sulawesi etc.) is often referred to as the 'Malay world', but I would like to avoid using this term here in order to avoid confusion with the core Malay ethnic/linguistic area that is the main focus of this study.

investigated appear to be from the East Coast of the peninsula, in particular the two neighbouring states of Patani and Kelantan. This is based on a number of factors such as the information contained in the colophons and other documentary evidence, the format of the books and the type of paper used, the style of the illumination, and the history of the collections.⁶ There are also manuscripts from other states albeit to a lesser degree, such as from Terengganu, Perak, Melaka, Singapore, as well as east Sumatra (Riau and Palembang) and western Borneo (Pontianak). Manuscripts from other parts of Sumatra, such as from the Minangkabau area, are generally beyond the purview of the study, although they are consulted for comparative purposes.

Nevertheless it is difficult to place things into such neat categories – Aceh in northern Sumatra for example was an important centre for the Malay textual tradition with strong historical links with the Malay sultanates, and this present study includes examples from that region. At the same time the Malay peninsula has long played host to migrant settlers such as the Minangkabau of west Sumatra and the Bugis of Sulawesi, and in this book there are manuscripts that appear to have been produced within these communities. Furthermore, it has to be acknowledged that where no provenance is indicated (which is often the case) it is very difficult to attribute where the manuscripts might have come from, and it is possible that they originated from other parts of the region such as Java. Thus although this book is primarily focused on the Malay area, the fluidity of ethnic, cultural and linguistic boundaries is an important factor that needs to be considered in the study of Malay manuscripts. At the same time, some Malay states such as Kedah and Johor are not represented in this

present study. This discrepancy does not necessarily discount the production of manuscripts there, but instead the lack of examples from a certain region means that manuscripts from that area may not have been identifiable from the lack of colophons, or alternatively they may be kept in collections that have yet to be investigated. In regard to the provenance, it is also worth highlighting that manuscripts travel, either due to earlier exchanges or recent collecting efforts by dealers and institutions. For instance, collections in the Malay peninsula such as that of the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur include manuscripts from places such as Aceh in northern Sumatra and Pontianak in western Borneo, while the private collection in Tanjungpinang contains a couple of examples from Palembang in east Sumatra.

There is a further complication in terms of chronology. Unfortunately the hot and humid climate of the region, coupled with the perishable nature of the material, means that early manuscripts in Southeast Asia have not survived. As a result we do not know when books were first produced in the region and what texts and images they would have contained. Therefore it is very difficult to trace the history and evolution of the Malay written tradition, but nevertheless based on the extant material it appears to be a long-standing one. Stone inscriptions in Old Malay found in Sumatra dating to the seventh century indicate the presence of a rich written literary tradition, but nevertheless the earliest surviving Malay manuscript (from Tanjung Tanah, Sumatra) only dates to the fourteenth century.⁷ While this early material employed Indic scripts, with the coming of Islam to the region during the thirteenth century Malay began to be written using a variant of the Arabic script known as Jawi. Malay manuscripts from the Islamic period are typically found in the codex format and written on European paper. Although there are a few examples that have entered European collections during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the majority

6 For example the manuscript collection of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia predominantly hails from these two states. Furthermore folding-book manuscripts on *khoi* paper can be attributed to this region as this format is predominantly used in nearby Thailand (this is discussed in Chapter Four).

7 See Chapter Three.

of manuscripts that have survived only date from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. By the late nineteenth century Malay texts began to be widely published in the printed form as well, and the development of printing meant that by the early twentieth century the Malay manuscript tradition was in severe decline.

As for magic and divination, the aforementioned Old Malay stone inscriptions attest to their use within Malay society from at least the seventh century, but the earliest evidence of manuscripts on these topics only appear much later. These include possibly the Tanjung Tanah manuscript (which contains a brief religious/magical formula that dates somewhat later than the main text), as well as a few sixteenth and early seventeenth-century manuscripts in European collections. They are however all unillustrated and will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three, but as with the rest of the Malay manuscript tradition the majority of the magic and divination manuscripts only date from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. Thus the earliest datable manuscript in this present study is RAS Raffles Malay 74, which contains treatises on auspicious and inauspicious times as well as a number of legal codes, datable to c. 1189 AH / 1775 AD and appears to be from Selangor (cat. 88), while the most recent is PNM MS 2228 from Perlis, which is dated Monday, 22 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1351 AH / 17 April 1933 AD (cat. 55). This relatively recent and rather short time frame means that our knowledge of the Malay magic and divination manuscript tradition is somewhat limited, but nevertheless the corpus of material available contains a particularly rich and wide range of images and texts, providing the basis for a fruitful area of study.

The practice of writing down and compiling esoteric knowledge is of course not only confined to Malay society. Indeed books containing topics on magic and divination are found in literate cultures all over the world, and in the West they are usually known as grimoires.⁸ They are equally

popular among many other societies in Southeast Asia: in Java notebooks containing magic, divination and much else are generally known as *primbon*. There does not seem to be a specific Malay term for such books, but according to the 1932 Malay-English dictionary compiled by Richard Wilkinson, books on divination and astrology are known in Malay either as *pustaka* (or *pestaka*) or *sastera*.⁹ *Pustaka* is a word derived from the Sanskrit *pustaka* meaning ‘book’, and indeed among the Batak of Sumatra *pustaha* refers to bark folding-books that predominantly contain matters on magic and divination. Apart from books, in Malay the term *pustaka* could also refer to fortune that is read, as well as to a range of other meanings including magical power, sorcery and magical objects.¹⁰ A search through a corpus of traditional Malay texts using the Malay Concordance Project (MCP)¹¹ reveals that the word *pustaka* has been in use since at least the beginning of the sixteenth century in the *Hikayat Pandawa Lima* (‘The Tale of the Five Pāṇḍavas’), a tale regarding the heroes of the *Mahābhārata*. The term *pustaka* is also found in the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (‘The Epic of Hang Tuah’), which is set in fifteenth-century Melaka but was probably composed in Johor sometime between 1688 and the 1710s.¹² This epic is not only of literary value, but is also valuable for its depiction of Malay life during that period, and as such shows us how the books might have been used then. As G.K. Niemann has noted, in the tale the protagonist Hang Tuah is often shown to have consulted his magic and divination manuscript (*pustaka*) in a number of adventures, either to ‘see’ events that are happening elsewhere, or to find

9 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “pĕstaka”, “sastĕra”.

10 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “pĕstaka”.

11 The Malay Concordance Project, created by Ian Proudfoot, is a searchable database of about 170 Malay texts, available at <http://mcp.anu.edu.au>. Search conducted 24 February 2011. It must be stressed however that the majority of Malay manuscripts date to the nineteenth century, and therefore any words found in early texts might be anachronistic.

12 Braginsky 2004, pp. 465-478.

8 For a general study of Western grimoires, see Davies 2010.

spells and potions to help him obtain what he needs.¹³ It is also noteworthy that he seems to have carried the book with him at all times, as he often refers to it in the middle of unfolding events, such as when stealing the Javanese prime minister's *keris* during an audience with the king, as well as during fierce battles. He is also depicted as kissing the book (*dikucupi*) after consulting it, and to find a 'clean' place (*tempat yang suci*) in order to read it. In one of the most memorable episodes of the story, in which he captures the princess Tun Teja for the Sultan of Melaka, Hang Tuah uses his book to concoct a love potion (*guna pengasih*) to gain her affections, and once she had been delivered to the ruler, finds a spell from the book to make her hate him (*hikmat pembenci*). He also consults the book to ascertain when his getaway boat would be arriving at the harbour.¹⁴ Apart from the term *pustaka*, the epic also uses *surat* ('thing written')¹⁵ to describe such books, indicating that the two words are used interchangeably in this context. For example after the princess had been taken, her fiancé asks his preacher (*khatib*) to look into his *surat* in order to find the most propitious moment in which he could sail and get her back.¹⁶ It is worth noting that the word *pustaka* has not been found in any of the magic and divination manuscripts consulted so far, but the term *surat* appears in the ownership note of IAMM 1998.1.249 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 11). Elsewhere *surat* is qualified further by the contents of the manuscript, for example in the colophon of PNM MS 4080 (Terengganu, 1903; cat. 82) the text is referred to as *Surat Bicara Meraksi* ('Written Text on Determining Compatibility').¹⁷

13 Niemann 1870, pp. 134-135.

14 Kassim 1975, pp. 159, 175, 205, 208, 212, 222, 260, 399, 407, 423.

15 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "surat"; *surat* could also mean a letter or epistle.

16 Kassim 1975, p. 225-226. Note that in the rest of the text, the term *surat* is used to denote a letter.

17 The colophon for this (and the other magic and divination manuscripts studied in this book) can be found in the Appendix.

The term *sastera* is also derived from Sanskrit, from the word *śāstra* meaning 'authoritative treatise'.¹⁸ In traditional Malay literary texts it is not as common as *pustaka*, and there is some ambiguity in the use of this term between astrological tables and books per se. Astrologers are typically depicted as 'looking in' (*melihat dalam*) or 'opening' (*membuka*) their astrological tables, which are usually referred to as *nujum*, *ramal* or *sastera*.¹⁹ The word *sastera* is found for example in the *Hikayat Seri Rama* ('The Tale of Rāma'), the Malay version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* datable to sometime between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, and in the *Hikayat Aceh* ('The Tale of Aceh'), a panegyric chronicle of Sultan Iskandar Muda of Aceh, composed between 1607-36. In the latter, two astrologers are described consulting their *sastera*: "Maka kedua nujum memuka surat sasteranya, maka ditiliknya seketika surat sasteranya itu" ("The two astrologers opened their *surat sastera* and consulted them").²⁰

An illustrated manuscript of the *Hikayat Indra Mengindra* ('The Tale of Indra Mengindra') from Kampung Kapor, Singapore, dating to the early 1900s shows the Prime Minister of a kingdom seeking help from an astrologer (*ahli al-nujum*) to obtain a cure for the sick Prince (Figure 1).²¹ Here the astrologer is portrayed as wearing a rosary bead around his neck which he clutches in one hand while holding a book in the other. It might also be of interest to point out that in the relevant passage the Prime Minister could recognise the man as being an astrologer by virtue of his dress: "Maka seorang itu pakaian ahli al-nujum" ("One of them is dressed as an astrologer").²² Similarly, a depiction of an astrologer with a book is found in a lithograph edition of the *Syair Indra Seba* ('Poem of the Court of Indra') that was printed in

18 Many thanks to Crispin Branfoot for this definition.

19 For a discussion of the terms '*nujum*' and '*ramal*', see Chapter Five.

20 Iskandar 2001, p. 89.

21 UM MS 126, vol. IV, p. 83.

22 UM MS 126, vol. IV, pp. 82-83.

اینست که نمایان اهل نجوم مکر فرزان منتزعی فرزان فیالبرود الیم هاتین باقیه الو
 سیکلک اورچی این الود همفین کتات هی سودر الو سیکله جورک هب
 هندو برتات مکر اهل نجوم فون سر فیالکیر اورچی این برک سبارتخ اورچی
 رتخ سیکله اورچی بشیر جورک در الی باقیه اورچی مقید یکل دی کتات اخاله
 توار هم هندوتات کرامه کارز هم هندوت کرایر جالز مکر ساهوت
 فرزان منتزعی در خون هم این رتیتلکد یکند سر فیالراج خلالت بنو انجاری
 کن او بده فتراش کارز رتله سده هم ملوک کسنونکری اورچی میو دکتم
 کیمی سدر فون تیار شکوف کن کارچی تا صدکه تونلمی کن او ببت ایت
 توتلکارز تر الو ساعده سوه یکند مکر نجوم ایتقو زتر سیدم کتات تیار الیم



بولیه همی برین او بده فتراش کارز رتله سده هم ملوک کسنونکری اورچی میو دکتم
 کیمی سدر فون تیار شکوف کن کارچی تا صدکه تونلمی کن او ببت ایت
 توتلکارز تر الو ساعده سوه یکند مکر نجوم ایتقو زتر سیدم کتات تیار الیم

FIGURE 1 The Prime Minister with an astrologer who is holding a book. Hikayat Indra Mengindra ('The Tale of Indra Mengindra'), Singapore, early 1900s. UM MSS 126, vol. IV, p. 83. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.



FIGURE 2 *The Sultan of Hindustan with an astrologer (Sultan Hindustan dihadapi nujum).* Muhammad Hassan bin Nasaruddin, *Syair Indra Sebaha* ('Poem of the Court of Indra'), Singapore, 1889. SOAS ER 2055/37034, opposite p. 10. Courtesy of SOAS.

Singapore and dated 20 Jumādā II 1306 AH / 21 February 1889 AD (Figure 2).²³ The illustrations in both texts suggest that books were seen as being associated with astrologers and thus became part of their iconography. Indeed a Malay pictorial *fālnāma* (a form of bibliomancy involving an illustrated book) in Aswandi N-06 (Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century; cat. 1) shows a bearded man – identified here as an astrologer (*ahli nujum*) – carrying a large book or table under his arm (Figure 3).

Nevertheless, like *pustaka*, the term *sastera* has not been found in any of the magic and divination manuscripts themselves. Instead, in many cases it seems that the owners of the manuscripts tended to refer to them as *kitab*, such as in PNM MS 1993 (probably Patani or Kelantan, second half

²³ SOAS ER 2055/37034, p. 11.



FIGURE 3 *An astrologer walking (Ahli nujum berjalan).* Pictorial *fālnāma*, *Penyengat or Bintan*, early twentieth century. Aswandi N-06 (cat. 1), fol. 41r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.

of the nineteenth century; cat. 50) and PNM MS 2121 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, 1932; cat. 54). In some instances this term is qualified further by reference to the contents, for instance PNM MS 1951 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 46) was given the title *Kitab Ilmu Firasat dan Ubat* ('Book on Physiognomy and Medicine')²⁴ while RAS Maxwell 106 (Perak, 1879; cat. 86) is titled *Kitab Perintah Pawang* ('Book of Instructions for the Magician'). The term *kitab* is derived from the Arabic *kitāb*, a generic term for a book, but in Malay *kitab* typically refers to "scripture generally or of religious or learned works" such as the Qur'an, devotional tracts and

²⁴ However the contents of this manuscript extend beyond these topics to include other types of divination.

works on Islamic theology.²⁵ One possible reason for the use of the term *kitab* to describe books on magic and divination is that they were perceived to be part of the religious corpus,²⁶ perhaps due to the blurred distinction between magic and religion as well as the usage of such books by the Islamic milieu. At the same time it could also be due to their nature as a compilation of information, as the term *kitab* is in addition used in the sense of a compendium of knowledge, for example to describe books on vocabulary and dictionaries (*kitab loghat* and *kitab kamus*).²⁷

Some of the manuscripts are referred to in their ownership notes as *kitab tib*. This term is derived from the Arabic *kitāb al-ṭibb* which means medical books, and in Malay *kitab tib* is also employed to denote such works.²⁸ Its usage to describe magic and divination manuscripts is due to the close relationship between medicine and magic. Typically the prescriptions found in Malay *kitab tib* are herbal remedies, but it must be noted that their preparation and usage may indeed involve magical rites. In addition some *kitab tib* also contain texts on magical rituals and divinatory techniques that are not related to medicine.²⁹ Conversely, many of the spells and talismanic designs contained in the magic and divination manuscripts are for healing, and at the same time herbal remedies are often included in them as well. Some magic and divination manuscripts are referred to as *kitab tib* by their owners even though medical concerns constitute only a small part of the contents, such as in the case of BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (probably Palembang, nineteenth century; cat. 5). One particularly memorable use of

the term *kitab tib* to describe books on magic and divination is found in the Malay folk tale of Pak Belalang ('Father Grasshopper'). Here, the protagonist passes himself off as a diviner and ends up being in the service of the king, who bestows upon him the title of Royal Diviner and sets up seemingly impossible tasks for him to do. For every case Pak Belalang pretends to consult his imaginary books (of which he claims to have hundreds) and manages to solve the problems mainly by luck. In the tale, Pak Belalang's books are usually called *tib* but in some instances he refers to them as *surat*.³⁰ Although *nujum* specifically means astrology, in this tale the term refers to divination in general, as Pak Belalang is shown to use his *tib/surat ilmu nujum* to solve a variety of tasks such as locating the king's stolen property, determining the gender of ducklings, establishing the top and bottom ends of logs, and rescuing a kidnapped foreign queen from a jinni. At the end of the tale, Pak Belalang felt that he has pushed his luck too far and tells the king that his 'books' were destroyed in a fire.³¹

Sometimes the word *kitab* is dropped in favour of other terms. In the colophon of PNM MS 1321 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 31) the copyist uses the term *ketika*, a generic term used to describe charts or calendars of auspicious/inauspicious days, which in this case constitutes the main contents of the manuscript. This echoes the practice of the Bugis and Makassarese of South Sulawesi who refer to books on divination as *kutika*. The origins of the Malay term *ketika* will be discussed in Chapter Five.

In terms of content, the Malay magic and divination manuscripts are for the most part practical, and theoretical concerns are rare. Apart from magical and divinatory techniques, the books also contain a myriad of other topics. As mentioned earlier the intimate relationship with healing means that instructions for the preparation of herbal medicine are often included. Another closely related topic is

25 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "kitab". These are also known as *kitab jawi* and *kitab kuning*.

26 Mohd. Taib 1989, p. xviii, footnote 13.

27 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "kitab".

28 For the *kitab tib*, see Gimlette & Burkill 1930; Werner 2002; Harun 2002; A. Samad 2005; Harun 2006a; Harun 2006c; Mohd. Taib 2006; also see Farouk 2015a.

29 As noted by Harun 2006a, p. 22.

30 For instance in Winstedt & Sturrock 1914, pp. 62, 83.

31 Winstedt & Sturrock 1914, pp. 62, 68, 73, 77, 83.

house construction, as talismans and divinatory techniques are often found as part of the rituals involved in house-building. There is also a close relationship with religion – Islamic prayers are usually used for healing and protection, and religious discourses and Sufi tracts may be included. Other topics include erotology, calendrical calculations and ownership notes such as births, deaths and records of debts. Since the books have been individually tailored to fit an individual's needs with information that is useful or effective, the contents of the manuscripts may differ widely, both in terms of the subject matter and the structure in which they are laid out. Thus it is rare to find two examples that are identical. Nevertheless, comparative studies with similar texts from other cultures indicate that the information contained are a combination of a number of textual traditions: an indigenous Malay one which is part of a larger Southeast Asian tradition, and those of South Asian, Islamic and possibly Chinese origins.

It must also be emphasised that these books do not comprise the total knowledge of the magician. There is much that is kept only in memory and transmitted orally, and as such the information contained in the books are often vague and incomprehensible. At the same time, the usage of the books is not evenly distributed within Malay society. Although women can and do become magicians and shamans, based on the colophons and ownership notes of the manuscripts it is rare to find a work or book that can be attributed to a woman. Additionally, not all male practitioners use them either – limited access to literacy is probably the main reason for this. When magic and divination texts began to be printed from the nineteenth century onwards they became democratised, giving access to the knowledge contained in the books to a larger proportion of society, although only individuals who have the right and training in the magical sphere could successfully put it into practice. At the same time, the wide dissemination of printed books meant that certain works, like the *Tajul Muluk* ('The Royal Crown'),

ended up being the standard reference texts for these topics.³²

Importance of the Art

Many of the magic and divination manuscripts contain images, diagrams and designs that are often both intriguing and disturbing. These graphical representations can be divided into four broad categories based on their form and function. To begin with are the illustrations, which comprise sketches, drawings and paintings of human beings, spirits, animals (both real and mythical), plants, buildings and various objects. They are employed either to elucidate a text, to function as divinatory instruments, or used as a template for making amulets and talismans. Diagrams on the other hand are used to organise information, and encompass things like tables, charts, compasses and other forms of representative schemas. In addition to these are talismanic designs – note that while images of living beings such as spirits may be employed for talismanic purposes, in this book the term 'talismanic designs' is used to refer to texts or geometric symbols such as pentagrams that are employed for talismanic purposes. Finally, illumination – decorative or ornamental elements used to beautify the manuscript and its contents – can be found not only in the initial and end pages of a manuscript but also used to enhance a divinatory table or talismanic design. Like those in the manuscripts of other genres of Malay texts they often consist primarily of vegetal motifs, but although beautiful they nevertheless do not reach the heights of those found in Qur'ans and other religious works.

Thus the images contained are not homogenous but vary greatly in terms of type and function, reflecting the complex nature of the Malay magic and divination tradition. Despite this they share many common features and are to some extent interrelated, and as a class the images present a

³² On the *Tajul Muluk* see Chapter Seven.

certain set of attributes and issues that are peculiar within Malay art. For instance, it is clear that they carry deep meaning, and the iconography and style of the human, spirit, animal and geometric figures have symbolic significance that go back to an ancient past as well as embodying power to effect magic. Even schematic diagrams used to organise information can be seen on a deeper level to encode a specific set of meaning. For instance, the compass diagram can be seen as a temporal and spatial representation of the Malay cosmology. The power of the images also means that they must be dealt with carefully. The contents of the manuscripts are often closely guarded secrets and can only be used by those who have been properly initiated, and the texts sometimes specify the rituals that are needed to accompany the employment of the images. Additionally, spirits that have been summoned via the use of images must be properly propitiated, or else they might cause harm.³³

This particularly rich repertoire of imagery makes the study of magic and divination manuscripts important for a number of reasons. They are an important avenue for the study of an aspect of Malay art that is rarely found and touched upon – that of drawing and painting, a topic that is only beginning to be explored in recent years. This is partly due to the limited amount of material available for study. Unfortunately the climate of Southeast Asia means that as a medium painting does not generally last for a long period of time, since both the pigments employed and the types of surfaces used are often made of organic material. Nevertheless, some early evidence still survives that indicates connections to the art of later periods. For instance, there is a long tradition of cave painting and rock art within the region dating back to the Palaeolithic period and which has continued even until very recent times.³⁴ These are

particularly important to the study of magic and divination manuscripts as they show the continuation of motifs and iconography. For example the human figures in some paintings – such as those in Racolo, Timor Leste (datable to 2000-1500 BP),³⁵ Gua Niah and Gua Sireh in Sarawak, Borneo,³⁶ and Gua Batu Cincin in Kelantan on the Malay peninsula (seventeenth – eighteenth century; Figure 4)³⁷ – are depicted with triangular torsos in a frontal spread-eagled squatting posture. Figures with similar iconography are also found in another form of two-dimensional art, i.e. rock engravings, such as those in Sarawak, datable to the tenth century.³⁸ As we shall see in Chapter Six, this particular iconography is still found within the magic and divination manuscripts of various societies across Southeast Asia.

Other forms of images similarly show a remarkable continuity. In the Pasemah plateau, South Sumatra, a number of paintings have been found in stone burial chambers datable to around 2,000-2,500 years ago, and they include a guardian figure of a cockerel shown frontally with large round eyes and beak (Figure 5).³⁹ Rock engravings in Lumuyu, Sabah, north Borneo depict similar anthropomorphic faces which are also shown frontally with big eyes, teeth and fangs.⁴⁰ In both cases the images are strongly reminiscent of Southeast Asian demon figures found in manuscript painting and masks (Figure 179).

The monumental Hindu and Buddhist temples that were built in Southeast Asia during the Classical Period (ninth–fourteenth centuries) were almost certainly once profusely decorated

33 Laderman 1993, pp. 220-221 describes a ritual for the propitiation of spirits that were “created by magical pictures and spells.”

34 For a general overview of cave painting and rock art in Malaysia, see Ipoi 1998a; Ipoi 1998b.

35 O'Connor & Oliveira 2007, figs. 5b, 8-10.

36 The paintings in these caves are difficult to date; see Harrison 1958, pp. 588-590; Ipoi 1993; Ipoi 1998a, p. 43.

37 Adi 1993, fig. 12.

38 Ipoi 1998b, p. 40.

39 Miksic 1996, p. 45; Caldwell 1997, photo 4, fig. 3.

40 Ipoi 1998b, p. 41.

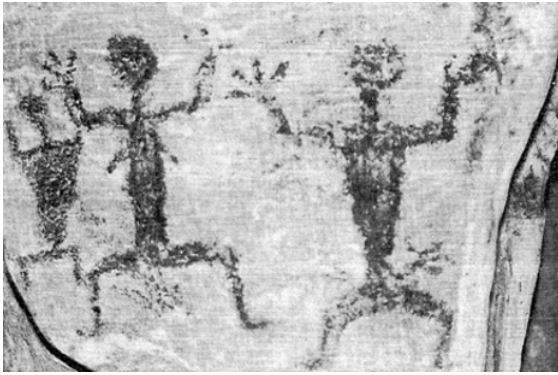


FIGURE 4 *Cave paintings. Gua Batu Cincin, Kelantan, seventeenth – eighteenth century. After Adi 1993, fig. 12.*

with wall paintings, as the very few remains in Pagan, Myanmar and Angkor, Cambodia show.⁴¹ In the Malay peninsula, Buddhist wall paintings have been found in the Silpa Caves in Yala, Patani, datable to the thirteenth century (Figure 6). They display some features of the artistic style of the Srivijaya period (seventh–thirteenth centuries), and are thought to have been produced as a result of the presence of Sri Lankan monks who were en route to Sukhothai in Central Thailand.⁴² It is difficult based on this scarce evidence to find connections between these and the art of the later Islamic period of this area, but Buddhist motifs such as the lotus flower continue to profuse Malay art (Figures 231, 252, 253). Incidentally during the twentieth century the Silpa paintings were destroyed by Muslim iconoclasts, although it is unclear if the objections to them were due to their Buddhist nature, or to the fact that they depicted living beings.

However, even taking account of the non-survivability of early material, the Malay painting tradition is not as extensive as those of other cultures in Southeast Asia such as the Thai or the Balinese. There are no large murals on the surfaces

41 For Pagan wall painting, see Bautze-Picron 2003; for Angkor, see Runkel, *et al.* 2012; Tan, *et al.* 2014.

42 Silpa 1959, p. 13, figs. 2, 5.



FIGURE 5 *Painting of a cockerel in a stone burial chamber. Pasemah, South Sumatra, 2,000–2,500 BP. After Miksic 1996, p. 45.*

of walls and ceilings, but instead painting is fairly restricted to manuscripts and to a lesser extent as decorative ornaments applied to objects, especially woodwork.⁴³ Thus unlike other forms of art such as architecture, metalwork and textiles, the art that is contained in manuscripts is a discrete one.⁴⁴ This limited platform and the inaccessibility of the material mean that it has received less study compared with other forms of Malay art. However even within the Malay manuscript tradition the art of drawing and painting is not very extensive. While many manuscripts and letters are illuminated, often to a very high standard, the depiction of figural elements is rare even in literary and historical works, even though there are numerous references within the texts to pictures (*gambar* or *peta*) and the act of painting (*tulis*).⁴⁵ The lack of

43 Shadow play puppets straddle the line between carving and painting, Mrázek 2005, p. 16, footnote 1. Their relationship with manuscript illustration is discussed in Chapter Six.

44 As noted in Gallop 2005c, p. 160.

45 Gallop 2013, pp. 17–18.



FIGURE 6 *Buddha subduing Mara, flanked by Buddhist disciples. Silpa Cave, Yala, Patani, end of the thirteenth century. After National Museum 1959, fig. 5.*

narrative paintings within the Malay literary tradition might account for the assumption by early Western scholars of an absence of a Malay painting tradition, as exemplified by Thomas Newbold who in 1839 remarks that “Painting, sculpture, architecture, mechanics, geography, are totally unknown to the Malays.”⁴⁶ An ‘Islamic prohibition’ of depicting living beings is often cited as the reason for the lack of figural images within Malay art. In his 1908 overview of Malay arts and crafts the museum curator Leonard Wray writes:

“Painting, by which is meant the production of pictures in colours, or even in monochrome is quite unknown to the Malays. Religious feeling is probably responsible for this to a great extent, for they obey to the letter the prohibition contained in the second commandment, and carefully avoid representing both men and animals.”⁴⁷

This perception of an ‘Islamic prohibition’ derives from a belief that only God can create living beings. Yet although representational images are rarely found in religious contexts (such as in mosques and the Qur’an), throughout the Islamic

world they abound in the secular sphere.⁴⁸ Indeed depictions of living beings are found in many aspects of Malay art, appearing in ceremonial, ritualistic, theatrical and decorative contexts. For instance images of animals may be made into objects such as boats (Figure 199) and royal regalia, or they may be sculpted as offerings to placate spirits. Perhaps the most extensive repertoire of Malay figural representation is found among shadow play puppets which consist of a wide range of images of people, animals and jinn. A division between the religious and secular might explain why figural representations are not found in Malay manuscripts on religious texts and treatises, but the issue as to why literary manuscripts are rarely illustrated may be explained by other reasons. These texts were meant to be read aloud, thus negating the need for any form of paintings within the manuscripts. Furthermore, the oral context in which they were used means that there is a sense of impermanence to the texts, and this might be why there was no importance attached to decorating these manuscripts with images.⁴⁹

While narrative painting might be rare within Malay literary manuscripts, images are nevertheless found within other textual genres. One category of text that is commonly illustrated comprises devotional works such as the *Dalā’il al-khayrāt* (‘Guidelines to the Blessings’; Figures 213, 215) and *mawlid* (nativity) texts, generally referred to in

48 For a discussion on the issue of figural images in Islamic art, see Allen 1988, chapter 2: “Aniconism and Figural Representation in Islamic Art”, pp. 17-37. On the representations of the Prophet Muḥammad in Islamic art, see Gruber 2009. Berlekamp 2011 argues that Islamic illustrated manuscripts on the wonders of Creation represent the use of figural images within a religious context, as they “were made for the explicitly stated purpose of inducing wonder at God’s creation...” (quote from p. ix).

49 Gallop 2005c, p. 176. However in other societies the oral and performative aspects of the texts do not necessarily negate the presence of images within the manuscripts, for example in the case of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century illustrated Arabic manuscripts of the *Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī, see George 2012.

46 Newbold 1839, vol. II, p. 368.

47 Wray 1908, p. 244.

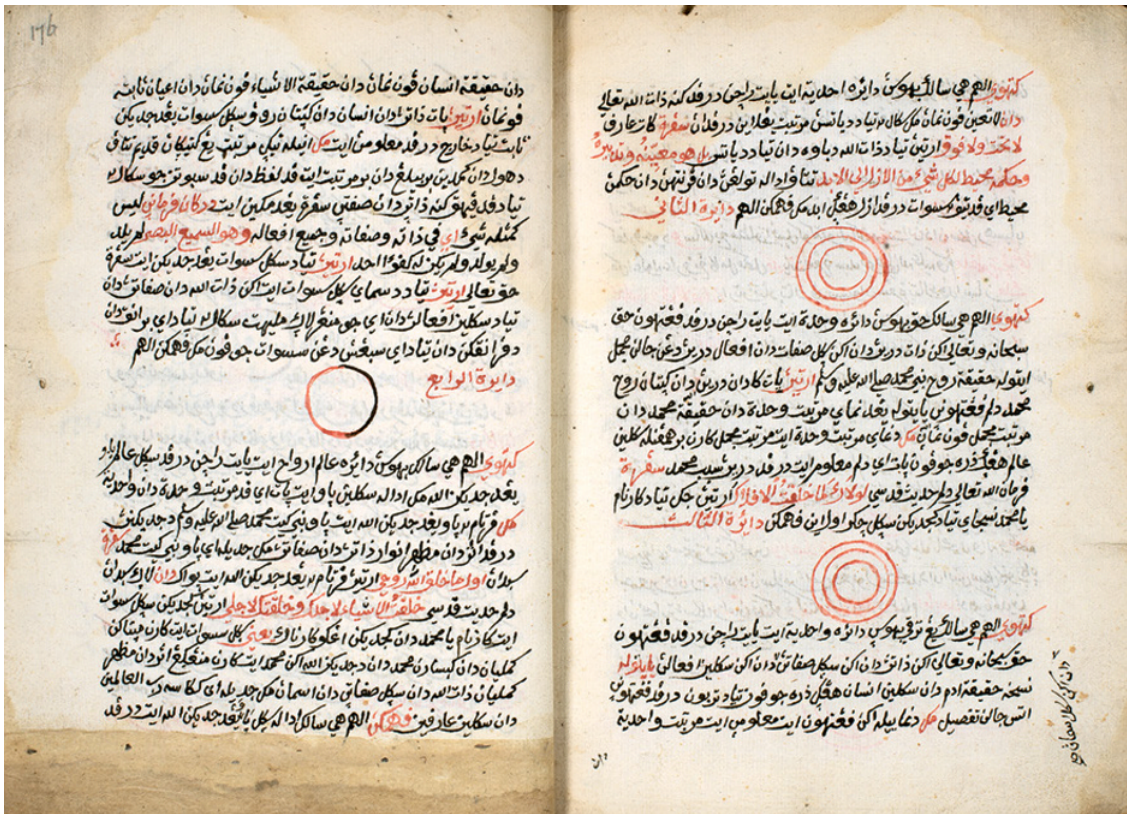


FIGURE 7 Diagrams of the Martabat Tujuh ('Seven Grades of Being'). Probably Sumatra, 1784. SOAS MS 12151, pp. 175-176. Courtesy of SOAS.

Malay as *kitab mawlid* (Figure 216).⁵⁰ Although devoid of depictions of living beings, they often contain illustrations of buildings and various objects. Across the Islamic world the manuscripts of the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt*, a collection of blessings on the Prophet Muhammad composed by the Moroccan mystic Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān al-Jazūlī (d. c. 1465), often feature images of the

tombs (*rawḍa*) of the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions together with his pulpit (*minbar*), or alternatively they might depict views of the cities of Mecca and Medina (Figures 213, 215).⁵¹ While the illustrations of the tombs are a graphical representation of the text (where they are described in the introduction), Jan Just Witkam argues that the image of the Prophet's pulpit in the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* functions to place the reader "where he can imagine himself to be standing in nothing less than 'the Gardens of Paradise'."⁵²

50 *Mawlid* texts are those that are "especially composed for and recited at the Prophet's nativity celebration"; see Knappert 1988 (quote taken from p. 210); Katz 2006. Popular *mawlid* texts in Southeast Asia include the anonymous *Mawlid sharaf al-anām* ('The Nativity of the Best of Mankind') and the *Mawlid al-Barzanjī* ('The Nativity by al-Barzanjī') by Ja'far ibn Ḥasan al-Barzanjī (1101-1177 AH / 1690-1764 AD). For *mawlid* texts in Indonesia see Kaptein 1993; for some Southeast Asian examples see Gallop 2005d, p. 16 and fig. 6, pls. 32-34, 36-37, 39; Bennett 2005, pp. 272-273; Porter 2012, pp. 56-57.

51 A discussion on the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* and its images in the Islamic world is given in Witkam 2002; Witkam 2007c; Witkam 2009; Porter 2012, p. 54. For a further discussion on the Southeast Asian tradition, see Farouk 2006.

52 Witkam 2009, p. 30.

Illustrative diagrams are also found in other Sufi mystical texts, most notably those on the doctrine of the *Martabat Tujuh* ('Seven Grades of Being'), which concerns "the descent of Being from absolute unity to the multiplicity of the phenomenal world".⁵³ In the manuscripts the Seven Grades are often represented as a series of circles (Figure 7).⁵⁴ A particularly striking example is a manuscript that once belonged to the Sultan of Aceh datable to c. 1840, and which also includes a number of other diagrams such as those of the *Sifat Dua Puluh* ('Twenty Divine Attributes of God').⁵⁵ The purpose of these diagrams is educational, in that they assist the student in understanding the doctrine, but in the case of the Acehese manuscript it has been argued that they were also used as meditative devices.⁵⁶ Additionally, such diagrams – which represent the different planes of Being – can also be seen as a form of cosmography.⁵⁷

Other illustrated Malay manuscripts encompass practical manuals, whereby the purpose of the images is primarily instructive. A number of them include schematic representations of the human body. One example comprises texts on elocution for the recitation of the Qur'an (*tajwid*), which are accompanied by stylised illustrations of the mouth and tongue labelled with explanations on how to properly pronounce the letters (Figure 8).⁵⁸ Meanwhile texts on erotology (*ilmu*

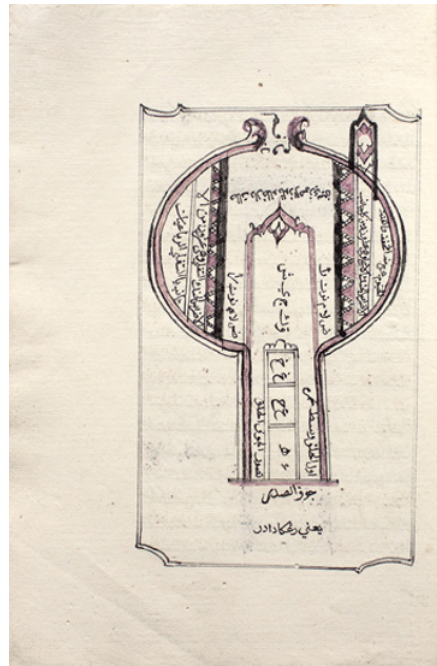


FIGURE 8 *Diagram of the mouth for the correct pronunciation of letters. Kitāb tajwid al-Qur'ān ('Book on the Correct Recitation of the Qur'an'), Riau, nineteenth century. BMKMR No. 48, fol. 9r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 and Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.*

berahi or *ilmu jimak*) contain representations of the vagina, whereby its various parts are given female names (such as Fatimah, Aisyah, etc.), each of which corresponds to a particular sexual position (Figure 9).⁵⁹ Certain medical texts are also accompanied by graphical representations, such as those on yaws (*puru*), where illustrations are given of the different types of marks the disease makes on the skin, accompanied by the necessary treatment (Figure 10).⁶⁰

53 Braginsky 2004, p. 213, with a description of the Seven Grades on pp. 643-644; also see Riddell 2001, pp. 113-114.

54 For the use of these diagrams in Java, see Christomy 2008, pp. 116-126.

55 Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 2222. For this manuscript see Janson *et al.* 1995 which includes a facsimile, also discussed in Riddell 2001, pp. 186-188.

56 Janson *et al.* 1995, pp. xxii.

57 For Sufi diagrams in a cosmological context, see Karamustafa 1992, pp. 83-88.

58 For example in BMKMR No. 48, fol. 9r (this manuscript has been digitised under the British Library Endangered Archives Programme under the number EAP153/13/4). The use of this diagram is long-standing within the Arabic illustrated manuscript tradition, appearing for instance in a 1332 copy of the influential compendium

on linguistic sciences by Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf ibn Abī Bakr al-Sakkākī (d. 1229) titled *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* ('The Key to the Sciences'), now in St John's College, Oxford, MS 122, fol. 4v; see Savage-Smith 2005, entry no. 23, pl. iv. For al-Sakkākī, see Heinrichs "al-Sakkākī". For modern Indonesian printed *tajwid* manuals, see Denny 1988.

59 Harun *et al.* 2006, p. 590.

60 Harun 2006a, p. 40.

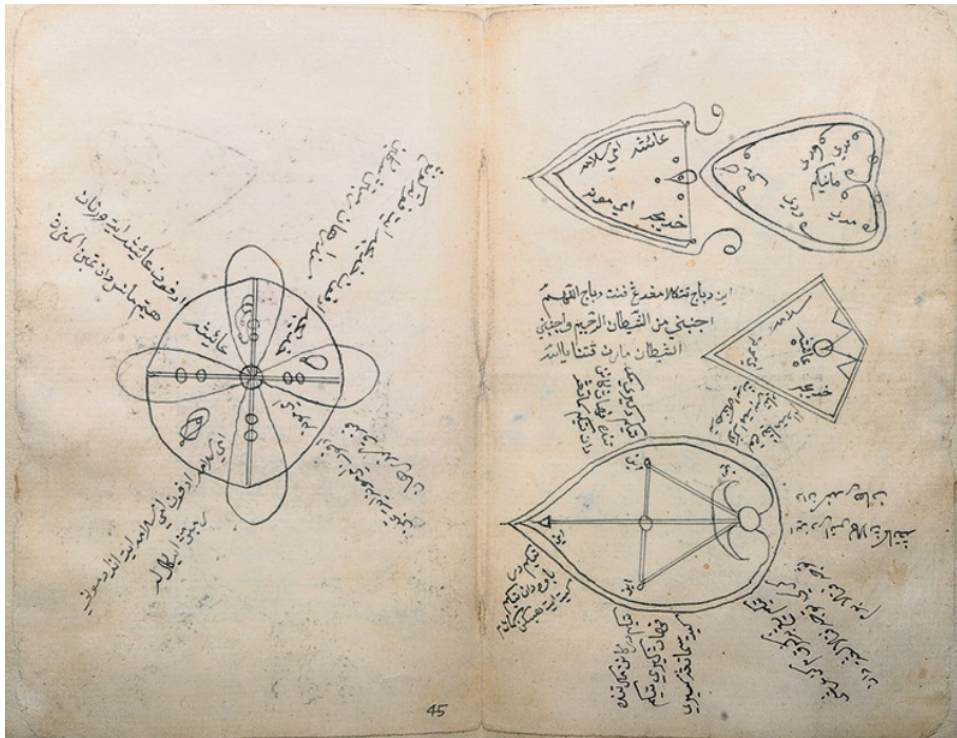


FIGURE 9 Schematic representations of the vagina. Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s-80s. PNM MS 1456 (cat. 36), fols. 44v-45r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 10 Diagrams of yaws (puru). Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late nineteenth – early twentieth century. UM MSS 253, fols. 9v-10r. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.

The illustrated magic and divination manuscripts certainly fall within this category of instructive manuals. Nevertheless they are of a much larger scope than those described above, and as mentioned before provide a wider dimension to the study of Malay painting. Since they are one of the few genres of Malay text to contain figural art, one way in which magic and divination manuscripts can help the field of art history is by opening up the study of Malay iconography. Many of the animals and spirits that are depicted within the manuscripts are also found in other media, enabling not only a study of the Malay iconography of these creatures but also the relationship between manuscript production and other forms of art. These issues are investigated within this book, for example an analysis of illustrations of the *nāga* (a kind of mythical serpent) reveals a shared iconography with depictions of the creature in other media such as woodwork and metalwork. Similarly, Chapter Six shows that relationships exist between manuscript illustrations and elements in Malay theatre such as shadow play puppets and dance costumes. Connections are also found between the decorations found in magic and divination manuscripts with those of other textual genres, for example divination tables are sometimes illuminated using the same styles as those used in Qurʾans, and the crown and tail of the *nāga* are often composed of motifs found in manuscript illumination. This demonstrates the creativity of the artists as well as showing how the books were not only used for practical purposes but also had an aesthetic value to their compilers and owners.

Additionally, it must be emphasised that there is a strong relationship between image and text, and thus an understanding of the latter is crucial in identifying and explaining the images.⁶¹ Therefore during the course of this research a lot of time was spent reading and translating the manuscripts, and throughout this book reference will often be made to the texts when discussing the art. A joint study of the images and texts not only enables us to

understand the context behind the production of the manuscripts, but also helps to shed light on broader issues in Malay culture such as the inter-relationship between religion and pre-Islamic traditions, regional factors, patronage, and links or relationships with other cultures. Furthermore the close interaction between image and text within magic and divination manuscripts means that it is often hard to separate the two. For instance many diagrams and talismanic designs contain texts themselves, and certain designs such as the calligraphic lion are difficult to categorise as they straddle a fine line between graphic and text. A similar ambiguity between image and text can also be said with regard to captions, which in illustrated Arabic manuscripts are considered as both part of the text and the image.⁶² Yet at the same time it must be noted that many of the images in these manuscripts are self-contained without any explanatory texts. In such instances they provide a way for us to study the role of oral tradition in the transmission of images, as well as how data may be represented visually without the need of explanatory texts.

A further aspect that can be investigated is the relationship between the images and texts contained within the manuscripts with actual magical and divinatory equipment and tools such as talismans and effigies. There have been a number of studies on such objects, mostly from an anthropological focus, by scholars such as Walter Skeat,⁶³ Shahrum Yub⁶⁴ and William Shaw,⁶⁵ as well as in the work by Annabel Gallop on talismanic designs on seals.⁶⁶ There is still much more research required on these objects, and the manuscripts can help in this respect by supplying further information and context on how they were used. Furthermore, the perishable nature of many Malay magical or divinatory equipment and tools means that the manuscripts can provide a description of

61 On the text and image discourse in illustrated Arabic manuscripts, see Contadini 2010.

62 Contadini 2012, pp. 100-101.

63 Skeat 1900.

64 Shahrum 1966.

65 Shaw 1971; Shaw 1973.

66 Gallop 2002b, vol. 1, chapter 111.7, pp. 216-242; Gallop 2010b.

their forms and designs, even if the actual physical objects are now lost. However such analyses must be treated with caution. In her work on early Islamic magic, Emilie Savage-Smith has noted that some items such as magic-medicinal bowls are rarely mentioned within the texts even though the evidence for the production and usage of such objects is well established, and conversely talismanic designs that are found in stone-books are often too impractical to be engraved onto gemstones.⁶⁷ The topic of the correspondences and disparities between manuscript and object is one that requires further extensive research, but it is an important issue that would help us to understand the discourse between texts and Malay material culture.

The study of the manuscripts could also provide us with an insight into Malay society as a whole. In investigating the manuscripts perhaps the most obvious question to ask is: what are the most common texts and images found in the preserved material? An answer to this can give us an understanding of the types of concerns that are held to be particularly important within Malay society. For instance many of the divinatory texts found within the manuscripts tend to relate to the determination of auspicious/inauspicious times and directions, which might be linked to a belief in the cyclical nature of time. Another aspect to be studied is where these images and texts came from. The rich Malay cultural heritage makes an interesting challenge to the untangling of the various sources of the texts and images, and as will be seen throughout this book these sources appear to be a mixture of local Malay, Southeast Asian, South Asian, Islamic and Chinese traditions. However the questions extend beyond just finding out when ideas and iconography travelled into the region, but more importantly how they have been transformed to fit into the Malay world-view. Related to this is the tension between orthodox Islam and pre-Islamic beliefs and practices, and the images contained in the magic and divination manuscripts can help to shed light on these issues. Indeed, the survival of pre-Islamic iconography

demonstrates how these earlier beliefs have been kept within an Islamic way of life, and some are even found in manuscripts produced and commissioned by the Islamic religious orthodoxy. Similarly, Islamic ideas have not only been imported but they have been put into new uses, such as in the use of the *budūh* magic square within the indigenous tradition of house construction. At the same time, local images and iconographies have been inserted into practices originating from the Islamic world, for instance in the addition of Malay shadow play puppet-style illustrations into the pictorial *fālnāma*, a method of divination that originated from the Persian or Ottoman worlds.

Yet in spite of their importance for the study of Malay art and culture, the complexity and significance of this vast array of imagery have not been adequately explored. As mentioned before, the lack of figural art in Malay manuscripts has led to a lack of scholarship on Malay painting. In the case of magic and divination manuscripts, there may also be further factors involved. Apart from a few exceptions the images are primarily a form of painting for practical use, and may have been considered as 'folk' art and therefore not worthy of attention. The images are also difficult to interpret without help from the manuscript owners themselves or other magicians, whose preference for secrecy often makes them inaccessible. Thus while previous studies on Malay magic and divination manuscripts are no doubt very useful and play a pivotal role in our understanding of Malay practices, they mainly have either an anthropological focus or are transliterations and translations of texts. Instead, the approach of this book is based on an art historical perspective. This includes concerns that relate to the artistic elements of a manuscript such as technique, iconography and style of the images. Therefore the illustrations, diagrams and talismanic designs in the manuscripts that are consulted for this present study must first be identified and their typologies established. At the same time, as noted earlier there is a strong connection between text and image, and thus another important initial step is to read and understand the contents of the manuscripts. This

67 Savage-Smith 1997d, p. 72; Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xv–xvi.

is because a study of the texts enables an understanding of what the images represent and how they would have been used, as well as providing an understanding towards the diffusion and interaction of ideas within Malay culture and beyond. Conversely, the study of texts also benefits from the study of the images, as it helps enormously in identifying different manuscripts that have the same text. As their compositions vary greatly in terms of content and layout, it is often very difficult to compare multiple manuscripts. Those that focus mainly on magic and medicine are particularly complicated as the paragraphs contained are usually very brief (only a few lines long), making specific spells difficult to locate within a mass jumble of texts. However, since symbols and diagrams are easily recognisable, they often provide a quick way of identifying similar passages across multiple manuscripts.

Another important issue that needs to be considered is that, since a lot of the magician's knowledge is oral, the contents of the manuscripts are often either obscure or incomplete. This makes it very challenging for the modern-day scholar to understand and interpret the material. Furthermore, since the manuscripts are held in institutional collections such as libraries and museums, they have been divorced from real life. As such, analysis on their meaning and usage is dependent upon anthropological research.⁶⁸ In order to understand the Malay magical and divinatory practices, during the course of this study interviews were conducted with four magic practitioners (all are male). Two come from a traditional Malay magic background: one is an 88-year old shaman (*tok peteri*) from Kelantan,⁶⁹ while the other is a royal magician (*pawang diraja*) from another Malay state.⁷⁰ The other two are practitioners from a more modern Islamic healing

tradition, both having been trained at the Darussyifa' institution (an organisation that practises Islamic healing). They are both fairly young, probably in their 30s or 40s. The first works for a leading corporation in Kuala Lumpur,⁷¹ while the other holds degrees from al-Azhar University in Cairo and Universiti Utara Malaysia and now works as a schoolteacher in Kelantan.⁷² They have all been very helpful in increasing my understanding of the Malay magical tradition and the work of those who deal with the supernatural world, and the two practitioners from Kelantan have also kindly allowed me to witness their healing rituals. In addition, some of the diagrams and drawings contained in the manuscripts were shown to the Darussyifa' practitioner in Kuala Lumpur, who provided an interesting insight into the attitudes held by modern Malay Islamic-based healers when he said that the use of images is forbidden.

Research on the manuscripts is also reliant on secondary anthropological field studies that can help to shed light on the usage of the material. Eyewitness accounts of Malay practices during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are especially useful as they are contemporaneous to the manuscripts. However, these must be used with reservation as the information is often unorganised and scattered, and any analysis by earlier scholars might be based on theories that are no longer accepted in academic circles. More recent anthropological studies are also problematic. Huge changes in Malay society since the mid-twentieth century due to Westernisation and the recent Islamic revival mean that current magic and divination practices are not always as they were even a hundred years ago. Nevertheless these studies are still extremely important, as further anthropological analyses help us to better understand the place of magic and divination in the Malay belief system. Even if society has changed in recent years, it is a reflection of the fluidity of Malay culture,

68 The use of anthropology to help elucidate written texts has been carried out for example on Javanese religion by Woodward 2011, p. 31.

69 Interviewed at his home in Kelantan on 6 July 2010.

70 Telephone interview on 22 July 2010.

71 Interviewed at his office in Kuala Lumpur on 23 February 2010.

72 Interviewed at his home in Kelantan on 19 July 2010.

which after all has absorbed ideas and influences from a great number of sources over the past two millennia.

As many of the Malay magic and divination practices are part of a wider tradition, comparative studies with those of other cultures can help us gain an understanding of the meaning and function of the texts and images contained in the manuscripts. Therefore an important aspect to this present research is to place the Malay material within a Southeast Asian context. In fact scholars of anthropology, art and cultural studies have noted that despite any outward differences in geographic dispersal, language and religion, Southeast Asian societies share a number of common cultural characteristics that set them apart from other parts of Asia.⁷³ As such, any study on a particular culture needs to be set within the context of a bigger regional whole. This, coupled with the long-running networks and contacts between the various parts of the region, means that existing studies on magic and divination from other parts of Southeast Asia are extremely valuable in shedding light on the contents of the Malay manuscripts. Furthermore, since there is a great scarcity of early surviving material, comparative studies also enable us to reconstruct the history and evolution of the Malay magic and divination tradition. For example, the Malay use of the pictorial *fālnāma* appears to be derived from Persian or Ottoman models, and therefore we may imply that they were introduced into the Malay corpus sometime after the sixteenth century when they were popular in other parts of the Islamic world. As such this

book makes extensive use of studies on magic and divination manuscripts and other ethnological material from various other cultures, both within Southeast Asia and beyond. Although there are often language barriers, thankfully there are English translations of some texts such as the publication on the pictorial *fālnāma* by Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağcı.⁷⁴ Apart from providing a means of identifying iconographies and intercultural transmissions, studies of other cultures are also helpful for the framing of more theoretical concerns. For example, a study on the form, function and meaning of Chinese technical images, *tu* (圖), edited by Francesca Bray, Vera Dorofeeva-Lichtmann and Georges Métaillé, provides a framework of issues and questions that can be applied to the study of Malay diagrams.⁷⁵

The lack of colophons is a major issue in the study of Malay manuscripts, and the absence of provenance and dates means that it is difficult to assign regional styles or schools to the illustrations. However, even when names are given in the colophons, biographical information can still be a problem. While details on the lives of European collectors and patrons are relatively accessible, the shortage of written official records prior to the twentieth century makes it difficult to investigate the background of the non-European individuals who were involved in the production and usage of the manuscripts. Nevertheless, there are government records held dating from the late nineteenth century onwards, such as those in the Arkib Negara Malaysia (National Archives of Malaysia) in Kuala Lumpur, which can be used to piece together the lives of some of the individuals associated with a particular manuscript. For example, from the archives of the Arkib Negara Malaysia some background information was obtained on Nik Ismail, a worker at the Kelantan Hospital whose father was the owner of a manuscript now in SOAS (MS 25030, Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 92).

73 For example, Penny Van Esterik sees “Southeast Asia as a single ethnological field of study subject to different historical and political pressures” which she uses as a background for a comparative study on the practice of herbal medicine in Thai and Javanese societies, see Van Esterik 1988, quote taken from p. 751. The shared traits include a similarity in methods of house construction, an equal status between genders and a common animistic indigenous belief system, Winzeler 2011, pp. 12-15. The similarities in house construction are also noted by Schefold 2003, p. 20.

74 Farhad & Bağcı 2009.

75 Bray *et al.* 2007.

When records are not available, another method employed was to speak to the descendants of the individuals concerned. For instance, in the study of manuscripts belonging to William Maxwell, contact was made with Raja Khairulzaman 'Engku Sulong' bin Raja Aziddin, the great grandson of Raja Haji Yahya bin Raja Daud who was the original owner and copyist of a number of manuscripts in the Maxwell collection in the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS Maxwell 15, Perak, 1882; cat. 84 and RAS Maxwell 53, Perak, 1879; cat. 85).⁷⁶ Similarly, for the investigation into the

manuscript commissioned for the *Raja Muda Penambang* of Kelantan, produced in Kelantan or Patani and datable to 1838-87 (now in the private collection of Dato' Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh; cat. 23), his descendants Tengku Yunus bin Tengku Ahmad and his son, Tengku Nizen were interviewed.⁷⁷ They have all been very helpful in providing background information on these individuals and their families, which helped tremendously in putting the manuscripts into context.

76 Pers. comm. 9 July 2010. I would like to thank Raja Adley Paris Ishkandar Shah bin Raja Baharudin for introducing him to me.

77 Pers. comm. 6 July 2010. I am grateful to Dato' Haji Salleh Mohd. Akib for facilitating this meeting. Thanks are also due to Abdul Hamid Omar for further information about the manuscript.

Malay Magic and Divination

The Malay Spirit World

Malay history, culture and art need to be placed against a background of the wider region of Southeast Asia.¹ A belief in the spirit world remains strong, and the environment is believed to be populated with numerous kinds of spirits (*hantu*). These include nature spirits such as the Earth Spirit (*Jemalang Tanah* or *Hantu Tanah*), as well as familiars that help magicians carry out their work such as the tiger spirit (*hantu belian*) that assists the shaman in a séance, and the *bajang* (a vampire that takes the form of a pole-cat) which is used for more nefarious purposes. There are also ghosts of those who died a ‘bad death’, such as the *langsuir* and *pontianak* (vampires of a woman who died during childbirth and her baby, respectively; Figure 11), fairies and elves like the *orang bunian*, creatures such as were-tigers, and many others.² Malay magic and divination manuscripts often contain talismanic drawings of some of the more malevolent spirits, and these are discussed in Chapters Five and Six. Additionally there is also the concept of the *semangat*, which is “an impersonal force vital to the well-being of men and things.”³ It is found in everything, i.e. not only in living beings such as humans and animals, but also in inanimate objects such as rocks, metals and even constructed structures such as houses. A lack of *semangat* leads to a person being vulnerable to attack by spirits, and as such medical treatment entails not only expelling the spirits but also restoring the *semangat*.⁴

Trading links between Southeast Asia and India were established from around the fourth century BC, and from the early first millennium AD Indian religions (Hinduism and Buddhism), languages and various other elements of culture began to be adopted by polities and kingdoms in Southeast Asia – the so-called ‘Indianisation’ process.⁵ Possibly also from India, Islam was formally adopted in the courts of northern Sumatra from the thirteenth century and from then onwards expanded throughout the region, with contacts being maintained with the Middle East through pilgrimage and scholarly activities.⁶ The introduction of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam introduced a further pantheon of supernatural beings into the Malay belief system. These include not only common spirits but also deities to be invoked for help and protection. Yet it must be emphasised that any outside influences coming into Southeast Asia have been redefined and given local meaning, a process known as ‘localisation’.⁷ Thus as Mohd. Taib Osman has argued, Hindu and Islamic supernatural beings have been added into the Malay system not as who they are, but “... for the power that they are believed to possess.”⁸ For instance the Prophet Khidr, who in the Islamic tradition is associated with the Fountain of Life,⁹ is invoked as the guardian spirit of water, and appears in spells used to capture crocodiles and for setting offerings (*limas*) on the river.¹⁰

1 For a general overview of Southeast Asian history, ethnography and ethnology, see Winzeler 2011; for art see Kerlogue 2004; Maxwell 2010.

2 For a general survey of Malay spirits and supernatural beings, see Skeat 1900, pp. 83-106, 112-120, 160-166, 320-331.

3 Mohd. Taib 1989, p. 79.

4 Endicott 1970, pp. 51-52; Laderman 1993, pp. 40-44.

5 For early contacts with India, see Bellina & Glover 2004.

6 For an overview of Islam in Southeast Asia, see Johns 2005.

7 Wolters 1999, p. 55.

8 Mohd. Taib 1989, p. 107.

9 Wensinck “al-Khādir (al-Khidr)”.

10 Skeat 1900, p. 99; Mohd. Taib 1989, pp. 107-108; the spells are found in Skeat 1900, pp. 297, 423.



FIGURE 11 *Models of the spirits penanggalan (left) and langsuir (right). After Skeat 1900, pl. 7.*

These supernatural beings, spirits and forces affect human lives in many ways, such as in economic activities (for instance in agriculture and hunting), health, the human life cycle (such as births, marriages), building or construction, entertainment (for example in shadow plays and animal combat) and personal matters such as love and quarrels.¹¹ They possess power and are thus sought, controlled and manipulated using magical rites and divinatory techniques.

Magic and Divination

Defining magic is not an easy task, the discussion of which still continues today.¹² One approach

favoured in recent scholarship on magic is to define and categorise it within a cultural and historical context, i.e. determining what the society in question regards as magic.¹³ Similarly divination is also being studied from the point of view of a particular society.¹⁴

In terms of Malay terminology, the English term ‘magic’ is usually translated into Malay as *hikmat*,¹⁵ which Richard Wilkinson has defined as: “wonder-working magic; cf. *ahli h.* (dealers in magic, sorcerers). It is magical procedures whether with or without appliances...”¹⁶ The word *hikmat* derives from the Arabic *ḥikma*, which although usually means ‘wisdom’ also encompasses the sciences, including that of medicine and magic.¹⁷ It is perhaps through this latter meaning that the word derived a magical connotation within the Malay context. Certainly in Malay literary works this term is employed to describe powers and action in a magical sense. A search through a corpus of traditional Malay texts using the Malay Concordance Project reveals that the word *hikmat* is used in the late fourteenth – early fifteenth century texts of the *Hikayat Raja Pasai* (‘The Tale of the Rajas of Pasai’) and the *Hikayat Amir Hamzah* (‘The Tale of Amīr Ḥamza’).¹⁸ In the latter, *hikmat* appears in a number of episodes, such as when a king uses his *hikmat* to set fire upon Amīr Ḥamza’s army: “*Maka Raja Arikhu pun dengan hikmatnya menjadikan api pada empat penahap.*” (‘King Arikhu with his *hikmat* conjured fire on all four corners.’).¹⁹

Sihir, another term that is used to describe magic, is derived from the Arabic *siḥr* which encompasses “black magic, theurgy and white or

11 Endicott 1970, pp. 23-27; Mohd. Taib 1989, p. 90.

12 For recent discussions on magic and its definition, see for instance Stark 2001; Middleton 2005; Hill 2005; Bailey 2006; Guiley 2006, s.v. “magic”.

13 Bailey 2006, p. 5. For how this approach is applied to medieval Europe, see Kieckhefer 2010, pp. 8-17; and for the problems of defining Malay magic, see Winzeler 1983, pp. 436-439.

14 For an overview of divination, see Zuesse 1987.

15 Winstedt [n.d.], s.v. “magic”.

16 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “hikmat”.

17 Goichon “Ḥikma”.

18 <http://mcp.anu.edu.au>. Search conducted 28 November 2011.

19 A. Samad 1987b, p. 683.

natural magic.”²⁰ However within Malay usage it mostly denotes sorcery – as Wilkinson translates: “*Ilmu seher*: the Black Art; cf. *ilmu s. yaani ilmu ghaib* (sorcery i.e. the art that works in secrecy).”²¹ The use of this word to describe sorcery is found amongst the Malay magic and divination manuscripts, which provide magical rituals or designs to be used as protection against *sihir*. For instance, the talismanic design found in SOAS MS 25030 (Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 92) ensures that its user “will be protected against the *sihir* of others” (“*tiada kena segala sihir orang*”; Figure 66).²² There is also a sense that *sihir* is used to denote magic performed by non-Muslims. Certainly in the *Surat al-Anbiya*, the Malay version of the *Qışaş al-anbiyā* (“Tales of the Prophets”), the word is used to describe the magic employed by enemies of the Abrahamic prophets.²³ Similarly, in the *Hikayat Raja Pasai* a Hindu ascetic or yogi (Malay: *jogi*) from India tries to perform magic (*sihir*) in the audience of the ruler, Sultan Ahmad, but fails due to the sacred aura (*keramat*) of his majesty, and as a result converts to Islam.²⁴

In this episode of the *Hikayat Raja Pasai* the Hindu ascetic is also imbued with the supernatural power known as *sakti*, a word derived from the Sanskrit *śakti*. According to Wilkinson in its original meaning the word refers to the Hindu concept of the divine female energy or power, but in Malay traditional literature (especially those of Hindu origin) it features “as a divine power to work miracles and plays a great part in the combats of the Gods and the Titans.”²⁵ Additionally it could also be obtained through asceticism (like the yogi mentioned above) and then transferred to objects or other people.²⁶ In a sense *sakti* could be seen as magical power that is possessed, in contrast to

hikmat and *sihir* which refer to the magical act itself, although sometimes the distinction between them is not so obvious. It is thus related to the Javanese concept of *kesekten* – magical power which can be possessed not only by human beings but also by certain objects such as sacred heirlooms (*pusaka*).²⁷ However this word has yet to be found in any of the magic and divination manuscripts consulted.

Furthermore, it is also important to note that the Malay definition of magic is not necessarily the same as in the West. For example, in his definition of *hikmat*, Wilkinson adds that it “does not cover religious charms worn protectively (*azimat, jimat*) or magical formulae for recitation (*mantĕra, jampi*).”²⁸ This separation is reflected in the anthropological study conducted by Thomas Fraser in Rusembilan, Patani during the 1950s-60s, which found that the use of amulets is not considered to be magic as they “operate in a slightly different chain of cause and effect, that is, in relationships directly between man and the spiritual world.”²⁹ Instead, magic is limited to rituals whereby “one human being produces an effect upon another through a spiritual or other preternatural agent.”³⁰ Such observations led Robert Winzeler to add that, “the idea that all such Malay concepts form an integrated system underlying a major segment of their culture, organized around a central notion corresponding to our notion of magic, has not been established and does not seem viable.”³¹

As for divination, the closest Malay word for it is *tilik*, although this could also mean to cast a spell.³² Another word is *tenung* which means to divine or foretell someone’s fortune.³³ It must be noted that in Malay practice, magic and divination are closely linked and are often employed together.

20 Fahd “Sihr”.

21 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “seher”.

22 SOAS MS 25030, fols. 9r-9v.

23 E.g. Hamdan 1990, p. 487.

24 Jones 1987, p. 36.

25 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “sakti”.

26 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “sakti”.

27 Woodward 2011, pp. 79-84, 177-178.

28 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “hikmat”.

29 T.M. Fraser 1966, p. 178.

30 T.M. Fraser 1966, p. 178.

31 Winzeler 1983, p. 438.

32 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “tilek”.

33 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “tĕnong”.

For example, in healing, the effectiveness of the cures (which often involve an element of magic) is dependent upon divinatory techniques to diagnose the illness correctly.

It is worth noting that in Southeast Asia, although magic can be used for good purposes such as in healing, agriculture, protection and divination (i.e. white magic), it can also be used to harm others (i.e. black magic or sorcery). However magicians are generally neutral and sorcery is only one of the areas practised, while the belief in witchcraft (whereby a person is inherently evil) is uncommon.³⁴ The texts in the Malay manuscripts contain instructions for both white and black magic, being predominantly concerned with not only healing and protection but also with love or erotic magic (“any form of magic intended to manipulate the sexual behaviour of others”³⁵). Nevertheless sometimes the line between white and black magic is not always clear. For instance, the use of effigies to bind one’s enemies can be construed as being defensive magic.³⁶

As we have seen, defining magic and divination is difficult and complex. Thus for the present purposes it is perhaps best to use Emilie Savage-Smith’s succinct definition of magic as an act that “seeks to alter the course of events, usually by calling upon a superhuman force (most often God or one of his intercessors)”, and of divination as “attempts to predict future events (or gain information about things unseen) but not necessarily to alter them.”³⁷ As such in this book magic covers things like spells, incantations, invocations, amulets, charms, talismans and sorcery, while divination includes numerology, astrology, auspicious/inauspicious times, omens, dream interpretation, physiognomy, sortilege and bibliomancy.

Magicians and Shamans

Although members of the general public may know some basic spells and omens, matters involving the supernatural world and concerning magic and divination are usually left in the hands of men and women who are professional magicians and shamans. As Wilkinson notes the magician is:

“... supposed to be in touch with the world of spirits and plays a part in exorcising illnesses, driving ill-luck out of a district by propitiating unseen powers, choosing lucky times for opening a new mine or planting a new crop, and performing the customary rites that took place on such occasions.”³⁸

While ordinary magicians typically work alone, using basic spells in conjunction with specific rituals and materials, shamans would conduct ceremonies whereby they would control, communicate and engage with spirits – usually in the state of a trance in a *séance* – with the promise of sacrifice and offerings (Figure 12).³⁹ Not all magicians have the expertise or qualification to be a shaman – thus “though the shaman is, among other things, a magician, not every magician can properly be termed as shaman.”⁴⁰ It must be noted that although they are referred to in the scholarly literature as shamans, Malay practitioners do not practise true shamanism (among which involves journeying outside the body into the spirit world), and as such they should properly be called spirit mediums.⁴¹ With regard to the magic and divination manuscripts however, it is very difficult to distinguish between those that were compiled and used by magicians and those by shamans. As such, for the purpose of simplicity this book will use the blanket term ‘magician’ to cover both types of practitioners.

34 Ellen 1993, pp. 6-8.

35 Dickie 2000, p. 565.

36 See Faraone 1991 for this practice in Ancient Greece.

37 Savage-Smith 2004, p. xiii.

38 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “pawang”.

39 For a discussion of the differences between the Malay magician and shaman, see Winstedt 1961, pp. 7-8; Davaraj 1980, p. 32; Endicott 1970, pp. 13-14, 23; Laderman 1993, pp. 51-53; Laderman 2004, p. 819.

40 Eliade 1989, p. 5.

41 Winzeler 2004, pp. 835-839; Winzeler 2011, pp. 169-170.



FIGURE 12 *The shamanistic ritual known as main peteri in Kelantan. After Sheppard 1972, fig. 15.1.*

In Malay society, both magicians and shamans are usually known as *bomoh* or *pawang*. The difference between the two terms appear to be geographic: according to Wilkinson, *pawang* is used to refer to medicine men in the southern states of the Malay peninsula while *bomoh* is used in the northern states. Other terms found in various regions include *belian*, *chen-yang*, *poyang*, *malim* and *dukun*.⁴² An alternative distinction between the terminologies is based upon the work involved and the skills of the practitioner. According to Hugh Clifford, the *bomoh* is a medicine man who deals with the sick and treats patients, while a *pawang* is a specialist in a certain subject, although he notes that both are “often used as though they were interchangeable.”⁴³ Additionally, fortunetellers are known as *petenung*, *tukang tenung* or

tukang tilik while astrologers are called *ahli nujum* or *ahli al-nujum*.⁴⁴

Nevertheless an important point to note is that the permeation of ritual and magic in many aspects of Malay culture means that practitioners of magic are not limited to professional magicians and shamans. Thus as will be seen in the following chapters, the use of magic by midwives, dance and theatre performers as well as Islamic officials and ‘ulama’ (religious scholars) means that placing the practitioners into neat, tight categories is a difficult task. More recently Douglas Farrer has highlighted the fact that the masters of *silat*, a form of Malay martial arts, are also magicians.⁴⁵ This notion is paralleled in South Sumatra where apart from the shaman (*dukun*), the warrior (*ulubalang*) is similarly accredited with magical and divinatory knowledge and powers.⁴⁶ Thus as Farrer observes, “A clear division between the warrior, medical, religious, and magical shaman is an academic construct; in reality the boundaries are fuzzy and porous.”⁴⁷ Therefore in this book the term ‘magician’ is often used in a broader sense, in order to acknowledge that the compilers and owners of the magic and divination manuscripts need not necessarily be *bomoh* or *pawang*, but might also include other members of society such as the religious milieu and literate laypersons.

It is also worth noting that the magicians who are consulted by Malay society may come from other ethnic groups. The aboriginal tribes in the interior of the Malay peninsula (known collectively as the Orang Asli) are held by the Malays to be powerful and knowledgeable magicians and healers.⁴⁸ In the northern and East Coast states of the Malay peninsula, Thai magicians and Buddhist monks (known in Malay as *tokca*) are commonly

42 See Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “bĕlian”, “bomoh”, “dukun”, “pawang”. Also see Amran 2009, pp. 20-25.

43 Quoted in Skeat 1900, p. 56, footnote 1.

44 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “nujum”, “tĕnong”, “tilek”.

45 Farrer 2009, p. 5.

46 Collins 1979, pp. 259-287.

47 Farrer 2009, p. 176.

48 Such views were already recorded by Erédia during the early seventeenth century, Mills 1997, pp. 31, 41; also see Newbold 1839, pt. 11, pp. 193-194; and Peletz 1988, p. 140, Peletz 1993a, p. 163.

consulted for sorcery, healing and exorcism by Malay Muslims.⁴⁹

Tools of the Magician

In carrying out their duties the magicians have a number of tools at their disposal. One of the major components of Malay magic and divination is the use of oral incantations and supplications which are variously known as *mantera*, *jampi*, *serapah*, *isim* and *doa*. Besides texts, there is a variety of material objects that are employed. One item used in magic rituals is a type of dagger known as the *keris* which is considered among many societies in maritime Southeast Asia to be the most esteemed weapon (Figure 154).⁵⁰ It is believed to be imbued with great power, and certain attributes such as the measurements of a *keris* and the damascene patterns on its blade (*pamor*) are believed to indicate its luck. The *keris* is also often used in healing or exorcism rites, whereby it is smoked over benzoin (*kemeryan*) and then used to cut limes, the juice of which is stirred with the weapon before being given to the patient to drink. Alternatively, it may be pointed at parts of the patient's body to rid it of illness.⁵¹ Another type of object used is the magic-medicinal bowl (*mangkuk penawar*) made of either ceramic or metal, that has been inscribed with Qur'anic verses and sometimes talismanic diagrams (Figure 259).⁵² Alternatively talismanic inscriptions and designs may be written or drawn onto a bowl in ink or other soluble substances. In either case these vessels are then filled with water or other liquids for the patient to drink. In addition to these objects, various tables and charts may be consulted in order to determine auspicious and inauspicious times.

Apart from these the magician also uses a number of perishable goods, usually supplied by the client. Typical items include water, candles, lime, eggs, betel leaves, palm-blossom (*mayang*), toasted rice (*bertih*), multicoloured threads and cloths, as well as many others.⁵³ *Tepung tawar*, which Walter Skeat translates as "neutralizing rice paste", is used to render poisons and evil spirits harmless.⁵⁴ In addition a healer might also make use of bezoar stones (*guliga*) obtained from animals such as monkeys or porcupines, which are grated, mixed with water and given to the patient to drink.⁵⁵ In communicating with the spirits, a magician will present a number of objects as offerings. These may be placed in a sacrificial tray of offerings (*ancak*), typically containing items such as food, cigarettes, betel leaves, coins and other objects (Figure 13). They are either placed where the spirits could feed on the offerings, cast away into the jungle or set adrift on a river.⁵⁶ Another important form of offering is the burning of benzoin in a censer (*perasapan* or *tepak bara*; Figure 14), the smell of which is said to be particularly favoured by spirits.⁵⁷

Effigies are another type of object that is used in Malay magical rituals. Models of humans and animals serve as substitutes or scapegoats for the spirits,⁵⁸ dough figures of humans are employed to recall the *semangat* of a patient,⁵⁹ while drawings of the spirits themselves are used as protection against them. However effigies may also be used for more evil purposes, either to hurt other people or employed in love magic.⁶⁰ Apart from these the magician may also prescribe to a client talismans,

49 Golomb 1985a, especially chapter 7.

50 For an overview of the *keris*, see Hill 1956.

51 Md. Ali 1996, pp. 165-166.

52 For the use of these bowls in the Islamic world, see Spoer 1935; Savage-Smith 1997d.

53 For a list of items usually used by the magician, see Md. Ali 1996, pp. 162-163.

54 Skeat 1900, pp. 77-81.

55 Skeat 1900, pp. 274-277.

56 For descriptions of various types of offerings, see Skeat 1900, pp. 260, 310-315, 414-424, 432-436; Md. Ali 1996, p. 166.

57 Skeat 1900, pp. 75-76; Md. Ali 1996, p. 163.

58 Skeat 1900, pp. 72, 432.

59 Skeat 1900, pp. 452-453.

60 Skeat 1900, pp. 569-574.

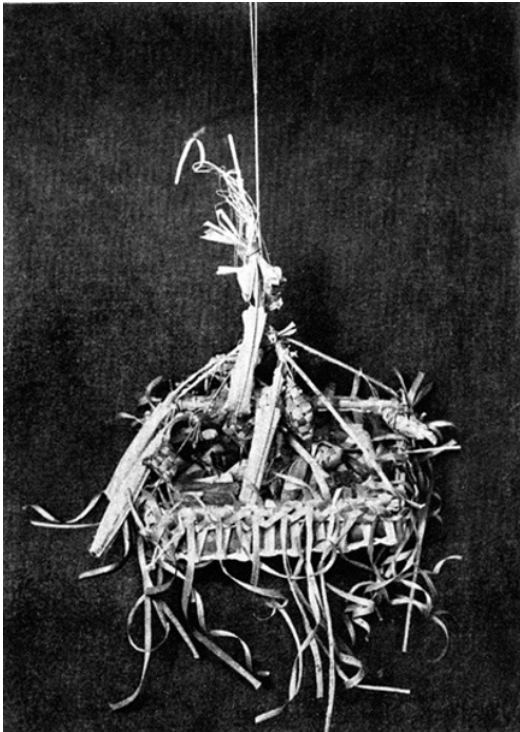


FIGURE 13 *The offering tray known as the ancak. After Skeat 1900, pl. 17.*

amulets and charms – these are small objects imbued with magical power that are used for various purposes such as protection, healing, inducing love and attracting customers.

In other cases a shamanistic ritual may be performed to exorcise malevolent spirits. There are many varieties of these rituals such as the *berhantu*, *berjin* and *main peteri* (Figure 12), and they usually involve music and dance.⁶¹ The performance aspect of the rituals correlates to the fact that shamans are also typically involved in the theatre such as shadow puppet plays (*wayang kulit*) and a form of opera known as *mak yong*.⁶²

61 For a summary of the typical Malay shamanistic ritual, see Endicott 1970, pp. 20-21, 154-167.

62 For music and dance in the shamanistic ritual of *main peteri* and the relationship between shamans and the theatre, see Laderman 1993, pp. 97-112, 323-340; also see Laderman 2004, p. 819.



FIGURE 14 *Incense burner (perasapan) used in Malay shadow puppet performances, earthenware, Patani or Kelantan, mid-twentieth century. London, Horniman Museum, 1980.83. Courtesy of the Horniman Museum London.*

The Malay magic and divination manuscripts contain many of the tools that magicians could use in carrying out their work, such as the incantations to be recited, instructions for casting spells, methods to make talismans and effigies, as well as tables, charts and other techniques for use in divination. These tools will be described and discussed in further detail in Chapter Five.

Islamic Attitudes towards the Practice of Magic

Up to around the late twentieth century traditional magicians enjoyed a prominent status and a position of power within Malay society. Writing in 1896 Charles Blagden notes that they formed a separate set of authority from the Islamic mosque officials such as the imam, *khatib* (Arabic: *khaṭīb*; preacher) and *bilal* (muezzin).⁶³ While the two groups can co-exist side-by-side relatively harmoniously even today, there has always been a tension between the practitioners of magic with the religious orthodoxy, as illustrated by field studies such as by Fraser in the village of Rusembilan, Patani, during

63 Blagden 1896, p. 5.

the 1950s-60s and by Carol Laderman in Terengganu during the 1970s-80s.⁶⁴ The view taken by the more religious-minded is that the practice of invoking spirits is against Islam. Belief in the spirit world is itself not an issue, as within Islam there is a belief in the existence of jinn, and thus there is a need to deal with these spirits and the magician has the necessary qualifications to do so.⁶⁵ Instead the objection stems from the fact that while spirits exist, relying on supernatural beings for help (such as during shamanistic rituals) is considered tantamount to associating other beings with God or *syirik* (Arabic: *shirk*; polytheism), a particularly grave sin as only God has the power to help. According to an imam interviewed by Fraser:

“Disease is sent by God, and only God can actually cure it. Medicine may be helpful in easing pain and relieving symptoms; but the invocation of spirits is against God’s Will.”⁶⁶

The magicians themselves however counter this view. Those who were interviewed by Laderman defend their practices by arguing how “their traffic with spirits in no way constituted worship”, and besides they were not doing anything harmful but instead were doing a good deed by healing.⁶⁷

The situation is indeed much more complex than this, and the line separating indigenous beliefs and practices with Islam is often blurred. Many of the spells, incantations and talismans used by traditional magicians contain Islamic elements such as Qur’anic verses and invocations to God.⁶⁸ For instance a fifteen-minute healing ritual that I had observed, conducted by an 88-year old shaman (*tok peteri*) from Kelantan on a patient

with back problems, involved the following:⁶⁹ sitting behind the patient with his hand on the man’s back, he recited a number of incantations, which began with the *ta’awwudh*⁷⁰ and the *basmala*,⁷¹ followed by Qur’anic verses comprising of the suras (chapters) *al-Fātiḥa* (1), *al-Ikhlāṣ* (112), *al-Falaq* (113) and *al-Nās* (114) as well as the Throne Verse (2:255). Much of what he recited was fast and hard to follow, but at frequent intervals he could clearly be heard to proclaim the *shahāda*.⁷²

Furthermore, there are many examples that show magicians and the religious orthodoxy existing and cooperating side by side. For example, Fraser reports that in Rusembilan, Patani both the magician and imam took part in an annual ceremony to propitiate the guardian spirit of the village.⁷³ In a royal wedding held in Kuala Lumpur in 1962, while royal magicians from Kelantan were expelling malevolent spirits from the proceedings, a group of Islamic leaders conducted religious prayers for the same purpose.⁷⁴

At the same time, it must be noted that many magicians are in fact devout Muslims, and there are also cases whereby members of the Islamic

64 Fraser 1960, pp. 189-191; Laderman 1993, pp. 16-20. For the attitudes held among modern-day Islamic societies towards magical practices, see Kruk 2005.

65 Fraser 1960, p. 189.

66 Fraser 1960, p. 189.

67 Laderman 1993, p. 19.

68 Peletz 1988, p. 135.

69 This ritual was conducted at his home in Kelantan on 6 July 2010.

70 Islamic formula recited before performing an action: “I seek refuge in God from Satan, the accursed one.”

71 Islamic formula recited before performing an action: “In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.”

72 Islamic formula on the profession of faith: “There is no god but God, Muḥammad is the Messenger of God.” In his incantations however the shaman only recites the first portion i.e. “There is no god but God.”

73 Fraser 1960, pp. 189-191; T. Fraser 1966b, pp. 63-65.

74 This wedding was that of the Sharifah Salwa, daughter of the Raja of Perlis, Tuanku Syed Harun Putra (who was then the *Yang Di-Pertuan Agong*) to a prince of Johor, Tengku Suleiman at the National Palace (Istana Negara) in Kuala Lumpur. For the magicians’ role in the ceremony, see Dahari 1962a; Dahari 1962b; Sprinkling 1962. Also see Davaraj 1980, pp. 24-25. The Kelantanese involvement is because the bride’s mother is from that state.

milieu themselves engage in magical practices and 'non-Islamic' rituals. Skeat gives an example of a mosque official named Bilal Umat who conducted a ceremony of giving offerings to the spirits of fishing stakes in Selangor in 1897.⁷⁵ Such fluidity of roles continued into the mid and late twentieth century. For instance Fraser mentions how in Rusembilan, Patani there was a *haji* who was not only a religious teacher but also worked as a magician to deal with spirits.⁷⁶ Laderman similarly reports of magicians who were muezzins and Qur'an instructors.⁷⁷ Another group known to practise magic are religious scholars ('ulama') of schools known as the *pondok*, and indeed a number of magic and divination manuscripts show connections to these learning institutions.

The continuation of pre-Islamic beliefs and practices within a Muslim Malay society has led scholars to investigate the issue of how these elements are reconciled with Islamic precepts and teachings. Mohd. Taib Osman observes that there were two predominant views among Western colonial scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁷⁸ One is that each successive religion was perceived to be superior to the previous one – Skeat for example argues that with the adoption of Hindu deities, indigenous spirits were thus relegated to a lower status.⁷⁹ The second and more prominent view is that the core indigenous animistic beliefs still remained strong, and the successive world religions were only superficial additions on top of that. This implies that the Malays were not 'true' Muslims and that Islam was merely a 'thin veneer'.⁸⁰ Later scholars

have rejected such views for several reasons. To begin with a lot of the observations on the nature of Islam in Southeast Asia by British and Dutch colonial scholars need to be put in the context of their background and the environment of that period. Many of these earlier scholars understood the world religions only from a scripturalist perspective, and thus popular practices were judged to be corrupt. Furthermore, the intellectual movement and Orientalist views of the time meant that earlier periods of Southeast Asian histories were deemed to be the 'golden age,' in contrast to contemporary times which was seen as decadent. This also entailed a political agenda as it meant that the colonial powers thus had a duty to intervene in order to improve the conditions of the local population. The influence of antiquarianism (the study of antiquities) meant that connections were being sought with classical Indian civilisations via the Hindu-Buddhist period of Malay (and Javanese) history through items such as archaeological remains, literature and surviving customs, while the folklore movement and early anthropological studies asserted the animistic Malayo-Polynesian heritage of the Malays.⁸¹ Additionally, there was also a negative perception of Islam which was seen as threatening to colonial rule. As such, although the local populations saw themselves as Muslims, the Islamic heritage of Southeast Asian societies such as those of the Malays and Javanese was downplayed or ignored.⁸²

Scholars have also now realised that the notion of a clean, neat division between the two rival categories of 'indigenous customs' and 'Islam' is too

75 Skeat 1900, pp. 310-316.

76 Fraser 1960, p. 190.

77 Laderman 1993, p. 18. Golomb reports a similar finding, see Golomb 1985a, pp. 17, 77, 102; also see Peletz 1993a, pp. 159-160.

78 Mohd. Taib 1989, pp. 76-78.

79 Skeat 1900, p. 85.

80 The expression 'thin veneer' is used for example by Graham 1908, p. 32 and Winstedt 1961, p. 39. There was a similar perception held of other Southeast Asian Muslim

societies such as the Javanese. For a discussion on this issue see Roff 1985, pp. 7-8; Mohd. Taib 1989, pp. 76-78; Hefner 1997, pp. 11-13; Woodward 2011, pp. 44-57.

81 See discussion in Carroll 2011.

82 Hefner 1997, pp. 11-12; M. Woodward 2005; Woodward 2011, pp. 44-57; Carroll 2011.

simplistic.⁸³ One issue that has to be taken into consideration is that Muslims societies in Southeast Asia do not comprise a single, homogenous block that has not changed over time. As William Roff observes, the relationship between ‘mystical’ beliefs and practices with orthodox Islam is closely connected to the issue of how Islam was adopted and understood by Southeast Asian societies. This is difficult as it involves understanding the spread of a complex religious system (which has many meanings) across a broad region taking place over several centuries “in a variety of contrasting social as well as cultural contexts.”⁸⁴ As such, in the resulting scholarly discussions there have often been “conflations of both time and place”, where what is true in one area at a particular time is assumed to be also true in other places at other times.⁸⁵ Such concerns have also been noted in regard to Malay culture specifically. Winzeler for example has argued that the interpretive works by Wilkinson and Richard Winstedt are somewhat flawed as they tended to lump all Malays under one umbrella, disregarding any regional variations and idiosyncrasies, with a lack of the context within Malay culture.⁸⁶ Thus in the examples given above, the events described by Skeat in Selangor during the late nineteenth century might involve a different set of circumstances and meaning to those described by Fraser in Patani during the 1950s-60s, and would certainly be even more dissimilar to those found in Kuala Lumpur during the present day. It has also been suggested that localised forms of such practices play a large part in forming regional cultural identities. Magical rituals, theatre and other forms of traditional practices fall under the rubric of Malay customs (*adat*), and Michael Peletz argues that since these typically vary between regions, they help Malays of a particular locale differentiate themselves from

those in other areas, as well as from outside groups such as the Javanese.⁸⁷

Furthermore, there are different attitudes within Malay society with regard to magic and animistic beliefs and practices – some are tolerant while others oppose them on religious grounds. For example, based on research conducted in Thailand in 1978, Louis Golomb reports that some Muslim Malay practitioners viewed all magical power as deriving from God (including those employed by non-Muslims), while another group believed that only Muslims have access to God’s power and that the magic used by non-Muslims derive from Satan, and yet at the same time another group of practitioners sought help directly from Buddhist-Brahmanistic entities “without perceiving them as a manifestation of Allah’s power.”⁸⁸ Additionally, although indigenous traditions continue to play a large part in Malay society, it must be remembered that Islam (as well as Buddhism and Hinduism) also played a prominent role in forming Malay culture.⁸⁹ Much of Malay medical theory is derived from the Islamic tradition, and healing often involves invocations to God and the recitation of Qur’anic verses.⁹⁰ Indeed many of the incantations, talismans and divinatory techniques found in the Malay manuscripts involve the use of the Qur’an.⁹¹ Furthermore, the definition of what is

83 For a summary of the literature on this, see Peletz 1997, p. 255.

84 Roff 1985, p. 16.

85 Roff 1985, pp. 16-17.

86 Winzeler 1983, p. 443-445.

87 Peletz 1997, p. 258.

88 Golomb 1985a, p. 105. Norshahril Saat has observed that even among ‘ulama’ the notion of what is Islamic and what is un-Islamic within Malay culture differs, see Norshahril 2012. As Woodward 2011, p. 136 notes of Java: “it is necessary to acknowledge that Javanese Muslims have multiple voices.”

89 Cf. Woodward 2011, p. 56 who notes this issue with regard to Javanese culture.

90 Malay medical theory is based on the humoralism of classical antiquity, most likely transmitted via the Islamic tradition, although with modifications, see Laderman 1993, pp. 15-39; cf. Woodward 2011, p. 70 who observes that Javanese medicine is similarly indebted to the Islamic tradition.

91 For the use of the Qur’an in magic and divination within the Islamic world, see O’Connor 2009.

'Islamic' needs to be broadened, and many of the elements in Southeast Asian life that were previously identified as being un-Islamic actually have precedent within the Muslim tradition (including that of Sufism).⁹² Even local rituals that began as pre-Islamic practices have lost their original meaning and been Islamicised. For instance in the *Puja Pantai* ritual for propitiating the sea spirits (now no longer performed) God was still held as the supreme deity, and although Hindu gods such as Batara Guru (Śiva) appear in shamanistic rituals and shadow puppet plays, they are no longer worshipped as deities.⁹³

Therefore perhaps a more important concern is how pre-Islamic and Islamic influences interacted within Malay society. Mohd. Taib argues that the co-existence of Islamic and non-Islamic elements was perhaps because the Malay 'world-view' was not affected by the arrival of Islam.⁹⁴ For example, since Islamic ideas included a belief in supernatural entities it did not alter the Malay world-view with regard to illnesses and cures. On the other hand, modern medicine which has a different world-view on the causes of diseases and their treatment, can and has generated a great deal of conflict.⁹⁵ He further suggests that Malay animistic beliefs could exist simultaneously with orthodox Islam as each could be thought of as a 'cult institution', whereby each type of practitioner – magician and religious official – attempts to deal with matters in their own way.⁹⁶

Golomb on the other hand has argued that the survival of indigenous animistic beliefs is because unlike Islam and Buddhism, these beliefs are difficult to define, inconsistent and not uniform. Apart from a belief that spirits exist, they could be interpreted in any way as "a nebulous, verbal reality into which individual practitioners and clients project their personal imaginations, frustrations and fears", and as such could withstand objections by religious authorities.⁹⁷

Nevertheless there have been long-standing efforts by various groups in Southeast Asia to persuade their fellow Muslims to stamp out traditions that are based on the pre-Islamic past and return to a more 'pure' form of Islam. An eighteenth-century treatise entitled *Tuhfat al-rāghibīn* ('Gift to the Desiring'), attributed to the Palembang theologian Abdul Samad al-Palimbani,⁹⁸ denounces the pre-Islamic practices of giving offerings (*menyanggar* and *berbuang pesilih*) as being wasteful and idolatrous.⁹⁹ Similar efforts were continued during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by reformist movements composed of a network of scholars ('ulama')

92 Hefner 1997, p. 16; Peletz 1997, pp. 255-256. Woodward 2011, pp. 113-136 has shown that the Javanese ritual meal known as *slametan*, which was previously thought to be an animistic rite, is actually rooted within the Islamic tradition.

93 Peletz 1997, p. 268, note 23; Norshahril 2012, p. 144.

94 Mohd. Taib 1972, p. 220, footnote 4 defines 'world-view' as "the system of ideas which members of a culture hold about things around them. In other words, it is the way things are pictured or conceived by them as 'reality'."

95 Mohd. Taib 1972, pp. 233-234.

96 The idea of the cult institution is based upon the theories of Anthony Wallace, who postulated that religion

could be classified into four categories (cult institutions) that vary in complexity. According to Mohd. Taib, the Malay belief system could be divided into these four categories: thus for example when a layperson uses a talisman, this could be considered as being an 'individualistic cult institution'. The work of the magician in contacting spirits to cure a sick patient can be categorised as a 'shamanic cult institution'. However when the magician leads agricultural rites for the whole community it could be considered a 'communal cult institution'. Official Islam and its associated structure such as the mosque and the imam can be classified as being an 'ecclesiastical cult institution', see Mohd. Taib 1972, p. 220; Mohd. Taib 1989, pp. ix-xxiii, 1-8, 155-160.

97 Golomb 1985a, pp. 108-109.

98 This attribution has been suggested by Petrus Voorhoeve and G.W.J. Drewes (see Drewes 1976, pp. 273-274); however Noorhaidi Hasan has argued that the author was actually Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, see Braginsky 2004, p. 750, note 58.

99 Drewes 1976, pp. 281-285.

educated in the Middle East and who drew upon ideas circulating in the rest of the Muslim world.¹⁰⁰ Part of their objection to these beliefs and practices was because they were archaic and had to be abandoned if Muslims were to modernise.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless despite the various criticisms by the reformist movements, practices and rituals with roots in indigenous animistic traditions were still more or less tolerated up to the late twentieth century when there was further pressure from religious quarters to have them eradicated. From the late 1960s to the early 1970s onwards there has been an Islamic revivalism in Malaysia, spurred by the *dakwah* (proselytising) movement by Malay university students which called for the education and propagation of Islam. It came about as a result of various related factors, including a response to domestic and international political events (most notably the 1969 Malaysian racial riots and the 1979 Iranian Revolution), the increasing exposure and connection of the students to the rest of the Islamic world, “a tightening of ethnic boundaries” leading to Islam playing a prominent role in the construction of a Malay identity, and a return to a more spiritual mode of living as a result of conflict with increasing urbanisation and Westernisation; from the 1980s the surge in promoting Islamic values was further precipitated by a pro-Islamic government which implemented numerous Islamic policies and programmes partly “to ‘out-Islamicize’ the opposition”, and partly to foster relationships with the oil-rich Middle Eastern countries.¹⁰² As a result there were more serious efforts to curb elements in Malay culture which were deemed to be un-Islamic, including the propitiation of spirits

and other magical rites.¹⁰³ Laderman reports that by the late 1980s, shamanistic rituals were virtually obsolete in the East Coast of the Malay peninsula.¹⁰⁴ More recently the Malaysian Ministry of Home Affairs (Kementrian Dalam Negeri) have banned two famous Malay books on magic and divination – the *Tajul Muluk* (‘The Royal Crown’) and the *Kitab Bintang Dua Belas* (‘Book on the Twelve Stars’).¹⁰⁵ In 2006 a book written by a magician was among eighteen that were banned by the Malaysian Internal Security Ministry as being “deemed to be able to disrupt peace and harmony.”¹⁰⁶

Modern development, widespread education and advances in science and medicine have also meant that nowadays other authorities rather than magicians are consulted in times of trouble. Yet a belief in the spirit world continues in the twenty-first century, and the services of the magician are still sought after.¹⁰⁷ In Malaysia the magicians are still tolerated by the government and religious orthodoxy, as long as they do not do anything illegal and avoid the sin of polytheism. The nature of the work however has somewhat

100 For an overview of these reformist movements, see Johns 2005, pp. 4665-4668.

101 Peletz 1993b, pp. 74-76.

102 The above is a simplistic description of the development – for further details see Hussin 1993, pp. 17-41; Shamsul 1997; Peletz 1997, pp. 233-236 (quotes from pp. 234, 236); Norshahril 2012, pp. 139-141.

103 Peletz 1997, pp. 256-259.

104 Laderman 1993, p. 17.

105 Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia [n.d.], available online at <http://www.islam.gov.my/ppi/BhnHaram/bm/B.pdf>, where the *Kitab Bintang Dua Belas* is no. 15 on the list; and <http://www.islam.gov.my/ppi/BhnHaram/bm/T.pdf>, where the *Tajul Muluk* is no. 26 on the list; initially accessed on 31 May 2010, although on my visit to the website on 29 January 2015 these links appear to have been taken down. These two books are discussed in Chapter Seven.

106 Bernama.com 2006, <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v3/printable.php?id=203457>, last accessed 29 January 2015. The book is by Awang Mohd. Yahya, titled *Petua dan Doa – Pendinding, Penawar dan Penyembuh Penyakit* (‘Traditional Precepts and *Du‘ā‘* – Protection, Antidotes and Cures’), published by Usnie Publisher.

107 However according to Woodward 2011 this situation exists in Java because modern medicine and treatment are unaffordable to many Javanese, pp. 105-107.

changed from that of their predecessors a century ago. While public spirit propitiation rituals are no longer carried out on a large scale, the focus now instead is more on helping individuals, usually when modern science and official authorities fail to deliver results. This involves work such as treatment for poisoning and sorcery, or in helping with quests for power, love or revenge.¹⁰⁸ Malay magicians of the present day also differ from their predecessors in that they are more commercialised and, in tandem with developments in scientific progress, are using modern technology such as the internet and mobile phones in their work.¹⁰⁹

108 Mohd. Taib 1989, p. xxiii; Peletz 1988.

109 For examples of websites, see: <http://www.angelfire.com/pop2/bomohartis/bomohartis.html>, last accessed 16 January 2015; <http://www.alamghaib.com>, last accessed 1 September 2012. A similar development is

The above is a brief overview of Malay beliefs and practices regarding the supernatural world, and a detailed discussion of the issues connected with them is beyond the scope of this book. Nevertheless they serve to illustrate a number of important points. These beliefs and practices need to be looked at from the background of earlier indigenous traditions. Yet at the same time the impact of other religions and cultures, especially that of Islam, cannot be underestimated. These issues have a direct bearing on the production and usage of the Malay magic and divination manuscripts, including the text and the art contained within them, as will be investigated throughout this book.

also observed in Java, see Woodward 2011, pp. 105-107. Kruk 2005, p. 65 mentions the use of telephones to perform exorcisms by a healer (who is of Moroccan origin) in the Netherlands.

PART 2

The Manuscripts



Early Manuscripts and European Collecting Activities

Manuscripts during the Srivijaya Period (Seventh to Thirteenth Centuries)

It is believed that there once existed books containing much medical and esoteric knowledge but which have now been lost. For instance, in Negeri Sembilan the archangel Jibrā'il is believed to have given such a book to the Prophet Muḥammad in which “could be found effective prescriptions for all ailments and through the medium of certain formulae, miracles could be performed”, but before Muḥammad could give it to the first magician (named Muhammad Saleh), Jibrā'il had it destroyed.¹ In Kelantan and Selangor, an Arab sage named Akmal Hakim (most likely referring to Luqmān al-Ḥakīm) is also believed to have possessed such books which were again destroyed by the actions of Jibrā'il, and it is only from the surviving fragments that one learns how to become a magician.² Unfortunately like these examples, due to the hot and humid climate, insects, fire and neglect, early Malay magic and divination manuscripts have also been lost. The majority of the surviving manuscripts date from the eighteenth century onwards, but nevertheless there are indications of the existence of such books from a much earlier period.

We find concrete evidence for the early practice of magic and astrology within Malay culture in a series of stone inscriptions dating to the seventh century belonging to Srivijaya, a major Malay Buddhist kingdom centred in Palembang, Sumatra, which dominated the region between the seventh and thirteenth centuries. The most important is an imprecation stone with seven *nāga* heads used by Srivijayan subjects to take an

oath of allegiance to their ruler, written in the Old Malay language using an Indic Southern Brāhmī script, commissioned by a king called Śrī Jayanāśa (or Jayanāga) (Figure 15).³ This inscription is important not only for our understanding of the political system of Srivijaya, but also because it describes the potential use of magic by traitors and rebels to commit treason, demonstrating that magical practices are a long-standing tradition within Malay society. It shows how magic was not only used for good, but that it might be employed for more subversive purposes. J.G. de Casparis



FIGURE 15 *Stone inscription, Sabokingking, Palembang, Sumatra, seventh century. Jakarta, Museum Nasional, D 155. After Miksic 2007, p. 99.*

1 Abdullah 1927, pp. 310–311.

2 Gimlette 1923, pp. 17–18; Davaraj 1980, pp. 31–32.

3 Found in Sabokingking, Palembang. Jakarta, Museum Nasional; D 155; Miksic 2007, p. 99; text published in Casparis 1956, pp. 32–46.



FIGURE 16 *Burmese manual for making amulets in the palm-leaf format. Myanmar, nineteenth century. SOAS PL MS 41891, fols. 5v-6r. Courtesy of SOAS.*

notes that some of the magical rites described indicate an influence of Esoteric or Tantric Buddhism.⁴ In addition to this stone, there are two other seventh- and eighth-century Srivijayan inscriptions in which we find references to astrology (see Chapter Five).

Scholars are now fairly certain that apart from inscriptions on stone, there were also manuscript books in existence during this period despite the lack of physical evidence. One of the main arguments for this is that Srivijaya was a world-renowned centre for Buddhist learning with close links to the Nalanda *mahāvihāra* ('great monastery') in Eastern India – such a place would surely have produced and used books.⁵ It is most likely that books in Srivijaya (including magic and divination manuscripts) were produced in the palm-leaf format as found in many parts of Southeast Asia (Figure 16) and in a form similar to the folding-books of Sumatra, such as those of the Batak (Figure 17) and South Sumatrans (Figure 18).⁶ Despite being separated geographically, the many similarities between the Batak and South Sumatran writing traditions suggest a common shared heritage between the two regions, possibly from Malay Srivijaya.⁷ These manuscripts are often

illustrated, and thus the images contained perhaps provide a window into Malay manuscript art of the pre-Islamic Srivijayan period.

Magic and Divination Manuscripts from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

Physical evidence of magic and divination manuscripts however only appears centuries later, but nevertheless they indicate the existence of a larger, well-developed literary tradition. The earliest extant Malay manuscript – dated by Uli Kozok to the fourteenth century through radiocarbon analysis as well as historical data – was found in the village of Tanjung Tanah in the Kerinci province, Sumatra, where it is still kept. It measures 10 × 15 cm and is written on *dluwang* paper⁸ in the form of a codex with 17 folios (Figure 19).⁹ The manuscript is considered to be a sacred heirloom, wrapped up in textiles and

existence of an earlier Indic-based Sumatran proto-script, see Durie 1996. To this, Teygeler 1993, p. 600, footnote 15 remarks that “a common book culture together with this early script would be worth investigating.”

4 Casparis 1956, pp. 29–30; also see Woodward 2004, p. 335.

5 For this and other arguments supporting the existence of books in Srivijaya, see Braginsky 2004, pp. 47–49.

6 Proudfoot & Hooker 1996, p. 68; Braginsky 2004, p. 48.

7 Apart from the writing materials, the Batak and South Sumatran scripts are also similar, which indicates the

8 *Dluwang*, mainly produced and used in Java, is made using the bark of the paper mulberry tree (*Broussonetia papyrifera*); technically it is not paper but bark cloth. For its production see Edi & McGlynn 1996; also Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, pp. 35–36.

9 The manuscript is discussed in Kozok 2004; Kozok 2007. Both publications include the transliteration and images of the manuscript.



FIGURE 17 *Simalungun-Toba Batak pustaha in the folding-book format, northern Sumatra, eighteenth century. SOAS MS 41836, side A, first opening. Courtesy of SOAS.*



FIGURE 18 *Divination manuscript with text in the Surat Ulu and Jawi scripts in the folding-book format, South Sumatra, nineteenth century. Dresden, Museum für Volkenkunde, Nr. 34225, side B, pp. 5–6. After Voorhoeve 1971, tafel III.*

kept in an earthenware pot. The main text – written in what Kozok calls the Late Pallavo-Nusantara script – consists of a Kerinci code of law made by the ruler of Dharmasraya, a kingdom in Central Sumatra. What is of interest is that at the end of the manuscript are two pages of Malay text written in the Surat Ulu script ('script of the upstream region'). This passage – which is unrelated to the main text – appears to be a religious/magical formula which is to be recited seven times a day and seven times a night, after which the reciter will receive blessings from God. The mention of God (Allāh) means that this passage dates later than the main text (which appears to date from a period before the advent of Islam in Central Sumatra), and Kozok believes that it is datable to before the sixteenth century

based on palaeographic grounds.¹⁰ Nevertheless it is unillustrated.

The Tanjung Tanah manuscript is a rare example of an early Southeast Asian manuscript that is still kept within a local environment. Nevertheless manuscripts dating earlier than the eighteenth century are more typically found preserved in European collections. It is notable however that despite being the first European power to arrive in Southeast Asia, the Portuguese accounts are silent with regard to the books and manuscripts that might have been used by the local magicians, and

¹⁰ For a discussion of this text, see Kozok 2004, pp. 42–43 with a transliteration on p. 53 and in Kozok 2007, p. 79. I would like to thank Uli Kozok for his help with this manuscript.

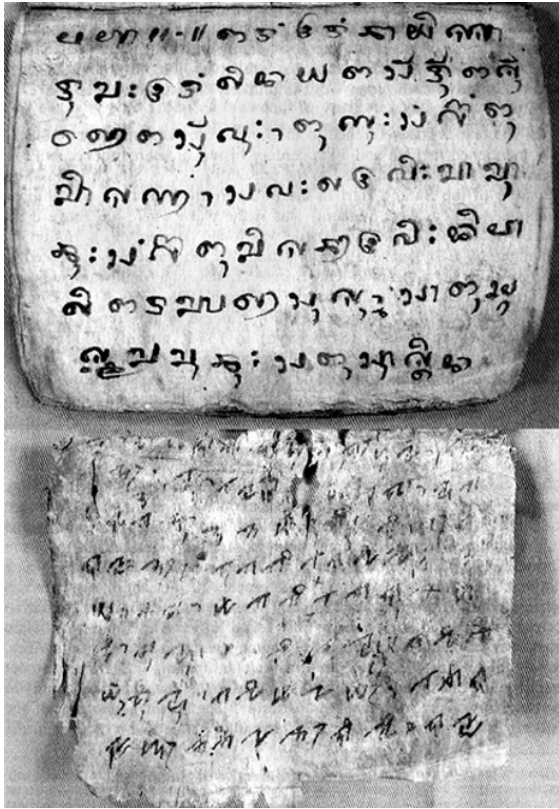


FIGURE 19 *The Tanjung Tanah manuscript, Sumatra, fourteenth century. The code of law in Late Pallavo-Nusantara script is at the top, and the later prayer/magical formula in Surat Ulu script is at the bottom. After Kozok 2004, p. 41.*

so far Malay manuscripts on these topics have yet to be identified from the catalogues of Portuguese archives. In fact apart from a couple of letters that were sent to them by local rulers, Malay manuscripts are rarely found in the Portuguese collections.¹¹ This could probably be explained by the antagonistic views held of non-Catholic cultures, especially that of Islam.¹² Additionally, the lack of Malay manuscripts in Portuguese archives is also

partly due to the survivability of the evidence, as many records were lost when the Casa da India in Lisbon was destroyed by earthquake and fire in 1755.¹³ Nevertheless the Portuguese did in fact make attempts to study the cultures of their colonies. There was for example a transmission of medical knowledge between the indigenous populations of the empire (in particular India) with Portugal, especially with regard to the properties of medicinal plants.¹⁴ Additionally, Jesuit missionaries were known to have made observations on indigenous practices and collected texts, in order to compare religions and to argue for potential missionary conversion and conquest.¹⁵

With regard to Malay manuscripts, there are indications that the Portuguese had made efforts in collecting them. João de Barros (c. 1496–1570) for example was known to have collected Arabic, Persian, Indian and Chinese manuscripts, although he failed in his efforts to obtain Malay records on the kings of Melaka.¹⁶ In addition there is also a reference to a copy of the *Sejarah Melayu* ('Malay Annals') being taken as war booty to Goa.¹⁷ Nevertheless it would have been highly unlikely that there was a similar scholastic attitude towards magic and divination due to the nature of the subject which would have been seen as being demonic (especially the images and illustrations associated with it), and the study of which could invoke the threat of the Inquisition.¹⁸ Reports written during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries however

11 These are the two letters by Sultan Abdul Hayat of Ternate to King João III of Portugal, dated 1521 and 1522. Lisbon, Arquivos Nacionais Torre do Tombo, Gavetas 15-16-38 and 15-15-7, for which see Blagden 1930.

12 Russell Jones, pers. comm. 4 August 2012.

13 Boxer 2007, p. 233.

14 Walker 2009.

15 Županov 2010; also see Hosten 1923.

16 Boxer 2007, p. 218.

17 The original recension of the *Sejarah Melayu* dated c. 1536 was taken to Goa following the Portuguese attack on Johor in the previous year, of which RAS Raffles Malay 18 is an early nineteenth-century copy, see Gibson-Hill 1956; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 134–135; Winstedt 1996, pp. 111–113; Braginsky 2004, pp. 92–103.

18 For the use of magic in Portugal and its colonies and the attitude of the Inquisition towards them, see among others Walker 2004; Silva Santos 2012.

do reference magical and divinatory practices within the Malay region. For instance, Tomé Pires' *Suma Oriental* ('An Account of the East', 1512–1515) and Barros' *Décadas da Ásia* ('Decades of Asia', 1552–1615) both mention the use of amulets for invulnerability.¹⁹ A more detailed description of Malay practices is provided by the Portuguese-Bugis mathematician and cartographer Manuel Godinho de Erédia (1563–1623) in his book *Declaração de Malaca e Índia Meridional como o Cathay* ('Description of Malaca, Meridional India and Cathay', 1613).²⁰ Here he records the existence of dancing girls (*rajavas*) who obtained powers of divination while in a trance, 'sorceresses' who killed babies, were able to control wild animals and could transform themselves into other creatures, as well as the magical powers of the Benua aboriginal people.²¹ Erédia reports that the Bishop of Melaka had prohibited and excommunicated the *rajavas*, sorceresses and the Benua, and his account moreover has a moralistic tone in which these groups are portrayed in a negative light.²² On the other hand, Barros' story on the finding of an invulnerability amulet depicts how the Portuguese were actually fascinated by such magical objects.²³

There is more concrete evidence for the existence of an early Malay literary tradition of magic and divination through the few manuscripts in British and Dutch collections dating to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Like the Portuguese, initial British and Dutch contact with Southeast Asia was primarily focused on trade, with the establishment of the East India Company (EIC) and the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie ('United East India Company', VOC) who set up trading posts within the region from the early seventeenth century onwards. Their presence in Southeast Asia soon took on a more

political and militaristic role, and by the early twentieth century they had governed the present-day countries of Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei. The collecting of Malay manuscripts (as well as those in other local languages such as Javanese) began from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when the two countries were beginning their exploration, and this continued over the next three centuries through the efforts of travellers, merchants, officers, scholars and missionaries.²⁴ Whether by design or coincidence the early manuscripts they collected often included elements on magic and divination. For instance, one of the earliest Javanese manuscripts in the Netherlands was brought back from the first Dutch expedition to the East Indies, obtained by the Leiden University Library (Bibliotheek Universiteit Leiden) in 1597 from a Mr. van Dulmen, a merchant and ship-owner from Amsterdam (Figure 20).²⁵ This manuscript, originating from East Pasisir in Java, is written on palm-leaf in Javanese script, and was mistakenly identified as being Chinese.²⁶ Although it is primarily concerned with Islamic theology, at the end of the manuscript is a short tract on the divinatory technique of interpreting the twitching of parts of the body.²⁷ Although this text is in Javanese, the rest of the manuscript contains elements in Malay and Arabic, which suggest that similar texts in

19 Cortesão 1967, p. 266; Pintado 1993, p. 145.

20 Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, No. 7264. English translation by Mills 1997, with Erédia's biography on pp. 1–6.

21 Mills 1997, pp. 31, 40–41, 48.

22 Mills 1997, pp. 41, 48.

23 Pintado 1993, p. 145.

24 For the history of European collecting activities of Malay manuscripts, see Gallop & Arps 1991, pp. 16–27; Proudfoot 2003; Warnk 2009. For British colonial studies on Malay language and literature, see Jones 1984; Braginsky 2004 pp. 4–11. For the intellectual background behind British colonial scholarship, see Carroll 2011.

25 Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 266, see Drewes 1954; Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. II, p. 25, vol. III, pp. 64–65, reproduced on pl. 29; Witkam 1997, p. 239; Witkam 2007b, p. 109.

26 Witkam 1997, p. 239.

27 The text on the twitching of the body is found on fols. 73v–74r, and has been transliterated and translated into Dutch in Drewes 1954, pp. 94–95.



FIGURE 20 a) Islamic theology; b) On interpreting the twitching of parts of the body. East Pasisir, Java, late sixteenth century. Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 266, a) fols. 67v-68r; b) fols. 73v-74r. Copyright of Leiden University Library.

Malay were also in circulation within the region during the late sixteenth century.

Indeed there are manuscripts from this period relating to magic and divination that were written in Malay. Their form and contents are not much different to those from later periods and the texts are also fairly well developed, indicating that such works were already in circulation at least up to the sixteenth century. One example contains passages from the Qur'an, prayers and a few Malay texts including a charm against evil spirits (*azimat syaitan*; Figure 21).²⁸ It belonged to Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609), the renowned French humanist who joined Leiden University in 1593 and bequeathed to its library his collection of Hebrew and Oriental manuscripts.²⁹ The Malay charm contained in the manuscript was misidentified in a Latin inscription (probably by Scaliger

himself) as being Turkish (*“Incantam. contra Satan. L. Turc.”*). The reading of this text is obscure, but it seems to be a talisman to be inscribed on a piece of white cloth made from the shroud covering the face of a dead person (*“surat pada perca tutup muka orang mati”*) which is then sprayed with black pepper (*“sambukan[semburkan?] ini azimat perca putih dengan jintan hitam pun baik”*). Alternatively a piece of tree-bark paper may also be used (*“atau pada kertas salada[?]”*).³⁰ In addition on a front flyleaf there is also a talisman to stop a child from crying. The collection of Qur'anic passages, prayers and talismans in this manuscript has led Edwin Wieringa to suggest that its “original owner was probably mainly interested in the invocation of the divine power of God’s Word to ward off evil and to obtain blessing.”³¹ The manuscript is undated, but is written on French laid paper with a watermark that is datable to c. 1572. It entered Leiden University Library upon Scaliger’s death in

28 Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 247 (ex-cat.), see Voorhoeve 1952; Wieringa 1998, p. 15; Witkam 2007b, p. 105; Wieringa 2009.

29 For Scaliger and the study of Arabic and Hebrew in the Netherlands, see Toomer 1996, pp. 42–43; Hamilton 2009. For his manuscript collection, see Ommen & Vrolijk 2009; Ommen 2010.

30 Wieringa 2009 interprets this as ‘tree-bark paper’. A transliteration of the text is provided by Wieringa 1998, p. 15 (in the above quotation the spelling has been normalised).

31 Wieringa 2009, p. 79.

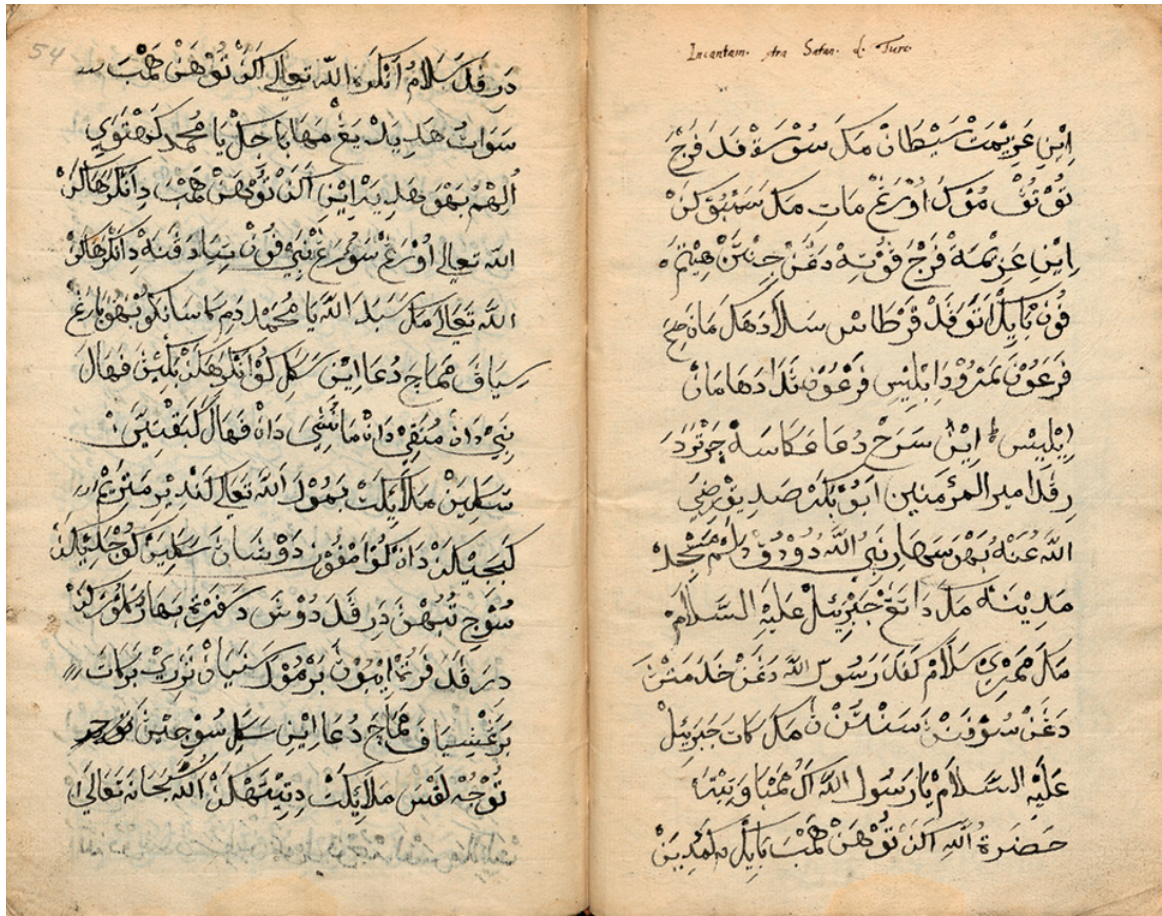


FIGURE 21 *Talisman against evil spirits in a compilation of Qur'anic passages, prayers and charms. Malaysia or Indonesia, between c. 1572–1609. Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 247 (ex-cat.), fol. 53v. Copyright of Leiden University Library.*

1609, and thus the manuscript could be dated to between c. 1572 and 1609, making it probably the earliest known Malay magic manuscript in existence. The use of the shroud covering a dead person's face is also found in PNM MS 2920 from the early twentieth century (Malay peninsula; cat. 72), demonstrating the long-standing continuation of this practice. In this case it is used as a base on which to draw a bird-shaped image used for harming others (Figure 195):

“Jika kita hendak membuat mati orang-orang, maka kita ambil kainnya tutup muka orang mati

kena gantung itu, maka kita suratkan gambaran ini kepada kain itu...³²

[If we would like someone to die, take the shroud covering the face of a person who was hanged, draw this image [gambaran] onto it...].”

Meanwhile, Malay divinatory texts are found in two short tracts appended at the end of a copy of the *Hikayat Yusuf* (“The Tale Of Yūsuf”) dated 1 October 1604 that was copied by the Dutch

32 PNM MS 2920, fol. 8r.

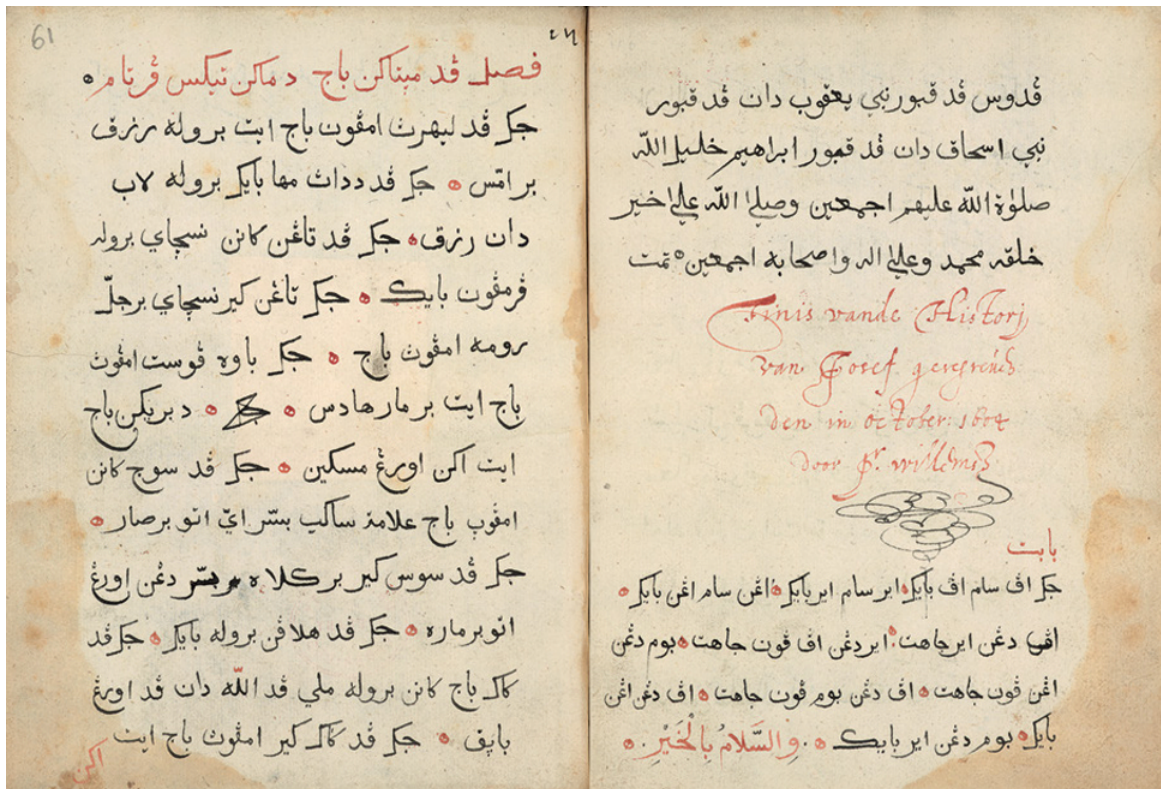


FIGURE 22 *Hikayat Yusuf* (*The Tale of Yūsuf*), together with tracts on the Four Elements and on omens for clothes that have been gnawed by mice or rats, copied by Pieter Willemsz van Elbinck, probably Aceh, 1604. Cambridge University Library, Dd. 5. 37 (ex-cat.), fols. 60v-61r. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

merchant Pieter Willemsz van Elbinck (also known as Peter Floris, d. 1615) probably in Aceh (Figure 22).³³ William Moreland argues that this

manuscript and others that van Elbinck had collected infer that he was making an effort to learn Malay, and suggests that the copy of the *Hikayat Yusuf* was “written presumably as an exercise in the language”.³⁴ This is not surprising considering one of the primary focus of European study of Malay during this early period was in learning its vocabulary and grammar for exploratory and mercantile reasons.³⁵ On fol. 60v of the manuscript is a four-line exposition on various combinations of the Four Elements (Earth, Water, Air, and Fire)

33 Cambridge University Library, Dd. 5. 37 (ex-cat.), see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 111; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 70, cat. 40. Van Elbinck is best known for his participation on the EIC ship, *The Globe*, from 1611 to 1615. For his life, the journey and a translation of his journal, see Moreland 1934. Van Elbinck’s manuscript (along with others belonging to him) was later acquired by Thomas van Erpe (also known as Thomas Erpenius, 1584–1624), Professor of Arabic at Leiden University who collected a large number of Oriental manuscripts. In 1625 Erpenius’ manuscript collection was bought by the Duke of Buckingham, George Villiers (1592–1628), and after his death was given by his widow to Cambridge in 1632 (a few other manuscripts ended up in the Bodleian and Leiden). For a background on the van Elbinck and Erpenius collections, see Ronkel 1896; Moreland 1934,

pp. xli-xlii; Oates 1974; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. xxiv, 111–112; Riddell 2004. For Erpenius and the study of Arabic, see Toomer 1996, pp. 43–47.

34 Moreland 1934, p. xlii.

35 In fact the earliest European work on Malay is a phrase book for merchants, see Jones 1984, pp. 117–118; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 18.

which might be connected to astrology, for example: “*Angin sama Angin baik; Api dengan Air jahat*” (“Air with Air is good; Fire with Water is bad”).³⁶ The text on fols. 61r-61v is on the omens for clothes that have been gnawed by mice or rats (“*Fasal pada menyatakan baju dimakan tikus*”), a form of divination that has also been found in a number of nineteenth-century manuscripts.³⁷ Here is an extract from the van Elbinck manuscript:

“*Jika pada lehernya, empunya baju itu beroleh rezeki beramm[beremas?]; jika pada dadanya maha baik, beroleh laba dan rezeki.*”

“[If it is at the collar, the owner of the garment will obtain a fortune of gold[?]; if it is on the chest, it is extremely good, will obtain profits and good fortune.]”³⁸

Meanwhile the divinatory technique of physiognomy is found in a work entitled *Bustān al-salāṭīn* (‘The Garden of Kings’), composed between 1638 and 1641/42 by the Gujarati theologian Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī (d. 1658) for Sultan Iskandar Thani of Aceh (r. 1636–41).³⁹ The *Bustān* is a combination of universal history (spanning from Creation up to the history of the Malay states) and a didactic mirror on the proper conduct of kings and court officials. It is made up of seven books, and Book VII contains four chapters on the following topics:

“*Bab yang ketujuh pada menyatakan akal (dan ilmu) dan kemuliaan keduanya; dan menyatakan ilmu firasat dan qiafat; dan ilmu tasyrih dan ilmu tabib; dan setengah daripada peri kelakuan segala perempuan dan setengah daripada segala hikayat*

yang ajaib-ajaib lagi gharib-gharib. Dan di dalamnya empat fasal.”⁴⁰

“[The seventh book is on intellect [*akal*] (and knowledge [*ilmu*]) and the nobleness of both; and on the knowledge of physiognomy [*firasat dan qiafat*]; and anatomy and medicine [*ilmu tasyrih dan ilmu tabib*]; and partly on the qualities of women and partly on wonderful and strange stories. And within it there are four chapters.]”

The original manuscript of the *Bustān* has now been lost and none of the later copies are complete, but Book VII appears to be the most popular as it has been copied the most often. Jelani Harun has found that out of thirty-three known copies of the *Bustān*, twenty-one of them contain Book VII, and its popularity reflects the interest held by Malay society on topics such as medicine and divination.⁴¹ Book VII is sometimes referred to on its own as *Bustān al-‘arīfīn* (‘The Garden of the Wise’), and the earliest extant copy is from Bengkulu, west Sumatra, dated 29 September 1814, copied by a Radin Muhammad Zain (Figure 23).⁴² It must be noted however that neither of the two copies of Book VII that I have consulted contain any illustrations or diagrams, although the Bengkulu copy is beautifully illuminated.⁴³

Jelani has observed how the *Bustān al-salāṭīn* has influenced later Malay works, and that certain portions of it appears in other Malay texts.⁴⁴ Indeed the section on physiognomy also appears in the *Tajul Muluk* (‘The Royal Crown’) as well as a

36 For an English translation of this text, see Ronkel 1896, p. 7.

37 See Chapter Five.

38 Further translations of this text, could be found in Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 70, cat. 40.

39 For the *Bustān al-salāṭīn*, see Jelani 1999; Jelani 2004; Braginsky 2004, pp. 449–453.

40 SOAS MS 36500, most probably Melaka, dated 25 Šafar 1309 / 30 September 1891 AD, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 161; one page reproduced in Jelani 1999, p. 414. On Book VII and its contents, see Jelani 1999, p. 76, 84–85, 175–176, 261–266, 312–313, 354–356; Jelani 2004, pp. 42–43.

41 Jelani 1999, pp. 73–74.

42 RAS Raffles Malay 70 (A), see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 142.

43 The other manuscript that was consulted is SOAS MS 36500.

44 Jelani 1999, chapter 6: pp. 267–293.



FIGURE 23 *Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānirī, Bustān al-salāṭīn* ('The Garden of Kings'), Book VII, Bengkulu, Sumatra, 1814. RAS Raffles Malay 70, part A, pp. 1–2. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

number of Malay manuscripts.⁴⁵ Whether these were taken from the *Bustān*, or were derived from another earlier common source is still to be investigated, but nevertheless the *Bustān* demonstrates that Malay texts on physiognomy were already in circulation from at least the first half of the seventeenth century.

Unfortunately the early examples described above are unillustrated, making it difficult to trace the artistic development of the magic and divination manuscripts. In fact illustrated Malay manuscripts (in any genre) dating prior to the eighteenth century have yet to be found. However there are two examples of Malay manuscripts dating to the seventeenth century that contain illumination. Both were in the collection of William Laud (1573–1645), Archbishop of Canterbury and

Chancellor of the University of Oxford, who like Scaliger was also a scholar of Arabic.⁴⁶ In 1633 he donated to the Bodleian Library in Oxford a copy of the *Hikayat Seri Rama* ('The Tale of Rāma')⁴⁷ and in 1635 he donated a letter sent by Sultan Iskandar Muda of Aceh (r. 1607–36) to King James I of England (1566–1625), dated 1615.⁴⁸ Laud's copy of the *Hikayat Seri Rama* and the Aceh epistle are the earliest extant illuminated Malay manuscript book and letter, and are thus important for the

45 Jelani 2006, pp. 231–233. For physiognomy, see Chapter Five; for the *Tajul Muluk*, see Chapter Seven.

46 For Laud and the study of Arabic in England, see Toomer 1996, pp. 105–115.

47 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Or. 291, see Greentree & Nicholson 1910, cat. 1; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 103; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 66, cat. 37.

48 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Or. Rolls b.1, see Greentree & Nicholson 1910, cat. 7; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 103; Gallop & Arps 1991, pp. 34–35, cat. 1; Gallop 1994, fig. 140 and cat. 5; Blair 2007, fig. 12.10.

study of the development of Malay manuscript art. With regard to the *Hikayat Seri Rama*, although the format of the decorative frame on its initial page is unusual within the Malay tradition, the vegetal patterns within it are still commonly found in Malay art today. Meanwhile the Sultan of Aceh letter to James I shows artistic influences from further afield. As Annabel Gallop and Sheila Blair have noted, the illumination here contains Safavid and Ottoman influences which demonstrates a connection between Acehnese art with that of the wider Islamic world.⁴⁹ Blair remarks on the similarities with late sixteenth-century Safavid Qur'ans that were produced in Shiraz and then exported to India.⁵⁰ Gallop however notes that alongside the Safavid *unwān* (decorative headpiece) there are also poppy motifs which are common in Ottoman art, and suggests the possibility that there were Ottoman illuminators working in Aceh.⁵¹ While the exact circumstances behind its production are still inconclusive, the letter nevertheless highlights the connections between Southeast Asian Islamic art with that of the Persian and Ottoman worlds, which still require more detailed investigation.

Later European Collecting Activities and Scholarship

The majority of surviving Malay manuscripts however only date from the eighteenth century onwards, and some were collected by European officials, administrators and scholars who were then based in the region. The types of texts collected by Europeans from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century were intended to help them understand local society for colonial administration, and thus focused on subjects such as history, law and literary works in prose. On the other

hand the British and Dutch collectors were less interested in Islamic theology and poetry, and thus these are not as well represented in the manuscript collections.⁵² They did however collect those relating to magic and divination, and this book covers a number of manuscripts found in British collections that were the result of these activities.

British scholarship on Malay texts and culture began in earnest during the late eighteenth century during the Enlightenment (or Age of Reason), when there was an emphasis on scientific rationality and the entire world was being explored, studied and classified.⁵³ Among the most influential figures of this time were two officers of the EIC, William Marsden (1754–1836), “the scholar who in the 18th century pioneered British Malay studies”,⁵⁴ and Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles (1781–1826), who is perhaps best known for founding modern Singapore in 1819.⁵⁵ Marsden collected numerous books and manuscripts in various languages. Apart from some that were given to the British Museum, the bulk of his collection was initially bequeathed to King’s College, London, but in 1918 these books and manuscripts were moved to SOAS.⁵⁶ As for Raffles, the majority of his manuscripts were bequeathed to the Royal Asiatic

49 Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 34; Gallop 1994, p. 41; Blair 2007, p. 561.

50 Blair 2007, p. 561.

51 Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 34; Gallop 1994, p. 41.

52 Proudfoot 2003, pp. 30–31; Warnk 2009, pp. 10–17.

53 For British scholarship on Southeast Asia during the Enlightenment, see Cribb *et al.* 2005, pp. 261–263; Carroll 2011, pp. 271–282.

54 Quote taken from Carroll 2011, p. 269. For his background, see Jones 1984, pp. 130–131. Some of his publications are among the most important in the field, such as *The History of Sumatra* (1783; third edition published as Marsden 1811), *A Dictionary of the Malayan Language* and *A Grammar of the Malayan Language* (both 1812; reprinted as Marsden 1984.)

55 Much has been written about Raffles’ life, career and scholarship, but amongst others see Boulger 1897; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. xxvii–xxviii; Bastin 1978; Jones 1984, pp. 131–132; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 126; Barley 1999; Noltie 2009.

56 His books and manuscripts are listed and described in his catalogue, *Bibliotheca Marsdeniana Philologica et Orientalis* (Marsden 1827), with the Malay ones on

Society by Lady Raffles in 1830, while the rest together with his letters are currently in the British Library.⁵⁷ Nevertheless despite their collections of Malay manuscripts being among the most important in the field, it does not appear that they had written much on Malay magic and divination, even though the manuscripts they collected include these topics (see cats. 87–90, 94).

Instead the first British scholar to properly study Malay magic and divination manuscripts was Thomas John Newbold (1807–50), an officer for the Indian Army who was based in Melaka between 1832 and 1835.⁵⁸ In the same vein as Marsden's and Raffles' surveys of Sumatra and Java is his *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca* (1839) which gives an account of the Malay peninsula.⁵⁹ In his book Newbold not only discusses a number of Malay magical and divinatory techniques,⁶⁰ but also makes references to books and texts, for instance:

“I have not been able to discover any regular treatise on astronomy, although brief tracts, borrowed from the Arabs and Hindoos, on judicial astrology, interpretations of dreams, spells, talismans, propitious and unpropitious moments, horoscopes, medicinal magic, love philtres, receipts for the secret destruction of persons at a distance, abound. ... Horoscopes, jadvvals, and takwims, or ephemerides, are to be found in their Falnamehs, or books of augury.”⁶¹

Newbold's work is important within the field of magic and divination because, as far as can be determined, he was the first person to publish the Malay texts and the illustrations accompanying them. In it he provides an English translation of a treatise on lucky/unlucky measurements and damascene patterns (*pamor*) of the *keris*, together with drawings presumably taken from the manuscript itself (Figure 24).⁶² This and the other texts he describes would have been taken from his own collection, as Newbold also remarks that he owned a number of Malay manuscripts on magical and divinatory topics.⁶³ In addition, Newbold also seems to have been the first to attempt to identify the sources of the texts when he tries to trace the source of Malay works on the divinatory technique of physiognomy.⁶⁴

Newbold's book marks what Robert Winzeler categorises as the first of three phases in British colonial writings on Malay magic, whereby the topic forms part of a general overview of the geography and culture of the region.⁶⁵ Meanwhile the second phase as defined by Winzeler occurred during the late nineteenth century, when as a result of a stronger British hold on the peninsula came the establishment of a number of journals which provided an outlet for the publication of various articles on Malay magic.⁶⁶ One of the most prominent was the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, founded in Singapore in 1878. Among its most prolific contributors was Sir William Edward Maxwell (1846–97), an administrative officer who spent most of his life working in

pp. 304–305. For his Malay material, also see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 1, 104, 155–159, 162–165.

57 See Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 44, 57–58, 71–73, 77–85, 122–123, 126–127, 133–143, 153–155. Unfortunately many more were lost in a fire aboard his ship *The Fame* on the journey back to England in 1824. Also see Farouk 2014.

58 For his biography see Jones 1984, p. 134.

59 Newbold 1839.

60 See Newbold 1839, vol. II, pp. 191–194, 351–368.

61 Newbold 1839, vol. II, pp. 354–355.

62 Newbold 1839, vol. II, pp. 202–207.

63 Newbold 1839, vol. II, p. 193. His manuscripts were presented to the Madras Literary Society and Auxiliary of the Royal Asiatic Society (see Newbold 1838; Ibrahim 1986) as well as to the Royal Asiatic Society in London. However according to Proudfoot 2003, pp. 6–28 they are now all lost.

64 Newbold 1839, vol. II, p. 353. See Chapter Five.

65 Winzeler 1983, p. 439, with a bibliography on pp. 453–458.

66 Winzeler 1983, pp. 439–440.

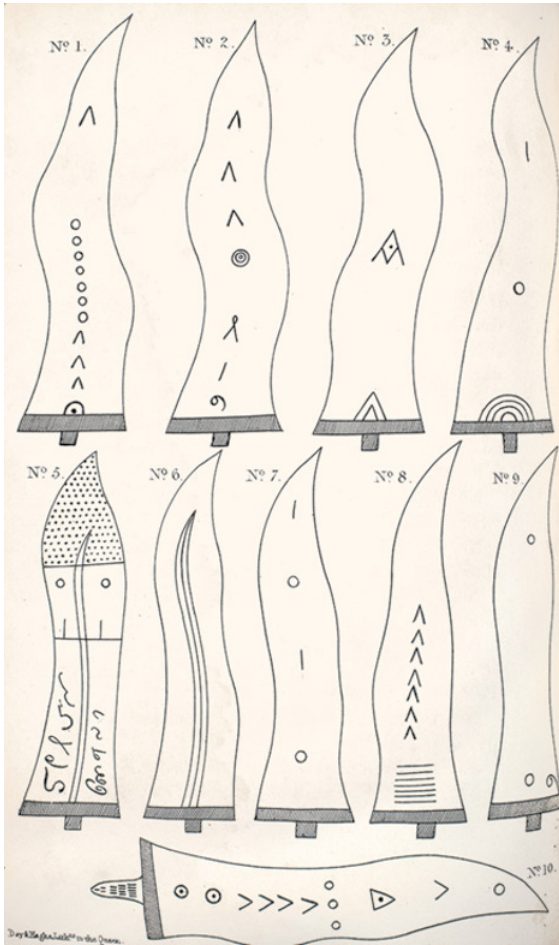


FIGURE 24 Pamor Keris. T.J. Newbold, Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca, 1839. SOAS EB 83.27/2892, vol. 11, pl. between pp. 204–205. Courtesy of SOAS.

the Malay peninsula, and who was also the Editor of the journal.⁶⁷ He was strongly influenced by Marsden, and also believed in the importance of the Hindu-Buddhist influence on Malay culture which he found within its folklore.⁶⁸ Maxwell

contributed a number of articles on the topic of Malay magic to the journal, and collected a large number of manuscripts which are now in the Royal Asiatic Society and SOAS collections, including some that relate to magic and divination (cats. 84–86).

While Marsden and Maxwell emphasised the Hindu-Buddhist influence on Malay society, British scholars during the early twentieth century focused on the ‘primitive’, i.e. the animistic elements of Malay culture and the aboriginal tribes in the peninsula (the Orang Asli).⁶⁹ This period (the third phase as defined by Winzeler) was also the “... classic era of Malayanist writing” on Malay magic.⁷⁰ Winzeler argues that here its study was not really founded on practical considerations, but reflected a romantic notion of Malay culture held by the British colonial administrators. The focus on the ‘primitive’ together with the rapid modernisation of the region meant that “Malay magic and the Malay magician are metaphors for what was seen as a vanished or vanishing side of traditional Malay life.”⁷¹ One of the most notable scholars on Malay magic and divination from this period was Walter William Skeat (1866–1953), who worked for the British administration in Selangor and Perak between 1891 and 1898.⁷² He collected material on the culture of both the Malays and the Orang Asli, including those relating to magic, which he published in the *Selangor Journal* and other journals.⁷³ His most famous book, *Malay Magic* (1900) is an important study of Malay beliefs and rituals due to the vast amount of information it contains.⁷⁴ In it, Skeat compiles the assorted writings of earlier authors on the topic, making it

67 For his life, career and scholarship, see Kynnersley 1899; Gullick 1991; also Sadka 1954, p. 33, footnote 7; Sadka 1968, pp. 389–390 and Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. xxvi–xxvii; Heussler 1981, p. 69.

68 Carroll 2011, pp. 282–287.

69 Carroll 2011, pp. 287–289.

70 Winzeler 1983, p. 440.

71 Winzeler 1983, pp. 448–451, quote from p. 451.

72 For Skeat, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. xxviii; Jones 1984, p. 140; Gullick 1988; Gullick 2005; Carroll 2011, pp. 288–289.

73 For example Skeat 1895; Skeat 1898.

74 Skeat 1900.

essentially a compendium of the literature up to that time. Additionally he provides information that he had collected himself, based on his own observations in the field and from the Malay manuscripts that he had either managed to collect or copy.⁷⁵ For the study of magic and divination manuscripts *Malay Magic* is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, in it Skeat gives transliterations and translations of the texts, and thus provides the reader with direct access to some of the primary sources. Secondly, he offers explanations as to how the techniques described in the texts work and attempts to identify the sources of the practices. Thirdly, and most importantly from an art-historical perspective, is his publication of a number of pages from the manuscripts, which depict various divinatory diagrams and charts (Figure 25).⁷⁶

Closely related to Skeat professionally was Charles Otto Blagden (1864–1949) who contributed the preface to Skeat's *Malay Magic* and also edited the book.⁷⁷ Blagden's Malay manuscript collection is now in SOAS,⁷⁸ and it includes two notebooks dated 1895 containing magic and divination texts together with their illustrations and



FIGURE 25 The rajamuka wheel and alternate Ketika Lima table in a manuscript, published by W.W. Skeat in *Malay Magic*, 1900. After Skeat 1900, pl. 26, fig. 2.

75 Skeat's manuscript collection is now held at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology in Oxford, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 104, 127–129; Gullick 1988, p. 136, note 39. However during a visit to the Institute in 2007 the manuscripts that Skeat had published in *Malay Magic* could not be located, except for one of a human figure published in Skeat 1900, pl. 24, fig. 2. Admittedly the visit was brief and a more thorough investigation might reveal the location of the manuscripts. I would like to thank Mike Morris for allowing me access to the collection.

76 Skeat 1900, pls. 24–26.

77 Blagden 1900. Blagden was posted to the Malay peninsula between 1888 and 1897, and upon his return to Britain became a barrister, and then Lecturer and Reader in Malay as well as Dean at SOAS. For Blagden, see Winstedt 1950a; Linehan 1950; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. xxiii; Jones 1984, pp. 138–139; Carroll 2011, pp. 287–289.

78 See Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 168–171.

diagrams (Figure 26).⁷⁹ It is unclear if they were copied by a Malay copyist or by Blagden himself (for this reason they are outside the corpus of the manuscripts investigated for this book), but in these notebooks he provides romanised transliterations, English translations and explanatory notes. The text on the *Ketika Lima* ('Five Times') from one of the notebooks appears in Skeat's *Malay Magic*,⁸⁰ and it is very likely that other sections of Blagden's manuscripts were used

79 SOAS MS 297496 (probably Melaka, 1895; ex-cat.) and SOAS MS 297497 (probably Melaka, 1895; ex-cat.). A number of Malay incantations are also found in SOAS MS 297483 (probably Melaka, 1892; ex-cat.).

80 Skeat 1900, pp. 656–658.

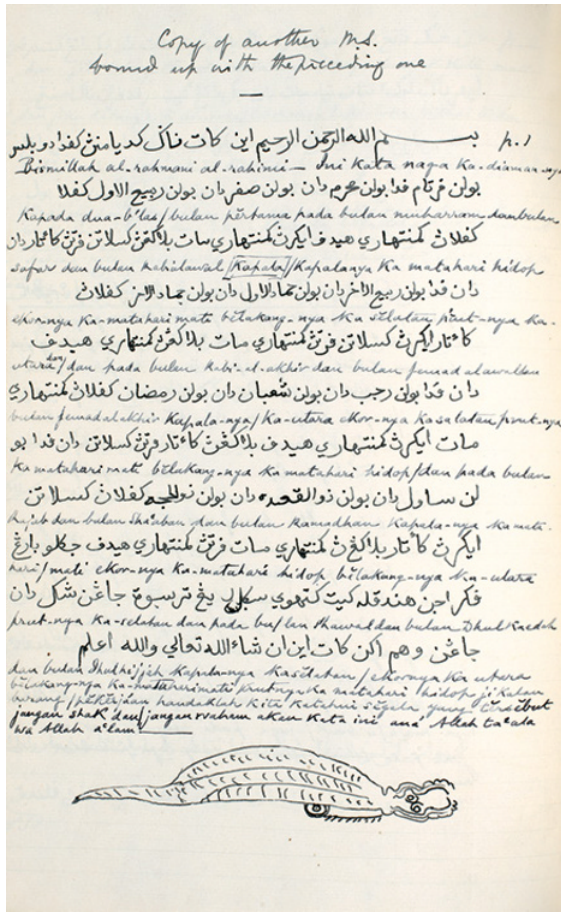


FIGURE 26 *The Rotating Nāga with interlinear romanised transliteration, probably Melaka, 1895. Copied by C.O. Blagden from a manuscript owned by Daud of Taboh Naning, Melaka. SOAS MS 297496 (ex-cat.), fol. 71v. Courtesy of SOAS.*

mainly descriptive, Winstedt was one of the few scholars who attempted to analyse Malay beliefs and practices in a more rigorous way. His *Shaman, Saiva and Sufi: A Study of the Evolution of Malay Magic* (1925)⁸² is one of the important works that goes beyond merely describing the practices but attempts to “synthesize and interpret existing knowledge.”⁸³ Winstedt categorises the various Malay rituals and beliefs based on their sources, i.e. whether they were of indigenous Malay, Hindu or Islamic origins. In the preface of his book, he writes that much of his analysis was based on manuscripts that he had copied or borrowed as well as printed books (cats. 91–93).⁸⁴ Other British administrator-scholars who had collected Malay manuscripts on magic and divination during this period include Richard James Wilkinson (1867–1941)⁸⁵ and Dudley Francis Amelius Hervey (1849–1911),⁸⁶ but their collections have yet to be studied in detail.

A brief mention should also be made of magic and divination manuscripts kept in the Dutch collections. Like the British, Dutch colonial administrators and scholars of the nineteenth century collected texts and other materials on Malay language and culture.⁸⁷ The Dutch colonial collections relating to magic and divination still need to be researched thoroughly, but among the scholars of this period was Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk (1824–94), a linguist and lexicographer who

for Skeat’s book, but these have yet to be fully investigated.

Another early scholar that must be mentioned is Richard Olaf Winstedt (1878–1966), the ‘Doyen of Malay studies’, who wrote countless books and articles on many aspects of Malay culture, encompassing literature, art and history.⁸¹ While much of the academic literature from this period was

81 After retirement from the Malayan Civil Service in 1935, he took up a position at SOAS as Lecturer and later Reader in Malay, as well as becoming a member of the Governing Body. For Winstedt, see Bastin 1964; Ricklefs

& Voorhoeve 1977, pp. xxviii–xxix; Jones 1984, pp. 141–143.
 82 Winstedt 1925; later revised as *The Malay Magician: Being Shaman, Saiva and Sufi*, Winstedt 1961.
 83 Winzeler 1983, p. 441.
 84 Winstedt 1925, pp. v–vi. For his manuscript collection, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 104–105, 150–153, 160, 163–164.
 85 See Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 112–119.
 86 See Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 161–162, 164–165; Jones 1979; Ellen *et al.* 1981; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1982, pp. 312–315.
 87 For Dutch scholarship in Malay studies and manuscript collecting, see Witkam 1997; Proudfoot 2003; Ding 2004.

studied the Batak, Old Javanese, Balinese and Malay languages.⁸⁸ His Malay manuscript collection (acquired by Leiden University Library in 1896) includes a number of examples that relate to magic, divination and medicine.⁸⁹

A few things differentiate the practice of collecting and scholarship on magic and divination manuscripts during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries with those of the colonial period. Firstly, the corpus of manuscripts available for study has greatly expanded. The lack of Islamic manuscripts in European colonial collections was not only due to a lack of interest by Western scholars but also because they did not have access to religious institutions such as mosques and schools where the books were used.⁹⁰ This imbalance was readdressed from the 1980s when Malaysian institutions such as the Pusat Manuskrip Melayu (Malay Manuscripts Centre) of the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (National Library of Malaysia) and the Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (Malaysia Department of Islamic Development, JAKIM⁹¹) made tremendous effort in collecting Malay manuscripts including from areas where there was a strong tradition of Islamic scholarship such as Patani,

Kelantan and Aceh (cats. 10–22, 24–83).⁹² Among the manuscripts they collected from these states are those on magic and divination, demonstrating the production and usage of these manuscripts within the religious milieu.

Another significant development in recent times is the recognition of magic and divination texts as part of Malay literature. A survey of traditional Malay literature published in 1993 by a team of scholars headed by Harun Mat Piah includes written texts on magic and divination being placed under the heading of ‘traditional knowledge’ (*kepercayaan ilmu tradisional*), which also covers topics such as medicine, erotology, weaponry, linguistics, carpentry, arithmetic, agriculture and dance.⁹³ Another important publication is the 2002 survey of Malay manuscripts by the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia using highlights from its own collection, to which Harun contributed a chapter on Malay traditional knowledge (*ilmu tradisional Melayu*) which is accompanied by lavish colour reproductions of the relevant manuscripts (some of which are discussed within this book).⁹⁴ Here the scope of traditional knowledge includes astrology, talismanic designs, physiognomy and the interpretation of dreams. Various texts on magic and divination were similarly discussed in a workshop on Malay traditional knowledge held in Melaka in 2000, the proceedings of which were published by Rogayah Hamid and Mariam Salim in 2005.⁹⁵

88 For van der Tuuk, see Grijns 1996; Teeuw 1996.

89 See Wieringa 2007. His manuscripts on magic, divination and medicine (often a mixture of Malay, Javanese and Arabic texts) in the Leiden University Library include Ms. Cod. Or. 3277, Ms. Cod. Or. 3297, Ms. Cod. Or. 3298 and Ms. Cod. Or. 3299, see Wieringa 2007, pp. 158–161, 193–199 where they are published on pp. 159, 196, 198.

90 Warnk 2009, pp. 14–15.

91 The JAKIM manuscripts are now held at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) in Kuala Lumpur.

92 Gallop 2002a; Gallop 2012, p. 84.

93 Third edition published as Harun *et al.* 2006, see pp. 560–615.

94 Harun 2002.

95 Reprinted as Rogayah & Mariam 2006.

Material and Format

European Paper and Watermarks

The predominant form of the Malay book is derived from the Islamic tradition, i.e. written in an Arabic-derived script known as Jawi on paper in the codex format.¹ There is a very limited paper-making tradition in the Malay area,² and instead the predominant type of paper used for manuscripts is that of European manufacture, distinguishable by the appearance of laid and chain lines that are a result of the wires that run across the paper mould. Many have watermarks – a graphic design or symbol used by the particular paper manufacturer as a form of trademark. In addition a number of papers have a countermark as well, which is a secondary watermark usually in the form of letters or initials.

In line with the rest of the Malay manuscript tradition, eighty-eight of the ninety-six magic and divination manuscripts that were consulted for this book (92%) are on European paper in the codex format, with most being in the *quarto* format (about 46%, measuring around 22 × 17 cm) followed by those in the *octavo* (28%, measuring around 17 × 11 cm), *folio* (7%) and *sextodecimo* (1%) formats (the formats of the remaining manuscripts are as yet unidentified).³ In addition there is one manuscript (PNM MS 2517, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 61; Figure 144) that was copied on laid European paper in an elongated format, measuring 27.3 × 10.3 cm, where the

text is written parallel to the spine. The manuscripts on European paper also include a few that were produced ready-bound with pre-printed lines in the form of ledger books, notebooks and exercise books. Typically the paper used for the manuscripts is white or off-white, but one example (PNM MS 2796, Patani or Kelantan, c. 1890s; cat. 67; Figure 109) uses blue paper. Some manuscripts are in the form of a single, loose sheet of paper that has been folded, such as in the case of PNM MS 1790 (probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 43; Figure 27) and PNM MS 3231 (probably Malay peninsula, 1829–30; cat. 79; Figure 85), both of which contain tables and charts to determine auspicious and inauspicious times. Additionally sixty-five of the eighty-eight manuscripts on European paper contain watermarks (74%).

The use of European paper in maritime Southeast Asia can be traced up to the early sixteenth century.⁴ Initially paper was imported from a myriad of sources, but once European presence gained a stronger hold in the region the paper employed was predominantly of Dutch, British and Italian origin.⁵ This is confirmed by the magic and divination manuscripts studied in this book, which show that the majority of the watermarked paper came from Italy (37%), the Netherlands (29%) and Britain (23%). It must be highlighted that some manuscripts comprise more than one type of paper, for example PNM MS 2459 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 59) which consists of both Italian and Dutch paper.

The Dutch and British connections are not surprising considering their strong influence in Southeast Asia from trade to colonial rule, and paper was therefore imported from Europe to be

1 For a general survey of paper and its history, see Hunter 1978. For the Islamic paper and manuscript tradition, see Bloom 2001. For paper in the Malay manuscript tradition, see Jones 1974; Jones & Rowntree 1983; Jones 1988; Jones 1993; Jones 1998; Jones 1999; Jones 2004.

2 Jones 1986b, pp. 134–135; Jones 1993, pp. 481–483.

3 For these formats, see Hunter 1978, pp. 228–229; Gallop 2005d, pp. 130–131.

4 Jones 1986a, p. 49; Jones 1993, p. 477.

5 Jones 1993, p. 480.



FIGURE 27 *Table of planetary hours. Probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1790 (cat. 43), pp. 1–2. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

utilised within their bureaucracies.⁶ The earliest manuscript investigated in this book, RAS Raffles Malay 74 (probably Selangor, c. 1775; cat. 88), has a Dutch watermark.⁷ This particular design, known variously as Pro Patria, Hollandia, the Maid of Holland or the Maid of Dordrecht, is fairly common in the Netherlands. It consists of an image of the Maid of Holland holding a spear next to a lion rampant holding sword and arrows, both enclosed within a palisade, together with the inscription “PRO PATRIA” (“For the Fatherland”).⁸ Besides this

example the Pro Patria watermark is also found in five other manuscripts, totalling 9% of the sixty-five watermarked manuscripts.

However the most common watermark is that of the Dutch lion rampant holding a sword, placed within a crowned medallion with an inscription around it (Figure 28a), which is found among twelve of the sixty-five watermarked manuscripts (19%).⁹ The majority of these bear the inscription “CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT” (“Little Things Increase Through Unity”), but there are also those with “PROPATRIA EENDRAGT MAAKT MAGT” (“For Our Country, Unity Creates Might”) and “LIBERTATE PROPATRIA” (“Freedom for Our Country”). None of the manuscripts with this watermark are dated, but paper with the words “CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT” has been found in other Malay manuscripts dating from

6 Jones 1993, pp. 480–483.

7 For Dutch watermarks and paper, see Churchill 1935, pp. 5–38; Heawood 1950, p. 26; Voorn 1960 (mostly in Dutch but there is an English summary on pp. 527–565).

8 For this watermark, see Heawood 1950, p. 27; Voorn 1960, pp. 540–541; National Gallery of Australia 2008, <http://www.nga.gov.au/Conservation/Watermarks/details/ProPatria.cfm>, last accessed 15 April 2008; for its use in a Malay manuscript context see Jones 1974, pp. 57–58 and fig. B.

9 For this watermark, see Heawood 1950, p. 27; Voorn 1960, p. 540.



FIGURE 28 a) The Dutch lion watermark with the inscription “PROPATRIA EENDRAGT MAAKT MAGT” on a manuscript from the Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2843 (cat. 71); b) Watermark with the bale mark of the English East India Company and the date “1808” on the flyleaf of a manuscript most likely from Penang, dated 1806. RAS Raffles Malay 34 (cat. 87); c) Moonface-in-shield watermark on a manuscript from the Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late nineteenth century. PNM MS 3498 (cat. 81). Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia and the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (Photos by the author).

1847 to c. 1878,¹⁰ while the inscription “PROPATRIA EENDRAGT MAAKT MAGT” has been found in those dating from 1864 to 1873.¹¹ As a result, the magic and divination manuscripts bearing these watermarks can be dated to the second half of the nineteenth century.

British paper used for copying Malay manuscripts includes those of Scottish and English manufacture.¹² The Britannia watermark was used on paper exported from the Netherlands to Britain, as well as by British papermakers themselves.¹³ Two

manuscripts with this watermark are accompanied by the countermark “MUNRO” with “187[?]” and “(18)7[?]”, denoting a Scottish paper manufacturer based in Edinburgh.¹⁴ As would be expected, manuscripts that were copied for British collectors often employed paper of British manufacture, most likely provided by the patron to the copyist. For example, the paper used in a manuscript copied for Stamford Raffles dated 1806 (RAS Raffles Malay 34, most likely Penang; cat. 87) has the watermark “I Sellers” with the date “1800”. The flyleaves of this manuscript however are of a different British paper – the watermark here is the bale mark of the English East India Company (EIC) for whom Raffles was working (“V E I C”, i.e. [U]nited East India Company, set within a heart shape with “4” above) with the date “1808” (Figure 28b). This paper is also

10 Teeuw *et al.* 2004, vol. 1, p. 13. There are also a couple of manuscripts with this watermark that are dated 1823 (with the Van der Ley countermark) but this dating is questionable, see Vickers 1982, p. 444.

11 Vickers 1982, p. 444.

12 For British watermarks and paper, see Churchill 1935, pp. 39–54; Heawood 1950, pp. 26–27; British Association of Paper Historians [n.d.], <http://baph.org.uk/ukpaperhistory.html>, last accessed 17 November 2011.

13 This watermark consists of the seated figure of Britannia with an olive branch, spear and shield, set within a crowned medallion. For this watermark, see

Churchill 1935, pp. 43–44; Heawood 1950 p. 27; National Gallery of Australia 2008, <http://www.nga.gov.au/Conservation/Watermarks/details/ProPatria.cfm>, last accessed 15 April 2008.

14 Hinzler 1986, pp. 5–6.

used in the flyleaves of another Raffles manuscript (RAS Raffles Malay 74 described earlier) where the main run is on Dutch paper.

Italian paper has been found among a great number of Malay manuscripts, including those on magic and divination.¹⁵ Unlike Dutch and British paper, the use of Italian paper in Southeast Asia did not have colonial connections, but instead it was imported from the Middle East where it was widely utilised. European paper began to be used in the Islamic lands from the mid-fourteenth century and soon began to replace locally made paper, with Italy being the major exporter to the region, together with France.¹⁶ The use of Italian paper was also widespread within Southeast Asia, and Russell Jones suggests that they might have similarly replaced an earlier importation of Islamic paper.¹⁷ If so, then this appears to have occurred at an early date as Malay manuscripts were already being written on European paper from the early sixteenth century. Jones also believes that Italian paper was imported from Mecca into Southeast Asia by religious scholars and pilgrims,¹⁸ but the amount used in the region is perhaps too large to be attributed to piecemeal efforts by these individuals, and therefore must have been part of a larger trade. The watermark of the double-headed eagle with “FNF” has been found in four manuscripts in this book (6% of the watermarked manuscripts), but the most common Italian watermarks comprise variations of the crescent moon. One type, known as *tre lune*, depicts three crescents in a row decreasing in size. It is generally attributed to Venice, and was popular in the Islamic world from the second half of the seventeenth century up to the nineteenth century.¹⁹ Among the magic and

divination manuscripts it is found in four manuscripts (6% of the watermarked manuscripts). By the early nineteenth century the crescent moon took up the form of a ‘moonface’, whereby its inner curve is that of a human face in profile. This may be arranged as three-in-a-row, but more commonly it appears singly and placed inside a shield (Figure 28c).²⁰ Within the Malay manuscript tradition this is the most common watermark,²¹ and its popularity is reflected among the magic and divination manuscripts where it appears in seventeen of the sixty-five watermarked manuscripts (26%). In Egypt, the moonface watermark began to take over from the plain crescent by the 1840s,²² but Malay magic and divination manuscripts with this watermark only date to the 1880s–1900s.²³

From the countermarks, it seems that the majority of Italian paper used for the magic and divination manuscripts was produced by the Galvani family who were based in Pordenone, Friuli, northeast Italy.²⁴ They dominated the supply of paper to the Islamic world during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and were so successful that “they and other *imprenditori* of the Friuli province produced eighty percent of the paper exported to the Levant in the 1860s.”²⁵ Their dominance over the Middle Eastern paper market meant that many Malay manuscripts were written on Galvani paper, whereby the most common are those bearing the name of Andrea Galvani (1797–1855), either as “Andrea Galvani Pordenone” in cursive script or simply “A G”.²⁶ It must be noted

15 For Italian papers and watermarks, see Heawood 1950, pp. 23–24; Eineder 1960, pp. 165–175; Woodward 1996.

16 Walz 1985; Bloom 2001, pp. 82–89, chapter 6.

17 Jones 1993, p. 480.

18 Jones 1998, pp. 126–128.

19 It was also produced in France in the late eighteenth century. For *tre lune* paper, see Heawood 1950, p. 24; Walz 1985, p. 31; Jones 1998, pp. 109–117.

20 For the moonface watermark, see Walz 1985, p. 35; Jones 1998, pp. 117–118.

21 Jones 1998, p. 118.

22 Walz 1985, p. 35.

23 PNM MS 3225 (Pontianak, 1885–86; cat. 78); PNM MS 2578 (probably Malay peninsula, 1895; cat. 63); PNM MS 2750 (Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65); PNM MS 4080 (Terengganu, 1903; cat. 82).

24 For the Galvani firm, see Eineder 1960, pp. 168–170; Walz 1985, pp. 35–36; Jones 1998, pp. 134–135.

25 Walz 1985, p. 36.

26 Jones 1998, pp. 136. Gallop 2005d, p. 130, footnote 16 notes that most of the illuminated Qur’ans from the

that the use of his name continued well after his death – in fact, the earliest Malay manuscript carrying his name is dated 1870.²⁷ Among the magic and divination manuscripts studied in this book, the Andrea Galvani paper is found in seven of the sixty-five watermarked manuscripts (11%) where it appears with the *tre lune*, moonface-in-shield and the double-headed eagle watermarks, with one example being from Pontianak, dated 1885–86 (PNM MS 3225; cat. 78).

The Folding-Book Format

Seven of the ninety-six Malay magic and divination manuscripts (7%) are in the concertina or folding-book format which is very popular in mainland Southeast Asia such as in Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia and Laos. This format originated from China, where the bark of the paper mulberry tree (*Broussonetia papyrifera*) was used.²⁸ This plant is also used to make paper in Myanmar, but in Thailand it seems that the *khoi* bush (*Streblus asper*) is preferred.²⁹ The pulp is sun-dried on a frame in wide, long strips, then pasted together and folded in the manner of an accordion or concertina. The paper of folding-book manuscripts is off-white in colour, and it can be used either in this uncoloured form with the text written in black ink, or blackened using soot or carbon paste with the text written in steatite (soapstone) or yellow ink. Since folding-book manuscripts are common in mainland Southeast Asia, Malay manuscripts in this format will almost certainly come from states

such as Patani, Kelantan, Perlis and Kedah where Thai influence is particularly strong, and thus the paper used would have been made from the *khoi* plant. Thai folding-book manuscripts are usually oblong, measuring either around 14 × 65 cm or 12 × 36 cm when folded, and one of the manuscripts discussed in this book (DBP MS 82, Patani, c. 1857; cat. 8; Figures 198, 222, 232) is of the latter measurement. However the other manuscripts show a closer affinity to a certain type of folding-book format that is peculiar to Southern Thailand (see Figures 151 and 173 for Thai examples). This type is squarer in shape, measuring consistently around 12 × 18 cm, and is known in the Southern Thai dialect as the ‘elephant-foot book’ (*but tin chang*).³⁰ The use of this format for Malay texts is not surprising considering the geographical and cultural proximity of the two regions. Nevertheless, although as noted earlier the paper may be blackened, such examples are rare within the Malay manuscript tradition.³¹ In fact all of the Malay magic and divination folding-book manuscripts studied in this book have been left in the uncoloured form. In Myanmar and Thailand the paper is blackened so that the texts can be erased and the manuscript reused (like a blackboard), and thus the material is employed for texts that are considered unimportant, while more valuable texts are written on uncoloured paper.³² If a similar principle lies behind the copying of Malay folding-book manuscripts, then the use of uncoloured paper might suggest that the texts were considered important enough to be recorded permanently.

East Coast of the Malay peninsula are on Andrea Galvani paper.

27 Jones 1998, pp. 136.

28 For papermaking in China, see Tsien 1985; Chinery 2007, <http://idp.bl.uk/education/bookbinding/bookbinding.a4d>, last accessed 28 January 2015.

29 For the production of folding-book manuscripts in Myanmar, see Fraser-Lu 1994, pp. 288–290; for Thailand, see Ginsburg 1989, p. 10; Ginsburg 2000, p. 8; Huang 2006, pp. 6–7.

30 Ginsburg 2000, p. 124.

31 One rare example is a collection of poems (*syair*) from Patani dated 1835, now in Singapore, Asian Civilisations Museum, 1999.2644, published in Henkel 2003, p. 321; Bennett 2005, cat. 20. Its owner was a Fakir Ramli of Myanmar.

32 Committee for Constructing a Database of Myanmar Parabaik Manuscripts in Aichi University (CCDMPM) 2002, <http://taweb.aichi-u.ac.jp/DMSEH/Introduction.html>, last accessed 9 November 2012. I would like to thank Sinead Ward for this reference and information.

Binding and Covers

Malay manuscripts in general are usually left unbound,³³ and indeed 60% of the ninety-six manuscripts studied are found in this state, whereby the sheets are collected in one or more gatherings or quires that are either left loose or sewn together. The number of unbound manuscripts rises even higher if we include those that were bound later by libraries and collectors in a Western-type binding, as the soiled condition of the first and last pages of some of these manuscripts indicate that they were not bound in their original state.³⁴ Jones notes that this Malay practice of using unbound loose gatherings of paper was derived from the Middle East. This format enables multiple individuals to use one book at the same time, and lets a copyist judge the number of pages he would need when copying.³⁵

Many manuscripts however do have some form of protective cover. These include simple practices such as enclosing the gatherings within a folded piece of paper which is usually brown, ordinary white or cream-coloured. Paper is also used as a protective cover for exercise books, employing material such as newspapers (Aswandi N-06, Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century; cat. 1; Figure 29) or even a printed tailor's design template (PNM MS 2920, Malay peninsula, early twentieth century; cat. 72; Figure 30). A few manuscripts in the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia are held within loose pieces of cardboard, but these may have been added later by the library.

Another practice is to cover the manuscripts with textiles, which are usually (but not always) glued onto the first and last folios of the manuscripts. The choice of material is cotton, ranging from simple white or single-coloured cloths

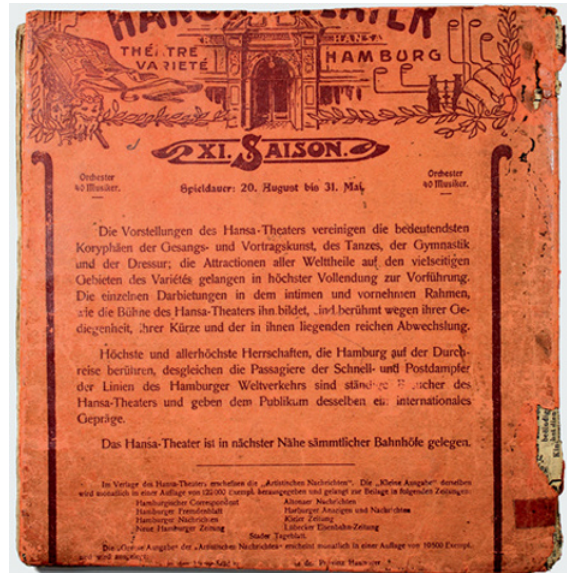


FIGURE 29 *The protective cover of this manuscript is the German newspaper Die Woche: moderne illustrierte Zeitschrift. Pictorial fālnāma, Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century. Aswandi N-06 (cat. 1), upper cover. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.*

(PNM MS 1452, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 35 and PNM MS 2799, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 68) to those with plaid or chequered designs, probably taken from the *sarung* (such as PNM MS 1596, Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72; cat. 38; Figure 31).³⁶ In her study of Qur'ans from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula, Annabel Gallop has found that manuscripts from Patani tend to have cloth covers, in contrast to those of Terengganu where leather bindings seem to be favoured.³⁷ If so, then perhaps the magic and divination manuscripts with cloth covers could similarly be attributed to the Patani region.

33 Plomp 1993, p. 571; Jones 1999, pp. 99–100.

34 For example PNM MS 292 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 92).

35 Jones 1999, pp. 99–105, who notes that a typical gathering or quire consists of five sheets (*bifolia*) that make up 10 folios/20 pages.

36 The *sarung* is a plaid skirtcloth usually worn by men, for which see Maxwell 2003, pp. 328–329. I am also grateful to Lesley Pullen for helping me identify some of the textiles found among the manuscripts.

37 Gallop 2005d, p. 131.

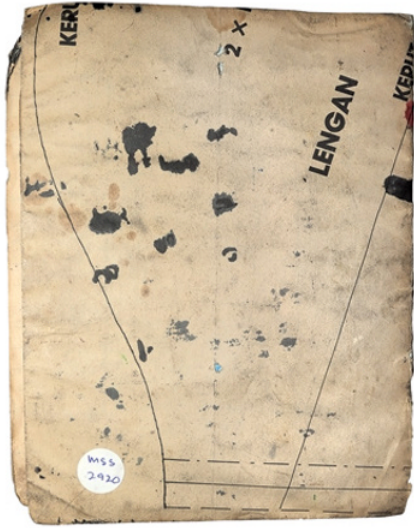


FIGURE 30 *A tailor's design template is used to wrap the covers of this exercise book. Malay peninsula, early twentieth century. PNM MS 2920 (cat. 72), upper cover. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

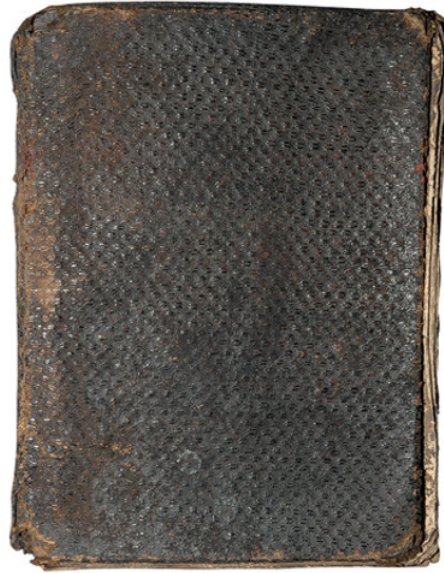


FIGURE 32 *A dark-coloured coarsely woven fabric over the covers of a manuscript. Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2812 (cat. 69), lower cover. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*



FIGURE 31 *Brown chequered cloth used for the covers of a manuscript. Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72. PNM MS 1596 (cat. 38), upper and lower covers (laid out flat). Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (photo by the author).*



FIGURE 33 *Spine-cloth of a manuscript made of white cotton with blue floral motifs. Melaka, c. 1845. DBP MS 119 (cat. 9). Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.*

Other manuscripts have bindings made using techniques from the Islamic and Western traditions, although they have not been investigated in detail and so would need further examination. The material that covers the two boards of PNM MS 2812 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 69) is made from a dark-coloured coarsely woven fabric (Figure 32).



FIGURE 34 *Binding of a manuscript. Singapore, 1907. PNM MS 3429 (cat. 80), a) upper cover; b) yellow spine-cloth. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

Meanwhile the binding of DBP MS 119 (Melaka, c. 1845; cat. 9) is in a very bad condition. There is no flap, and the two boards are covered with black leather decorated with blind tooling around the edges. The spine appears to be missing, exposing a spine-cloth of white cotton with blue floral motifs (Figure 33). The bookblock is attached to the case by gluing the endpapers (or possibly the first and last folios) to the boards. Meanwhile PNM MS 3429 from Singapore, dated 1907 (cat. 80), does not have a flap either. The case is wrapped with a plastic sheet that makes it difficult to ascertain the material used to cover the boards, but its colour is ochre with some geometric patterns in a lighter shade (Figure 34a). Again the bookblock is attached to the case by gluing the endpapers onto the boards. Here the spine-cloth is yellow (Figure 34b), which might indicate the sacred nature of the manuscript, considering the common use of yellow cloth in Malay magical rituals (see below).

The binding used for the manuscripts also includes more unusual material. PNM MS 4080

(Terengganu, 1903; cat. 82), has a binding made from tree-bark (Figure 35). It is stitched to the paper at the spine, with the back extending into an envelope flap that folds over the front of the book. This form of binding is a fairly rare occurrence in the Malay manuscript tradition.³⁸ Nevertheless the envelope flap is a distinct feature of Islamic bookbinding,³⁹ and the use of tree-bark in this format demonstrates the adaptation of an Islamic design with indigenous material.

Some of the folding-book manuscripts also have covers. That of PNM MS 2381(2) (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 58) has layered bands made of the same material as the manuscript (Figure 36). Meanwhile the cover of

38 So far, the only other instance of this binding is found on a manuscript of the *Muqaddimat al-mubtadi'* ('Introduction for the Beginner'), PNM MS 491 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century), published in PNM 2002a, fig. 13.

39 Haldane 1983, p. 14.



FIGURE 35 *Binding made from tree-bark. Terengganu, 1903. PNM MS 4080 (cat. 82), upper cover. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*



FIGURE 36 *Cover of a folding-book manuscript with layered bands. Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2381(2) (cat. 58), upper cover. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

the manuscript on bull, buffalo and ram fighting in the Nik Mohamed collection (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23) is more interesting as it shows a leather Islamic-type cover being used on a folding-book manuscript of an indigenous Southeast Asian tradition (Figure 37). Leather bindings of the Islamic style with flaps and blind or gold tooling are found in many parts of Islamic Southeast Asia. The designs usually consist of an almond-shaped central medallion flanked by bud-shaped decorations, four corner pieces and a frame band. Such designs are common in the Ottoman and Persian worlds, and in her study of leather bookbindings from Java and Sumatra, Marije Plomp suggests that the Southeast Asian examples were probably influenced from the Persian tradition. She explains this connection with the fact that much of traditional Malay literature is derived from Persian works, but also raises the possibility of the influence coming through via India. However Plomp notes that the Southeast Asian bookbindings have certain idiosyncrasies,

particular in the number and designs of the frame bands.⁴⁰

The upper cover of the Nik Mohamed manuscript is bare except for a letter or note written on this page, probably added later. Nevertheless on its inner side (i.e. the first opening) remnants of a dark blue cloth can be found along the edges, suggesting there might have once been a cover that has now been lost. Meanwhile the other end of the manuscript has a leather cover with gold tooling in a design similar to the other bookbindings from the region as described by Plomp. It has been attached onto the folding-book, but it is not in very good condition and is torn, showing darker brown leather underneath. The central medallion contains an inscription but unfortunately it is not very legible. On the inner side (i.e. the last opening) are remnants of brown cloth with white flowers glued to one of the edges. Although the central medallion, corner pieces and bud-shaped decorations denote Persian or Ottoman influence, the

40 Plomp 1993, pp. 588–591.



FIGURE 37 *Cover of a folding-book manuscript made of brown leather with gold tooling. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), lower cover. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.*



FIGURE 38 *Cover of a folding-book manuscript made of brown leather with gold tooling. Treatise on cannon and guns, Kelantan, 1863. DBP MS 101. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.*

cross pattern in the middle of the cover is characteristic of Indian bookbinding.⁴¹ Indeed this cross pattern is found on the binding of many Malay and Javanese manuscripts, which supports Plomp's suggestion of a possible Indian connection in Southeast Asian bookbinding. Additionally the Nik Mohamed manuscript was produced for a Kelantanese prince, and it is noteworthy that the continuous 'x' pattern in the frame band is similar to that of another folding-book manuscript containing a treatise on cannon and guns that once belonged to a member of the Kelantanese royal family, dated 28 Jumādā II 1280 AH / 10 December

1863 AD (Figure 38),⁴² suggesting that they both could have been produced by the same workshop.

Colophons, Seals and Other Documentary Evidence

Unfortunately, many of the magic and divination manuscripts are anonymous, making it difficult to identify any pertinent information relating to the production of the manuscript such as the name of the persons involved (i.e. the author/compiler, copyist, artist, owner), the provenance or the date. Out of the ninety-six manuscripts consulted, only

41 I am grateful to Alison Ohta for pointing this out to me.

42 DBP MS 101; A. Samad 1987a; Kamariah & Wan Salhah 2006, p. 65.

about 23% have an identifiable colophon, which is lower than the general average for Malay manuscripts as calculated by Henri Chambert-Loir (40%).⁴³ Even when colophons are found the information given is often incomplete. For example, the colophon of SOAS MS 25030 (Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 92) gives the names of the copyist and patron, together with the time, date, day and month of when it was completed, yet fails to mention the year or the place where it was copied.⁴⁴

Thankfully some of the manuscripts contain inscriptions and additional documentary evidence that can be used as a source of information on the manuscript when a colophon is lacking. Around 11% of manuscripts have some form of notes on ownership, whereby the name of the copyist/owner is recorded, usually on the upper cover or on the first folio. For example, PNM MS 1993 (probably Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 50) is without a colophon, but nevertheless has an inscription on its front page that gives the name of the owner together with a notice on the birth of a child. Apart from births, the notes on life events also cover topics such as circumcisions, marriages, deaths and financial matters such as records of debts. These kinds of documentary evidence show that the manuscripts did not only function as encyclopaedias of knowledge, but also as record books of incidents that were deemed important by their owners. However this type of information typically does not have any connection with the contents of the manuscripts.

A few manuscripts also contain marks of ownership in the form of seals and rubber stamp impressions. In most of the Islamic world the use of seals in books to denote ownership is fairly common, but within the Malay manuscript tradition this practice is rare. A survey by Gallop of seals from across Islamic Southeast Asia has found that only 2% are found within manuscript books (the rest are found in letters and treaties).⁴⁵ This

situation is reflected among the magic and divination manuscripts studied in this book, where only three of them are stamped with seals (i.e. around 3% of the ninety-six manuscripts).

The forms and contents of these seals vary greatly. The typical Malay seal is circular in shape, sometimes with a petalled border forming a lotus motif⁴⁶ and impressed with lampblack,⁴⁷ with the letters in white against a black background.⁴⁸ A circular seal impressed with lampblack is found in PNM MS 2459 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 59) with an illegible inscription in the centre, and pentagrams and probably the *shahāda* in its border (Figure 39a). One of the texts in this manuscript has a colophon that gives the owner's name as Tengku(?) Yap Din of Tanjung Majahu. This location is so far unidentified, but the seal is comparable to one from Tiro in Aceh that belonged to a famous religious scholar, Muhammad Amin Muhammad Saman (d. 1896), dated 1293 AH / 1876 AD.⁴⁹ The use of pentagrams in both seals would most certainly have had talismanic purposes, and apart from Aceh it is also found in seals from other parts of Southeast Asia such as the Riau Archipelago.⁵⁰

Two impressions of a black circular seal are found in PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47) but here they appear to have been impressed in ink (Figure 39b). The seal has the inscription "*Qawluh al-ḥaqq*" ("His Word is the Truth"), a phrase commonly used in Malay letters as the introductory heading.⁵¹ While the copyist of the manuscript appears to be from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula, most of the other

43 Chambert-Loir 2006, p. 363.

44 For the full colophon, see the Appendix.

45 Gallop 2007, p. 140.

46 The lotus motif is discussed in Chapter Six.

47 Lampblack is obtained from the soot collected when the seal matrix is oiled and held over a flame.

48 For an overview of Malay seals, see Gallop 1994, pp. 45–55; Gallop 2002b.

49 It appears on a letter dated 1293 AH / 1876 AD, now in Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 7321, see Gallop 2002b, vol. II, p. 124.

50 See Gallop 2002b, vol. I, p. 223, vol. II, p. 248.

51 Gallop 1994, pp. 60–61.



FIGURE 39 a) Seal with an illegible inscription in the centre, and pentagrams and probably the shahāda in its border. Manuscript: Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2459 (cat. 59), fol. 15r (detail); b) Seal with the inscription “Qawluh al-ḥaqq”. Manuscript: Probably Kelantan, 1894. PNM MS 1957 (cat. 47), fol. 14v (detail). Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (photos by the author).

known seals with similar inscriptions are from Sulawesi, suggesting a possible link between the two regions.⁵² Among the seals found in the manuscripts however, there is only one case in which the personal name of an individual is inscribed. In Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (Palembang, c. 1890; cat. 2), the name “Muhammad Salih... [the rest is illegible]” appears in a seal which is in the unusual shape of a shield. Next to it is a note in pencil saying that the manuscript was owned by a certain “Muhammad...” (Figure 40).

A couple of manuscripts have rubber stamp impressions by their owners. PNM MS 1789 (Kelantan, 1857; cat. 42) has a stamp with the name of an officer in the Office of the Director of Land and Excavations of Kelantan on the doublure⁵³ of the lower cover. Meanwhile UM MSS 225 (early twentieth century; cat. 96) was copied in an exercise book from Singapore, and the rubber stamps



FIGURE 40 Table of alternate Ketika Lima/Muhammad and the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, with seal and inscription underneath. Palembang, c. 1890. Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (cat. 2), fol. 20r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.

52 See Gallop 2002b, vol. III, pp. 500, 510, 523, also see p. 629.

53 Lining on the inside of a book cover.



FIGURE 41 *Rubber stamp impressions on an exercise book. Singapore, early twentieth century. UM MSS 225 (cat. 96), lower cover. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.*

on its lower cover are of an individual with a Singaporean address (Figure 41).

Inks and Colours

Malay manuscripts in general are written in black ink, and the magic and divination manuscripts that have been studied seem to follow this format, although in some cases blue ink is used instead. There are a number of accounts on Malay recipes for making black ink, which often mention ingredients such as lampblack (*jelaga*, obtained by hanging an earthenware pot with the bottom moistened over a lamp) and vegetal products such as tree bark.⁵⁴ The chemical composition of the inks and pigments employed in the magic and divination

54 Marsden 1811, p. 182; Jaspan 1964, p. 15; Siti Hawa 1997, p. 214; Wan Ali 2002, pp. 30–31.



FIGURE 42 *The paper on which this Ketika Lima table appears on has corroded due to the use of iron gall ink. Probably Perlis, 1933. PNM MS 2228 (cat. 55), p. 73. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

manuscripts has yet to be investigated, but in some cases it can be seen that black iron gall ink was used which has resulted in the corrosion of the paper (Figure 42).

Talismanic designs, which are often drawn as part of the text, are typically drawn in black ink without any embellishment, and thus manuscripts that are predominantly composed of such elements are fairly monochrome affairs. Some diagrams and illustrations are also drawn and painted using only black ink. For example in PNM MS 291 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 26) the outlines of the animals together with details such as fur or scales are drawn in black (Figures 43, 51, 194, 202). For the most part the animals are left uncoloured, and when certain parts of their bodies are painted (such as the legs), only black ink is used.



FIGURE 43 *The Fish (Ikan, right) and the Pig (Babi, left). Rejang calendar, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 291 (cat. 26), fols. 7v-8r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

In other manuscripts red ink or occasionally purple is used for the rubric, which usually consist of words such as *bab* or *fasal* to indicate the start of a new chapter or section. Red ink is also added to the diagrams and illustrations to give some additional colour and contrast to the black, and the texts contained within tables and other diagrams are often written in both red and black inks in alternating fashion in order to make them easier to read, such as in DBP MS 23 (most likely Perak, nineteenth century; cat.7; Figure 44). According to Wan Ali Wan Mamat, red ink is made using brazilwood dye,⁵⁵ but scientific analysis by Rajabi Abdul Razak and Idries Trevathan on the inks and pigments used in illuminated manuscripts has found that red iron oxide “was by far the most popular red pigment/colour used in Malay Qur’anic illumination with vermillion a

distant second.”⁵⁶ Thus the red ink or paint used in many of the manuscripts discussed in this book (at least those that come from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula) would most likely be of the same substance. In addition to black and red, certain parts of an illustration are usually left blank with the colour of the paper showing through – this ‘colour’ may be considered as a substitute for white and has been referred to as ‘reserved white’.⁵⁷

Some manuscripts go beyond this combination of black, red and reserved white. In PNM MS 292 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 27) yellow is used in place of red to create an alternative tricolour palette (Figure 45). In others, the yellow is used as a fourth colour alongside black, red and reserved white (Figure 46), which is in line with the colour palette found in illuminated

55 Wan Ali 2002, p. 31.

56 Rajabi & Trevathan 2010, p. 86.

57 Gallop 2004, p. 200.



FIGURE 44 Wheel diagram of the second version of the Faal Quran. Most likely Perak, nineteenth century. DBP MS 23 (cat. 7), fols. 2v-3r. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

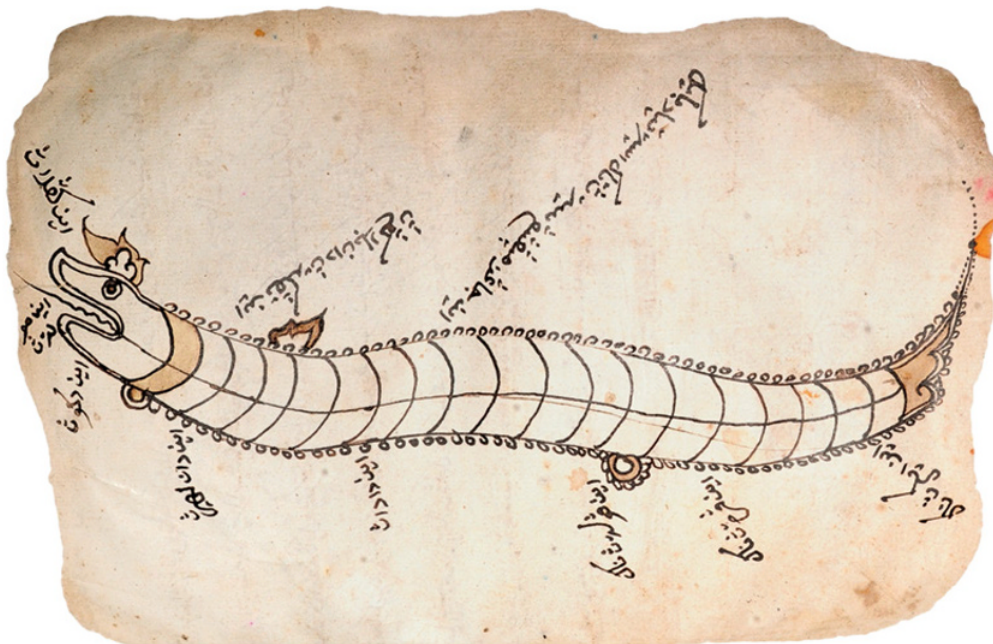


FIGURE 45 Rotating Nāga. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 292 (cat. 27), fol. 23v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

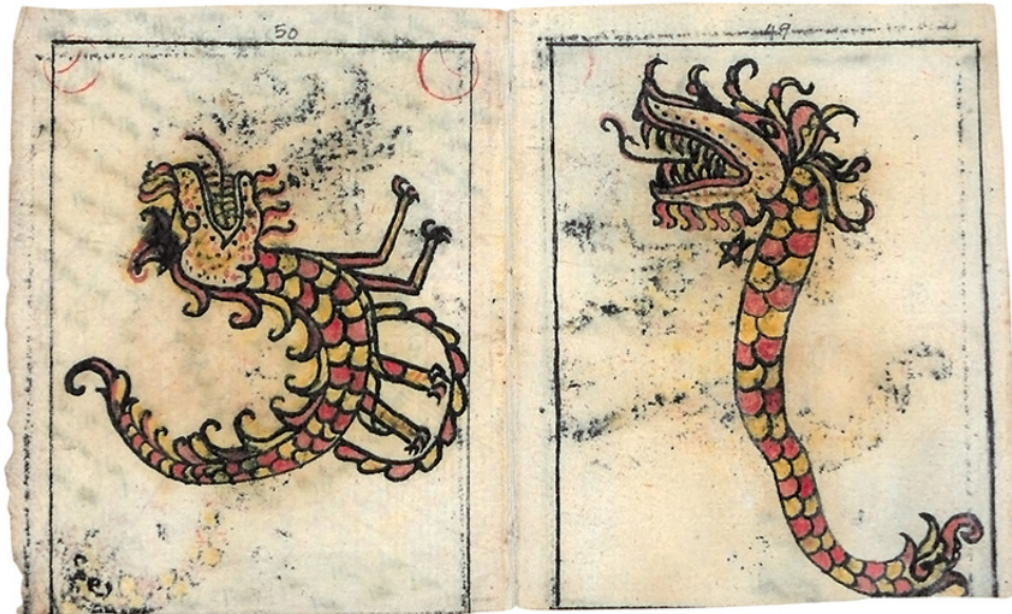


FIGURE 46 Two nāga from a set of four. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. DBP MS 13 (cat. 6), p. 49. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

manuscripts from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula and Aceh.⁵⁸ Wan Ali writes that yellow ink is made using a mixture of turmeric and chalk,⁵⁹ although Rajabi and Trevathan have found that the yellow pigment used in the illuminated Qurʾans they had studied was usually made from a type of gum called gamboge.⁶⁰

In Malay society, yellow is designated for use only by the king and the royal family, as well as by magicians in their traffic with spirits.⁶¹ In Malay manuscripts it is most likely used as a cheap substitute for gold.⁶² In a technical analysis of an illuminated Qurʾan possibly from Terengganu, datable to the late

1810s, Rajabi and Trevathan have found that yellow colourant had been mixed in with the gold.⁶³ It is however worth noting that in Javanese manuscripts yellow paint may be used as a foundation for gilding. An analysis of the illumination in a copy of the *Serat Jaya Lengkar Wulang* ('The Tale of Jaya Lengkar') dated 1803 shows that the design was first drawn in yellow, then glue was applied onto it in order to adhere the gold leaf, and finally black ink was used to outline the design.⁶⁴ Among the Malay magic and divination manuscripts however gold is rarely used. It is found in the painting of a *nāga* in PNM MS 1080 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 28; Figure 192), as well as in the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23) where it had been applied liberally across many

58 Gallop 2004, p. 200; Gallop 2005d, p. 130.

59 Wan Ali 2002, p. 31.

60 Rajabi & Trevathan 2010, p. 88.

61 Skeat 1900, pp. 33–34, 419–420, 433. on p. 59 he notes that the usage of yellow demonstrates how the “magician stands in certain respects on the same footing as the divine man or king”.

62 Cf. Gallop 2005d, p. 130.

63 IAMM 1998.1.3615, Rajabi & Trevathan 2010, p. 88.

64 London, British Library, MSS Jav 24, see Gallop 2014, <http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/asian-and-african/2014/08/a-javanese-manuscript-artist-at-work.html>, last accessed 3 November 2014.



FIGURE 47 Jin Kuning (Yellow Jinni), Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 48th opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.



FIGURE 48 A bull. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 21st opening (detail). Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh (photo by the author).

illustrations, and is particularly notable in the painting of the Yellow Jinni (*Jin Kuning*; Figure 47). The use of gold in art usually indicates wealth and royal patronage, and indeed this manuscript was produced for a prince.⁶⁵ In addition some of the other illustrations in this manuscript had been painted with a shiny unidentified pigment that might be tarnished silver (Figure 48), although the use of silver is unusual in Malay manuscript illumination generally.⁶⁶

Other colours are added because they are required as part of divinatory techniques. In the table of the *Ketika Lima* ('Five Times'), each cell relates to a Hindu god who is associated with a colour – yellow, black, white, red and green. In some manuscripts the cells are painted in with



FIGURE 49 *Ketika Lima* table. Probably Selangor, c. 1775. RAS Raffles Malay 74 (cat. 88), fol. 10v. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

the corresponding colour.⁶⁷ These coloured tables are also useful for studies of Malay inks and pigments – for example we may compare the bright yellow used to represent the time of the Hindu god Maheśvara in RAS Raffles Malay 74 (probably Selangor, c. 1775; cat. 88; Figure 49) with

65 See Chapter Seven.

66 The lack of silver in illuminated Malay letters is noted in Gallop 1994, p. 43.

67 See Chapters Five and Six.

the more ochre pigment found in BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (probably Palembang, nineteenth century; cat. 5; Figure 245). In some cases the colours used in the tables are not as they are described in the texts, for example in RAS Raffles Malay 74 blue is used instead of green for the god Viṣṇu (Figure 49), while in Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (Palembang, c. 1890; cat. 2), purple is used instead of green (Figure 40). Also in this manuscript a greenish-grey colour is used instead of red for the god Brahmā, while in PNM MS 1948 (probably Terengganu, 1877–78; cat. 45) purple is employed instead of red (Figure 246). It is possible that these alternative colours were due to the unavailability of the correct pigment, and thus the artist had to resort to the next closest shade available.

As for painting techniques, usually black ink is used first to draw the frame of a diagram or the outlines of an illustration before it is coloured. This can be seen clearly in the Nik Mohamed manuscript, where the artist had drawn three figures in black ink but then decided to cross them out before they were painted (Figure 50).

In a few cases there is evidence of over-painting in the diagrams and illustrations. In PNM MS 291 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 26), the Barking Deer (*Kijang*) is drawn in black ink, but further elements such as genitals and grass were added later in what looks like pencil (Figure 51). In PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47), the underlying diagrams and illustrations are also drawn in black ink, but they have

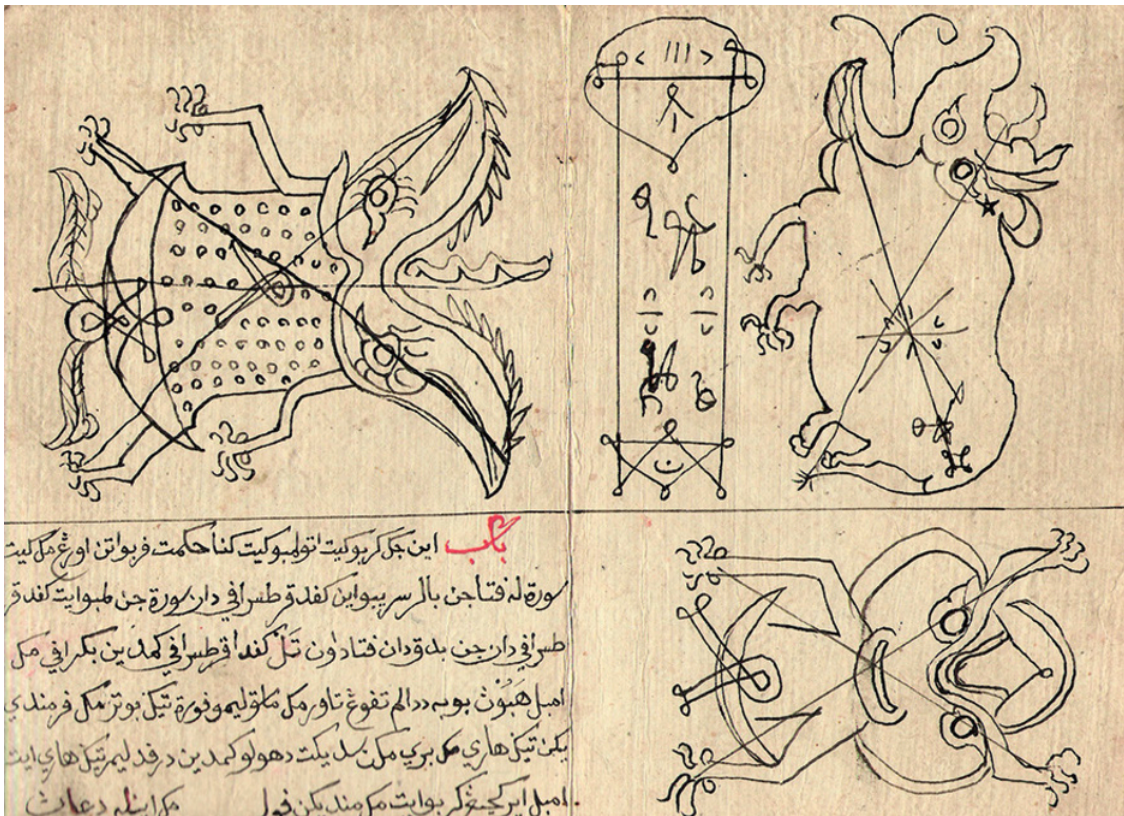


FIGURE 50 Outline of cancelled illustrations drawn in black ink. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 43rd opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.



FIGURE 51 *The Barking Deer (Kijang)*. Rejang calendar, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 291 (cat. 26), fol. 1r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 52 *Seven-day compass diagram of eight animals for Sunday and Wednesday*. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 34th opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.

been overlaid by purple and blue. This is most noticeable in the *nāga* which was drawn and painted in black, but with feet that had been added in purple (Figure 252). It is however difficult to say if these embellishments were done by the initial copyist-artist or by another person at a later time. Also worth mentioning is the use of

a white substance to correct mistakes, such as in a drawing of the Rat in the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Figure 52). It is possible that this substance is white lime paste, as used in Northern Thailand.⁶⁸

68 Conway 2014, p. 40.

The Contents: Texts and Images

In terms of content, Malay magic and divination manuscripts contain texts and images that cover a broad mixture of magical and divinatory techniques. Much has been made about the role of copyists in the Malay literary tradition, who not only copied works but also often made additions and changes to the original text.¹ In the case of manuscripts on magic and divination, this is taken to another level, whereby the copyist appears to have actively selected and compiled texts from a variety of different sources to create a unique work. As a result the manuscripts are idiosyncratic and no two copies are the same, indicating their use as notebooks and *aide memoire* for a magician. They are therefore highly personalised to their owners, and “would be almost useless, and probably dangerous, for anyone not inducted into its mysteries.”² Thus as noted in Chapter One, it is very difficult to define a ‘typical’ example of a manuscript as they often vary in the focus of their contents. Furthermore there is no set rule for what a manuscript will contain, and thus it may include a variety of topics including those that do not relate to magic and divination.

Nevertheless there are certain topics that occur more often than others, and this chapter will briefly describe those that are the most prominent, though not necessarily the most common, together with a short description of how they function (meanwhile the artistic aspects of the illustrations and diagrams such as iconography, style and illumination will be covered in Chapter Six). Before going into the specific methods and techniques however, this chapter will commence by explaining the relationship between text and image within the manuscripts, as

well as discussing some of the issues regarding their sources.

Relationship between Text and Image

In his essay entitled *Tupu lüe* 圖譜略 (‘A Brief Account of Illustrated Registers’), the Chinese Song scholar Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104–62) likens the relationship between technical images (*tu* 圖) and text to that of the warp and weft.³ This description is equally appropriate for Malay magic and divination manuscripts where the relationship between text and image is an intimate and complex one. As such it is hard to discuss one without reference to the other, and therefore in this chapter they will be described jointly. Indeed, art historical scholarship in other areas has now moved towards a study of both text and image together in order to look at “the manuscript as a whole”.⁴ This approach gives a more nuanced and balanced analysis of the manuscripts, providing context to the images and texts contained and to their interrelationships, and helping to shed light on the circumstances behind the production of the books.

In the magic and divination manuscripts the images help to enlighten the text, and at the same time the texts also function to inform and explain the illustrations and diagrams. For example, drawings of talismans and effigies are preceded by instructions on how these images should be made and used. Similarly, texts on divination give instructions on how to operate the diagrams and illustrations in order to carry out the divinatory procedures, as well as providing the various prognostications that will result.

1 Voorhoeve 1964, pp. 261–266; Proudfoot 1984; Braginsky 2004, pp. 23–24.

2 Proudfoot 2002, p. 120.

3 As cited in Bray 2007, p. 2.

4 Contadini 2010.



FIGURE 53
Boat sinking in the middle of the sea (Perahu karam di tengah lautan). Faal Nursi ('Divination of Nursi'), Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72. PNM MS 1596 (cat. 38), fols. 3v–4r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

In addition, the images offer a way to summarise textual data. Many Malay divinatory techniques involve multiple elements such as time and space, and therefore the text may be arranged in the form of tables and charts to enable the querent (the person who is asking the question) to locate the relevant prognostication quickly and accurately. This is especially pertinent to certain forms of diagrams such as the compass rose where the pool of information and relationships between the various elements are quite complex. Additionally, drawings of figural beings also often contain textual elements such as letters, numbers and words, usually functioning either to label parts of an illustration (such as in the case of the Rotating *Nāga*) or for esoteric purposes (like the magical texts used to bind an effigy).

The pictorial *fāl-nāma*, which is a form of bibliomancy involving an illustrated book, provides a very clear relationship between text and image. For instance in one version of this divinatory technique known as *Faal Nursi* ('Divination of Nursi'), the text of one of the auguries says, "*Maka adalah orang seperti ini iaitu gambar perahu (karam) di*

tengah lautan" ('The querent will be like this, i.e. the picture of a boat (that is sinking) in the middle of the sea'),⁵ and accordingly the image on the opposite page depicts a boat (Figure 53).

The connection between text and image may also be shown graphically. Occasionally an image is linked to the text via a line of dots, such as in the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat 23; Figure 54), which in Bali is known as *semut sadulur* ('a row of ants').⁶ Another method is to label both the image and text with a specific symbol. For example in PNM MS 2920 (Malay peninsula, early twentieth century; cat. 72), the text and image on the making of a human effigy are actually on two separate pages, but they are linked by the Arabic numeral ٢ which is written at the end of the text as well as above the image (Figure 55). The numeral ٢ is also

5 PNM MS 1596 (Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72; cat. 38), fol. 3v. Note that the text for this augury in IAMM 1998.1.548 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 17), p. 18 does not refer to its accompanying illustration.

6 Rubinstein 1996, p. 134.



FIGURE 54
A line of black and red dots connects the talismanic design on the right with the text at the top of the opposite page. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, first opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.

used to connect a sentence that has accidentally been omitted, or additional information that the copyist would like to add to the main text. These would be written in the margin and linked to the main body of the work using the numeral.7

That said, the relationship between text and image can still be fairly limited. Firstly the accompanying texts may be vague and only refer to the images briefly without elucidating any further details. For instance, in PNM MS 1596 (Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72; cat. 38) one of the auguries of the pictorial *fālnāma* refers to an episode from the *Mahābhārata* in which Maharaja Duryodana (Duryodhana) had his legs broken by Bisma (Bhīma), but it is unclear in the accompanying illustration who is who (Figure 56). In the Nik Mohamed manuscript, a jinni named *Jin Pengikat Diri Hulubalang Tugal Setabang Alas* is invoked to bind the opponent in the sport of bull/buffalo fighting (Figure 57).8 The incantation commands the following:

7 For instance in PNM MS 1452 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 35), fols. 38r–38v, and PNM MS 1646 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 41), fol. 4v.

8 Its name is not entirely clear, but part of it could be translated as ‘The Binding Jinni of the Solitary Warrior...’

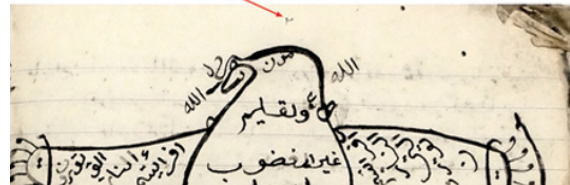
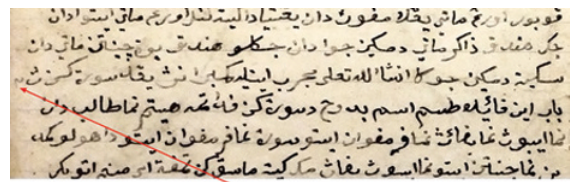


FIGURE 55 Arabic numeral 2 used to connect text and image: a) At the end of a line; b) Above an effigy. Malay peninsula, early twentieth century. PNM MS 2920 (cat. 72), fol. 8v (details). Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (photos by the author).

“Dengar! Aku hendak suruh mengikat sekalian lawan. Bukalah tanganmu, ambil sekalian tangan lawan. Kakimu jижak pigang [pinggang?], tanganmu paut dengan kuasa mu.”9

“[Listen! I want you to bind all of my opponents. Open your arms, grab the arms of all my opponents.

9 Nik Mohamed collection, side A, third opening.



FIGURE 56 *Duryodhana beaten by Bhīma* (Maharaja Duryodana dipalu oleh Bisma). Faal Nursi ('Divination of Nursi'), Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72. PNM MS 1596 (cat. 38), fol. 33r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

With your feet hold the waist[?]; with your hands grip with all of your power.]”

In the accompanying illustration the spirit is depicted with both arms raised upwards, holding a pole from which hang two horseshoe shapes. The text however does not mention these items and thus it is difficult to ascertain the meaning and symbolism behind them.

Secondly the images are not always placed adjacent to the relevant texts. In RAS Raffles Malay 34 (most likely Penang, 1806; cat. 87), the text on the Rotating *Nāga* is at the beginning of the manuscript but an illustration of the creature is only found on its final page (Figure 258a). However even when the texts and images are next to each other it is not always easy to match a particular text to its related

image. For instance in SOAS MS 25030 (Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 92) there are two passages describing the making of effigies, which are then followed by two drawings of human figures, but it is unclear which drawing relates to which passage (Figure 284).

Sometimes an image does not have any explanatory text making their meaning and usage obscure. For example there are no instructions for how certain divinatory diagrams such as the *rajamuka* wheel and the compass diagram of eight animals are to be used, and it is only through ethnological sources and comparative studies that they may be identified and understood. Similarly PNM MS 1416 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 34) contains an illustration of a turtle (Figure 58), but it is difficult to identify the relevant



FIGURE 57 Jin Pengikat Diri Hulubalang Tugal Setabang Alas. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side A, second opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.

text within the manuscript (if there is one) and therefore the function and meaning behind the drawing is unclear. At the same time, not all texts are accompanied by images – some of the spells are purely verbal, and certain types of divinatory techniques such as the interpretation of dreams are never illustrated.

Finally, it is worth noting that in regard to certain texts, there are instances whereby the text is illustrated in some manuscripts but not in others, such as in the case of the *Rejang* calendar. Here it would be interesting to investigate if the illustrated copies constitute a separate textual tradition to the

non-illustrated ones. Additionally, the question also arises as to whether the compiler of an illustrated manuscript was continuing the pictorial programme set in the source manuscript or had decided to conceive a new one for the copy. The presence of illustrated manuscripts of a text also leads to the issue of the function of the images, i.e. whether they have been added for comprehension or embellishment, or both.

Some Issues Regarding the Sources of the Contents

Identifying the sources for the texts is not an easy task. A reconstruction of a literary history of Malay magic and divination is complicated by the fact that there is a lack of early material, and that the surviving texts are often anonymous and undated.¹⁰ Nevertheless scholars have long recognised the debt to the Hindu and Islamic worlds, and many Malay texts can be traced to works from these traditions. The influence of Chinese practices has yet to be investigated in great detail and much work still needs to be done in this area.

In any case, merchants, the religious milieu, scholars and settlers from South Asia, the Middle East and China who operated in the region over the past two millennia have transmitted various magic and divination practices, tools, texts and images to Southeast Asian cultures via a mixture of oral transmission, practical demonstration, objects and written texts. At the same time Southeast Asian traders, students and pilgrims brought knowledge and material from other parts of the world back to their homelands. We can see evidence of the transmission of knowledge from other parts of the Islamic world in a number of Arabic magic and divination manuscripts that are kept in Southeast Asian collections. For instance there are three copies of the famous Arabic book on magic, *Shams al-ma'arif* ('The Sun of All

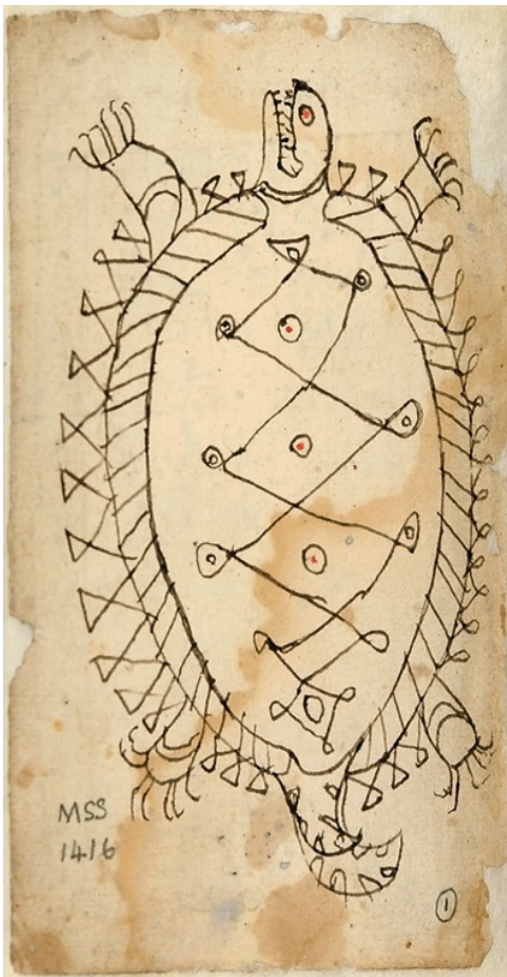


FIGURE 58 A turtle. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1416 (cat. 34), fol. 1r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

10 These are also problems in the study of traditional Malay literature in general, see Braginsky 2004, pp. 15–16.



FIGURE 59 An unidentified Arabic text on magic with comments in Malay. Mecca, Cairo or Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.24, pp. 3–4. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

Knowledge’) by Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Būnī (d. c. 622 AH / 1225 AD) in the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia in Jakarta.¹¹ In the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur there are two Arabic manuscripts with texts that have yet to be identified, but what is of interest is that they also contain comments written in Southeast Asian languages. One of them includes a talismanic design for treating illnesses, which appears to be derived from the *Shams al-ma‘ārif* (Figure 59).¹² Underneath this is a note in Malay written in a

different hand that says, “Atas rupa itulah yang sah adanya” (“The above image is true”). On the same page the writer has also added a further Malay prescription for healing. Meanwhile the second Arabic manuscript contains various magic squares, and in one of the pages there are notes in the Bugis script and language underneath a 5 × 6 grid containing Arabic letters (Figure 60).¹³ The left-hand column of the grid is

11 Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, A 19b, A 20b and A 127, see Sri *et al.* 1999, p. 17; Gallop 2005a, p. 210, n. 9. For al-Būnī and the *Shams al-ma‘ārif*, see Dietrich “al-Būnī”; Francis 2005; Witkam 2007a.

12 IAMM 1998.1.24 (Mecca, Cairo or Malay peninsula, nineteenth century), p. 3, for this manuscript see

IAMM 2010, p. 14. Note that the text is not wholly identical to the version found in a printed copy of the *Shams al-ma‘ārif*, al-Būnī 2007, Book 1, p. 87.

13 IAMM 1998.1.369 (Mecca, Cairo or Sulawesi, nineteenth century), p. 2, for this manuscript see IAMM 2010, p. 81. I am grateful to Stephen Druce for his help in identifying that the text is Bugis.

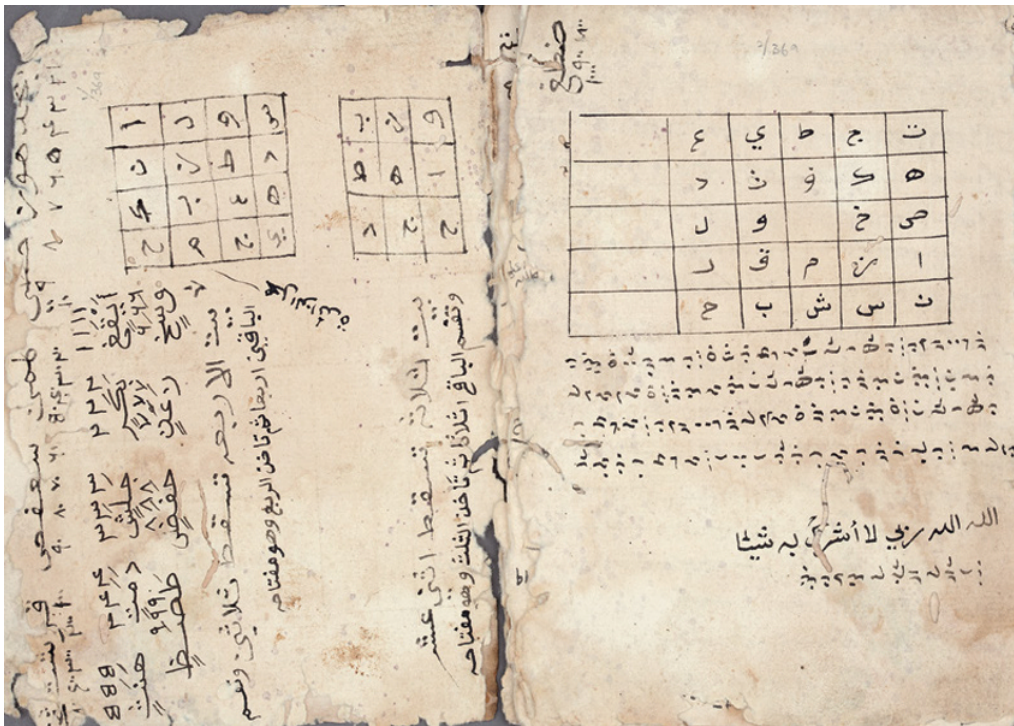


FIGURE 60 An unidentified Arabic text on magic with comments in Bugis. Mecca, Cairo or Sulawesi, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.369, pp. 1–2. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

blank, and so if we ignore it the diagram then looks like a 5 × 5 magic square with an empty middle cell. However when the letters are converted into numbers using the *abjad* system they do not add up, as they would do if it were a true magic square.

A more obvious example of the transmission of Arabic texts could be seen in a work on geomancy that is found in two Malay manuscripts: SOAS MS 40779 (probably Sumatra, late eighteenth century; cat. 94; Figure 142) and RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84). This work is titled *Qur'a 'azīma fī 'ilm al-raml ta'lif al-Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq raḍīya Allāh ta'ālā 'anhu* ('The Great Lot Divination of Geomancy by Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, may God the Exalted be pleased with him') and will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, but for the moment it is worth highlighting that in the SOAS manuscript the Arabic text is interspersed with a Malay translation, demonstrating clearly

the transmission process of Arabic texts on divination into the Malay corpus (the later 1882 RAS Maxwell 15 copy however is mainly in Malay).

In addition, it is important to highlight that the sources of the practices found in Malay manuscripts may have been derived from manuals on related topics such as house-building and medicine. Many of the divinatory techniques found in the Southeast Asian corpus, especially those that relate to house-building such as the Rotating *Nāga*, appear to have been derived from the South Asian *vāstuśāstra* which are authoritative treatises concerned with architecture, planning and other aspects of design, or *śilpaśāstra* which are concerned with painting, sculpture, etc.¹⁴ These texts contain topics such as selecting the appropriate

14 I am grateful to Crispin Branfoot for his help with this definition.

sites for construction and the types of buildings to be built, although they tend to focus less on the practical but more on the cosmological and ritualistic aspects of construction. Examples include classical Sanskrit works such as the *Mayamata*, a *vāstuśāstra* on architecture and iconography (Tamil region, Chola period, eleventh century), but as Bonnie MacDougall has found there is also a strong textual tradition on this subject in vernacular South Asian languages such as Tamil, Sinhala and Malayalam.¹⁵ These works only became a widespread textual genre during the nineteenth century but they are clearly part of an older tradition, and differ from the classical Sanskrit texts in a number of ways. Firstly, the vernacular treatises focus on the houses of villagers rather than on temples, palaces and kingly trappings; secondly they often have a strong astrological content (which is only incidental in the classical works); and thirdly they democratise the body of knowledge contained in the classical texts from being the preserve of Brahmins to the general public.¹⁶ It seems that many of the Southeast Asian texts on house-building (including those in Malay) have much more in common with these vernacular, popular South Asian books rather than the classical Sanskrit treatises, although further research is needed to verify this. If so, this then suggests that such architectural texts were used and transmitted into Southeast Asia by laypersons rather than the elite.¹⁷

Indeed contacts between the Malay peninsula and South Asia remain strong even today. There are various South Asian communities across the peninsula particularly in major cities such as Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Melaka. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that a Malay manuscript from Melaka, c. 1845 (DBP MS 119; cat. 9) contains a short text written in Tamil (Figure 61). It appears on a torn folio



FIGURE 61 Detached torn page with Tamil text on medical preparations. Melaka, c. 1845. DBP MS 119 (cat. 9). Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

that has become detached from the rest of the manuscript. On one side of this folio is a Malay note that describes a marriage rite that was conducted in 1845, written in the same hand as the rest of the manuscript. The Tamil text appears on the other side of the folio and is not easily readable, but it seems to consist of recipes for medical preparations. Two kinds of preparations are mentioned: *lēkiyam* (which are jam-like and semi-solid) and *cunnam* (which are powder-based). The recipe for the *lēkiyam* preparation includes ingredients such as a type of juice (as yet unidentified), honey, *kalkaṇḍu* (sugarcandy), nutmeg, saffron and *kacakacā* (poppy seeds); on the fourth line there is an instruction to “soak it in water”.¹⁸ It is unclear if the Tamil text was written by the manuscript copyist himself, a Melakan religious scholar named Haji Abdul Rauf bin Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman, or by a later owner of the manuscript. There is still much research to be done on Abdul Rauf’s background, but the text suggests that either he or a later owner of the manuscript had a connection with the Tamil community in Melaka.

However, even if the sources of the magical rites and divinatory techniques in the manuscripts can

15 MacDougall 2008.

16 See discussion in MacDougall 2008, pp. 47–54.

17 Similarly, it has been discovered that the Malay version of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Hikayat Seri Rama*, is derived not from the Sanskrit written text but from the oral tradition, Braginsky 2004, p. 68.

18 I am very grateful to Santanam Swaminathan for reading this text and translating it for me. I would also like to thank Crispin Branfoot and Nalini Persad for their help, and to Ronit Ricci for first identifying that the text is in Tamil.

be identified as having been derived from Hindu, Islamic or Chinese traditions, the exact method and route of transmission into the Malay corpus is difficult to pinpoint. One important issue to be considered is whether there is a separation between the transmission of the images and the texts. In his discussion on Javanese magic and divination manuscripts, Theodore Pigeaud raises the point that talismanic designs must have been in circulation for a long time before being committed into books.¹⁹ Another issue that deserves further exploration is whether the images had an influence in the transmission of a text. For instance, Barend Jan Terwiel has argued that the popularity of the text of the Rotating *Nāga* in Southeast Asia is because it is accompanied by a depiction of the creature.²⁰ Nevertheless in the case of the Rotating *Nāga* we can also see a separation between text and image, because although the text is most likely of Indian origin, the accompanying illustrations in Southeast Asian manuscripts had been sourced from local iconography. This demonstrates that any foreign influences would have been filtered carefully to fit into local ideas, beliefs and customs, as will be seen in many examples throughout this book.

The Rotating *Nāga* also brings up the issue as to whether a common Southeast Asian tradition also points to a common source, i.e. whether a particular technique was transmitted into multiple parts of Southeast Asia independently, or entered via a single entry point from which it then spread across the region. For instance, Terwiel has suggested that the text of the Rotating *Nāga* entered Southeast Asia via Dvaravati (Central Thailand, sixth – twelfth centuries).²¹ While this is yet to be determined, it must be noted that in the case of Malay texts on magic and divination, it is possible that some of the rites and techniques of Hindu origin entered the Malay corpus via Java during the Islamic

period, as opposed to being a direct inheritance from a Hindu-Buddhist past (for instance during the Srivijaya period).²² Such intra-regional cross-cultural contacts within Southeast Asia in the field of magic and divination can indeed be seen today. As mentioned in Chapter Two, magicians from other ethnic groups are also consulted within Malay society for matters such as healing and sorcery, and this interaction extends to the transmission of knowledge. According to Golomb some Malay magicians are known to study magical and divinatory techniques from Thai practitioners, which they then pass on to other Malay magicians.²³ As a result, Thai techniques and talismanic designs made their way into the Malay magical vocabulary, and these are found in a number of Malay magic and divination manuscripts. For instance in PNM MS 2778 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 66; Figure 62), the figure of the human effigy has a Thai talismanic design on its chest, together with Arabic script around its body.²⁴ Meanwhile PNM MS 2812 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 69), contains some texts in Thai. For instance a passage written on the doublure of the lower cover seems to be a recipe (there is a reference to “three chillies” and on making something to eat; Figure 63) while on fol. 100r there is a compass rose with the cardinal and intercardinal directions written in both Malay in Jawi script and Thai in Thai script.²⁵ In PNM MS 2588 (Patani or

19 Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, p. 271.

20 Terwiel 1985, p. 240.

21 Terwiel 1985, pp. 240–241. Many thanks to Stephen Murphy for information on Dvaravati.

22 As Vladimir Braginsky has noted, there has been a continuous close relationship between Malay and Javanese literature, and since many pre-Islamic elements are strongly preserved by the Javanese even during the Islamic period, there is sometimes the question of “whether a certain fact of a Malay writing is a reflection of its own heritage of the old Malay period or a secondary phenomenon caused by Javanese influence in the Muslim period”, Braginsky 2004, p. 49.

23 Golomb 1985a, pp. 262–270.

24 I would like to thank Justin Watkins for his help with this manuscript.

25 In this compass rose, all of the Thai directions employ the formal, Sanskritic names except for east (*pon*



FIGURE 62 *Human effigy with Thai talismanic design in its chest. Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2778 (cat. 66), side B, first opening. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 64), two words in Thai script which read as “*patoh*” and “*tulang*” appear on a folio above a discussion on various illnesses, one of which is on bone or joint ache (in Malay *patah* means ‘broken’ while *tulang* means ‘bone’).²⁶ Lastly in PNM MS 1321 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 31) the names of the animals in the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac are given in Thai but written in the Malay Jawi script (Figure 99; see further discussion below).

instead of *burapha*). I would like to thank Angela Chiu and David Smyth for their help with this manuscript.

26 PNM MS 2588, fol. 75v. I am grateful to David Smyth for his help with this manuscript.

At the same time Golomb also notes the reverse, whereby Thai practitioners consult Malay sources and include Malay and Arabic material into their repertoire.²⁷

Titles, Opening Statements and Arrangement of the Texts

The Malay magic and divination manuscripts are usually untitled. There are a few rare exceptions, such as in the two manuscripts mentioned in Chapter One, one of which gives the title as *Kitab Ilmu Firasat dan Ubat* (‘Book on Physiognomy and Medicine’; PNM MS 1951, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 46), while the other has the title *Kitab Perintah Pawang* (‘Book of Instructions for the Magician’) written on its flyleaf together with the names of its owner and the person who commissioned the manuscript, as well as the date (RAS Maxwell 106, Perak, 1879; cat. 86; Figure 64).²⁸

Some manuscripts begin the text with the *basmala* and sometimes a personal prayer or supplication (*du‘ā*) as well.²⁹ The copyist of PNM MS 3429 (Singapore, 1907; cat. 80) however not only commences the text with formulas and supplications but also gives an introductory statement in which he provides the date of when he began the copying process. Nevertheless in the majority of cases the text typically launches straight into the topics at hand, although we have to take into account that some manuscripts are missing their initial pages.

The main contents are typically separated into a number of divisions that are referred to as either chapters (*bab*) or sections (*fasal*). As mentioned

27 Golomb 1985a, pp. 262–270.

28 For a transliteration and translation of this inscription see the Appendix.

29 For example PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44), PNM MS 2459 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 59) and PNM MS 2920 (Malay peninsula, early twentieth century; cat. 72).



FIGURE 63 *Texts in Thai. Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2812 (cat. 69), fol. 100v – doublure of the lower cover. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

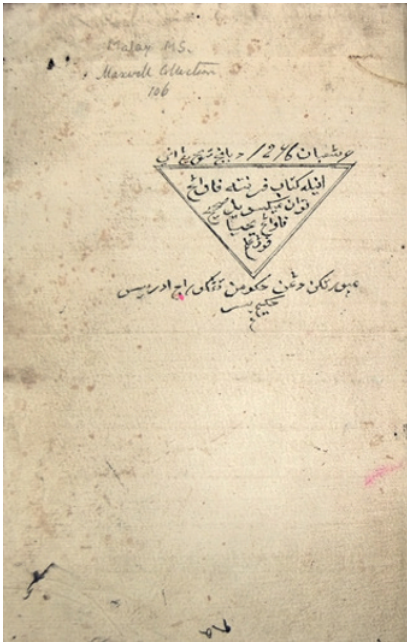


FIGURE 64 *Inscription with the title of the work, names of the owner and person who commissioned the manuscript, and the date. Perak, 1879. RAS Maxwell 106 (cat. 86), flyleaf recto. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.*

earlier red or purple ink was employed as a rubric to mark the beginning of a new chapter or section, which would typically be introduced by the phrase “*Bab ini pada menyatakan...*” (“This chapter explains...”) or “*Fasal ini pada menyatakan...*” (“This section explains...”). In a survey of religious books (*kitab jawi*) from Patani, Virginia Matheson and M.B. Hooker have found that theological works that begin with the phrase “*pada menyatakan*” (“to explain”) tend to be used for longer, older (nineteenth century) explanatory works aimed at advanced students, in contrast to those that use “*pada bicara*” (“to discuss”) that are shorter, more basic and designed for initiates.³⁰ The use of the phrase “*pada menyatakan*” in the magic and divination manuscripts suggests that these too were meant for experts rather than the layperson.

Chapters or sections may be divided further into sub-chapters/sub-sections. These usually describe alternative techniques that could be used, and are

30 Matheson & Hooker 1988, pp. 47–48.

usually introduced with the phrases “*Sebagai lagi*” or “*Sebagai pula*” (“And also”). However, it is not always easy to distinguish a chapter, section or subdivision as they are not always clearly marked, and furthermore a paragraph may instead begin with just the word “*Ini*” (“This is”). In general, chapters or sections on magic (such as instructions for casting spells or making talismans) are usually very short and consist of only a few lines, while topics on divination are usually longer, sometimes spanning multiple pages.

Magical Rites

In the manuscripts a chapter detailing a magical rite would often be set out in this way:

1. First it specifies the tool to be used, for instance whether it is a talisman or an incantation, as well as the purpose for which it is to be employed.
2. Then it explains how the tool is to be administered, for example whether an incantation is to be recited over food, or if an inscription or design is to be drawn on a particular object that is then worn or placed in a specific location.
3. Finally the text gives the relevant incantation, inscription or drawing (or a combination of these).

Being relatively short and rather haphazardly organised within the manuscripts, it is often difficult to compare chapters on magical rites across multiple copies. Nevertheless there are certain passages that appear in a number of manuscripts that have been identified in this book, such as those that relate to the use of the magic square in house-building, as will be set out in Chapter Six.

The attribution of magical rites to legendary Islamic personages is fairly common. For example in Aswandi EAP153/3/16 (Palembang, c. 1890s; cat. 3), Solomon (Arabic: Sulaimān; Malay: Nabi Sulaiman) is credited with an incantation for entering the jungle and with a talisman for protection from wild

beasts.³¹ Meanwhile a talismanic inscription for healing and facilitating childbirth is attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad,³² while methods for enhancing male virility are attributed to the Caliph ‘Alī³³ and the sage Luqmān al-Ḥakīm.³⁴ Nevertheless it must be noted that many magical rites that are described in the magic and divination manuscripts have non-Islamic origins. Some Malay talismanic designs that are attributed to personages such as Solomon and Fāṭima (Muḥammad’s daughter) have ancient histories that precede Islam.³⁵ The exact textual sources for the magical rites that are contained in the manuscripts are yet to be identified, but it is highly likely that well-known books on magic, such as the Hindu *Atharvaveda*³⁶ and the Arabic *Shams al-ma’ārif* of al-Būnī played a great part in influencing the Malay texts.

The magical rites proffered in the manuscripts involve the employment of a number of tools and techniques. The most common include oral incantations, the making of amulets, talismans and effigies, and the practice of herbal medicine.

Oral Incantations

In Malay oral magical incantations are usually referred to as *mantera* (Sanskrit: *mantra*), which according to Haron Daud is a generic term that covers “*semua jenis pengucapan dalam bentuk puisi atau prosa berirama yang mengandung unsur magis dan diamalkan oleh orang tertentu, terutama bomoh, dengan tujuan kebaikan atau sebaliknya*” (“any recitation in the form of a poem or rhyming prose that contains an element of magic, is used by certain people, especially the magician, for the

31 Aswandi EAP153/3/16, fols. 35r and 15r respectively.

32 Aswandi EAP153/3/16, fol. 15v.

33 Aswandi EAP153/3/16, fol. 20v.

34 Aswandi EAP153/3/16, fol. 20r.

35 Pre-Islamic talismanic designs are also found in Javanese manuscripts, Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. III, p. 39.

36 The *Atharvaveda* is one of the four Vedas, or collection of hymns, that are the foundation of Hinduism (many thanks to Crispin Branfoot for this explanation). For the *Atharvaveda*, see Bloomfield 1899.

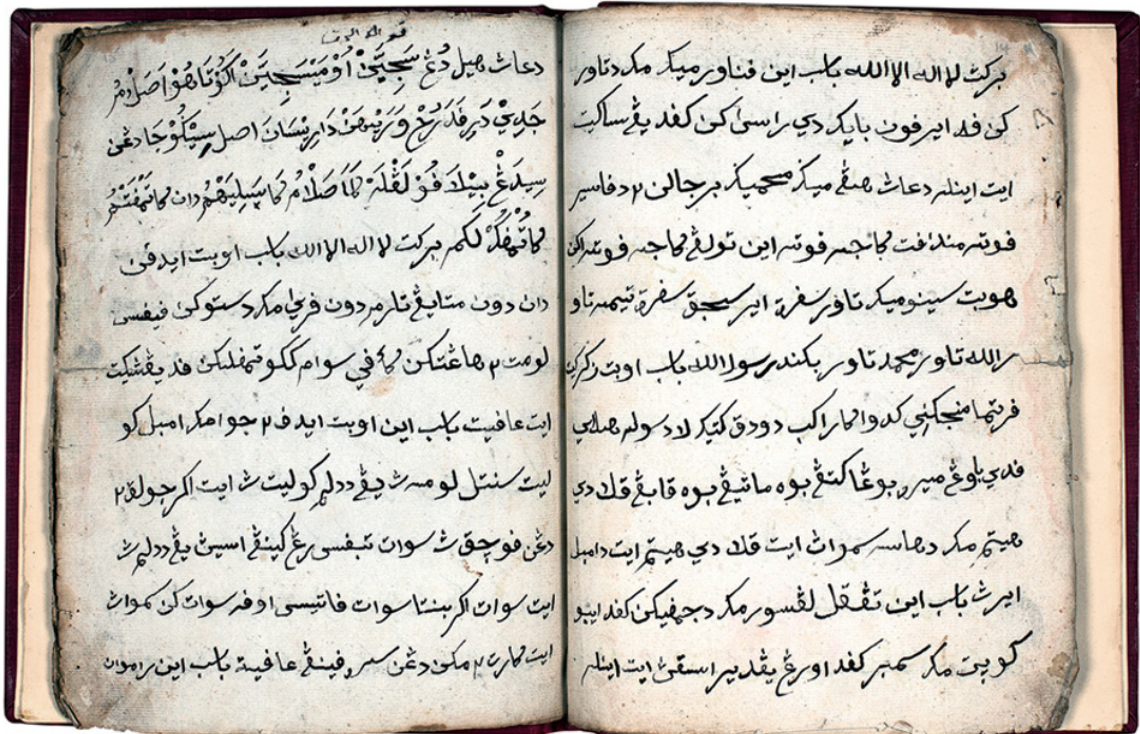


FIGURE 65 Various incantations for healing and recipes for herbal medicine. Perak, c. 1830s–40s. SOAS MS 25027(2) (cat. 91), pp. 14–15. Courtesy of SOAS.

purposes of good or otherwise”).³⁷ Additionally there is also the *jampi* (Sanskrit: *japa*), which Haron defines as “*sejenis mantera yang digunakan untuk menyembuhkan penyakit yang biasanya dibaca pada ubat, air, minyak, dan sebagainya*” (“a form of *mantera* used to cure illnesses that is usually recited over medicine, water, oil, etc.”).³⁸ Apart from these, there is also the *serapah* or *singelar* which is “*digunakan untuk mengusir makhluk halus seperti jin, hantu, syaitan, juga untuk menghalau binatang buas dengan cara sumpahan*” (“used to rid of spirits such as jinn, ghosts, Satan, and also to shoo away wild animals using curses”).³⁹ Although these incantations could be learned from other practitioners, they may also be obtained through supernatural means such as via dream revelations. In addition

there are incantations of a more religious nature that are referred to as *doa* (Arabic: *du‘ā*), which can be translated as prayer formulas or supplications.⁴⁰ The language here is typically Arabic, and is usually employed by religious figures such as an imam (in contrast to a *mantera* where the language used is mainly Malay and is usually recited by a magician).⁴¹ Of course, the most powerful text is that of the Qur’an, which is employed for numerous purposes such as protection and healing.

Since they are used in the oral form, within the manuscripts the texts on incantations are typically unillustrated. An example of an incantation to exorcise the vampire *langsuir* is given in SOAS MS 25027(2) (Perak, c. 1830s–40s; cat. 91; Figure 65):

37 Haron 2007, p. 52; also see Haron 1996.

38 Haron 2007, p. 52; also see Haron 1996.

39 Haron 2007, p. 52; also see Haron 1996.

40 A prayer differs from a spell in that it “petitions gods or higher forces to bring about a desired outcome”, Guiley 2006, s.v. “spell”, also see “prayer”.

41 Mohd. Taib 1989, p. 91.

*“Bab ini tangkal langsuir. Maka dijampikan kepada ibu kunyit maka sembur kepada orang yang dirasuknya itu. Inilah doanya...”*⁴²

“[This chapter is on the protective talisman [*tangkal*] of the *langsuir*. Recite [*jampi*] it over turmeric and spray it on the person possessed. This is the incantation [*doa*]...”

Amulets and Talismans

Besides oral texts, there are a variety of material objects that are used in Malay magic. Amulets, charms and talismans are objects that confer a benefit to its user or wearer, via some sort of magic, and are used for a variety of functions such as protection, healing and sorcery.⁴³ In Malay these are generally called *azimat* or *jimat* (Arabic: *‘azīma*; ‘spell’ or ‘incantation’), although a protective amulet may also be known as a *tangkal*.⁴⁴ These talismans and talismanic objects are then usually worn by a person (Figure 67), consumed or placed at a specific location.

In preparing and using a talisman, there are usually a number of rules and steps that must be followed, as well as certain times that are particularly effective for creating them. SOAS MS 25030 (Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 92) contains a talismanic design in the form of a 10 × 9 grid, most likely an incomplete Latin square (Figure 66).⁴⁵ The cells contain Qur’anic verses from sura 9:128–129, together with the numerical values of the letters of these verses as based on the *abjad* system (these numbers however do not produce the same sum across the rows, columns and two main

diagonals; there is probably a column missing here). The text gives the purpose of the diagram together with instructions on how it should be made:

“Ini suatu faedah wafak ini dijadikan azimat. Akan khasiatnya barangsiapa memakai dia itu dipeliharakan Allah SWT dari peluru dan keris lembing dan tiada mati dengan keramah dan tiada kena penyakit. Maka dilepaskan Allah SWT daripada segala bala dengan berkat azimat ini.

Syahdan jika diwafakkan kepada papan maka dibubuhkan di haluan perahu, maka tiadalah tenggelam perahu itu di laut dengan berkat azimat ini. Dan jika diberi makan kepada perempuan disuratkan kepada mangkuk putih maka dihancurkan dengan air diberi minum, maka tiadalah perempuan itu berbuat kejahatan atas lakinya. Dan lagi tiada kena segala sihir orang.

*Maka tatkala hendak berbuat azimat ini masuk bintang Akrab, maka baharulah berbuat dia. Maka ambil air mawar dan kasturi dan kumkuma menyuratnya. Maka jikalau berbuat azimat ini dibacalah ‘Laqad jā’akum’ tujuh kali pagi dan tujuh petang. Maka terlalulah mujarabnya. Maka inilah mulanya...”*⁴⁶

“[This is on a design for a talisman. Whoever wears it will be protected by God the Glorified and Exalted from bullets and the *keris* [and] spears and will not die with [God’s] favour and will not be stricken with disease. He will be relieved by God the Glorified and Exalted from any misfortune by virtue of this talisman.

If this talisman is drawn on a piece of wood and placed on the prow of a boat, the boat will not sink in the sea by virtue of this talisman. And if you make a woman consume it by drawing it in a white bowl, dissolving it in water and giving it to her to

42 SOAS MS 25027(2), pp. 14–15.

43 The differences between the terms ‘amulet’, ‘charm’ and ‘talisman’ are subtle and sometimes interchangeable, and scholars have attached different meanings to these terms, for instance see Paine 2004, p. 10 and Savage-Smith 1997a, p. 133. In Malay, the distinctions are usually blurred and therefore for the purposes of simplicity this book will use the broad term ‘talisman’.

44 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “azimat”, “tangkal”.

45 See the next chapter for a discussion of Latin squares.

46 SOAS MS 25030, fols. 9r–9v, also in the accompanying romanised transliteration to SOAS MS 25030 (with the same accession number), pp. 52–53. See also Winstedt 1961, p. 88.



FIGURE 66 *Talismanic diagram in the form of a 10 × 9 grid. Kelantan, nineteenth century. SOAS MS 25030 (cat. 92), fol. 8v. Courtesy of SOAS.*

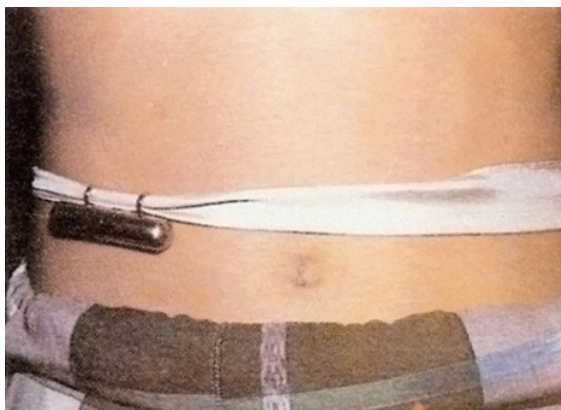


FIGURE 67 An amulet holder worn around the waist containing a piece of paper or cloth with talismanic inscriptions and designs. After Mohd. Kassim, p. 116.

drink, then the woman will not cause harm to her husband. And also a person will not be harmed by sorcery.

When you want to make this talisman [wait until] the time of Scorpio, then you can start making it. Take some rosewater and musk and saffron to draw it. When making this talisman recite '*Laqad jātakum*' [‘Now hath come unto you’; sura 9:128] seven times in the morning and seven in the evening. It is very effective. Here is the beginning...]”

Additionally a few magic and divination manuscripts contain *duā'* that are recited prior to commencing the making of a talisman, as well as the appropriate 'header' (*kepala azimat*) to be inscribed on the talisman for each of the seven days of the week (Figure 86).⁴⁷

While some talismans may be uninscribed, there are many that incorporate “a particular vocabulary of inscriptions and designs.”⁴⁸ The usual Malay term for such elements is *rajah*, although sometimes *wafak* is also used, and they

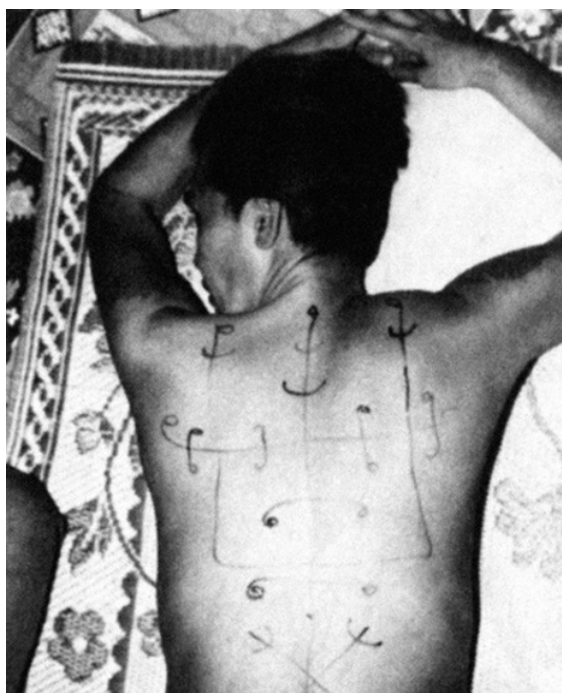


FIGURE 68 Talismanic designs drawn on a patient in a healing ritual. After Werner 1986, plate 19.

could be in the form of letters, numbers, words, geometric designs, drawings of spirits or any combination of these. These talismanic inscriptions and designs are thought to contain great power that may be utilised to affect the intended purpose of the user. The *rajah* is thus written, drawn or inscribed onto materials such as paper, cloth, metal or leaves in order to create the necessary talisman. For example, a common method of healing includes writing and drawing a *rajah* onto a piece of paper which is then burnt, with the patient drinking water that has been mixed with the ashes. The presence of a *rajah* also imbues everyday items such as food containers, weapons (Figure 226) and clothing with magical properties. For instance, the patient may be asked to drink water from a bowl on which talismanic texts and designs have been inscribed (Figure 259). The *rajah* may also be placed directly onto an object that is to be affected, for example they may be drawn directly onto the

47 For instance in Aswandi EAP153/3/16 (Palembang, c. 1890s; cat. 3), fols. 18v–19r and PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47), fol. 3r.

48 Quote from Porter 2006, p. 794.



FIGURE 69 Talismanic design named Penjuru[?] Sasak. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, early twentieth century. PNM MS 273 (cat. 24), fol. 7v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

human body (Figure 68). It is possible to have the power of these drawings annulled later.⁴⁹

Malay magic and divination manuscripts give a variety of *raja* to be used for different purposes. After specifying the function of the talisman, the method of preparation and how it is to be used, the text then provides a drawing of the appropriate *raja* that needs to be written, drawn or inscribed onto the object, usually preceded by the phrase “*Inilah rajahnya*” (“This is the *raja*”) or “*Ini yang disurat*” (“This is what is to be written/drawn”). The names of some of the designs are given in the texts, such as *Pintu Bumi* (“The Door of the Earth”) in IAMM 1998.1.579 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 20) and *Penjuru*[?] Sasak (“The Wattled Corners[?]”) in PNM MS 273 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, early twentieth century; cat. 24; Figure 69):

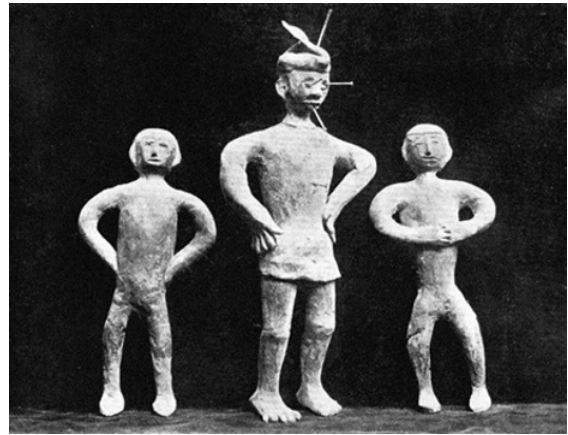


FIGURE 70 Wax human effigies, Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. After Skeat 1900, pl. 28, fig. 1.

“*Bab ini P.c.r [Penjuru?] Sasak namanya. Disurat pada tembikar tepayang [tempayan]. Maka ditanam empat penjurunya. Inilah rajahnya.*”⁵⁰

“[This chapter is named *P.c.r [Penjuru?] Sasak*. Inscribe it on ceramic jars. Bury them in the four corners [of the house]. This is the *raja*].”

Some of the more common talismanic designs found in the manuscripts are discussed in Chapter Six.

Effigies

Also within the manuscripts are texts on how to bind or harm other people using their images or effigies (*rupa*). In Malay practice, these effigies may be either sculpted or drawn. Those that are sculpted could be made out of any type of material but one of the most common is wax (Figure 70). These wax figurines are mixed with items belonging to the victim, such as the soil of the footprint, nails, hair or saliva. In order to affect the victim the figurine is subject to various procedures such as smoked over incense, burnt over fire, or pierced with something sharp.⁵¹ Alternatively figures may

49 See Laderman 1993, p. 220.

50 PNM MS 273, fol. 7v.

51 Skeat 1900, pp. 569–574, also see pp. 45–46.

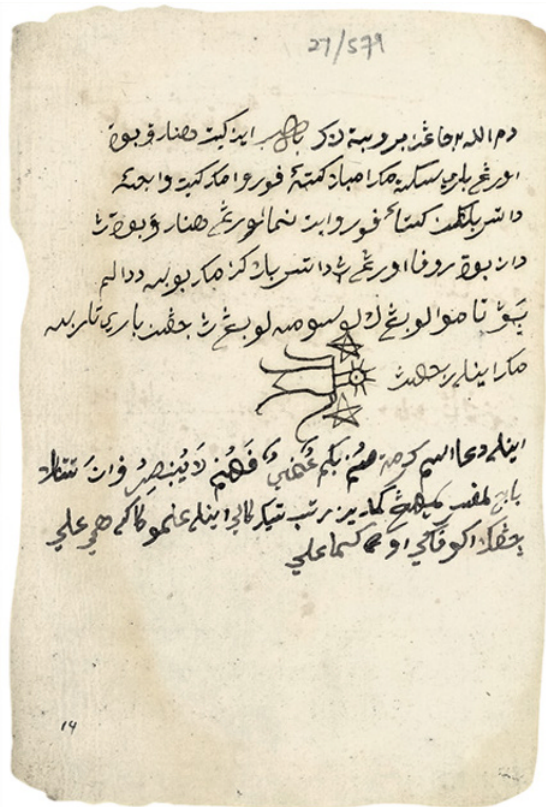


FIGURE 71 Drawing of human effigy. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.579 (cat. 20), p. 27. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

be drawn on paper⁵² or any other surfaces. When drawn, they typically include magical writing such as letters, words, phrases or numbers, together with the name of the victim. Just as with the texts on incantations and talismans, in the manuscripts a chapter on creating an effigy would usually begin with specifying its purpose, followed by how it is to be prepared and used, and finally a drawing of what it should look like (Figures 62, 71, 159, 195, 284). For instance, IAMM 1998.1.579 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 20) describes one method on how to make a person sick, together with the image that is to be drawn (Figure 71):

“Bab ini kita hendak buat orang beri sakit. Maka ambil katak puru, maka kita wajah di atas belakang

*katak puru itu nama orang hendak buatnya dan buat rupa orangnya di atas belakang. Maka bubuh di dalam b-w-n-a-m-w[?] lubang, kalau sumbat lubangnya jangan beri terbit, maka inilah rajahnya.”*⁵³

“[This chapter is if we want to make someone ill. Find a toad, write the person’s name and draw an image [*rupa*] of that person onto its back. Put it in a *b-w-n-a-m-w*[?] hole. If you plug the hole do not let it escape. This is the *raja*h.]”

The distinction between talismans and effigies can be blurry. A talisman created in order to protect against evil spirits such as the *pelesit* may involve a drawing of the spirit itself, onto which are added magical inscriptions or symbols to bind it (Figures 72, 73, 156, 181a, b). Furthermore within some manuscripts drawings of the effigies are also referred to as *raja*h. The human and spirit figures in these drawings are often depicted in a pose known as the spread-eagled squatting posture, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Herbal Medicine

Many of the medical cures in the *kitab tib* (‘medical books’) and magic and divination manuscripts are in the form of preparations of mixtures, ointments and concoctions (Figure 65). Although these recipes are typically known as herbal medicine, the ingredients are not only limited to herbs but may also include spices, animal products (such as eggs) and minerals (such as sulphur). It must be noted that the preparation and administration of the medicine may also be supplemented with magical rites. In the manuscripts, texts on herbal medicine are typically unillustrated, unless there are talismanic designs involved.

Usage of Magical Rites

An investigation into the contents of the manuscripts helps to reveal the types of concerns and

52 For example, see Shahrum 1966, pp. 37–40.

53 IAMM 1998.1.579, p. 27.



FIGURE 72 Talismanic designs against evil spirits. Melaka, c. 1845. DBP MS 119 (cat. 9), p. 25. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.



FIGURE 73 Talismanic design against the pelesit spirit. Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1394(3) (cat. 33), fol. 3v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

issues that were important to their copyists and compilers, and by extension to the clients of the magicians as well.⁵⁴ Aswandi EAP153/3/16 (Palembang, c. 1890s; cat. 3) for instance contains around 286 chapters predominantly on spells and herbal remedies (which often also involve magical rites). Of these chapters, 35% are to do with love, sex and relationships. The most common is love magic with the aim of capturing the passion of a woman (*perkasih* or *pengasih*), as well as other topics such as ensuring that a woman will not be attracted to another man, creating marital strife, helping couples reconcile, increasing one's attractiveness and enhancing virility. Another 30% of the chapters are to do with healing and medical

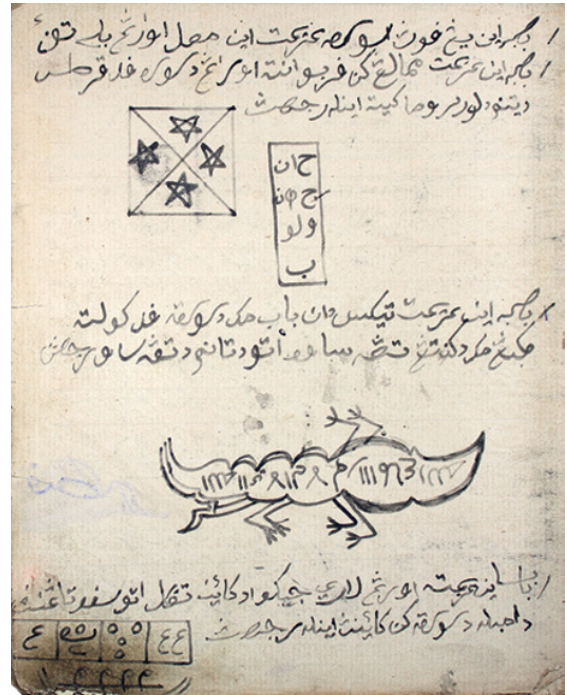


FIGURE 74 Talismanic designs for protection against mice/rats and wild boars. Palembang, c. 1890s. Aswandi EAP153/3/16 (cat. 3), unnumbered folio between fols. 20 and 23. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.

matters, demonstrating one of the roles of the Malay magician as a medical practitioner. This includes curing illnesses that are caused by spirits and facilitating childbirth. 10% of the chapters are to do with protection, including protecting one's self as well as the home (for example from thieves and spirits) and crops (from wild animals and pests; Figure 74).

Similar concerns are found in SOAS MS 25027(2), which is a manuscript belonging to a Perak royal magician, datable to the 1830s–40s (cat. 91; Figures 65, 220, 292). Its contents indicate that his interests did not differ greatly from practitioners who serve the general public. About half of the 83 chapters/sections are to do with healing (54%), and within this figure are illnesses such as malarial fever (*kepialu*), dizziness (*pen-*

ing), eye disease (*mata sakit*) and constipation (*sembelit*), as well as those that are caused by spirits which have to be expelled and protected against. A fairly large part of healing is devoted to the treatment of children (usually for convulsions and crying), as well as with men's sexual health (*sakit laki-laki*). 16% of the chapters are to do with love and sex, which include rites for attracting women and enhancing a person's attractiveness to the public in general, together with herbal remedies for increasing men's sexual performance. Perhaps appropriate for a magician who is connected to the royal court are the instructions on war magic (11% of the chapters). These include protection from enemies (both in terms of physical harm and from magic), scaring enemies (*pengeri*) and silencing hostile witnesses (*pemberat lidah*). However, although an important task of the royal magician is to preside over state rituals and functions, there is no mention of this in the manuscript. Although it is possible that the owner of SOAS MS 25027(2) had other books on this subject, it is most likely that such knowledge was kept and transmitted orally.

Divinatory Techniques

One of the major concerns in many Southeast Asian societies (including the Malays) is the determination of auspicious and inauspicious times. This is reflected within both traditional Malay literature as well as more recent ethnological reports.⁵⁵ It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that

within the manuscripts, the majority of divinatory texts found are concerned with trying to determine favourable and unfavourable times, whereby the periods in question range from hours and days to longer cycles such as months and years. Closely related to this is directionology, i.e. determining favourable and unfavourable directions. These two elements are particularly important in areas such as travelling, house construction and agriculture, and many of the divinatory techniques regarding time and direction are also found in other Southeast Asian societies such as the Bugis, Batak, Javanese and Thai. Malay divination also aims to shed light on other matters such as diagnosing ailments, tracking lost items, discerning the profitability of business ventures and predicting the fortune of a newborn child. Another common concern is determining the outcome of relationships (i.e. if a couple is suitable for marriage), or in the case of warfare to ascertain the victor and the loser.

In the manuscripts, some of the texts on divination (such as the *Faal Quran*) begin by naming the technique followed by instructions for how they operate, as well as any rules that must be observed in carrying out the divinatory process. However in most cases these instructions are not included in the texts, making it very difficult to ascertain how the methods work or even to identify the name of the technique. Instead, the main component of the texts is usually the prognostication or forecast, which is constructed in the form of the conditional statement 'If (*jika*) P, then Q'. Some texts also offer instructions for ways to counteract a bad prognosis. For example, according to the text of the *Ketika Lima*, an illness occurring during the watch of Śrī could be cured by making a particular talisman inscribed using the blood of a chicken.

The most common divinatory techniques found among the manuscripts include tables and compasses for determining good and bad times and directions, numerology (including letter-number interpretation, lucky/unlucky measurements and counting methods), sortilege, dream interpretation,

54 A similar approach has been conducted on medieval English magic manuscripts from the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries in Klaassen 1998.

55 A search within the Malay Concordance Project database for '*ketika yang baik*' and '*saat yang baik*' ('the right time' or 'the right moment') generates over 40 texts containing these phrases, <http://mcp.anu.edu.au>, search conducted on 12 April 2011.

physiognomy, and omens. There is sometimes an overlap between the categories, and many of the techniques have some basis in astrology.

Astrology

Astrology refers to “... the interpretation of the movements of the stars as a fulfilment of the will of the various godly powers so that men, by watching such movements, can determine the approach of fortune or misfortune...”⁵⁶ Although it is not strictly divination,⁵⁷ it nevertheless underpins many divinatory techniques. The ‘stars’ in astrology are of two types: the first consists of the fixed stars that remain static and form constellations, while the second comprises the seven classical planets which include the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. These seven planets travel along the zodiac⁵⁸ which is divided into twelve sections of 30 degrees, each containing an astrological sign (Aries, Leo, etc.).⁵⁹ In addition the planets and signs also move across twelve divisions known as ‘houses’, each of which influences a particular aspect of human life such as health or money.⁶⁰ In Malay, astrology is known as *ilmu nujum*,⁶¹ derived from the Arabic *‘ilm al-nujūm* (‘the science of the stars’⁶²). The seven planets are referred to as

Bintang Tujuh (‘The Seven Stars’) or *Raja Bintang* (‘Kings of the Stars’), while the twelve constellations or signs are called *Bintang Dua Belas* (‘The Twelve Stars’).⁶³ The Malay names of the individual planets and signs are of Arabic origin and are listed in Tables 8 and 9. Each of the seven planets has specific qualities (for example Mars is a malefic planet while Jupiter is benefic), and their movement across the heavens influences human lives and activities. Thus natural astrology concerns the effect of the planets on the natural world (for example in causing rain), while judicial astrology investigates how they affect human life directly. The latter includes the future of political entities and of the world (revolutions or mundane astrology), but within the Malay manuscripts the most important concerns are to do with practical day-to-day matters such as predicting the future based on a person’s time of birth (genethliology or natal astrology), determining the most auspicious time to do something (electional, elective or catarchic astrology) and answering specific questions or problems based on the time of the query (interrogations or horary astrology).

The use of Arabic terms for the planets and the zodiacal signs indicates that the Malay astrological tradition has been greatly influenced by that of the Islamic world.⁶⁴ Yet it was preceded by an earlier Indian tradition, as the Srivijayan inscriptions mentioned in Chapter Three demonstrate a familiarity with astrological concepts from at least the seventh century.⁶⁵ An Old Malay stone tablet commemorating the foundation of a park or garden by King Śrī Jayanāśa that was found in Talang Tuwo,

56 Jeffers 1996, p. 147.

57 Burnett 1996, p. ix.

58 A path or band centred on the ecliptic (the path of the sun).

59 Although the astrological signs are based on the constellations, they differ in two ways: firstly, while the signs equal 30 degrees across the ecliptic, the size and positions of their associated constellations are not so precise. Secondly, there is the issue of precession (the oscillation of the Earth’s axis), which means that although both sign and constellation might be at the same position during Babylonian times, over the centuries both have diverged, see Whitfield 2001, pp. 22–23.

60 For an overview of astrology, see amongst others Kaske & Clark 1989, pp. 32–38; Pingree 1997; Whitfield 2001; Cuianu 2005; Guiley 2006, s.v. “astrology”.

61 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “nujum”.

62 Savage-Smith 2004, p. xxxiv.

63 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “bintang”. Note that the term ‘*Bintang Tujuh*’ is also used to refer to the constellation of Pleiades.

64 For an overview of Islamic astrology, see Pingree 1987; Fahd “Nudjūm (Aḥkām al-);” Whitfield 2001, pp. 82–96; Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xxxvi–xl.

65 For an overview of Hindu astrology, see Pingree 1981, pp. 81–114; Sivapriyananda 1990; Whitfield 2001, p. 31.

Palembang, dated 684 AD, mentions planets and lunar mansions:⁶⁶ “*Waraṃ wuatāña kathamapi anukūla yaṃ graha nakṣatra parāwis diya...*” (“Whatever they do, may all the planets [*graha*] and constellations [*nakṣatra*] be favourable to them...”).⁶⁷ Elsewhere, the Sanskrit Ligor inscription, found in Nakhon Si Thammarat, Southern Thailand, contains praises for a king of Srivijaya and gives the date of Śaka 697 / 775 AD “on the eleventh day of the bright half of the (month of) Vaiśākha, the sun rising in company of Venus in Cancer...”⁶⁸ Both of these examples show a knowledge of Indian astrology and strongly suggest that there were astrologers trained in that tradition at the Srivijayan royal court. This Indic astronomical and astrological heritage survives into the Islamic period. Malay divinatory methods involving time are usually referred to by the term *ketika* which could have been derived from the Sanskrit *ghaṭikā* (a division of time denoting 24 minutes),⁶⁹ or possibly from the name of the star cluster Pleiades (Sanskrit: *Kṛttikā*). Additionally *rāśi*, the Sanskrit term for zodiacal signs, continues today in Malay as *rasi* or *raksi* which refers to the compatibility of two people. The usage of Arabic terms could be dated to up to the fourteenth century as evidenced by the inscription on the Terengganu Stone, but here it seems that the zodiacal sign mentioned was assigned to a whole year: “... *Jumaat di bulan Rejab di tahun Saratan...*” (“... a Friday in the month of Rajab in the year of Cancer...”).⁷⁰ Blagden believes that this method of attributing a zodiacal sign to a

year was a continuation of a Hindu system whereby the year was named after the sign in which Jupiter was located when the Sun entered Aries; alternatively it might have been a local adaptation which named the year after the sign in which Jupiter was located when the Islamic year began.⁷¹

However the Malay interest in astrology is not reflected in its art, even though depictions of planets and zodiacal signs are found in the Indian and Islamic astrological traditions, both of which were derived from the Greeks.⁷² Such images are also found in other parts of Southeast Asia. For instance in Myanmar each day of the week (Wednesday is divided into two) is associated with a planet that rides a certain animal, and in a Burmese pagoda each planet is associated with one of the eight cardinal and intercardinal directions.⁷³ Thus around the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon there are planetary shrines, each containing a planetary post together with an image of the personification of the planet, their animal vehicle and the Buddha, to whom a person born on that day would make offerings to.⁷⁴ In addition images of the twelve zodiacal signs and the eight animal vehicles of the planets are popular designs on Burmese lacquer

66 Jakarta, Museum Nasional Indonesia, D 145. The stone is published in Westenenk 1921, pl. opposite p. 10; Coedès 1992, p. 46, pl. v, p. 51, pl. vi; Hunter 1996, p. 6, fig. 3.

67 Text and translation from Coedès 1992, pp. 49–50, the square bracketed terms in the quote above are my own additions; also see Ronkel 1924, pp. 13–19.

68 Chhabra 1965, p. 34.

69 Niemann 1870, p. 133, n. 1 however notes that this interpretation is not 100% certain.

70 The content of the inscription is a code of law. There has been some debate as to the reading of its date as

the final part is missing, with the possibilities ranging between 702 AH / 1302–03 AD and 789 AH / 1387–88 AD. A transliteration of the Malay text and an English translation could be found in Paterson 1924, pp. 255–258, from which the above reading (the spelling has been normalised) and translation is taken. For further discussions on the Stone and its dating, see Blagden 1924; Casparis 1975, pp. 70–71. The Stone is now in Muzium Negeri Terengganu (State Museum of Terengganu), Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia.

71 Blagden 1924, pp. 259–261.

72 For the Indian tradition, see Pingree 1989; Sivapriyananda 1990. For the Islamic world, see Carboni 1997; Caiozzo 2003; Boudet, *et al.* 2011.

73 Like Indian astrology, Burmese astrology adds two planets to the existing seven: *Rahu* (Sanskrit: *Rāhu*) and *Kate* (Sanskrit: *Ketu*). On the Burmese planets see Htin Aung 1959, pp. 11–22; also Moore 2007.

74 See Moore, *et al.* 1999, pp. 75–77, 106–108.



FIGURE 75 Leo (Singa) and Virgo (Kanya). Cirebon, Java, c. 1811–16. RAS Raffles Java 1, pp. 240–241. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

betel-boxes.⁷⁵ Similarly, in East Java and Bali there are bronze holy water beakers (*prasen*) dating to the Majapahit period (specifically the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) which are usually referred to as ‘zodiac beakers’ as they are decorated with images of the zodiacal signs.⁷⁶ Illustrations of the twelve zodiacal signs also appear in a Javanese manuscript that was copied for Stamford Raffles from an earlier manuscript belonging to the *tumenggung* (governor) of Talaga in Cirebon, West Java (Figure 75).⁷⁷ Here the names of the Javanese

zodiacal signs are based on Sanskrit terminology, for example *Mesa* (Sanskrit: *Meṣa*) for Aries and *Tula* (Sanskrit: *Tulā*) for Libra, and each illustration is accompanied by an explanation of the sign. Meanwhile in Bali the constellations are used in a local ‘star calendar’ known as *pelelintangan* or *palelintangan* (from *lintang*, ‘star’) which provide information on good and bad days. These calendars are produced by the combination of a five-day week and a seven-day week using a Javanese calendrical system known as *pawukon*, which result in a series of 35 days. Each of these days is named after a star, a few of which could be recognised as having

75 Isaacs & Blurton 2002, p. 58, also cats. 9, 45, 56, 63, 64, 130.

76 Casparis 1978, pp. 32–33. For an example see Miksic 2007, p. 245. These objects are still used and venerated among certain communities of East Java, see Hefner 1985, p. 27 and figs. 3–4; Beatty 2004, pp. 107–110.

77 RAS Raffles Java 1, Cirebon, West Java, datable to 1811–16, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 77. Raffles dis-

cusses the provenance and contents of this manuscript in his 1817 book *The History of Java*, see Raffles 1978, vol. 1, pp. 477–478, vol. II, p. 52, with the illustrations of the zodiacal signs published in vol. 1 on opposite p. 478.

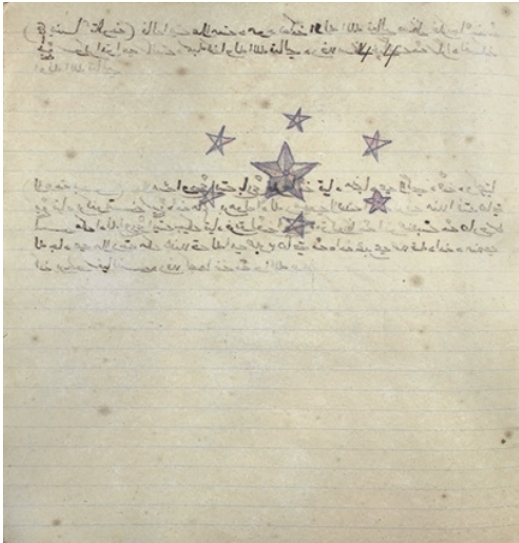


FIGURE 76 *Venus rising in the night* (Bintang Zuhrah terbit malam). Pictorial fālnāma, Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century. Aswandi N-06 (cat. 1), fol. 44r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.

Indic origins such as *Kumba* (Sanskrit: *Kumbha*) for Aquarius and *Karitika* (Sanskrit: *Kṛttikā*) for Pleiades. These calendars are typically illustrated.⁷⁸ In Sumatra images of the zodiacal signs are found in Batak *pustaka* manuscripts.⁷⁹

In Malay art however such imagery is rare. Only a few illustrations of planets are found among the magic and divination manuscripts, and these are restricted to the genre of the pictorial *fālnāma* which include depictions of the Sun, the Moon and Venus (Figures 76, 77). However images of the zodiacal signs are yet to be found, although it is possible that some of the images in the pictorial *fālnāma* were derived from astrology even if they are not labelled as such. For instance the two fish in the pictorial *fālnāma* known as *Faal Nursi* could represent Pisces (Figures 149, 150), while the lion in Aswandi N-06

(Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century; cat. 1) might refer to Leo (Figure 203). The reasons behind the lack of visual representation within the Malay astrological tradition are as yet unclear, and the paucity of early evidence also makes it difficult to determine if there was previously an iconographical tradition that has not survived, or if there was ever one in the first place.

At the same time there are other elements of Indian and Islamic astrology that are not found within the Malay tradition. The construction of horoscopes – a two-dimensional diagram “which depicts the positions of the planets in the zodiacal signs and of the zodiacal signs relative to the local horizon at a given time”⁸⁰ – does not appear in the manuscripts, and a clear reference to the concept of houses is yet to be found. Instead, the majority of astrological-based techniques involve simpler methods, such as onomancy and the use of tables of planetary hours (see below). Indeed as Richard Wilkinson notes, astrologers (*ahli nujum*) only seem to appear in literary works, and he suggests that a detailed study of the stars by Malay society was probably hampered by the lack of clear skies due to persistent rain clouds.⁸¹ Yet on the other hand there is in fact knowledge of the stars and constellations, some of which have local names.⁸² For instance in the northern region of the Malay peninsula, the Pleiades (*Bintang Ketika*, ‘The *Kṛttikā* Star’ or *Bintang Tujuh*, ‘The Seven Stars’) is consulted for rice-planting in order to ascertain the best variety of rice that could be planted during that season.⁸³

A similar situation could be seen in other parts of Southeast Asia. Pigeaud notes that Javanese manuscripts do not refer to the casting of horoscopes either.⁸⁴ Also in Java the significance of the

78 On the *pelelintangan*, see Akkeren 1971, Eiseman 1989, pp. 193–215; Vickers 2011, pp. 62–63.

79 Revunenкова 2005, table 2.

80 Pingree 2004.

81 Wilkinson 1906, p. 67.

82 Skeat 1900, p. 551; Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “bintang”. For astronomy in maritime Southeast Asia, see Maass 1924.

83 Rahimah 2010, pp. 218–219.

84 Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, p. 281.

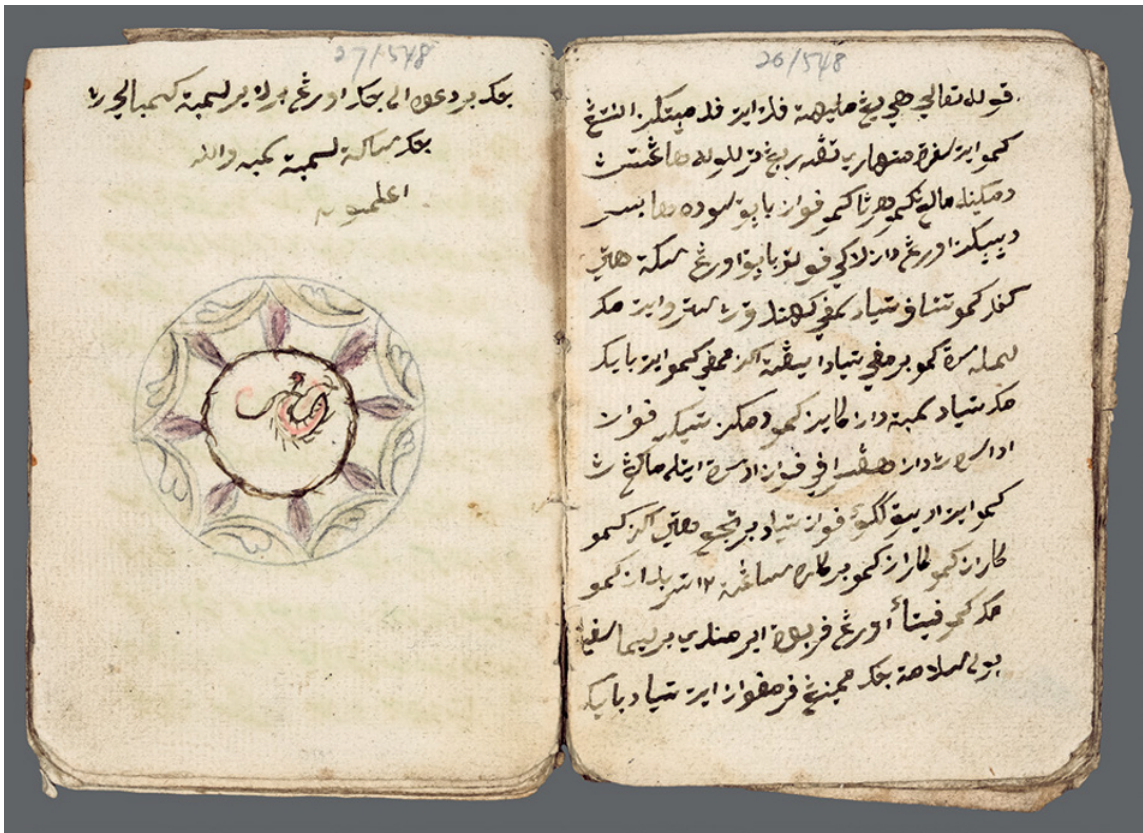


FIGURE 77 *The blazing sun at noon* (Matahari tengah hari yang terlalu hangatnya). Faal Nursi ('Divination of Nursi'), Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.548 (cat. 17), pp. 26–27. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

zodiacal signs does not relate to their movement and positions – instead Raffles mentions that according to his Cirebon manuscript each sign is said to preside over an entire year (similar to the fourteenth-century Malay Terengganu Stone), and provides predictions of what will happen during that period.⁸⁵ Meanwhile in Thai traditional society the casting of horoscopes was largely limited to the royal court.⁸⁶ This suggests that in Southeast Asia simpler divinatory methods were preferred, or perhaps there was more of an emphasis on the cyclical nature of time, which meant that other

forms of divination such as calendrical tables were preferred to horoscopes.⁸⁷

Tables, Lists and Charts of Auspicious/ Inauspicious Times

A common method to determine lucky and unlucky times is to divide a day into a number of time periods that rotate over a weekly cycle, with each period being presided over by a watch that influences human activity during that time. This information is typically summarised in the form of a table, and is sometimes followed by a more

85 Raffles 1978, vol. 1, p. 478.

86 Ginsburg 1989, p. 22.

87 For the importance of cyclical time among Malay and Javanese societies, see Proudfoot 2006.

detailed explanation of the prognostication for each watch. This procedure is based on the concept of planetary hours, whereby a day is divided into twenty-four hours, each of which is ruled by one of the seven planets, rotating over a cycle of seven days (Table 1). The planets are given in the sequence of Saturn – Jupiter – Mars – Sun – Venus – Mercury – Moon,⁸⁸ so for example the first hour of Saturday is ruled by Saturn, the second hour by Jupiter, the third by Mars, and so on. Since there are twenty-four hours and only seven planets, for the eighth hour the cycle begins with Saturn again. On the following day, the sequence would continue on from the twenty-fourth hour of the previous day.⁸⁹ As this method does not involve the calculation of horoscopes, it is simpler and can be used by those without the required technical skills.

Within the Malay texts this is sometimes referred to as *Bintang Dua Belas* ('The Twelve Stars'; not to be confused with the twelve zodiacal signs which is also referred to in the same way). The planetary hours table is found in a few Malay manuscripts (Figures 27, 78). A day is divided into twelve hours of daytime (*hari*) and twelve hours of nighttime (*malam*). Typically in the tables the daytime hours of one day are combined with the nighttime hours of a day that has the same planetary sequence, probably to avoid duplication (Table 1). Thus the daytime hours of Sunday (*hari Ahad*) are combined with the nighttime hours of Thursday (*malam Khamis*), and the daytime hours of Monday (*hari Isnin*) are combined with the

nighttime hours of Friday (*malam Jumaat*).⁹⁰ The day is said to begin at 6 o'clock.⁹¹ The cells of these tables often include the prognostication of the hour, thus for example the seventh hour of Monday daytime and Friday nighttime is ruled by Saturn, and according to PNM MS 2121 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, 1932; cat. 54) during this period: "*Dan berperang baik kutika itu*" ('And this is a good time for going into war').⁹² A few manuscripts however give an alternative sequence of days and planets, for instance whereby the daytime hours of Monday (*hari Isnin*) correspond to the nighttime hours of Sunday (*malam Ahad*) instead.⁹³

Apart from tables detailing the twenty-four hours of the day, in some Malay manuscripts a simpler version is found whereby the day is divided into only seven time periods with one for each planet, and this is known as the *Ketika Tujuh* ('Seven Times'; Table 2; Figure 79).⁹⁴ Here, hours 8 to 24 in the planetary hours system are discarded, leaving only the first seven hours of the day with their planets intact. These seven periods are then altered into morning (*pagi-pagi*), forenoon (*tengah naik*), just before noon (*hampir tengah hari*), noon (*tengah hari*), the time of the Zuhur prayer (*Zuhur*),

88 Based on either their orbital periods or distances from Earth, see Zerubavel, pp. 14–15.

89 For the planetary hours and days, see Cumont 1912, pp. 164–166; Gandz 1948–49, pp. 213–224; Zerubavel 1989, pp. 12–20. For its use in the Islamic and India traditions, see al-Bīrūnī 1934, pp. 237–238; also for India see Fleet 1912, who observes that planetary days were in use in Southeast Asia by the seventh and eighth centuries in inscriptions from Champa, Java and Cambodia, see pp. 1044–1045. For the Malay system, see Winstedt 1961, pp. 87–88; Abdul Rahman 2006, pp. 266–270.

90 Note that the Malay day begins on the previous night, so here Friday night (*malam Jumaat*) actually refers to Thursday night in the Western method of reckoning time.

91 PNM MS 1790 (probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 43), pp. 1–6, PNM MS 2121 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, 1932; cat. 54), fol. 2v–4r, PNM MS 2796 (Patani or Kelantan, c. 1890s; cat. 67), fols. 14v–21r, PNM MS 3007 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late 1870s–80s; cat. 74), pp. 49–50, PNM MS 3225 (Pontianak, 1885–86; cat. 78), fols. 14v–15r (time not specified), DBP MS 119 (Melaka, c. 1845; cat. 9), pp. 43–50 (no table; here the day begins at 7 o'clock).

92 PNM MS 2121, fol. 2v.

93 PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47), fol. 8r, PNM MS 3429 (Singapore, 1907; cat. 80), pp. 7–8 and in the *Tajul Muluk*, Ismail [n.d.]a, p. 13.

94 For the *Ketika Tujuh*, see Skeat 1900, pp. 548–549, 558, 659–660.

TABLE 1 *Table of the planetary hours.*

| Day | Hours | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Sunday daytime / Thursday nighttime | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn |
| Monday daytime / Friday nighttime | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun |
| Tuesday daytime / Saturday nighttime | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon |
| Wednesday daytime / Sunday nighttime | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars |
| Thursday daytime / Monday nighttime | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury |
| Friday daytime / Tuesday nighttime | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter |
| Saturday daytime / Wednesday nighttime | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus |



FIGURE 78 Table of planetary hours. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, 1932. PNM MS 2121 (cat. 54), fols. 2v-3r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

TABLE 2 Ketika Tujuh table

| Day | Period | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------|------------------|---------|-------------|--------------|---------|
| | Morning | Forenoon | Just before noon | Noon | Zuhr prayer | 'Ashr prayer | Evening |
| Sunday | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars |
| Monday | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury |
| Tuesday | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter |
| Wednesday | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus |
| Thursday | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn |
| Friday | Venus | Mercury | Moon | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun |
| Saturday | Saturn | Jupiter | Mars | Sun | Venus | Mercury | Moon |

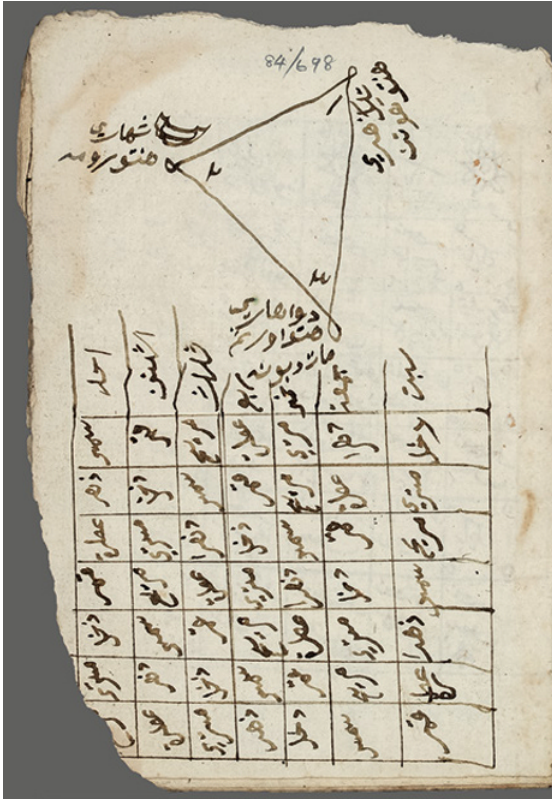


FIGURE 79 *Angka Tiga* diagram (top) and *Ketika Tujuh* table (bottom). Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.698 (cat. 21), p. 84. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

the time of the ‘Aṣr prayer (*Asar*) and evening (*petang-petang*). Each planet is either benefic or malefic, thus influencing human activities during the time period it presides over. Some texts also associate each planet with a prophet and a colour.

At the same time there are other similar tables which give alternative time cycles and presiding rulers, with the most common being the *Ketika Lima* (‘Five Times’; Table 3).⁹⁵ This method is the most popular divinatory technique found, appearing in 39% of the manuscripts studied. Here each day is divided into five time periods: morning (*pagi-pagi*), forenoon (*tengah naik*), noon (*tengah*

hari), afternoon (*tengah turun*) and evening (*petang-petang*). The cycle begins on the first day of the month, and therefore occasionally an upward-facing crescent moon is placed on the top right hand corner of the table to indicate the start of a new month and the place to begin counting.⁹⁶ The five time periods of the day are presided over by Hindu gods, who rotate their positions over a five-day cycle. They are: Maswara (a contraction of Maheśvara, ‘Great Lord’, a term usually associated with the god Śiva), Kala (Kāla), Sri (Śrī), Brahma (Brahmā) and Bisnu (Viṣṇu). In the majority of manuscripts the gods are sequenced as in Table 3 (Figures 42, 49, 80, 83, 94, 244, 246, 248), but occasionally alternate sequences are also found (Figures 25, 40, 81, 245).

Like the astrological planets, each god is either of a positive or negative nature and is associated with a colour (*kelakuan*), and therefore affects the actions that are carried out during the time period accordingly. Thus as mentioned in Chapter Four the cells of some of the *Ketika Lima* tables have been painted to reflect the colours of the gods. Furthermore, the prognostications that relate to the watches are elaborated in texts that accompany the tables, with the predictions often being linked to their colours. Thus for Brahmā:

“Bab pada ketika Brahma, kelakuannya merah. Jika kita berjalan bertemu dengan orang berkelahi, atau kita melihat darah, atau kita bertemu dengan orang bendahara; bahawa ketika itu amat jahat. Jika kita berjalan diperjamu orang dengan makanan merah seperti k-a-d-ng atau daging atau habwa. Jika warta baik, tiada sungguh; jika warta jahat, sungguh. Pada suatu kaul jika membawa warta jahat ketika itu warna tubuhnya putih atau pakaian putih, tiada sungguh khabarnya sebab bersalahan kelakuan. Jika benda hilang ketika itu, laki-laki memaling dia, merah kulit atau rambutnya, atau matanya bilis,

95 For the *Ketika Lima*, see Skeat 1900, pp. 545–547, 556–558, 656–658.

96 Skeat 1900, p. 556.

TABLE 3 Ketika Lima table

| Day | Period | | | | |
|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Morning | Forenoon | Noon | Afternoon | Evening |
| Day 1 | Maheśvara | Kāla | Śrī | Brahmā | Viṣṇu |
| Day 2 | Viṣṇu | Maheśvara | Kāla | Śrī | Brahmā |
| Day 3 | Brahmā | Viṣṇu | Maheśvara | Kāla | Śrī |
| Day 4 | Śrī | Brahmā | Viṣṇu | Maheśvara | Kāla |
| Day 5 | Kāla | Śrī | Brahmā | Viṣṇu | Maheśvara |

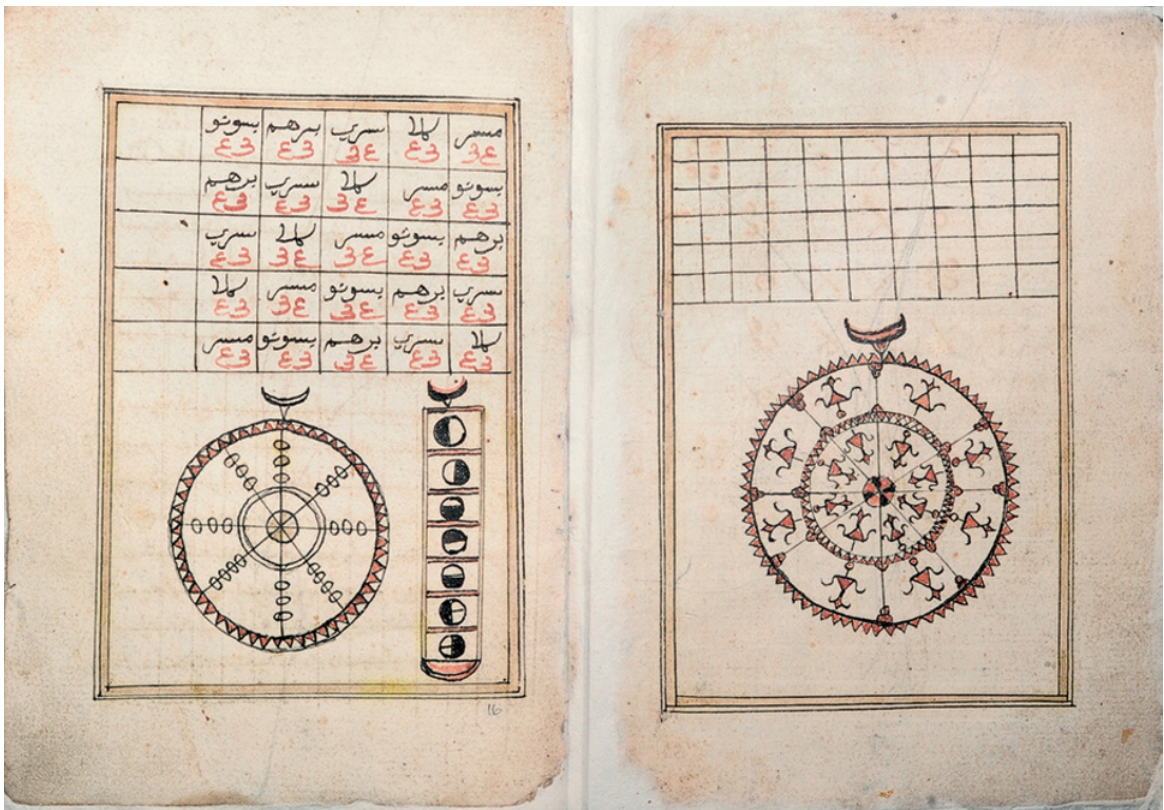


FIGURE 80 Rajamuka wheel (right) and Ketika Lima table and compass rose (left). Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2344(B) (cat. 56), fols. 15v-16r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

perkataannya l-m-ng-h a-ṣ-a-l-ny sedia dusta; benda itu ditanamnya, jika d-k-w-s [dikeras] didapatnya. Jika perempuan, d-t-a-h-ny [ditanam] di bawah dapur jua. Jika sahaya lari ke barat halnya; dibuan-

gan timur, kemudian kembali jua kepada empunya sahaya. Pada suatu kaul jika lanjut ia ke ba(rat), lepas. Jika mengadap raja pun jahat. Jika hendak kepada keluarga pun tiada kita dapat. Jika kita

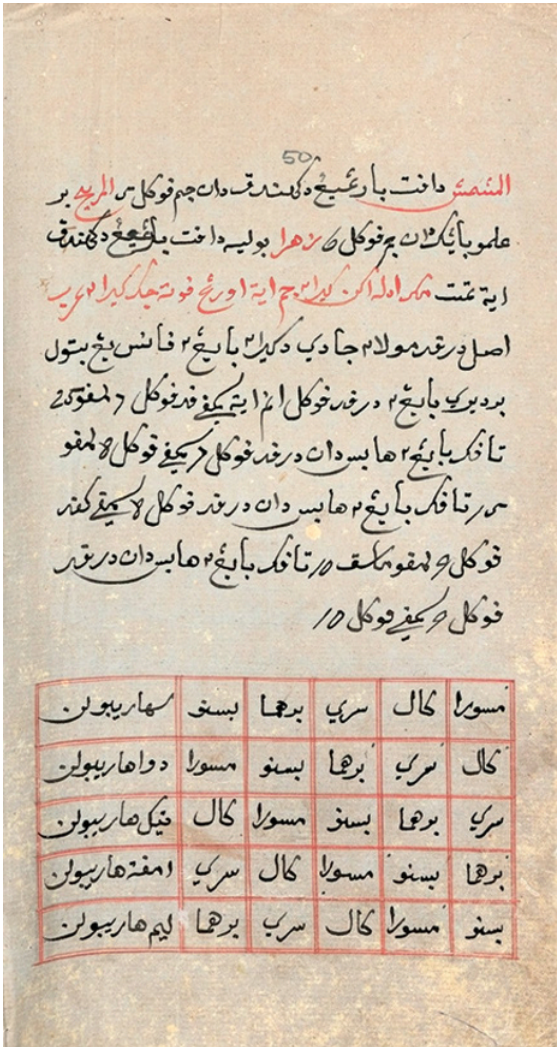


FIGURE 81 Alternate Ketika Lima table. Melaka, c. 1845. DBP MS 119 (cat. 9), p. 50. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

berjalan ke timur, tiada baik; ke barat, beroleh rezeki. Jika menyerang, baik; jika diserang orang, tiada baik. Jika sakit tajam perutnya termuntah-muntah, akan penawarnya ayam merah, hijau kakinya, kemudian maka dibuang orang itu. Atau penyakitnya dikerat binatang atau bekas kebisaan atau bekas kena api, tetapi tiada ngapa, akan penawarnya ayam kelabu, kuning kakinya. Jika orang menyabung ayam, merah menang, kelabu hijau alah. Jika menerkam [menerka], merah kuning dari kanan, hijau biru dari kiri. Jika d-p-l-h [bilah], panjang dari kanan, pendek

dari kiri. Jika biji d-r-k-m [diterka?], genap bilangannya. Jika orang luka, hingga pinggang ke lutut. Wallāhu a'lam."⁹⁷

"[This chapter is on the time of Brahmā, its colour is red. If we are travelling, we will meet with people fighting, or we will see blood, or we will meet the *bandahara*,⁹⁸ for this time is especially bad. If we are travelling, we will be served a meal that is red like *k-a-d-ng* or meat or sweets. If good news, it is untrue; if bad news, it is true. According to an opinion, if [the person] bearing the bad news at that time has white skin or is wearing white, the news is untrue as the colour is wrong. If a belonging is missing during this time, a man has stolen it, he has red skin or hair, or is bleary-eyed [*matanya bilis*], his words are *l-m-ng-h a-ṣ-a-l-ny* willing to lie; the item is buried, if you press [him] you will get it back. If a woman has stolen it, she has buried it under the kitchen. If a slave runs away he is headed west; cast away the offerings to the east, he will then return to his owner. According to an opinion, if the slave has gone too far west, he is gone. If you have an audience with the king, it will be bad. If we are going to see our family, it will not be fruitful. If we are travelling to the east, it will not be good; if towards the west, we will obtain livelihood. If attacking, good; if being attacked, bad. If someone has sharp pains in the stomach and much vomiting, the cure is a red chicken with green legs, then cast away the offering. Alternatively if the illness is due to an animal attack, or the effects of poisoning, or burned by fire, it will be fine, the cure is a grey chicken with yellow legs. If someone is cockfighting, a red [gamecock] will win, a grey-green [gamecock] will lose. If guessing [*menerka*], [it will be] red-yellow from the right, green-blue from the left. If sticks [*bilah*], [it will be] long from the right, short from the left. If [guessing?] seeds [*biji*],

97 PNM MS 2459 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 59), fols. 5r–5v; also in PNM MS 2750 (Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65), fol. 53r and PNM MS 2989 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 73), fols. 5v–6v.

98 A high-ranking administrative post in traditional Malay government.

it will be even-numbered. If someone is injured, it will be from the waist down to the knees. And God knows best.]”

Additionally, in some of the manuscripts the relationships between the watches of the *Ketika Lima* and their respective natures may be shown in the form of relationship diagrams, such as in PNM MS 1458 (Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s–80s; cat. 37; Figure 82).

The divinatory technique of the *Ketika Lima* is not only popular among the Malays but is widespread across much of Southeast Asia, being found among the Batak of Sumatra (where it is called the *Permamis*),⁹⁹ the Javanese,¹⁰⁰ the Bugis and Makassarese in Sulawesi,¹⁰¹ and in Maguindanao in the Philippines.¹⁰² It is likely that the five-day weekly cycle reflects an earlier, possibly indigenous Southeast Asian calendrical system. Ian Proudfoot has suggested that the *Ketika Lima* is related to a Javanese five-day weekly cycle of market days known as *pasaran*, with each day being related to a deity, colour and direction.¹⁰³ It is therefore likely that the *Ketika Lima* table (and perhaps the *Ketika Tujuh* as well) is a local adaptation of the twenty-four hour/seven-day planetary hours structure, whereby the Hindu gods have taken the place of the classical planets. Indeed the astrological basis of the *Ketika Lima* is apparent when we compare the section in the text on Brahmā regarding the thief with a similar passage on Mars in the first century AD Greek astrological treatise *Pentateuch* (‘Five Books’) by Dorotheus of Sidon (fl. 25–75 AD): “If his indicator is Mars, then he will be red in colour, with reddish, lanky hair, sharp eyed, fat cheeked, gay, joking, capricious and spiteful.”¹⁰⁴ Thus it is possible to correlate the Hindu gods of



FIGURE 82 *Ketika Lima* in the form of a relationship diagram. Patani or Kelantan; c. 1870s–80s. PNM MS 1458 (cat. 37), fol. 11r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

the *Ketika Lima* to the planets based on their nature and colour:

- Maheśvara = Jupiter = yellow
- Kāla = Saturn = black
- Śrī = Venus = white
- Brahmā = Mars = red
- Viṣṇu = Mercury = green¹⁰⁵

Similar to the *Ketika Lima* is the *Saat Lima* (‘Five Moments’), but here the watches comprise the

99 See Voorhoeve 1975, pp. 49–50, 252; Schuster 1975.
 100 Raffles 1978, vol. 1, p. 475; also see Hien 1896, vol. 1, pp. 95–97, 109–111, 122–124, 142–147.
 101 Matthes 1868, pp. 14–19, fig. D.
 102 Kroeber 1928, p. 212.
 103 Proudfoot 2006, pp. 21–23.
 104 Pattie 1989, pp. 20.

105 For a list of the colours of the planets as per Greek astrology, see Pingree 1989, p. 3.

TABLE 4 Saat Lima table

| Day | Period | | | | |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| | Morning | Forenoon | Noon | Afternoon | Evening |
| Day 1 | Aḥmad | Jibrā'il | Ibrāhīm | Yūsuf | 'Izrā'il |
| Day 2 | Jibrā'il | Ibrāhīm | Yūsuf | 'Izrā'il | Aḥmad |
| Day 3 | Ibrāhīm | Yūsuf | 'Izrā'il | Aḥmad | Jibrā'il |
| Day 4 | Yūsuf | 'Izrā'il | Aḥmad | Jibrā'il | Ibrāhīm |
| Day 5 | 'Izrā'il | Aḥmad | Jibrā'il | Ibrāhīm | Yūsuf |



FIGURE 83 Ketika Lima/Saat Lima table (top) and Ketika Tujuh table (bottom). Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1951 (cat. 46), p. 4. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

Islamic prophets Ibrahim (Ibrāhīm), Yusuf (Yūsuf) and Ahmad (Aḥmad, i.e. Muḥammad), and two angels: Jibrail (Jibrā'il) the Messenger and Izrail ('Izrā'il) the Angel of Death (Table 4; Figures 83, 247;

Figure 94 gives an alternate sequence).¹⁰⁶ These figures are also associated with colours (for example Yūsuf is yellow) and the concerns are alike, such as whether it is a good time to see the king, the reality of good and bad news, finding missing goods, the outcome of battle, etc. Like the *Ketika Lima*, the *Saat Lima* is also found in other parts of Southeast Asia such as Java (where it is known as *Saat Nabi*, the 'Times of the Prophets')¹⁰⁷ and Madura.¹⁰⁸ The similarities between the *Ketika Lima* and *Saat Lima* mean that sometimes they are combined into the same table, such as in Figures 83 and 94. However it must be noted that the watches in the two systems are not sequenced in the same way. Instead, we may find a correspondence between the two systems by comparing the nature of the watches (whether they are positive or negative) and their colours. In doing so we can identify the Islamic watches with their Hindu counterparts:

- Yūsuf = Maheśvara
- Aḥmad = Śrī
- 'Izrā'il = Kāla
- Ibrāhīm = Brahmā
- Jibrā'il = Viṣṇu

Some of the links are obvious – for example both Kāla and 'Izrā'il are associated with death, while as

106 For the *Saat Lima*, see Skeat 1900, pp. 547–548, 659.

107 Hien 1896, vol. 1, pp. 125–127, 148–151.

108 Jordaan 1985, pp. 127–128.

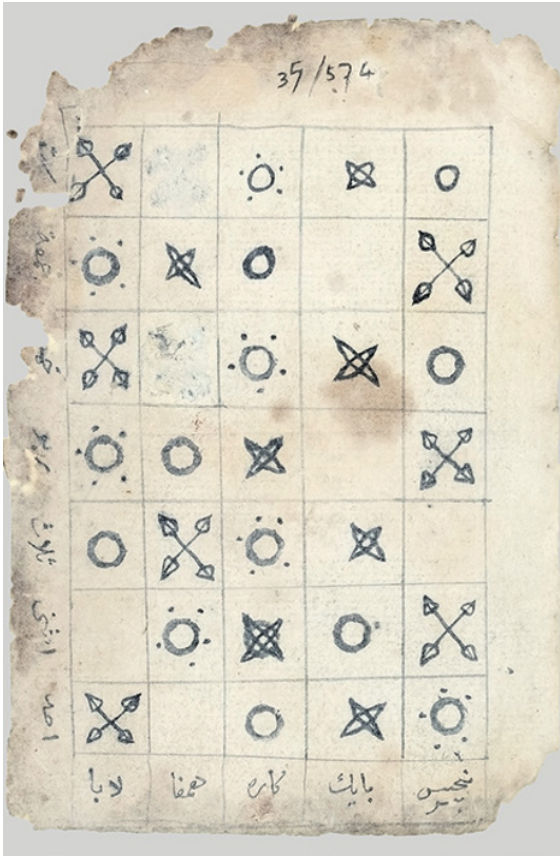


FIGURE 84 *Ketika table. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.574 (cat. 18), p. 35. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.*

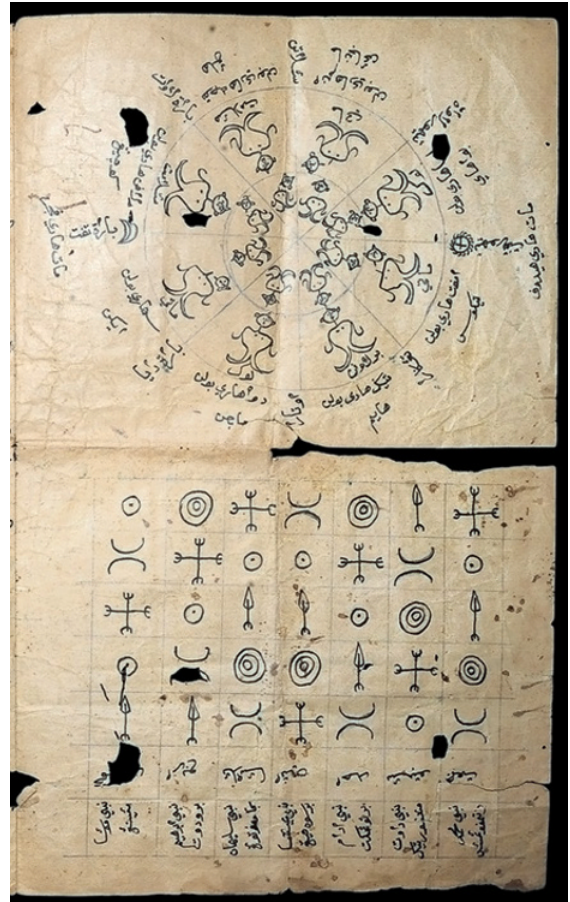


FIGURE 85 *Rajamuka wheel and ketika table. Probably Malay peninsula, 1829–30. PNM MS 3231 (cat. 79), fol. iv. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

for Brahmā and Ibrāhīm the Malay spelling of their names are very similar. However, the relationships between the other watches are not so apparent.

Alternatively the cells of the tables may simply contain words such as “*Laba*” (“Profits”) or “*Nahas*” (“Bad Luck”),¹⁰⁹ but there are also many that contain geometric symbols, typically a mixture of blank spaces, circles, dots, and crosses (Figures 84–86, 197, 245). In most cases the legend or key to the symbols is not given, but according to PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47) four dots are considered auspicious while two concentric circles are inauspicious (Figure 86). Apart from the Malay peninsula, similar tables are also used in Central and West Sumatra (where they are found on materials such as

buffalo horn, Figure 87),¹¹⁰ as well as among the Batak¹¹¹ and the Bugis (Figure 88).¹¹² Among the Thai the tables are called *Yan Ubakong*,¹¹³ and a 5 × 5 version of the table in a SOAS manuscript gives the times of the day as (early) morning (*chao*), late

109 Also see Skeat 1900, pp. 548, 659.

110 Van Hasselt 1881, p. 16 and pl. xxxiv, fig. 1; Van Hasselt 1882, pp. 87–88; Maass 1910, vol. 1, pp. 487–490 who notes that they are also called the *Ketika Lima*.

111 Revunenkov 2005, p. 40 and fig. 3.

112 Matthes 1868, pp. 11–13 and fig. B.

113 See Sombat 1991, pp. 62–63 (I would like to thank Janit Feangfu for helping me with the translation); Terwiel 2001, pp. 133–134.



FIGURE 86 *Ketika* table with dots, circles and crosses (top), 'headers' for talismanic designs (middle) and *Ketika Tujuh* table (bottom). Probably Kelantan, 1894. PNM MS 1957 (cat. 47), fol. 3r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

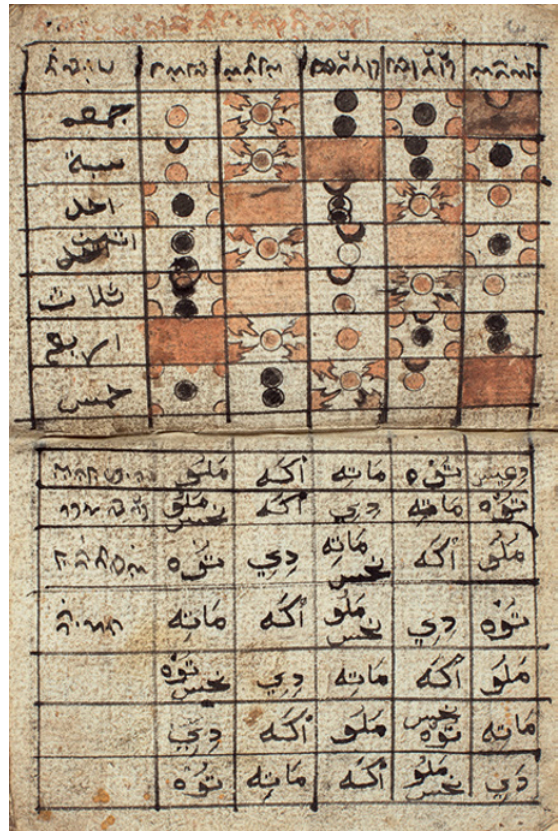


FIGURE 88 *Bugis* divination tables. Sulawesi, eighteenth – early nineteenth century. SOAS MS 12915, part d, fol. 3r. Courtesy of SOAS.



FIGURE 87 *Ketika* tables with dots and crosses on buffalo horn, Central Sumatra, late nineteenth – early twentieth century. After Maass 1910, vol. 1, fig. 189.



FIGURE 89 *Thai* divination table. Thailand, nineteenth century. SOAS OS MS 43645, side B, first opening (detail). Courtesy of SOAS.



FIGURE 90 *The Nāga (Naga, right) and the Goat (Kambing, left). Rejang calendar, Perak, 1882. RAS Maxwell 15 (cat. 84), fols. 86v–87r. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.*

morning (*sai*), noon (*thieng*), afternoon (*bai*) and evening (*yen*) (Figure 89).¹¹⁴

Malay texts on auspicious and inauspicious times also take into account much longer cycles. Among the most common is the *Rejang*, a form of hemerology¹¹⁵ which assigns each day of the month (thirty days) to a symbol. These symbols are typically a mixture of living beings (mostly animals) and objects, each having either a good or bad

influence.¹¹⁶ For example, according to the text in RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) the *Nāga* presides over the tenth day of the month (Figure 90):

“Yang kesepuluh: Kepada sepuluh haribulan, pagi-pagi Kala, tengah naik Besri, tengah hari Brahma, tengah turun Bisnu, petang-petang Maswara. Adalah pada hari itu yakni di barat daya duduknya, kenaikannya Anjing. Pada bilangan rejangnya Naga. Terlalu

114 SOAS OS MS 43645, side B, first opening. I am grateful to Angela Chiu for her help with this table.

115 Hemerology refers to “the cultural practice of connecting the success or failure of actions with favourable or unfavourable days defined by the calendar...”, Stuckrad 2012.

116 For the Malay *Rejang* and the Batak *Ari Rojang*, see Skeat 1900, pp. 551–553, 664; Voorhoeve 1975, pp. 183–186; Awang 1986 (from Brunei); Harun 2006b with a transliteration on pp. 56–60. The text is also transliterated in Haron 2009, pp. 41–45 and translated in Werner 2002, pp. 53–58.

baik. Kerja berhuma, atau bertanam-tanaman, atau berniaga, atau berlayar, atau membayar hutang orang, baik. Jika pergi barang ke mana-mana, beroleh laba. Jika mendengar warita, tiada sungguh. Jika sakit, lekas sembuhnya. Jika kanak-kanak jadi pada hari itu, nescaya beroleh kekayaan, umurnya pun dilanjutkan Allah Taala. Jika orang lari hari itu, lepas. Jika menyerang, baik adanya. Bermula: Kepada hari itu, nadi kepada belakang. Barang ke mana-mana pergi beroleh laba. Wallāhu a'lam.

Sepuluh haribulan rejangnya Naga.

Naga di tasik bercula tujuh; pergi mengambat (ikan) kawan-berkawan. Engkau katalah apa Martabat Tujuh; berketahu(i) inilah sifat hamba dan Tuhan.”¹¹⁷

“[Number ten: On the tenth day of the month, in the morning Kāla, forenoon Śrī, noon Brahmā, afternoon Viṣṇu, evening Maheśvara. On that day the *jakni*¹¹⁸ is in the southwest, its vehicle is the Dog. The *rejang* symbol is the *Nāga*. It is very good. [If] tilling the soil, or planting crops, or trading, or sailing, or settling debts, it is good. If going anywhere, you will obtain profits. If you hear news, it is untrue. If sick, the patient will recover quickly. If a child is born on that day, he will surely obtain riches, and will be granted a long life by God the Exalted. If a person [i.e. slave] runs away on that day, you will not get him back. If attacking, good. Begins: On that day the pulse is on the back. Anywhere you go, you will obtain riches. And God knows best.

The tenth day of the month the *rejang* is the *Nāga*.

Nāga in the lake with seven horns; chasing a shoal (of fish). You say what are the Seven Grades of Being; know that it describes myself and God.]”

¹¹⁷ RAS Maxwell 15, fol. 86v.

¹¹⁸ On the *jakni* see discussion below.

¹¹⁹ Voorhoeve 1975, pp. 183–184.

¹²⁰ Newbold 1839, vol. II, p. 355. Lunar mansions are “the 27 or 28 divisions of the ecliptic circle (the course of the Sun through the heavens) marked out by the Moon in its monthly course”, Burnett 2004, p. 43. For the *nakṣatra*, see Sivapriyananda 1990, pp. 57–62.

¹²¹ Skeat 1900, p. 552.

Petrus Voorhoeve has compared the *Rejang* text in a number of Malay sources and reconstructed a standard list of the thirty symbols (see Table 10).¹¹⁹ Thomas Newbold believed that the *Rejang* was derived from the *nakṣatra* (lunar mansions) of Hindu astrology.¹²⁰ However as Walter Skeat observed it is difficult to reconcile the two systems: while the first day of the *Rejang* (the Horse) could be said to correspond to the first *nakṣatra* (Aśvinī, which is represented by a horse’s head), the rest of the symbols do not match.¹²¹ Meanwhile Joe Stewart has grouped the *Rejang* together with similar Burmese and Khmer lists as being part of an ‘Indo-Southeast Asian’ group of calendar animals, which might have been derived from both the *nakṣatra* and the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac.¹²² At present it is difficult to trace the source of the *Rejang* and more research is needed to compare it with other similar systems. At the same time, some of the prognostications in the *Rejang* appear to be conflated with Islamic hemerologies of Persian origin, such as in the association of days with the birth of prophets.¹²³ In any case, the *Rejang* is extremely important in terms of art historical studies because even though illustrated copies are few (Figures 43, 51, 90–93, 194, 200, 202, 272),¹²⁴ the wide range of living beings and objects listed in the texts means that there are illustrations of animals that are less commonly depicted in Malay art, such as the Pig (Figure 43) and the Dog (Figure 91). The *Rejang* in PNM MS 2017 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 52) is however unusual in

¹²² Stewart 1980.

¹²³ For hemerology in the Islamic tradition, see Fahd “Ikhtiyārāt”; Fahd “Nudjūm (Aḥkām al-)”, pp. 107–108; Walbridge 1997; Pingree 1998. Indeed the circulation of hemerological texts from the Islamic tradition into Southeast Asia has led to a misattribution of an Arabic manuscript to Iran (Ebied & Young 1976), when in fact it was actually copied in Java (Witkam 1979).

¹²⁴ Illustrated copies of the *Rejang* include PNM MS 290 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 25), PNM MS 291 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 26), RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84).

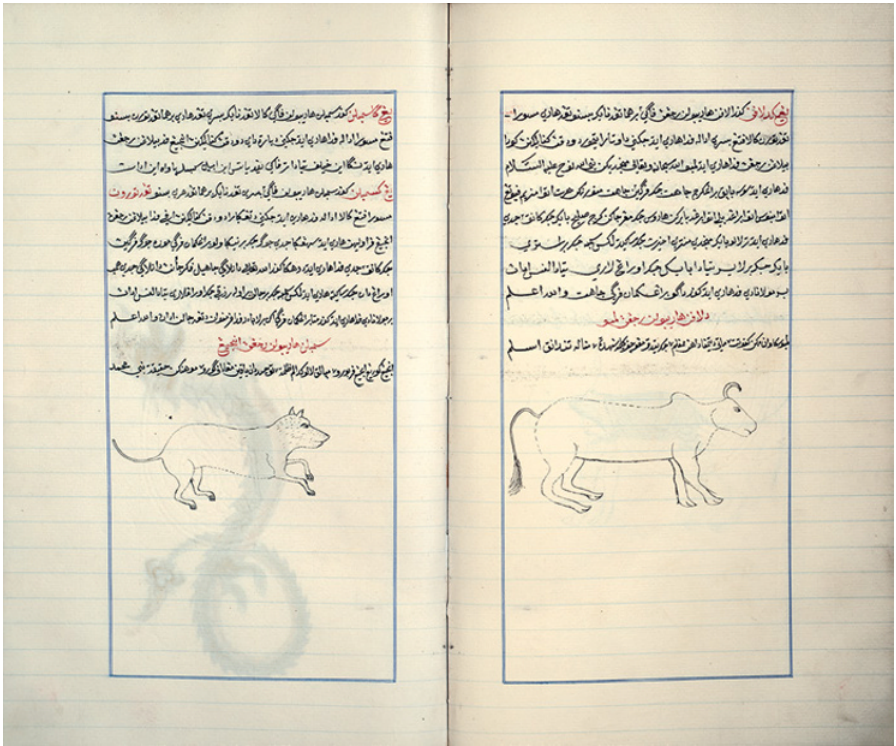


FIGURE 91 *The Cow (Lembu, right) and the Dog (Anjing, left). Rejang calendar, Perak, 1882. RAS Maxwell 15 (cat. 84), fols. 85v–86r. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.*



FIGURE 92 *The Elephant (Gajah, right) from the Rejang calendar and an illustration of a Nāga (left). Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 290 (cat. 25), side B, 23rd opening. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

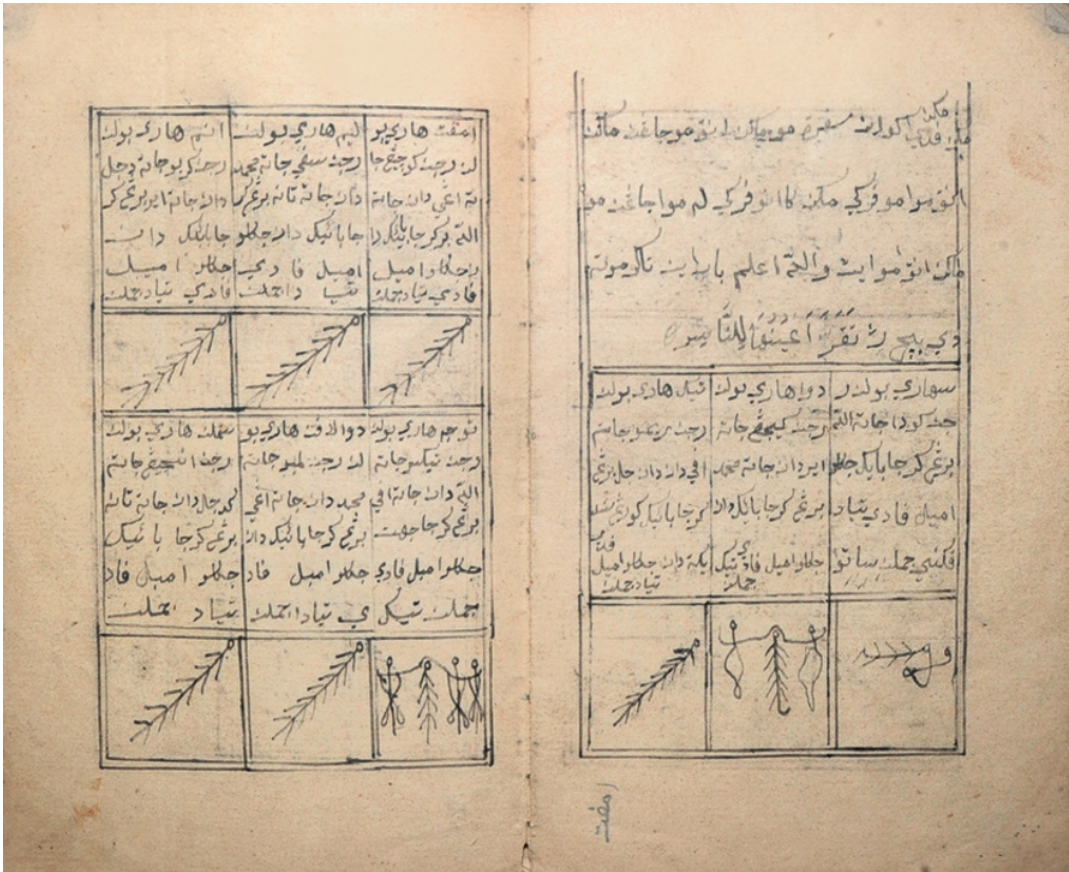


FIGURE 93 Illustrated Rejang calendar with abstract designs. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2017 (cat. 52), fols. 27v–28r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

that the accompanying illustrations are in the form of abstract designs (Figure 93).

Good and bad days in a month are also visually represented in the form of tables and charts (Figure 94). Additionally there are weather charts that show good and bad days for travelling and sailing throughout the whole year, whereby tables or rows of texts or marked circles are laid out representing favourable and unfavourable days, known as the *Ketika Angin* ('Wind Times'; Figure 95).¹²⁵ There are also charts for auspicious

and inauspicious days for planting rice within a month (Figures 96, 97).

Years are also thought to be lucky or unlucky. In the Islamic calendrical system, there is a cycle of eight years over which the leap years are distributed, and each year is associated with a letter from the Arabic alphabet. This system has been adopted in Southeast Asia.¹²⁶ In the Malay texts however, the eight-year cycle is also associated with some of the animals from the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac as well as the Four Classical Elements (Air, Earth, Fire, Water). Thus according to one text, the year of the letter *alif* (ا) is associated with Air (*Angin*)

125 See discussion in Matthes 1868, pp. 32–33 and fig. R; Van Hasselt 1881, pp. 13–16 and pl. XXXIII, fig. 4. Another example is published in Skeat 1900, pl. 24, fig. 1.

126 For a detailed study of the eight-year cycle in Southeast Asia, see Proudfoot 2006.



FIGURE 94 Hemerological tables showing bad days in a month (top and middle) and Ketika Lima/alternate Saat Lima table (bottom). Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late nineteenth century. PNM MS 3498 (cat. 8i), p. 14. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 95 Weather chart. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1367 (cat. 32), fols. 8v-9r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

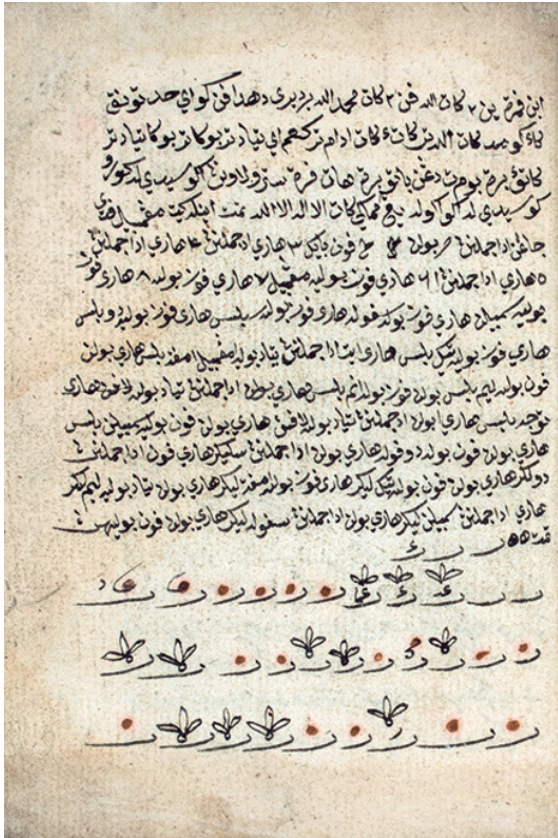


FIGURE 96 *Calendar for planting rice. Kelantan, nineteenth century. SOAS MS 25030 (cat. 92), fol. 1v. Courtesy of SOAS.*



FIGURE 97 *Calendar for planting rice. Probably Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 1993 (cat. 50), fol. 2r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

and the Mouse/Rat (*Tikus*), and the rice crop during that year will be destroyed by mice or rats and too much rain (Figure 98):

“*Pada tahun Alif, raksinya Angin, binatangnya Tikus, dan segala padi yang dahulu dimakan tikus dan jenangau, dan hujan pun sangat. Padi binasa padahnya.*”¹²⁷

“[In the year of *Alif*, the Element is Air, the animal is the Mouse/Rat, and all of the previous rice crop

will be eaten by the mice/rats and the *jenangau* fly, and there will be a lot of rain. The rice crop will be destroyed.]”

Apart from in this system, the Malays also use the full Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac but with slight modifications. The twelve-year animal cycle has a long history in Southeast Asia, as evidenced by the Khmer inscription of King Sūryavarman I of Angkor dated 1039.¹²⁸ It forms the basis for a type of Thai divination,¹²⁹ and some of the animals are

127 PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47), fol. 13r, PNM MS 2228 (probably Perlis, 1933; cat. 55), p. 12, PNM MS 2812 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 69), fol. 85r. Another text is published in Skeat 1900, pp. 662–663; Proudfoot 2006, p. 25.

128 For a study of the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac in mainland Southeast Asia, see Coedès 1935.

129 A person's birth year is related to one of the twelve animals. Each animal is classified further into four subtypes (i.e. three months each) and is related to an Element (such as Water, Earth, Wood) and a tree. See



FIGURE 98 Tables of the Malay twelve-year animal zodiac and the eight-year cycle. Probably Kelantan, 1894. PNM MS 1957 (cat. 47), fols. 12v–13r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

also found in an illustrated Burmese divination manuscript in the SOAS collection.¹³⁰ In the Malay version of the twelve-year animal cycle, the Rabbit is replaced with the Mousedeer (*Pelanduk*), and the Pig with the Tortoise (*Kura*), while the Dragon and Snake are referred to as the Large Snake (*Ular Besar*) and Second Snake (*Ular Sani*) respectively (Table 11). Here is a text on the predictions for the year of the Tiger (*Harimau*):

Wales 1983, pp. 8–31, 64–70; Ginsburg 1989, pp. 22–27; Ginsburg 2000, pp. 121–123, 126–129; Pattaratorn 2011, pp. 19–20, 74–86. For a Khmer divination manuscript which contains this technique see Sunseng 1977.

130 SOAS OS MS 44729. Here a person's birth year is divided by twelve, and the remainder figure relates to a number of items such as a tree associated with a planetary aspect, a gold or sand pot and one of the animals of the twelve-year cycle, see Moore 2007.

"Jika pada tahun Harimau, naganya enam ekor, akan memberi air hujan. Pada tahun itu berbuat bendang padi awalnya baik..."

*Jika pada bulan dua belas hujannya besar lebat. Jikalau berbuat padi pada tanah tinggi baik, jadi..."*¹³¹

"[In the year of the Tiger, there are six nāga, they will bring rain. In that year planting rice will be good at the beginning...]

During the twelfth month there will be very heavy rains. If planting rice it is best to plant on a higher ground...]

131 PNM MS 2228 (probably Perlis, 1933; cat. 55), pp. 7–8; the text in PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47), fol. 12v appears to be a shorter recension.

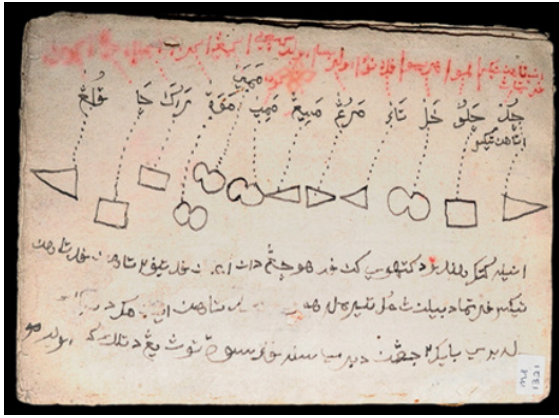


FIGURE 99 *The Malay/Thai version of the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac. Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 1321 (cat. 31), fol. 10v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

In Malay manuscripts the twelve-year cycle may be arranged in the form of a table (Figure 98). Texts on lucky and unlucky years are not illustrated, but in PNM MS 1321 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 31) the animals of the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac are represented by a series of geometric symbols, alongside their Thai names written in Jawi script (Figure 99). For instance the first symbol on the far right is a triangle on its side with the label “Chudh”, referring to the Thai Year of the Rat, *Chuat*, and indeed underneath it is written in Malay “*Tahun Tikus*” (“Year of the Rat”). The square next to it is labelled “*Chalu*” which is the Thai word for Ox, and so on.

The Compass Rose and Auspicious/ Inauspicious Directions

Apart from influencing human lives at particular moments in time, certain beings are also believed to move around the cosmos, and therefore care needs to be taken with regard to the directions that a person is travelling in or facing when undertaking tasks. While tables are useful where only the element of time is taken into account, the addition of this further dimension – i.e. directions – necessitates the use of another form of diagram. This is the compass rose, usually shaped as an eight-pointed



FIGURE 100 *Malay compass rose with north on the right. Probably Patani, late nineteenth – early twentieth century. IAMM 1998.1.578 (cat. 19), p. 1. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.*

star with points towards the eight cardinal and intercardinal directions. In PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44) it is referred to as *Kitaran Mata Angin Dua Lapan* (“The Eight Cardinal Points”).¹³² Note that in the Malay magic and divination manuscripts, in many cases north is placed on the right (Figure 100) or left side (Figure 101) of the diagram, rather than at the top as we are used to seeing today.

Using the compass rose, one can identify the location of these spirits at any given time. The types of beings involved and their movements vary, but one entity is known as the *Bintang Celaka* (“Star of

132 Term used in PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44), p. 30.



FIGURE 101 Malay compass rose with north on the left. Probably Perlis, 1933. PNM MS 2228 (cat. 55), p. 57. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

Bad Luck’). This star moves across the eight cardinal and intercardinal directions as well as residing in the sky or within the earth. In the northern region of the Malay peninsula, the location of the star is consulted to determine the best time to transfer rice seedlings into the rice field.¹³³ The locations of the star may be given in the form of a compass rose. In an example described by A.E. Coope taken from a pocketbook belonging to a Kelantanese criminal, this star moves in a monthly cycle – for instance on the fifth, fifteenth and twenty-fifth day of the month it resides in the west and thus it is unlucky for a person to set out from the house if the door faces in that direction (Figure 102).¹³⁴ The same movements

133 Rahimah 2010, pp. 222, 232, note 6.

134 Coope 1933, pp. 271–272.

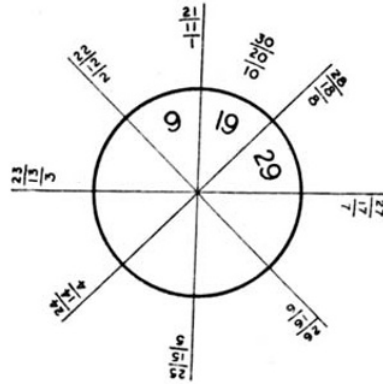


FIGURE 102 Compass rose of the Bintang Celaka. After Coope 1933, p. 271.

are detailed in PNM MS 1456 (Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s–80s; cat. 36; Figure 103), although here the star is not named:

*“Lima haribulan, lima belas haribulan, lima likur haribulan diamnya di barat tepat.”*¹³⁵

“[On the fifth, fifteenth and twenty-fifth days of the month it resides in the west.]”

Some diagrams provide favourable/unfavourable directions over a seven-day cycle instead, such as in PNM MS 1452 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 35), although here the moving spirit is not identified (Figure 104):

*“Pada hari Rabu’ hadap ke utara seribu balanya. Jika hadap ke selatan seribu rahmatnya. Pada hari Rabu’ memberi salam pada Nabi Yunus.”*¹³⁶

“[On Wednesday if you face north, there will be a thousand calamities. If you face south there will be a thousand blessings. On Wednesday give greetings to the Prophet Yūnus.]”

135 PNM MS 1456, fol. 40r.

136 PNM MS 1452, fol. 15r.



FIGURE 103 Divinatorial diagram with the Bintang Celaka. Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s-80s. PNM MS 1456 (cat. 36), fol. 40r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 104 Divinatorial seven-day compass rose. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1452 (cat. 35), fol. 15r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

The *Bintang Celaka* is not the only entity associated with time and directions. Other spirits that move around the cardinal points on a temporal basis include the *jakni* (or *jaguni* or *chaguni*) which Wilkinson defines as “Spirits or influences believed to govern periods of good or evil fortune”.¹³⁷ According to one text referred to as *Edaran Jakni* (‘Rotation of the *Jakni*’), the *jakni* were sent by God to ‘Alī and then given to all war champions (*hulubalang*). Here the text also identifies the Hindu gods of the *Ketika Lima* as being the vehicles (*kenaikan*) of the *jakni*, and each *jakni* faces a particular cardinal/intercardinal direction during one of the five time periods of a day.¹³⁸ In the passages of Blagden’s 1895 notebook, the text describes the *jakni* as being

“... *penghulu segala iblis, kepala segala seteru*” (“... the leader of all devils, the head of all enemies”).¹³⁹

At the same time there are other spirits in Malay divination who perform a similar function but are from the Islamic tradition. One group comprises the prophets such as Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, as found in PNM MS 2588 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 64; Figure 105).¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile another group are the *rijāl al-ghaib* (“the «Hidden Beings» who control human destinies”¹⁴¹) who in the Sufi tradition are believed to be a class of saints (*walī*) that are invisible and wander across the globe every day.¹⁴² Diagrams and tables showing their positions are found not only in the

137 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “jaguni”.

138 PNM MS 1458 (Patani or Kelantan; c. 1870s-80s; cat. 37), fols. 10r–11r, PNM MS 1789 (Kelantan, 1857; cat. 42), pp. 8–9 and PNM MS 2812 (Patani or Kelantan, second

half of the nineteenth century; cat. 69), fols. 13v–14v, SOAS MS 297497 (probably Melaka, 1895; ex-cat.), fols. 12r–13r.

139 SOAS MS 297497 (probably Melaka, 1895; ex-cat.), fol. 12r.

140 See Skeat 1900, pp. 664–665.

141 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “rijāl”.

142 In Sufism there is a hierarchy of saints. According to John P. Brown, this consists of a single *qutb* (the pole or



FIGURE 105 Compass diagram with seven Islamic prophets. Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2588 (cat. 64), fol. 67r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (photo by the author).



FIGURE 106 Divinatory compass rose of the *rijāl al-ghaib*. Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.494 (cat. 13), p. 4. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

Malay manuscripts (Figure 106)¹⁴³ but also among the Bugis¹⁴⁴ and Javanese¹⁴⁵ as well as in many other parts of the wider Muslim world.¹⁴⁶

axis, two *umanā'* (the faithful), four *autād* (the pegs), five *anwār* (the light), *akhyār* (the good) and forty *shuhadā'* (the martyrs). The *shuhadā'* are also known as the "*rijāl-i-ghaib*". They are followed by the seventy *abdāl* (the substitutes) and the eighty *nuqabā'* (the magistrates), see Brown 1927, pp. 91–93. Masood Ali Khan and S. Ram however give a different explanation, whereby there is single *qutb*, two imams (the leaders), four *autād* and seven *abdāl* (who are the *rijāl al-ghaib*), see Khan & Ram 2003, vol. 1, pp. 255–256. Another source gives the *rijāl al-ghaib* as being the seven *nujabā'* (the noble), see Nurbakhsh 1992, pp. 18–19.

143 For the *rijāl al-ghaib* in a Malay context, see Niemann 1870, p. 135; Wilken 1893, p. 592; Haron 2009, pp. xviii–xix, 24–27. The text published by Skeat 1900, pp. 561, 665 identifies the *rijāl al-ghaib* with the bier of 'Ali (this text is taken from SOAS MS 297496 (probably Melaka, 1895; ex-cat.), fols. 79v–80r).

144 See Matthes 1868, pp. 2–4 and fig. A.

145 Hien 1896, vol. 2, pp. 4–5.

146 Shurreef 1832, pp. 395–401; Brown 1927, pp. 91–92.

Within the manuscripts the movements of the above beings may even be combined within the same diagram. According to the compass rose in PNM MS 1995 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 51), on the first day of the month the *rijāl al-ghaib*, the *Bintang Maut* ('Star of Death') and the *Bintang Bala* ('Star of Misfortune') are in the east, while the *jakni* are in the southeast (Figure 107). These beings then change their positions across the cardinal directions over a ten-day cycle. In addition there are further compass diagrams whose workings are still to be determined (Figure 108).

The *nāga* serpent is also known to move across the cardinal directions on different days and is referred to in this instance as *Naga Hari* ('Day *Nāga*', i.e. Daily Rotating *Nāga*). However a more common divinatory technique involving the *nāga* finds the creature rotating by 90 degrees every three months over the four cardinal points – this technique is referred to by Barend Jan Terwiel as the 'Rotating *Nāga*'.¹⁴⁷ The location of its body

147 Terwiel 1985. On this technique also see Farouk 2013, vol. 1, pp. 352–383, vol. 2, pp. 3–11.



FIGURE 107 *Divinatorial compass rose of the rijāl al-ghaib, Bintang Maut, Bintang Bala and the jakni. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 1995 (cat. 51), fol. 7r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*



FIGURE 108 *Budūh talismanic magic square and divinatorial compass diagram with Muhammad and the archangels. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2107 (cat. 53), fol. 10v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

parts at a particular time is used to determine whether it will be auspicious or otherwise to undertake certain actions, particularly in house-building and warfare. There are a number of variants within the Malay tradition, but in the majority of cases (around two-thirds of the manuscripts consulted) the rotation of the *nāga* is as follows: the cycle begins with the first three months of the year – Muḥarram, Šafar and Rabīʿ I – during which the *nāga*'s head (*kepala*) faces west, its tail (*ekor*) is in the east, its belly (*perut*) towards the south and its back (*belakang*) towards the north. It then rotates in an anticlockwise direction, completing a full circle within the year:

*“Fasal ini pada menyatakan naga mengedari bumi, pada setahun empat kali mengedar. Bermula: Barangsiapa tahu akan edaran naga itu sejahtera daripada segala kejahatan, barang di mana ia dimenangkan Allah daripada seterusnya dan beroleh berkat dan selamat kerana yang demikian itu malai-
kat juga adanya. Pertama: Bulan Muharram, Safar,*

Rabiulawal, kepalanya ke maghrib, ekornya ke masyrik, perutnya ke selatan, belakangnya ke utara. 2: Dan pada bulan Rabiulakhir dan Jamadilawal dan Jamadilakhir; kepalanya ke selatan, ekornya ke utara, perutnya ke masyrik, belakangnya ke maghrib. 3: Rejab, Syaaban, Ramadan, kepalanya ke masyrik, ekornya ke maghrib, perutnya ke utara, belakangnya ke selatan. 4: Syawal, Zulkaedah, Zulhijjah, kepalanya ke utara, ekornya ke selatan, belakangnya ke masyrik, perutnya ke maghrib.”¹⁴⁸

“[This section is on the *nāga* that rotates around the earth, in a year it rotates four times. Begins: Whoever knows of the rotation of the *nāga* will be protected from misfortune, wherever he is he will be given vic-

148 PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47), fol. 4v. For the full text see Farouk 2013, vol. 2, pp. 6–11.



FIGURE 109 *Rotating Nāga. Patani or Kelantan, c. 1890s. PNM MS 2796 (cat. 67), fols. 13v–14r.*
 Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

tory by God against enemies and will obtain blessings and security because of the angels. Firstly: Months of Muḥarram, Ṣafar, Rabīʿ I, its head is in the west, its tail in the east, its belly in the south, its back in the north. 2: And in the months of Rabīʿ II and Jumādā I and Jumādā II, its head is in the south, its tail in the north, its belly in the east, its back in the west. 3: Rajab, Shaʿbān, Ramaḍān, its head is in the east, its tail in the west, its belly in the north, its back in the south. 4: Shawwāl, Dhū al-Qaʿda, Dhū al-Ḥijja, its head is in the north, its tail in the south, its back in the east, its belly in the west].”

This method is found across South Asia, Southeast Asia (including in Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, the Malay peninsula, Indonesia – Sumatra, Java, Sulawesi, Maluku – and the Philippines) and East Asia.¹⁴⁹ In the Malay manuscripts the text is usually accompanied by an illustration of the crea-

ture. In PNM MS 2796 (Patani or Kelantan, c. 1890s; cat. 67) there is a two-page spread in which four *nāga* at right angles to each other form a rectangle, whereby the head of each animal intersects the tail of the adjacent one (Figure 109). The manuscript does not have a colophon, but it is most likely from the northern areas of the Malay peninsula as this method of depicting the *Rotating Nāga* is more commonly found in mainland Southeast Asia, such as in Thailand and Laos (Figure 110).

149 For a summary of the places where this technique has been found see Terwiel 1985; Farouk 2013, vol. 1, pp. 356–365. Other literature on the rotating *nāga* in Southeast Asia include: for Myanmar, see Htin Aung 1959, pp. 109–110; for the Shan people, see Scott & Hardiman 1900–01,

pt. 1, vol. 2, p. 48; for Thailand, see Wales 1983, pp. 77–78; Sumet 1997, pp. 90–91; Terwiel 2001, pp. 145–147; for Cambodia, see Porée-Maspero 1961, pp. 563–566; for Laos, see Clément-Charpentier & Clément 1990, vol. 2, pp. 578–584; for the Batak of Sumatra, see Winkler 1956; Voorhoeve 1956; Voorhoeve 1957; for Java, see Raffles 1978, vol. 1, pp. 478–479; Appel 2002; for the Minangkabau of Sumatra, see Van Hasselt 1882, p. 89, and plate in Van Hasselt 1881, pl. xxxviii, with explanation on p. 17; for the Bugis and Makassarese of Sulawesi, see Matthes 1868, pp. 28–30, pl. O; Robinson 1998, pp. 176–177; for Maluku, see Teljeur 1990, pp. 78–81; for the Philippines, see McCoy 1982, pp. 344–351. For South Asia, see MacDougall 2008, pp. 72–84; for China, see Ruitenbeek 1993, p. 49, footnote 136.

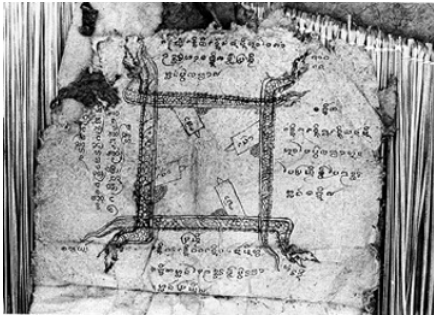


FIGURE 110 *Rotating Nāga. Laos, nineteenth century. Formerly in the library of the Ban Done Mo pagoda near Luang Prabang, Laos, now in the collection of a former Buddhist monk from a village nearby. After Clément-Charpentier & Clément 1990, vol. 2, pl. XXXI.*



FIGURE 112 *Rotating Nāga. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2459 (cat. 59), fol. 9r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

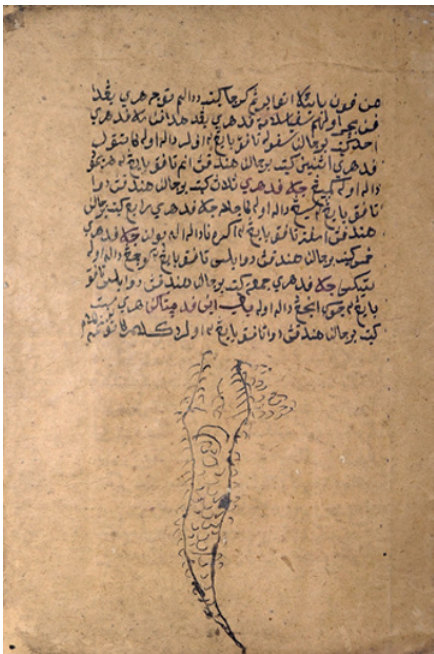


FIGURE 111 *Rotating Nāga. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1990 (cat. 49), fol. 3r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

Although in these other traditions the illustrations are usually of four *nāga*, in the Malay manuscripts the image is typically of a single creature (Figures 26, 45, 111–113, 134, 192, 197, 252, 258a, 296), a form that is also found in some other Southeast Asian manuscripts (Figure 136), although they may

also be shown in groups of two or three (Figures 114, 115). In a few examples the *nāga* are depicted together with a compass rose (Figures 116, 117) – what this image represents and how it is supposed to function is still to be determined, but it is possible that it relates to the Daily Rotating *Nāga*.

A similar form of divination involves birds, known as *Ketika Burung* ('Times of the Bird'). According to PNM MS 2588 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 64), the *Burung Malaikat* ('Angel Bird') moves across the universe in four parts (*"Ia mengedarkan alam dunia ini empat mazhab alam"*):¹⁵⁰ on the first day of the month on its beak, the second day on its wing, the third day on its feet, and the fourth day on its tail (it is unclear if there is a connection to the cardinal points). Like most other Malay divination tracts, here each *ketika* (time period) is linked to the outcomes of various human activities. For example, if the *ketika* is on the beak of the bird,

150 PNM MS 2588, fol. 65v.



FIGURE 113 *Rotating Nāga (top) and Angka Tiga diagram (bottom). Probably Patani, late nineteenth – early twentieth century. IAMM 1998.1.578 (cat. 19), p. 15. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.*



FIGURE 114 *Rotating Nāga with two nāga. Probably Palembang, nineteenth century. BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (cat. 5), fol. 2r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.*



FIGURE 115 *Rotating Nāga with three nāga. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2843 (cat. 71), fols. 11v–12r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

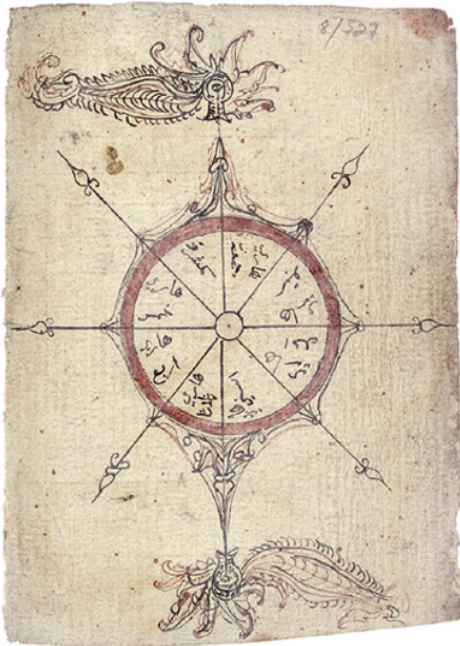


FIGURE 116 Compass rose with two nāga. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.527 (cat. 14), p. 8. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.



FIGURE 118 *Ketika Burung*. Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2588 (cat. 64), fol. 66r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (photo by the author).

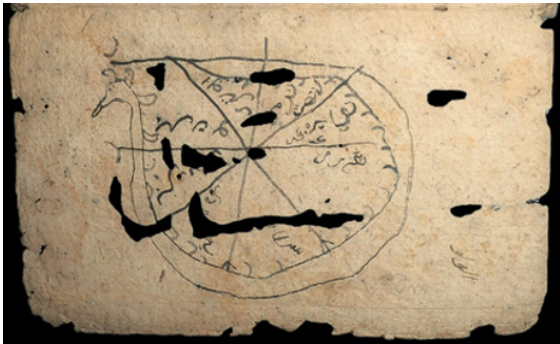


FIGURE 117 Nāga and compass rose. Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2381(1) (cat. 57), side B, 13th opening. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

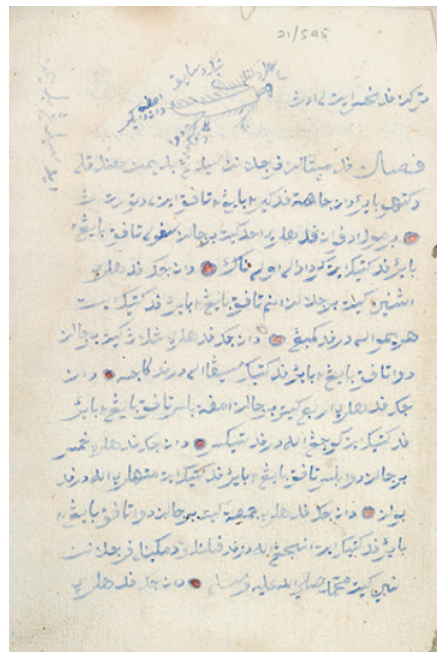


FIGURE 119 *Ketika Burung*. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.545 (cat. 16), p. 21. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

business will be good but sailing or travelling will be bad. In the manuscripts this technique is usually accompanied with an illustration of a bird (Figures 118, 119, 197, 198, 263).

Counting-Off Methods

Apart from the techniques above, there are also diagrams and even illustrations that a person can use to count, in order to ascertain auspicious and inauspicious times as well as determine other matters such as the outcome of battle. A commonly found counting-off method involves the use of a circular or wheel diagram in which human figures are arranged in two concentric circles (Figures 25, 80, 85, 120–122, 251, 252). The name of this diagram is not mentioned in the Malay manuscripts but it is known in Java as the *rajamuka* (Figure 184)¹⁵¹ and as *kotika johor* among the Bugis and Makassarese, attributing its origins to the sultanate of Johor in the Malay peninsula.¹⁵² Elsewhere it is known by various other names: *pelangkahan* in Central Sumatra¹⁵³ and *pidiran* or *pangkati* in Pasemah, Sumatra.¹⁵⁴ In this diagram some of the human figures are depicted without heads – these represent the loser or the vanquished, while those that keep their heads are the victors. According to Skeat, the figures representing the user are those in the inner ring of the wheel, while the enemy's figures are in the outer ring. The user would count around the circle, and if the figure representing the user is headless then he will lose, but if the opposing figure is headless then the user will win.¹⁵⁵ In his study of the diagram in Central Sumatra however Alfred Maass reports the opposite: that the user's figures are those in the outer circle.¹⁵⁶

Another counting-off method is derived from the South Asian house-building tradition, where *vāstuśāstra* and *śilpaśāstra* texts often provide a number of mathematical formulae to

be used to determine whether the measurements of a building are of the correct proportions, in terms of whether it is auspicious or inauspicious. One of the calculations that needs to be taken into account is the *yoni* which “links the proportions of the dwelling with their orientation in cosmic space and thus with the value of quadrature.”¹⁵⁷ This is calculated by multiplying the width or area by 3, and dividing the result by 8. The remainder number is then linked to one of the cardinal directions and to an animal or object which is either auspicious or inauspicious.¹⁵⁸ According to the *Mayamata*, on building a house this is calculated by multiplying the width by 3, and then dividing the result by 8. The remaining number is then linked to one of these objects or animals: the Standard, Cloud, Lion, Dog, Bull, Donkey, Elephant and Crow.¹⁵⁹ Those with an odd remainder number are considered auspicious (Standard, Lion, Bull and Elephant) whereas those with an even number are inauspicious (Cloud, Dog, Donkey and Crow). Elsewhere, one of the eighteen major *purāṇa*, the *Nārada Purāṇa* (c. eighth – tenth century), gives a similar sequence (beginning from the east): Flag, Smoke, Lion, Dog, Cow, Ass, Elephant and Crow.¹⁶⁰

In Malay architecture a similar sequence of animals is also used to determine the auspiciousness of a new house. The method of calculation follows the same formula but goes around it in a slightly different way. It is given in the *Tajul Muluk* ('The Royal Crown'), a popular Malay manual for magical

151 For examples of the Javanese *rajamuka*, see Behrend 1996, p. 188, figs. 202, 203.

152 For the *kotika johor* among the Bugis and Makassarese, see Matthes 1868, pp. 25–27 and figs. L, M; also see Niemann 1870, p. 140; Wilken 1893, pp. 593–594.

153 Maass 1910, vol. 1, pp. 499–500.

154 Collins 1979, p. 262.

155 Skeat 1900, p. 560.

156 Maass 1910, vol. 1, pp. 499–500.

157 MacDougall 2008, p. 113.

158 For a fuller discussion on the *yoni* calculation, see MacDougall 2008, pp. 113–117.

159 Dagens 1985, p. 233, similar calculations are also used for villages and the *lūṅga*, see pp. 27 and 313 respectively.

160 Tagare 1981, part. II, p. 837. The *purāṇa* ('old') are ancient texts on cosmology, mythology, divine genealogies, and rich sources of information on popular Hindu rituals and practice (many thanks to Crispin Branfoot for this explanation).

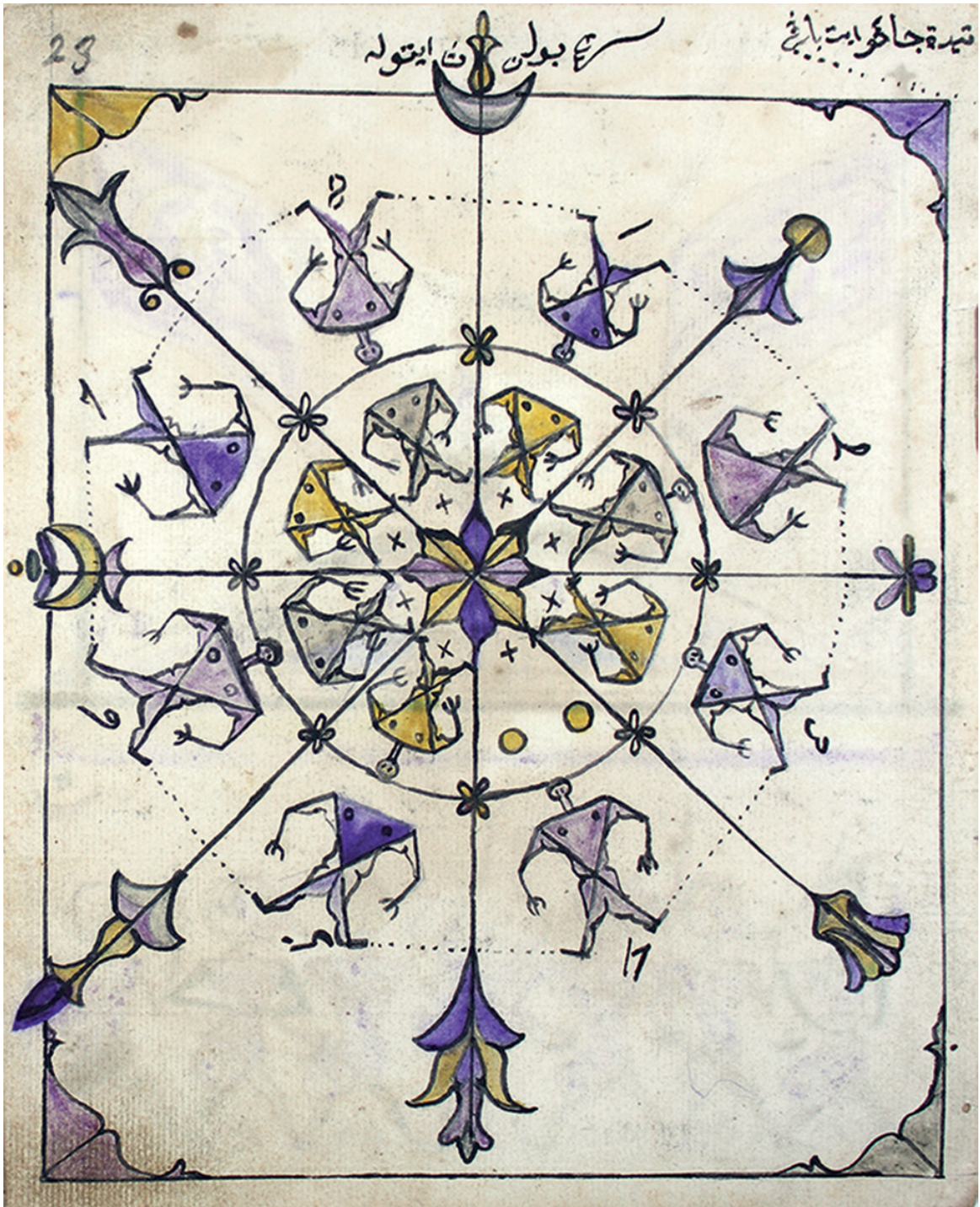


FIGURE 120 *Rajamuka wheel. Palembang, c. 1890. Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (cat. 2), fol. 25r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.*

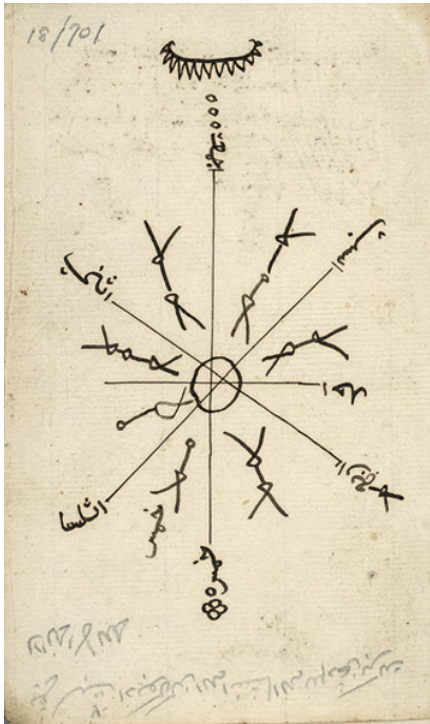


FIGURE 121 *Rajamuka wheel. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.701 (cat. 22), p. 18. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.*



FIGURE 122 *Rajamuka wheel. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 1986 (cat. 48), fol. 6r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

and divinatory techniques that was compiled by an Acehese *‘ālim*, Ismail ibn Abdul Mutalib al-Asyi, in Mecca sometime between 1888 and 1891.¹⁶¹ Here the unit of measurement is the *depa*, which is the length of the outstretched arms of the owner (i.e. mistress) of the house. This is measured using a piece of string which is then divided into three. A third of it is discarded while keeping the remaining two-thirds. The two-thirds is then folded into eight – seven-eighths are then discarded, and the remaining one-eighth is used to ‘count off’ the length of the *bendul* (threshold) of the house using a similar list of animals and objects to those in the Indian sources, although here the Flag is replaced with the *Nāga* serpent. The sequence is thus: *Nāga* (*Naga*), Smoke (*Asap*), Lion (*Singa*), Dog (*Anjing*), Cow (*Lembu*), Donkey (*Keldai*), Elephant (*Gajah*)

161 On this work, see Chapter Seven.

and Crow (*Gagak*).¹⁶² As before, odd numbers are auspicious while even numbers are not, although unlike the South Asian texts here they are not linked to the cardinal directions. Texts similar to that found in the *Tajul Muluk* are also found in a number of Malay manuscripts,¹⁶³ and the similarities in the method of calculation and list of animals/objects indicate that the Malay texts have roots within the South Asian architectural tradition.

In the Malay magic and divination manuscripts the names of these animals may be placed within a

162 Ismail [n.d.]a, p. 95.

163 For instance see Skeat 1900, pp. 145–147, 601–602; also see Syed Iskandar 2000, pp. 95–96. In some texts Smoke is replaced by the Zebu (*Sapi*), indicating that the original copyist of this recension had mistaken the two, as in Malay both words are similar in spelling (*asap* vs. *sapi*).



FIGURE 123 Table of the eight animals for the yoni calculation (top) and the talismanic design of Solomon's ring for house posts (bottom). Probably Patani, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1797 (cat. 44), p. 148. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

table, such as in PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44; Figure 123)¹⁶⁴ but they are not visually represented. However the same sequence of animals appears in RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) in a different context, where they function as auguries in an illustrated pictorial *fālnāma* (Figure 190).

In the South Indian vernacular tradition (i.e. Sinhala and Tamil texts), an alternative group of animals for the yoni calculation is found. Beginning from the east they are: Eagle, Cat, Lion, Dog, Snake, Rat, Elephant and Rabbit (Figure 124).¹⁶⁵ When these animals are placed around the eight cardinal points, they are arranged in such a way that those that are naturally antagonistic are placed opposite each other. According to a Tamil *śilpaśāstra*

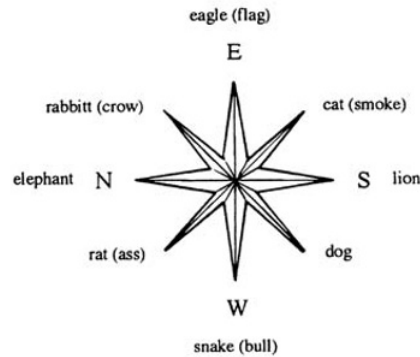


FIGURE 124 South Indian group of animals for the yoni calculation. After MacDougall 2008, fig. 29.

translated by the missionary J.F. Kearns in 1876, this affects travel from the house, for example a person living in the position of the Cat must not travel towards the Rat, and vice versa.¹⁶⁶ In Malay magic and divination manuscripts similar groups of animals are found arranged around the compass rose, but the Dog and Rabbit are replaced by the Cow and Tiger, and they are often provided as a set of seven compasses, one for each of the seven days of the week, such as in the manuscript on bull, buffalo and ram fighting in the Nik Mohamed collection (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23; Figures 52, 125, 208).¹⁶⁷ Similar seven-day compasses of animals are also found among the Thai where they are known as *Phi Luang*, although here the Cat is replaced by the Dog, and the Cow is replaced by the Goat.¹⁶⁸ It is very likely that there are connections between these Malay and Thai sets of animals with the Burmese calendrical system whereby each day of the week is associated with a planet which rides an animal, for example the Monday planet (i.e. the Moon) rides the Tiger, the Tuesday planet

¹⁶⁶ Kearns 1876, pp. 296–297.

¹⁶⁷ They are also found in PNM MS 1789 (Kelantan, 1857; cat. 42), unnumbered page-p. 1 and PNM MS 1986 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 48), fols. 8r–9r, but here the animals are positioned differently to those in the Nik Mohamed manuscript.

¹⁶⁸ Eade 1995, pp. 111–114.

¹⁶⁴ Here the sequence is slightly out of order – instead of ‘Dog, Cow, Donkey’ it is ‘Cow, Donkey, Dog’.

¹⁶⁵ MacDougall 2008, p. 113.

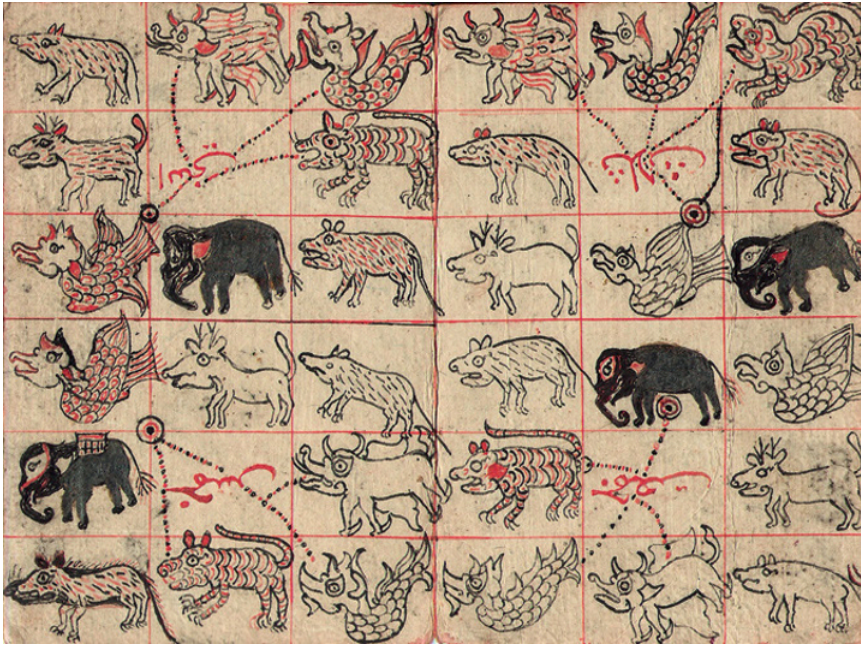


FIGURE 125 *Seven-day compass diagram of eight animals for Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 35th opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.*

(Mars) rides the Lion, and so on. In the Shan States of Myanmar and in Lan Na in Northern Thailand the eight animals are depicted on painted and printed cotton cloths, used to determine the fortune of a person. Here counting begins from the animal representing the birth period, and goes clockwise around the chart for men or counter-clockwise for women. The animal reached at the end of the counting would then indicate that person's fortune.¹⁶⁹ In Laos, the same eight animals are drawn onto a flag called *tua paung* which is erected on a mound of sand during the last day of the year. By doing certain calculations a person can determine which of the eight animals he or she can depend on during the upcoming year.¹⁷⁰

There are other sets of eight animals in the Malay manuscripts which provide further combinations. In an example found in BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (probably

Palembang, nineteenth century; cat. 5), the Snake is replaced by the Banyan tree (*Beringin*), the Cow is replaced by the Goat (*Kambing*), and instead of the Lion opposite the Elephant there is now the Crocodile (*Buaya*) opposite the Fish (*Ikan*) (Figure 126). Meanwhile a couple of illustrated diagrams are found in Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (Palembang, c. 1890; cat. 2; Figure 127), but unfortunately the animals are not labelled which make them difficult to identify. The way in which these diagrams work is not given in the manuscript, but they are probably similar to the other examples provided by Skeat in his book *Malay Magic*. According to Skeat the diagrams are used for travel, whereby the user counts anticlockwise from the north and stops when the number of the date of the journey is reached. If it lands on a weak aspect, then that day is not suitable for the trip.¹⁷¹ Similar arrangements of animals are also found in other

169 Conway 2014, pp. 136–139.

170 Thararat 2004.

171 Skeat 1900, pp. 559–560; however Maass 1910, vol. 1, pp. 491–492 describes a different way of counting

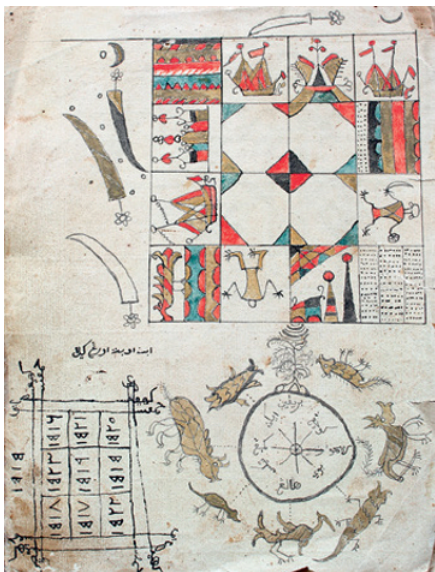


FIGURE 126 Unidentified *ketika* table, 3×3 talismanic magic square and compass diagram of eight animals. Probably Palembang, nineteenth century. BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (cat. 5), fol. 32r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.

parts of Southeast Asia, such as in Central and West Sumatra where they are known as the *Kutiko Harimau* ('Times of the Tiger') or *Kutiko/Galah Salapan* ('Eight Times/Rods'),¹⁷² among the Batak who refer to it as the *Panggorda* (after the first animal of the series, the *Garuḍa*)¹⁷³ and in Sulawesi (Figure 128).¹⁷⁴ There is still much research to be done in understanding the symbolism and iconography of the animals or objects that are used in these different systems, as well as in identifying the relationships between them.

Besides square/rectangular tables and circles, triangular diagrams are also used. In the technique

which starts from the east (the Tiger) and associates each animal with certain hours of the day.

172 Van Hasselt 1881, p. 16 and pl. xxxiii, fig. 5, pl. xxxiv, fig. 6; Van Hasselt 1882, p. 89; Maass 1910, vol. 1, pp. 490–494.

173 Wilken 1893, pp. 592–593; Voorhoeve 1975, p. 251; Kozok 1999, pp. 48–49.

174 Matthes 1868, pp. 37–38 and fig. v.



FIGURE 127 Compass diagram of eight animals. Palembang, c. 1890. Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (cat. 2), fol. 5v. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.

of the *Ketika/Angka Tiga* ('Three Times/Numbers'), the user would count off the days of the month across the numbers 1, 2, and 3 (which are usually placed within a triangle) to arrive at the prognostication (Figures 79, 113, 129, 256, 257).¹⁷⁵ In Sulawesi this method is associated with the Prophet Muḥammad's daughter, Fāṭima,¹⁷⁶ and there also seems to be a similar method used in Thailand.¹⁷⁷

Apart from diagrams, the counting-off method may also be used on drawings of figural beings. In his book *Malay Magic* Skeat describes an illustration of a war-chief named Unggas Telang in a manuscript from Selangor, which has little dots surrounding his body that are counted in order to determine the outcome of an undertaking (Figure 164).¹⁷⁸ Similar human figures with dots or

175 For a discussion of this method, see Van Hasselt 1881, p. 13 and pl. xxxiii, fig. 2; Van Hasselt 1882, p. 90; Matthes 1868, p. 32 and fig. Q.

176 Matthes 1868, p. 32.

177 Wales 1983, pp. 109–111.

178 Skeat 1900, pp. 560–561, the illustration is published on pl. 25, fig 1.

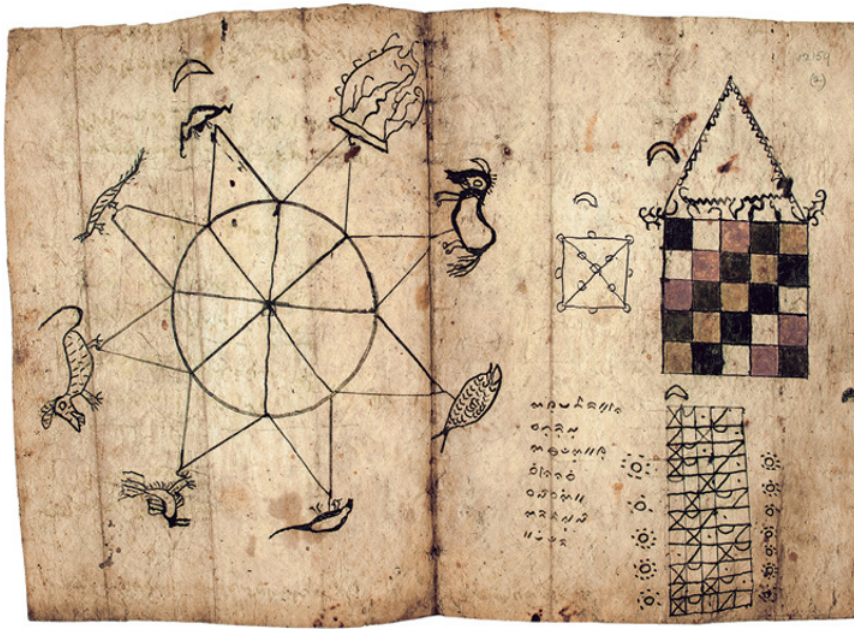


FIGURE 128 Bugis compass diagram of eight animals and kutika tables. Sulawesi, eighteenth century. SOAS MS 12159(2), fols. 1v–2r. Courtesy of SOAS.

numbers around their bodies have been found among the manuscripts consulted, and although there are no explanatory texts it is possible that they are to be used in the same way (Figures 130, 177).

Occasionally in Malay manuscripts one comes across two intertwined figures of the *nāga* with spikes protruding from them, for example in PNM MS 2381(2) (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 58; Figure 131). Unfortunately there are no accompanying texts, but this iconography also appears in other parts of Southeast Asia such as in Thai and Mon divination manuscripts (Figure 132). According to Horace Quaritch Wales, this divinatory technique – used to determine the compatibility of a couple – has its origins in the Chinese theory of ‘hostile pairs’ (although I have yet to come across this diagram in Chinese sources).¹⁷⁹ In the diagram, the twelve circles on the creatures – two on the head, middle and tail

of each *nāga* – are joined with lines onto four points. Each circle represents one year of age and one of the animals of the Chinese twelve-year zodiac, and thus the man would count from head to tail while the woman would count in the opposite direction. If both of them end up at the head of the same *nāga*, then the union will be happy, but if they land on the heads of different *nāga*, they will most likely separate.¹⁸⁰

In PNM MS 3429 (Singapore, 1907; cat. 80), this diagram takes the form of a ship with a *nāga* figure-head (Figure 133). The ship iconography is also found in Bugis divinatory treatises where it is known as the *Bintang Kappala*.¹⁸¹

In some of the Malay manuscripts however the diagrams do not include illustrations at all, leaving

179 Wales 1983, p. 66.

180 Wales 1983, pp. 66–67; also see Sombat 1991, pp. 90–93 (I would like to thank Angela Chiu for helping me with the translation).

181 See Matthes 1868, pp. 34–36, fig. T; Akbar 2005.



FIGURE 129 Angka Tiga diagram. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.100 (cat. 10), p. 2. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

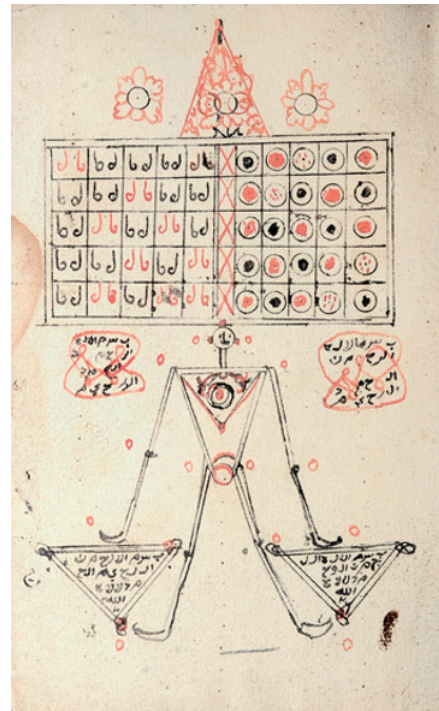


FIGURE 130 Ketika table (top) and human figure (bottom). Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 3179 (cat. 77), fol. 5r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

just the lines joining the circles and points (Figures 134, 135). This type of diagram is also found in Cham manuscripts (Figure 136).¹⁸²

Letter-Number Interpretation

As mentioned earlier the Sanskrit word for the zodiacal signs, *rāśi*, appears in Malay to describe the compatibility of two people. Thus if a couple are ill-suited for each other they are described as “*tiada serasi*” which “means literally that the ‘stars’



FIGURE 131 Malay intertwining nāga diagram for ascertaining compatibility (top) and abjad table (bottom). Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 238r(2) (cat. 58), side B, first opening. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

182 Hull, Hull History Centre, U DSE/8, fol. 20r (previously in the Brynmor Jones Library, University of Hull as SEA 8). For this manuscript see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 41.



FIGURE 132 *Mon intertwining nāga diagram for ascertaining compatibility.* Myanmar, late eighteenth – early nineteenth century. London, British Library, Or. 14532, side A, 16th opening/fol. 16 (detail). Photo by the author.



FIGURE 133 *Ship diagram for ascertaining compatibility.* Singapore, 1907. PNM MS 3429 (cat. 80), p. 83. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (photo by the author).

of husband and wife do not agree.”¹⁸³ However in spite of the Indic terminology, apart from the Chinese-derived method described above, the Malays typically employ the Islamic technique of

using the numerical values of the letters in a person’s name (onomancy) to determine a couple’s compatibility.¹⁸⁴

The couple’s names are deciphered using the *abjad* system whereby each letter of the Arabic alphabet corresponds to a number. Here the positions of the letters are different to the standard Arabic alphabetical sequence, but are instead based on an earlier, ancient ordering (the term *abjad* is based on the first four letters: *alif* ا, *bā* ب, *jīm* ج and *dāl* د).¹⁸⁵ The letters and their equivalent numerical values are given in Table 5.

The Malay system however expands on the list above. This is because the Malay adaptation of the Arabic alphabet – Jawi – has a few additional letters. Accordingly, these have also been allocated values, for which see Table 6.¹⁸⁶

Note however that *z* is not a Jawi letter but instead belongs to the Javanese adaptation of the Arabic alphabet called Pegon, although another Pegon letter *ḥ* has not been added to the Malay *abjad* system.

Quite often however we find that the letters are arranged in the standard alphabetical order instead (i.e. ا, ب, ت, etc.) with the additional Jawi/Pegon letters remaining at the end of the sequence. In these cases two further letters are added: *ḥ* and *z* with the values of 30 and 1 respectively, resulting in the *abjad* sequence as seen in Table 7.

In the Malay magic and divination manuscripts, the *abjad* letters and their numerical equivalents

183 Overbeck 1923, p. 282.

184 For the practice of letter-number interpretation in the Islamic world, see Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xxxv–xxxvi.

185 For the *abjad*, see Weil & Colin “Abdjad”; Canaan 2004, p. 159. Note that in the Western Islamic lands (North Africa and Spain) some of the letters are arranged differently and allocated other values, but as far as I am able to determine none of the Malay *abjad* systems follow this.

186 For the *abjad* in a Malay context, see Newbold 1839, vol. 11, pp. 365–366; Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “abjad”; Proudfoot 2006, pp. 94–95. Modern Jawi has added another letter, *z* (va).



FIGURE 134 Rotating Nāga (right) and diagram for ascertaining compatibility (left). Probably Malay peninsula, 1895. PNM MS 2578 (cat. 63), fols. 12v–13r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

may be laid out in a table although usually without any grid lines (Figures 131, 137). The numbers are either written in the numerical form or represented by dots, or occasionally both. Note that in many manuscripts multiple *abjad* tables in different formats could be found alongside each other. Also, some manuscripts give variant numbers and letters to their *abjad* tables, mostly due to scribal error, although in some cases there may be an underlying reason that is yet to be uncovered. A similar *abjad* table, with the same sequence of additional letters, is also found in a Cham divination manuscript from Cambodia (Figure 136).¹⁸⁷

The *abjad* values are used for a number of different purposes. An important function is in the construction of talismans, for example the talismanic word *budūh* is actually an acronym of the four corner cells of a 3 × 3 magic square (see Chapter Six). In the Malay magic and divination manuscripts however, the *abjad* tables usually

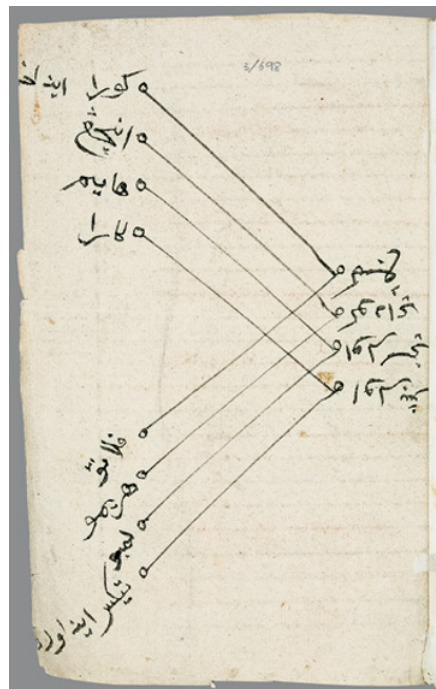


FIGURE 135 Diagram for ascertaining compatibility. Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.698 (cat. 21), p. 3. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

187 Hull, Hull History Centre, U DSE/8, fol. 31r. On this manuscript see footnote 182 in this chapter.



FIGURE 136 Cham Rotating Nāga (left) and diagram for ascertaining compatibility (right). Found in Phum Trea, Kampong Cham province, Cambodia, eighteenth century. Hull, Hull History Centre, U DSE/8, fols. 19v–20r. Copyright of the Hull History Centre.

TABLE 5 The Arabic abjad system

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|
| ن | م | ل | ك | ي | ط | ح | ز | و | هـ | د | ج | ب | ا |
| 50 | 40 | 30 | 20 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| غ | ظ | ض | ذ | خ | ث | ت | ش | ر | ق | ص | ف | ع | س |
| 1000 | 900 | 800 | 700 | 600 | 500 | 400 | 300 | 200 | 100 | 90 | 80 | 70 | 60 |

TABLE 6 Additions in the Malay abjad system

| | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| ڠ | ڤ | ڠ | ڠ | ڠ | ڠ |
| 7000 | 6000 | 5000 | 4000 | 3000 | 2000 |

appear among texts on divination, often with a connection to astrology, used for purposes such as ascertaining the outcome of a fight, the likelihood of a patient healing, the best time for traveling, the fortune of a person, and as mentioned earlier the suitability of two people with each other, usually for marriage. Here, according to IAMM 1998.1.698 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 21), the numerical

values of the man’s name are added up and divided by 9, and the same is done for the woman’s name. The remainders are then compared. Thus for example:

“Jika asa dengan asa, sekata sukacita serta bicaranya terlalu baik isterinya, dan beroleh anak baik paras serta dengan budinya ini...

*Jika asa dengan empat, tiada sejahtera, tiada akan kekal keduanya, bercerai juga padahnya...*¹⁸⁸

188 IAMM 1998.1.698, p. 13. Similar texts are published in amongst others Overbeck 1923; PNM 2006c; Haron 2009, pp. 45–51.

TABLE 7 *The Malay abjad system arranged in the standard alphabetical order*

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|----|-----|------|------|------|
| ز | ر | ذ | د | خ | ح | ج | ث | ت | ب | ا |
| 7 | 200 | 700 | 4 | 600 | 8 | 3 | 500 | 400 | 2 | 1 |
| ك | ق | ف | غ | ع | ظ | ط | ض | ص | ش | س |
| 20 | 100 | 80 | 1000 | 70 | 900 | 9 | 800 | 90 | 300 | 60 |
| غ | ذ | ج | ي | ء | لا | هـ | و | ن | م | ل |
| 4000 | 3000 | 2000 | 10 | 1 | 30 | 5 | 6 | 50 | 40 | 30 |
| | | | | | | | | ن | أ | ف |
| | | | | | | | | 7000 | 6000 | 5000 |

“[If one and one, there will be happiness and the wife will be well-spoken, and they will obtain a beautiful and well-mannered child...

If one and four, there will not be any peace, the couple will not last, they will end up being divorced...]”

Additionally there is also a particular diagram that may be employed. It consists of two tables or grids containing the numbers 1 to 30, with one grid of numbers being called *Lawḥ al-ḥayāt* (‘The Board of Life’) and the other *Lawḥ al-mamāt* (‘The Board of Death’). The procedures vary between the manuscripts, but in their most basic form the numerical values of the letters forming a person’s name are added to that of the day of the month (sometimes other components may be added such as the mother’s name), and then 30 is subtracted continuously until a remainder is left. This remainder is then compared to the two grids of numbers in the diagram. In PNM MS 2487 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 60), this technique is used to determine the outcome of war – if the number falls under the *Lawḥ al-ḥayāt* then the person will live, but if it falls under the *Lawḥ al-mamāt* then the person will die (Figure 137).¹⁸⁹

This diagram is thus related to one known variously in the West as the *Sphere of Life and Death*, *Sphere of Petosiris*, *Sphere of Democritus*, *Sphere of Apuleius* and *Sphere of Pythagoras*, the text of which has been dated up to the first century BC.¹⁹⁰ It is employed to determine the outcome of an illness or a fight, or to see if a lost item or slave could be recovered. In the *Sphere of Life and Death*, the diagram is divided into compartments containing the numbers 1 to 30 which relate to prognosis such as ‘Life’ and ‘Death’. The numerical values of the letters forming a person’s name are combined with the numerical values of the weekday and the day of the moon in which the illness began, and then the sum is divided by 30. This number is then consulted in the diagram.

The *abjad* values are also used to calculate zodiacal signs, based on a system attributed to Abū Ma’shar al-Balkhī (see Chapter Seven for a further discussion). Here the numerical values of a person’s name and that of his mother are added together, which is then divided by 12. The remainder provides the person’s zodiacal sign (Figure 138). Thus for example if the remainder figure is 1, then the person’s sign is Aries (*Hamal*), which is ruled by Mars (*Marikh*) and the associated Element is Fire (*Api*).

189 PNM MS 2487, fols. 14r–14v. The diagram is also found in PNM MS 3429 (Singapore, 1907; cat. 80), pp. 44–45 and in the *Tajul Muluk*, see Ismail [n.d.]a, pp. 35–36.

190 For the *Sphere of Life and Death* and its variants, see Thorndike 1923–58, vol. 1, pp. 682–3; Chardonnens 2007, pp. 181–222 with a bibliography on p. 181.



FIGURE 137 Table of the Lawḥ al-ḥayāt and Lawḥ al-mamāt (right) and abjad table (left). Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2487 (cat. 60), fols. 14v-15r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

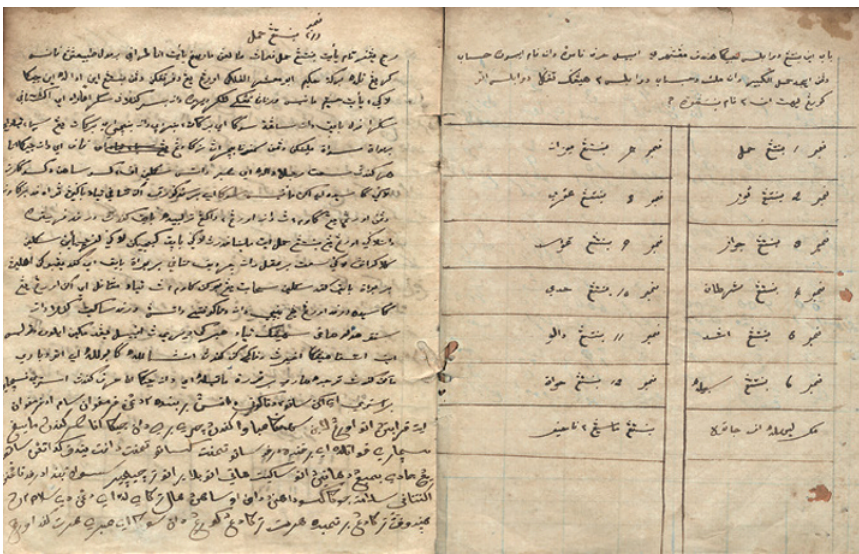


FIGURE 138 Zodiacal signs based on the numerical values of names. Singapore, early twentieth century. UM MSS 225 (cat. 96), fols. 1v-2r. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.

Sortilege, Bibliomancy and Geomancy

The casting of lots or sortilege works on the principle of “the interpretation of results produced by chance”,¹⁹¹ and in Malay such methods are usually

termed *faal* (Arabic: *faʿl*, ‘omens’¹⁹²). Texts on sortilege may be compiled in manuscripts and books, which are commonly known in English as Books of Fate or lot-books, in German as *Losbuch*, and in

191 Savage-Smith 2004, p. xxxiii. For an overview of sortilege in the Islamic world, see Weil 1913–6; Donaldson 1938, pp. 194–198; Fahd “Ḳur’a”; Omidsalar 1995;

Savage-Smith 1997b, pp. 148–151; Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xxxiii–xxxv.
192 See Fahd “Faʿl”.

Persian as *fālnāma* ('Book of Omens').¹⁹³ Many of the techniques in the Malay manuscripts appear to be derived from the Islamic tradition especially that of Iran, although it is possible that they did not enter the Malay corpus directly but were transmitted via India.

In her account of divination in Iran, Bess Allen Donaldson describes a technique whereby four sides of a wooden dice are inscribed with the Arabic letters that form the word *abjad*: ا, ب, ج and د. The dice is then thrown three times to generate a combination of letters which the user then consults in a book for the relevant prognostication.¹⁹⁴ This procedure is known as *Qur'a Jafariyya* ('The Lots of Ja'far'), named after the sixth Shi'i imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (702/3-765) to whom many of the esoteric sciences such as divination and alchemy are attributed.¹⁹⁵ However as Gotthold Weil has observed the origins of this divinatory technique could be traced back to Greek dice oracles (*astragaloi*).¹⁹⁶ Within the Malay manuscripts there is a very similar procedure but which instead employs two different letters, *hā'* ه and *wāw* و, on the wooden dice (although a physical example of this object is yet to be found).¹⁹⁷ It seems likely that the esoteric significance of the two letters plays a major part for their inclusion within this

divinatory technique. Both are part of the Seven Seals of Solomon,¹⁹⁸ and together they form the Arabic word *Huwa* ('He'), the third person pronoun which in Sufi circles refers to the Divine Name of the Essence.¹⁹⁹ According to the Malay text the dice is thrown four times to generate a combination of four letters, each sequence being represented by an Islamic prophet or angel and predicts either a good or bad outcome. Thus هوو is associated with the archangel Jibrā'īl and the outcome of any undertaking is good, while in contrast ههه, which is linked to the Prophet Dāwūd means that there will be misfortune. In the manuscripts the various combinations of the letters may be found arranged in the form of a table which is sometimes illuminated (Figures 139, 140).

In Iran, the practice of sortilege using dice is known as *raml*, but within the wider Islamic world the term usually refers to the art of geomancy (*'ilm al-raml*, 'the science of the sand').²⁰⁰ Geomancy involves the interpretation of sixteen geomantic figures, each of which is composed of four lines of one or two dots. This is produced by randomly generating sixteen rows of dots, and then counting the dots off in pairs for each line. A row with an odd number of dots is represented by one dot, and an even-numbered row by two dots. These are then grouped into four sets of geomantic figures (known as 'mothers'), and a further twelve figures are then generated from these initial four, producing a geomantic tableau which is interpreted in order to derive the prognostication (Figure 141).²⁰¹

193 For a general survey of these books worldwide, see Bolte 1903; Weil 1929; Skeat 1954, pp. 51–4 (who defines Books of Fate to be only those mantic or divinatory procedures with specific questions and answers); Strickmann 2005, chapter 9, pp. 98–144. For those specific to the Islamic tradition, see Flügel 1861; Massé "Fālnāma"; Afšār 1999.

194 Donaldson 1938, p. 194.

195 Ja'far al-Ṣādiq was also well-regarded in the areas of theology, Islamic law, the Sufi tradition and herbal medicine. For an overview of his life and works, see Hodgson "Dja'far al-Ṣādiq"; Gleaves *et al.* 2008.

196 Weil 1929, pp. 14–15; for a summary see Strickmann 2005, p. 122; also see Flügel 1861, p. 48.

197 This technique is found in PNM MS 3225 (Pontianak, 1885–86; cat. 78), pp. 23–27; PNM MS 3429 (Singapore, 1907; cat. 80), fols. 9v–11v; RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84), fols. 28v–29r. The procedure is discussed briefly in Hanapi 2006, pp. 152–153.

198 For which see Chapter Six.

199 In his work on the names of God, *Ṭawālī' al-shumūs* ('The Rising Suns'), the Indian mystic Ḥamīd al-Dīn Nāgawrī (d. 1244) writes that *Huwa* is "The greatest name of God" and that "it indicates His eternal nature, holy and free from decline and fall", Khan & Ram 2003, vol. 3, p. 217, also see vol. 1, p. 119, note 35. On *Huwa* also see Glassé 2008, pp. 45, 159, 217.

200 Savage-Smith 2004, p. xxxiv.

201 For geomancy in the Islamic world, see Savage-Smith 1997b, pp. 148–149; Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xxxiv–xxxv; Savage-Smith & Smith 2004.



FIGURE 139 Faal using dice of ha' and wāw. Pontianak, 1885–86. PNM MS 3225 (cat. 78), pp. 23-24/fol. 9v–10r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

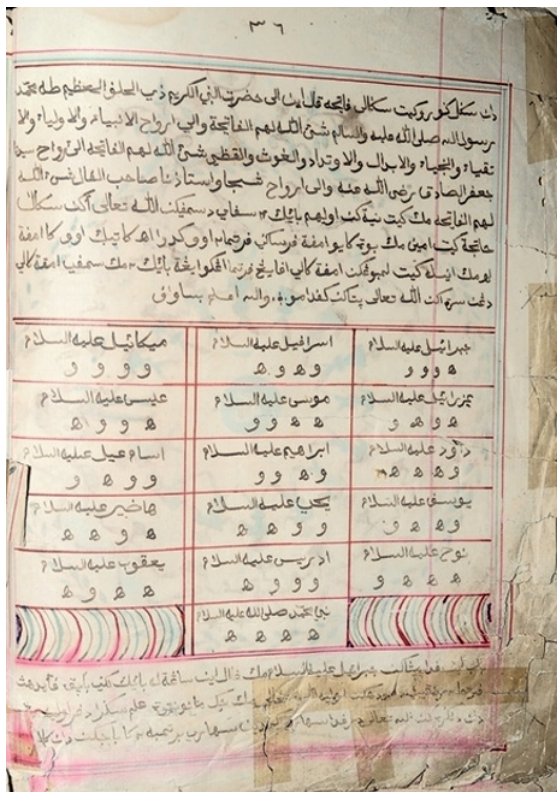


FIGURE 140 Faal using dice of ha' and wāw. Singapore, 1907. PNM MS 3429 (cat. 80), p. 36. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

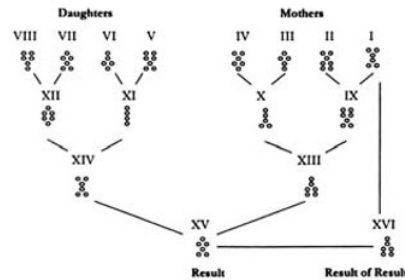


FIGURE 141 The geomantic tableau. After Savage-Smith & Smith 2004, fig. 2.

Within the Malay divinatory tradition the technique of geomancy is rarely found, and as Wilkinson has pointed out in traditional Malay literary works the term *ramal* is often conflated with astrology.²⁰² Furthermore in current usage *ramal* is applied as a blanket term for 'divination' or 'prediction' in general. Nevertheless geomancy is not unknown and appears into two Malay manuscripts (Figure 142).²⁰³

202 Wilkinson 1906, p. 67; Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "ramal".

203 SOAS MS 40779 (probably Sumatra, late eighteenth century; cat. 94), fols. 29v–43r, RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) where it appears twice: on fols. 28r–28v



FIGURE 142 *Geomantic figures* (ramal). Qur'a 'azīma fi 'ilm al-raml ta'lif al-Imām Ja'far al-Šādiq raḍīya Allāh ta'ālā 'anhu, probably Sumatra, late eighteenth century. SOAS MS 40779 (cat. 94), fols. 29v–30r. Courtesy of SOAS.

As mentioned earlier, this text is a combination of Arabic with an interlinear Malay translation, and it attributes the technique to Ja'far al-Šādiq who is also accredited with the art of geomancy in other parts of the Islamic world.²⁰⁴ The Arabic text is titled *Qur'a 'azīma fi 'ilm al-raml ta'lif al-Imām Ja'far al-Šādiq raḍīya Allāh ta'ālā 'anhu*, translated into Malay in the text as *Bubung Undi yang Maha Besar dalam Ilmu Ramal iaitu Karangan Imam Ja'far Sadiq* ('The Great Lot Divination of Geomancy by Imām Ja'far al-Šādiq, may God the Exalted be pleased with him') but its relationship with other Arabic works on this topic is still to be determined. According to the text, a geomantic figure is generated by grabbing a bunch of seeds (*biji*) or pebbles (*batu*) in one's hand, and then counting them off in pairs – this is done four times. However rather than generating further figures and looking at the tableau as a whole, only one geomantic figure is needed in order to tell

the fortune. For this purpose the manuscript gives a table containing the sixteen possible combinations (Figure 142) and their relevant prognostication. Thus for example, the geomantic figure ♁ named *jawdala* is associated with Fire (*Nārī*) and the planet Venus, and if the augury seeker or querent obtains this figure he will have happiness and good fortune.

A prominent subcategory of sortilege is bibliomancy, i.e. divination using books. In its simplest form the user would open the book at random to find the necessary advice within the page that has been opened, but there are also divinatory manuals that help to interpret the contents of the relevant text.²⁰⁵ Within the Islamic world divinatory prognostications are often sought within its most sacred book, the Qur'an, and in Iran manuals that deal with this form

(incomplete and missing the section that details the various prognostications) and on fols. 41v–48r.

204 Savage-Smith & Smith 2004, pp. 214–215.

205 For Islamic bibliomancy, see Phillott 1906, pp. 339–340; Omidsalar 1995; Savage-Smith 1997b, pp. 150–151, 156 (cat. 106); Afšār 1999; Schmitz 1999, pp. 66–74; Savage-Smith 2004, p. xxxiv; Gruber 2005; Tourkin 2006; Farhad & Bağci 2009; Gruber 2011.

of divination are usually known as *Fāl-i Qurʾān* ('Divination by the Qur'an'). A common method is for the querent to open the Qur'an at random, and then follow a number of steps (such as turning over a certain number of folios and/or counting down a certain number of lines) in order to find the key letter. This is then cross-referenced against the manual which contains the relevant prognostication for each letter of the alphabet.²⁰⁶ For instance, in a nineteenth century Qajar manuscript, a technique attributed to the Shi'i scholar Ḥājji Mürzā Muḥammad Ḥasān Ḥujjat al-Islām (d. 1894) tells the querent to open the Qur'an at random, turn over another seven folios and then count seven lines downwards to find the prognostication.²⁰⁷ In the Malay magic and divination manuscripts a very similar procedure is found, most likely based on Persian models. Titled *Faal Kalam Allah* ('Divination by the Word of God'), the querent has to open the Qur'an at random, turn over another seven folios (*waraqā*) from the opened page, and then count seven lines (*saṭr*) downwards from the top of the page on the right. The first letter he sees is the key letter that is cross-referenced against the manuscript for the prognostication (Figure 143).²⁰⁸

Bibliomancy using the Qur'an may also involve tools such as diagrams and tables, and one technique found in Persian manuscripts involves the use of wheel diagrams. Wheel diagrams appear in a number of Malay manuscripts for a procedure titled *Faal Quran* ('Divination by the Qur'an', as the wheel contains either Qur'anic verses or titles of the suras). It involves the querent picking a question from a pre-determined list, and then by selecting a lot number at random from a grid of numbers, he would utilise the wheel diagram to obtain the answer from a list of possible responses. Among the Malay manuscripts the procedure is found in two versions. The first version appears in

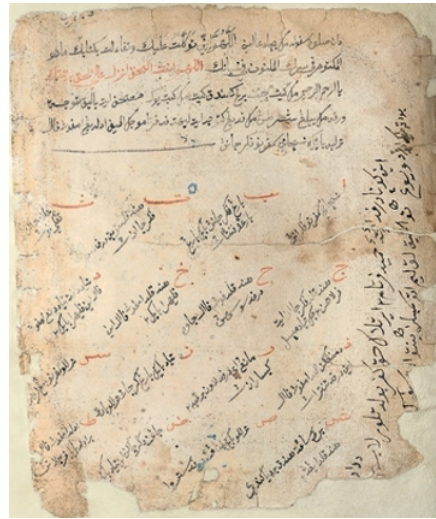


FIGURE 143 *Faal Kalam Allah*. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2532 (cat. 62), fol. 11v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

three manuscripts. Although one manuscript ascribes it to Ja'far al-Šādiq,²⁰⁹ the other two copies refer to it as *Faal Sadar Johan* ('Divination of Sadar Johan') and mention that the author had spent fifty years devising it.²¹⁰ Here, the wheel diagram is divided into thirty sectors and two rings (Figure 144a). The sectors of the outer ring contain the titles of suras from the Qur'an, while those of the inner ring contain various questions that may be asked. The accompanying grid contains the numbers 1 to 15 (Figure 144b). The text of PNM MS 2517 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth

206 Flügel 1861, pp. 45, 59–74; Strickmann 2005, p. 119; Gruber 2011.

207 London, Khalili Collection, MSS 412, fol. 7v, see Savage-Smith 1997b, cat. 106; Tourkin 2006, p. 390.

208 PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44), pp. 66–72, PNM MS 1951 (Malay peninsula or

Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 46), p. 37 (incomplete), PNM MS 2532 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 62), fols. 11r–11v, PNM MS 2750 (Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65), fols. 16v–19r, RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84), fols. 27r–27v, SOAS MS 7124 (Aceh, c. 1784–85; cat. 89), p. 581ff.

209 RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84), fols. 14r–26v.

210 PNM MS 2517 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 61), fols. 9r–19r, and in a manuscript from Semarang, Java, datable to before 1824, now in Singapore, Asian Civilisations Museum, 1996.525 (ex-cat.), published in Tan 2003.



FIGURE 144 The first version of the Faal Quran: a) Wheel diagram; b) Grid of numbers 1 to 15. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2517 (cat. 61): a) fol. 44r; b) fol. 43v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

century; cat. 61) gives the following instructions on how to conduct the procedure: firstly the querent must take ablutions, perform a prayer and recite a number of Qur'anic verses and *du'ā*. He then randomly chooses (*tunjuk*) a lot number between 1 and 15 with his eyes closed. Using this number he moves from the sector that relates to his question, down to the sura title that will provide the answer.²¹¹ Each sura title is linked to a list of fifteen possible responses, and using the same lot number

chosen earlier, the querent then counts off this list until he arrives at the correct prognostication.²¹²

The second version of the *Faal Quran* however was more popular (Figures 44, 145, 146).²¹³ According to the text found in SOAS MS 40328 (Melaka, 1913; cat. 93), it was composed by Ja'far al-Ṣādiq who had spent forty years devising it. Here, the wheel diagram is divided into forty sectors and the grid of numbers has the numbers 1 to

211 Note that the counting includes the sector from which we start counting from.

212 PNM MS 2517, fols. 42v–43r.

213 DBP MS 23 (most likely Perak, nineteenth century; cat. 7), PNM MS 1789 (Kelantan, 1857; cat. 42), pp. 54–70,

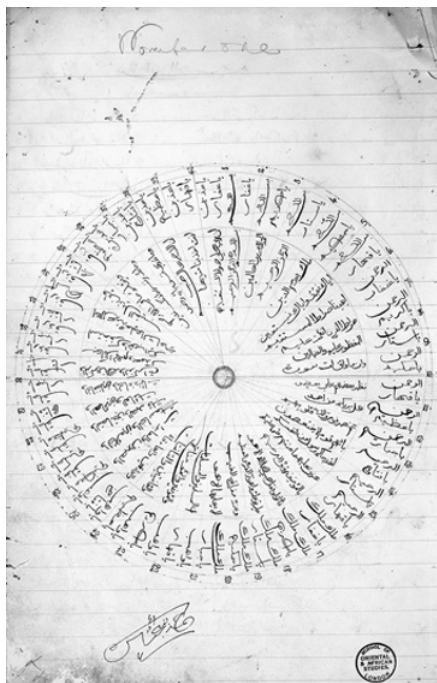


FIGURE 145 *Wheel diagram of the second version of the Faal Quran. Melaka, 1913. SOAS MS 40328 (cat. 93), fol. 2r. Courtesy of SOAS.*

10 only. This augury works along the same principles, albeit is a bit more long-winded. 40 Qur'anic verses and *du'ā'* are in the inner ring, but the outer ring contains a combination of two of the Ninety-nine Most Beautiful Names of God (*asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā*), for example "*al-Rahmān / Yā Qahhār*" and "*Yā Wahhāb / Yā Karīm*". These Names are linked to various questions (usually in a separate concordance table), for example the question "Will the sick person be cured?" relates to the Name combination "*Mālik al-Mulḳ / Yā Karīm*". The user randomly chooses (*tunjuk*) a lot number,

PNM MS 1948 (probably Terengganu, 1877–78; cat. 45), fols. 16r–21r, PNM MS 2487 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 60), fols. 1r–13r, PNM MS 3225 (Pontianak, 1885–86; cat. 78), pp. [3]-22 (fols. 1r–9r), RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84), fols. 3r-13v; RAS Maxwell 53 (Perak, 1879; cat. 85), SOAS MS 40328 (Melaka, 1913; cat. 93), fols. 1v–14r, also in IAMM 1998.1.514 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth – early twentieth century; ex-cat.).

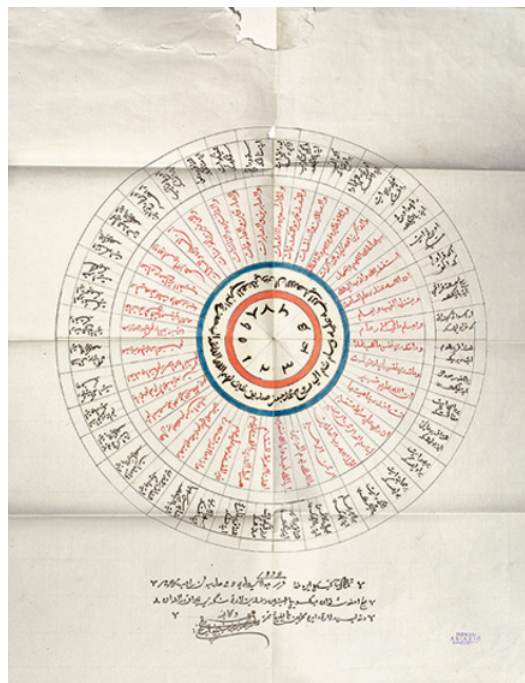


FIGURE 146 *Wheel diagram of the second version of the Faal Quran. Perak, 1879. RAS Maxwell 53 (cat. 85), loose sheet. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.*

and then from the sector containing the Name combination that relates to his question, he counts clockwise around the wheel to find the relevant Qur'anic verse/*du'ā'* which is in turn linked to a set of responses. Using the same lot number he had chosen earlier, he then counts downwards along the responses listed under this verse or *du'ā'* and finds the answer. For instance, the *basmala* is linked to the following prognostications (amongst others):

- “1. *Yang sahabatmu itu terlalu amat baik lagi muafakat dengan dikau, insya-Allah Taala adanya.*
2. *Hendak berburu itu engkau peroleh pada hari ini, insya-Allah Taala adanya. Wallāhu a'lam bi-l-ṣawāb...*”²¹⁴

²¹⁴ Based on RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84), fol. 4r.

“[1. That friend of yours is very good and will cooperate with you, God the Exalted willing.

2. If you go hunting you will obtain something today, God the Exalted willing. And God knows best the truth...]”

Although in most cases this wheel diagram is drawn within the codex itself, in one example it is drawn on a separate sheet of paper, presumably to make consulting and cross-referencing the outcomes easier (Figure 146).

The first version of the *Faal Quran* appears to have been based on Persian models as a similar divinatory procedure is found in at least two Persian manuscripts.²¹⁵ In terms of the structure of the procedure, both Persian and Malay versions belong to a system of lot divination defined by T.C. Skeat as containing “a fixed table of specific questions with a fixed number of alternative answers to each question.”²¹⁶ There are many variations of this type of divination, which is found in both the Islamic world (where it is known as *Qurʾa al-Maʾmūniyya*, ‘The Lots of al-Maʾmūn’)²¹⁷ and in the West.²¹⁸ The source of this system of lot divination could be traced to the Graeco-Roman tradition, as exemplified by the text known as the *Sortes Astrampsychi* (‘The Lots of Astrampsychus’),



FIGURE 147 *Faal using a wheel diagram and string. Terengganu, early twentieth century. PNM MS 4084 (cat. 83). Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

datable to the late first – early third century AD.²¹⁹ Nevertheless from the nature of the various questions and prognostications given in the Malay *Faal Quran*, we can see that although this divination technique may have originated from other parts of the Islamic world, it has been adapted to suit Southeast Asian activities. For example, one of the prognostications recommends a *berlimau* treatment, a traditional Malay ritual for treating illness whereby the patient is bathed with water mixed with lime and flowers.

Another type of a *faal* using a wheel diagram consists of a round piece of paper which is divided into a number of sectors, each of which contains a prognostication with a piece of string attached to its edge (Figure 147). According to the instructions given in PNM MS 4084 (Terengganu, early twentieth century; cat. 83), the user chooses a sector at random by putting the paper onto his head and pulling at the string. Here, the paper has been pasted onto a piece of yellow cloth of the same shape, although another example from Aceh shows that the paper could be folded like a closed fan (Figure 148).²²⁰ In 1882 A.L. van Hasselt describes a

215 London, British Library, Add. Or. 6591, fols. 1v–18r dated 1480, described in Rieu 1881, p. 800, and in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. orient. quart. 118, see Pertsch 1888, p. 5. I am grateful to Nazanin Mostoufi for her help with the Persian texts and to Doreen Mueller for her help with the German literature. Tourkin 2006, p. 392, footnote 22 also describes a *Fāl-i Qurʾān* with a circular diagram in St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, MS A 866. A circular diagram with Qurʾanic verses is mentioned in a manuscript in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. suppl. persan 1872, on fol. 62v, although the manuscript does not actually depict the diagram, Massé “Fāl-nāma”.

216 Skeat 1954, p. 54.

217 Weil 1913–16; Weil 1929, p. 15; Fahd “Kurʾa”; Fahd 1987, pp. 216–7; Strickmann 2005, pp. 122–124.

218 For a summary of the Western tradition see Skeat 1954, pp. 51–54; lafrate 2013, pp. 139–142.

219 On the *Sortes Astrampsychi* see Naether 2010.

220 Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, ML 233 (ex-cat.), published in Kumar & McGlynn 1996,

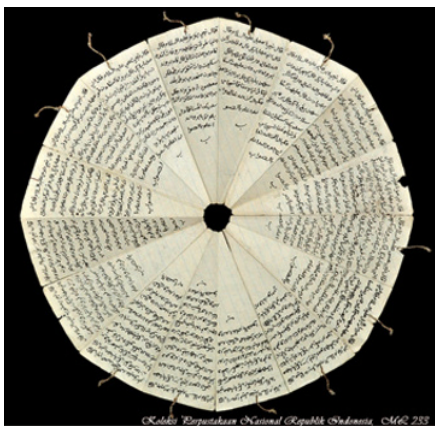


FIGURE 148 Faal using a wheel diagram and string, Aceh, nineteenth century. Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, ML 233 (ex-cat.). Courtesy of Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia.

similar format being used in Lubuk Tarok, Sumatra.²²¹

In the Islamic world another form of bibliomancy is the pictorial *fālnāma*. This involves the use of an illustrated book whereby the user opens it randomly to find his fortune, with each augury being made up of an illustration on one page and the related prognostication on the opposite page. This technique was employed in Iran, Turkey and India,²²² and in this book four Malay examples have also been found.²²³ These Malay pictorial *fālnāma* are very important from an art historical point of view as they contain a large number of illustrations. Furthermore, unlike other Malay divinatory methods, the themes and subject matter of the pictorial *fālnāma* are sometimes connected to

literary traditions, such as with Javanese epics and Islamic legends.

Three of the Malay pictorial *fālnāma* that have been found are in self-contained books, the exception being that of RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) which is found in a compilation with other divinatory works. The latter is composed of nine auguries titled *Peta Sembilan* ('The Nine Illustrations'), eight of which are from the *yoni* sequence of animals described above, while the pictorial *fālnāma* of Aswandi N-06 (Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century; cat. 1) contains 57 auguries with various subject matters including humans, animals and objects.

Meanwhile IAMM 1998.1.548 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 17) and PNM MS 1596 (Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72; cat. 38) contain a text that is referred to within the manuscripts as *Faal Nursi* ('Divination of Nursi', the identity of Nursi is still unidentified but he might have been an important and influential sage). Note that although both manuscripts contain almost the same number of auguries (29 and 30 auguries respectively) and have many elements in common (for instance see Figures 149 and 150), the order in which they are arranged differs and some auguries appear in one but not the other. This is so that no two manuscripts are exactly the same in order to generate a random prognostication.²²⁴ In any case the subject matters that are mentioned in the *Faal Nursi* can be divided into three main categories:

- Muḥammad and the Abrahamic prophets, such as Ibrāhīm and Yūsuf.
- Other literary characters, such as Duryodhana from the *Mahābhārata*, Raja Harman Syah and Angling Darma.
- Objects such as the sun, trees and ships.

In the *Faal Nursi* the random choosing of an augury is referred to as *tikam*, and the concerns for which

p. 89, fig. 105 (here the manuscript is erroneously described as being a letter).

221 Van Hasselt 1882, p. 88.

222 The most important study on the pictorial *fālnāma* is by Farhad & Baġci 2009, with a focus on Persian manuscripts from the Safavid period; an Indian example is discussed by Leach 1998, cat. 65, pp. 221–225.

223 Aswandi N-06 (Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century; cat. 1), IAMM 1998.1.548 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 17), PNM MS

1596 (Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72; cat. 38), RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84), fols. 31v–41r.

224 I am grateful to Massumeh Farhad for pointing this out to me.



FIGURE 149 Two fish. Faal Nursi ('Divination of Nursi'), Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.548 (cat. 17), pp. 42–43. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.



FIGURE 150 Two fish, one male and one female. Faal Nursi ('Divination of Nursi'), Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72. PNM MS 1596 (cat. 38), fols. 31v–32r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

the technique is used include travelling, getting married and curing illnesses. The text also gives instructions on how to conduct certain rituals in order to counteract any negative fortunes. An extract of the text for the augury of the Prophet Ibrāhīm is below:

“Fasal bab pada (menyata)kan faal ini dengan berkat Nabi Ibrahim AS. Maka [...] untung kamu ter-lalu bahagiannya, jatuh pada tempat masjid Nabi Ibrahim setengahnya bertuah juga. Allah dan Rasulullah memberi (tu)ah kamu itu. Maka hendaklah kamu berbuat kenduri orang raya (ni)at kepada ahli-ahli kubur dan kepada ulama-ulama. Maka tuah kamu pun (se)gera kembali, rezeki mudah dicari, dapat banyak emas dan perak. Jika pergi meminang nescaya boleh...”²²⁵

“[This chapter is on the augury with the blessings of the Prophet Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him. Your good fortune will be very joyful, for it partly falls on the mosque of the Prophet Ibrāhīm which is lucky. God and His Messenger are giving you this good fortune. You must hold a feast and dedicate it to the dead and to the ‘ulama’. Your luck will quickly return, livelihood will be easy to find, and you will get a lot of gold and silver. If you ask for a woman’s hand in marriage you will get it.]”

There are some similarities between the subject matter contained in the *Faal Nursi* with the Persian pictorial *fālnāma*, such as in the use of Islamic prophets. However, there are also major differences, for instance with the exclusion of Shi’i personages and the inclusion of characters that are familiar in the Malay literary tradition. Thus, although the Malay pictorial *fālnāma* might have originated from other parts of the Islamic world, they have nevertheless been adapted to fit into the local environment.

In addition there are also Thai divination manuals that work on a similar principle to the pictorial *fālnāma*, whereby the user would open the manuscript randomly using a stick or a knife to



FIGURE 151 *Rāma with Hanumān*. Khu-meue Siang Tai Chok Chata (*Fortune Teller's Handbook*), Southern Thailand, early twentieth century. SOAS MS 74583, side A, 50th opening. Courtesy of SOAS.

find an augury composed of an image on one page and the relevant prognostication on the opposite page. However here the prognostications relate to Thai literature, such as in the Buddhist *Jātaka* tales (stories on the previous lives of the Buddha) and the *Ramakien* (the Thai version of the *Rāmāyaṇa*). Two manuscripts containing this form of divination come from Southern Thailand and are in the squarer folding-book format known as *but tin chang* (‘elephant-foot book’; Figures 151, 173).²²⁶ Their relationship with the Malay and Persian pictorial *fālnāma* is still unclear and needs further investigation. Bibliomancy using sacred Buddhist texts and the *Rāmāyaṇa* is also known in Cambodia. Here, palm-leaf manuscripts of these texts are opened at random using a stick, and the text contained within the pages would indicate if the fortune is favourable or otherwise. For example if the passage selected from the *Rāmāyaṇa* is

225 Based on PNM MS 1596, fol. 25v.

226 London, British Library, Or. 16482 (formerly I.O. Siamese 18), see Ginsburg 2000, no. 63, p. 124, SOAS MS 74583, see

on the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa, then the fortune will be bad.²²⁷

Augury and Physiognomy

Augury, “the interpretation of signs in nature”, can be of many types.²²⁸ In Malay it tends to be referred to as *takbir* (from the Arabic *ta‘bīr*, ‘(dream) interpretation’),²²⁹ and omens may be derived from natural events such as earthquakes (*gempa*), eclipses (*gerhana*) and lightning (*kilat* or *halilintar*).²³⁰ According to RAS Raffles Malay 34 (most likely Penang, 1806; cat. 87), if an eclipse of the sun occurs during the month of Ramaḍān, the rice crop will be plentiful and human lives will be averted from misfortune; but if within that month an earthquake occurs during the day time, many ascetics (*orang pertapa*) will commit sins or fight amongst themselves, and if it occurs at night many people will migrate to another country.²³¹

Another form of augury is the interpretation of involuntary movements or twitching of the body, referred to as *Gerak Segala Anggota* (‘Movement of All Parts of the Body’).²³² For example according to PNM MS 2750 (Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65), if it occurs on the right side of the head, the person will obtain riches and happiness from both humans and spirits.²³³ There are also texts on the interpretation of

dreams or oneiromancy (*Takbir Mimpi*), of which there are a few versions.²³⁴ This form of divination is fairly popular and is found in a number of manuscripts.²³⁵

One Malay belief is that the appearance, behaviour or call of certain animals and birds foretells good luck or misfortune,²³⁶ and PNM MS 2588 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 64) provides ways on how to counteract the bad omens that arise from their behaviour. For example, if a wolf (*serigala*) enters one’s orchard, garden or home, misfortune could be averted (*tolak akan balanya*) by making an offering of raw meat, a piece of red cloth and gold. By doing this, one’s child will be beloved by kings and ministers, but failure to do so will lead to one being arrested by the king and ministers, contract illness or have the child die in prison.²³⁷

Within the manuscripts the aforementioned texts are usually unillustrated, but there are some forms of augury that are accompanied by drawings. As discussed in Chapter Three, a text on the omens of clothes gnawed by mice or rats appears in a manuscript owned by the Dutch merchant Pieter Willemsz van Elbinck dated 1604. In PNM MS 1456 (Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s–80s; cat. 36) and PNM MS 2812

Contadini 2007, cat. 44, pp. 60–61. I am grateful to Angela Chiu for her help with the latter manuscript.

227 Pou 1992, pp. 99–100.

228 For augury in general, see Guiley 2006, s.v. “augury” (quote from p. 26), also “omen”; for the Islamic tradition, see Donaldson 1938, pp. 198–199; Fahd “Fa’l”; Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xxx–xxxiii.

229 Also see Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “tabir”.

230 Hollander 1845, pp. 164–165, ١٦٢-١٦٥; Skeat 1900, pp. 561, 665; Overbeck 1923, pp. 373–374. For the Javanese tradition, see Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, pp. 280–281.

231 RAS Raffles Malay 34, p. 100.

232 Hollander 1845, pp. 164–165, ١٦٥-١٦٧; Overbeck 1923, pp. 374–375; Winstedt 1961, p. 91–92; Werner 2002, pp. 149–152. For the Islamic tradition, see Donaldson 1938, pp. 198–199; Savage-Smith 2004, p. xl. For the Javanese tradition, see Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, pp. 280–281.

233 PNM MS 2750, fol. 34r.

234 On these, see Hollander 1845, pp. 164–165, ١٦٠-١٦٣; Skeat 1900, pp. 562–566, 666–669; Overbeck 1923; Suriania 1993; Harun & Siti Mariani 2002, p. 194; Abu Hassan 2006; Harun *et al.* 2006, pp. 574–580. For the Islamic tradition, see Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xxxi–xxxii. For the Javanese tradition, see Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, pp. 280–281.

235 PNM MS 1452 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 35), fols. 16v–31r, PNM MS 1986 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 48), fols. 10r–20v, PNM MS 2228 (probably Perlis, 1933; cat. 55), pp. 56–[?], PNM MS 2532 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 62), fols. 21r–24v, PNM MS 2750 (Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65), fols. 22v–29r, PNM MS 2812 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 69), fols. 21r–27r;

236 See Skeat 1900, pp. 111–112, 123, 534–535, 561, 665–666; Bazrul 2006a. For the Islamic tradition, see Donaldson 1938, p. 199; Fahd “Iyāfa”; Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xxx–xxxii.

237 PNM MS 2588, fol. 69r.

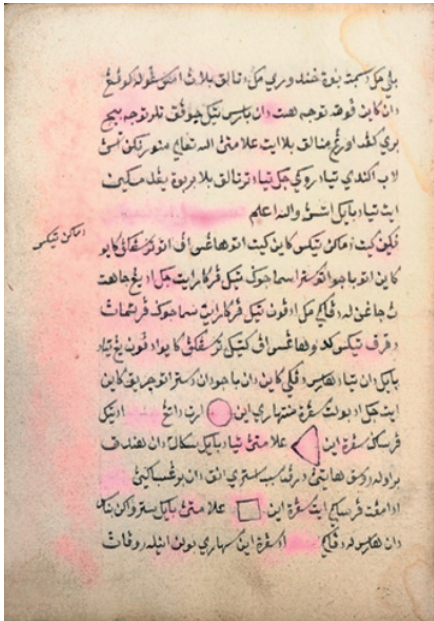


FIGURE 152 Patterns created on clothes eaten by mice/rats, burnt by fire or caught in a tree. Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 2812 (cat. 69), fol. 83r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

(Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 69), another version of the text is accompanied by diagrams depicting the patterns that are formed on the garments by these creatures, or as a result of being burnt by fire (*hangus api*) or caught in a tree (*tersangkut kayu*) (Figure 152). For example, if the shape is a triangle (*tiga persegi*) the owner will encounter misfortune or heartache caused by the death of his wife or children.²³⁸ PNM MS 1789 (Kelantan, 1857; cat. 42) gives yet another type of text and diagram for this type of divination (Figure 153).

Physiognomy attempts “... to decode the inner character by developing a grammar of observable bodily features”,²³⁹ and is known in Malay as *firasat*

(Arabic: *fīrāsa*). As mentioned in Chapter Three, Book VII of the seventeenth-century Malay work *Bustān al-salāṭīn* (“The Garden of Kings”) by Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī contains a section on this topic.²⁴⁰ It begins by distinguishing physiognomy into two types: that which is based on external signs (*ḥukmī*) and that which is divinely inspired (*sharʿī*; the ability to perform this is said to be possessed only by prophets and other holy men²⁴¹), together with anecdotes giving examples of both. The text then focuses on the *ḥukmī* type of physiognomy, providing the meanings behind various parts of the body in the following order: body colour, hair, head, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, nose, mouth, lips, teeth, chin, tongue, voice, breath, moles, beard, ears, face, neck, shoulders, back, forearms (*hasta*), palms of the hands, fingers, chest, stomach, waist, calves, soles of the feet, heels, and steps (*langkah*).²⁴² For instance, regarding the eyes:

“Kata hukama, adapun mata itu juru bahasa manusia dan menyatakan barang rahsia yang tersebut di dalam hati, dan diketahuilah dengan dia kelihatan akal segala manusia dan kurangnya. Kata ahli al-firasat, bahawa mata yang sederhana itu tanda menyampaikan janji. Dan mata yang jarang terkelip-kelip itu tanda akalnya baik lagi sempurna bicarannya. Dan mata yang sangat hitam itu tanda akalnya baik. Dan mata yang merah itu tanda berani. Dan yang mata sederhana itu dengan segala perinya – tiada besar dan tiada kecil dan tiada merah lagi dengan hitam, iaitulah yang ter-lalu baik daripada segala warna mata – akan tanda sempurna akalnya dan bicarannya dan maluan lagi beragama...”²⁴³

238 PNM MS 2812, fol. 83r, also PNM MS 1456 (Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s–80s; cat. 36), fol. 14v (here the text is slightly different). The topic of omens of clothes gnawed by mice/rats is briefly discussed in Winstedt 1961, p. 91.

239 For physiognomy in the Greek and Islamic traditions, see Swain 2007; also see Savage-Smith 2004, pp. xl–xliii

(quote from p. xli). For Malay physiognomy, see Jelani 2006; also see Harun & Siti Mariani 2002, p. 202; Werner 2002, pp. 140–148; Haron 2009, pp. ix–x. For the Javanese tradition, see Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, pp. 268–269, 273.

240 SOAS MS 36500, fols. 17r–28v.

241 For divine physiognomy in Islam, see Hoyland 2007, pp. 257–261.

242 Discussed in Jelani 2006, pp. 231–233, 248–255.

243 SOAS MS 36500, fols. 20v–21r.

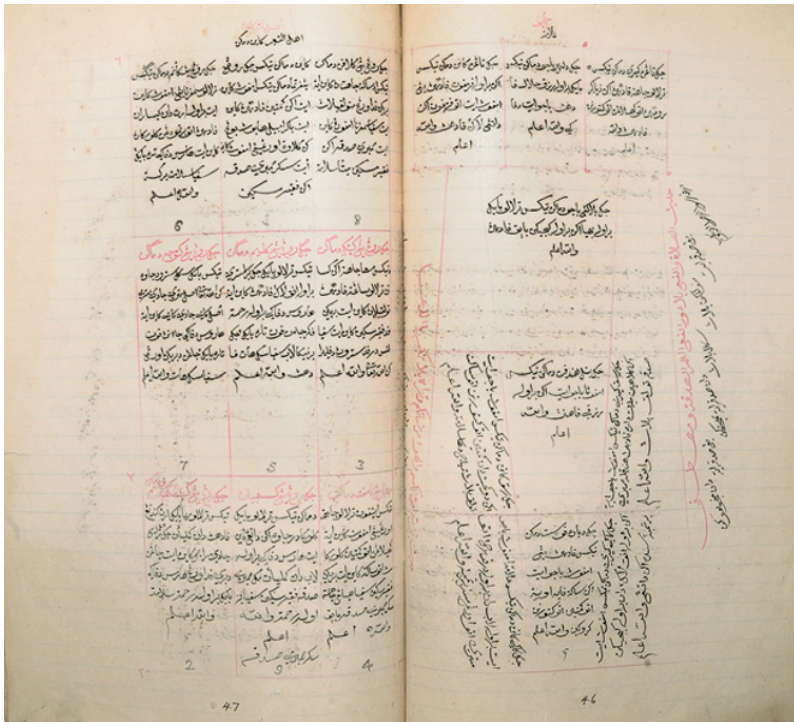


FIGURE 153 Diagram for divination based on clothes eaten by mice/rats. Kelantan, 1857. PNM MS 1789 (cat. 42), pp. 46–47. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

“[According to the authorities, the eyes are the gateway to a person and reveals the secrets of the heart, and it provides knowledge on a person’s intellect [akal] or lack thereof. According to the experts on physiognomy, eyes that are average mean that [the person] will not keep his promise. And eyes that rarely blink mean that he is intelligent and speaks well. And eyes that are very black mean that he is intelligent. And eyes that are red demonstrate bravery. And eyes that are average – neither large nor small nor red nor black, that is the best colour – mean that he is of sound mind and speech as well as modest and religious...]”

These are then followed by further anecdotes of famous figures using physiognomy, such as the caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13–23 AH / 634–44 AD) and the jurist Imām al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 204 AH / 820 AD).

The passages in the *Bustān* regarding the meanings behind the various parts of the body have

also been found in a number of Malay manuscripts as well as the *Tajul Muluk*,²⁴⁴ however other sections of the text – i.e. on the distinction between the *ḥukmī* and *shar‘ī* types of physiognomy, and the various anecdotes – do not seem to accompany them. According to Newbold,²⁴⁵ the Malay texts on physiognomy are translations of

244 PNM MS 1789 (Kelantan, 1857; cat. 42), pp. 81–85, PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44), pp. 97–108, PNM MS 2750 (Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65), fols. 55r–56r. Despite its title *Kitab Ilmu Firasat dan Ubat* (‘Book on Physiognomy and Medicine’) PNM MS 1951 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 46) does not contain a text on physiognomy. For the *Tajul Muluk*, see Ismail [n.d.]a, pp. 64–68, 116–120 (the text is repeated).

245 Newbold 1839, vol. II, p. 353 writes: “The only treatise on physiognomy that has fallen under my observation was an evidently imperfect translation of the Arabic work,

the *Dhakhīrat al-mulūk* ('The Treasury of Kings'), a Persian treatise on political ethics by the mystic 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Hamadhāni (1314–85).²⁴⁶ Whether this is correct is still to be investigated, but in one anecdote the *Bustān* makes a reference to Imām Fakhr al-Dīn, most likely referring to the Persian theologian Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (543–606 AH / 1149–1209 AD) who composed a well-known work titled *Kitāb al-firāsa* ('Book on Physiognomy').²⁴⁷ Ultimately however, the origins of the text on the meanings behind various parts of the body could be traced back to a treatise on physiognomy by the Graeco-Roman politician and scholar Polemon of Laodicea (c. 88–144) that was widely popular throughout the Islamic world.²⁴⁸

Within the Southeast Asian tradition including that of the Malays, physiognomy is not only limited to humans but also encompasses animals and objects which reveal if they are lucky (*bertuah*) or unlucky (*celaka*). For instance there are texts on how to determine if a bull is lucky or unlucky based on its markings (*Naskah/Petua Lembu*).²⁴⁹ PNM MS 1452 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 35) contains a text on lucky and unlucky cats, referred to



FIGURE 154
A keris with pamor on its blade, Brunei, late twentieth – early twenty-first century. SOAS, SOASAW 2010.0199.10. Courtesy of SOAS.

the *Zukheirat al Muluk*, or of its Persian extract the *Risalat* of Syed Ali of Hamadan. According to the Malay translation, physiognomy is divided into two parts; (which are again subdivided) viz., the *Firaset Sherai*, and the *Firaset Hukma*.”

- 246 Al-Hamadhāni was a significant figure in the spreading of Islam in Kashmir. For his life and works, see Hamadani 1984.
- 247 On this work, see Mourad 1939.
- 248 For Polemon and his influence in the field of physiognomy, see Swain 2007.
- 249 PNM MS 290 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 25), also in PNM MS 1702 (probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; ex-cat., see PNM 1997, p. 19), and PNM MS 1703 (Kampung Tajung (unidentified), probably Malay peninsula, dated Monday the 8th but no month or year given; ex-cat., see PNM 1997, p. 20).



FIGURE 155 Pamor Keris. Aceh, c. 1784–85. SOAS MS 7124 (cat. 89), p. 566. Courtesy of SOAS.

TABLE 8 *The seven planets*

| English | Malay | Arabic ²⁵⁰ |
|---------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Sun | <i>Syams</i> ²⁵¹ | <i>al-Shams</i> |
| Moon | <i>Kamar</i> ²⁵² | <i>al-Qamar</i> |
| Mercury | <i>Utarid</i> | <i>ʿUṭārid</i> |
| Venus | <i>Zuhrah</i> | <i>al-Zuhara</i> |
| Mars | <i>Marikh</i> | <i>al-Mirrikh</i> |
| Jupiter | <i>Musytari</i> | <i>al-Mushtarī</i> |
| Saturn | <i>Zuhal</i> | <i>Zuḥal</i> |

TABLE 9 *The twelve zodiacal signs*

| English | Malay ²⁵³ | Arabic ²⁵⁴ |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Aries | <i>Hamal</i> | <i>al-Ḥamal</i> |
| Taurus | <i>Thaur</i> | <i>al-Thawr</i> |
| Gemini | <i>Jauz</i> | <i>al-Jawzāʾ</i> |
| Cancer | <i>Saratan</i> | <i>al-Saraṭān</i> |
| Leo | <i>Asad</i> | <i>al-Asad</i> |
| Virgo | <i>Sunbulat</i> | <i>al-Sunbula</i> |
| Libra | <i>Mizan</i> | <i>al-Mizān</i> |
| Scorpio | <i>Akrab</i> | <i>al-ʿAqrab</i> |
| Sagittarius | <i>Kaus</i> | <i>al-Qaws</i> |
| Capricorn | <i>Jadi</i> | <i>al-Jadī</i> |
| Aquarius | <i>Dalu</i> | <i>al-Dalū</i> |
| Pisces | <i>Hut</i> | <i>al-Ḥūt</i> |

²⁵⁰ Taken from Kunitzsch, “al-Nudjūm”.

²⁵¹ The more common Malay word for the sun is *matahari*.

²⁵² The more common Malay word for the moon is *bulan*.

²⁵³ Also see Maass 1924, p. 432.

²⁵⁴ For the Arabic zodiacal signs, see Hartner & Kunitzsch “Mintāḳat al-Burūdīj”.

TABLE 10 *Rejang list as compiled by Voorhoeve*²⁵⁵

| Day | Symbol |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Horse (<i>Kuda</i>) |
| 2 | Barking Deer (<i>Kijang</i>) |
| 3 | Tiger (<i>Harimau</i>) |
| 4 | Cat (<i>Kucing</i>) |
| 5 | <i>Simpai</i> (a species of monkey) ²⁵⁶ |
| 6 | Buffalo (<i>Kerbau</i>) |
| 7 | Mouse/Rat (<i>Tikus</i>) |
| 8 | Cow (<i>Lembu</i>) |
| 9 | Dog (<i>Anjing</i>) |
| 10 | <i>Nāga</i> (<i>Naga</i>) |
| 11 | Goat (<i>Kambing</i>) |
| 12 | Palm-blossom (<i>Mayang</i>) |
| 13 | Elephant (<i>Gajah</i>) |
| 14 | Lion (<i>Singa</i>) |
| 15 | Fish (<i>Ikan</i>) |
| 16 | Pig (<i>Babi</i>) |
| 17 | Kite (<i>Helang</i>) |
| 18 | Centipede (<i>Lipan</i>) |
| 19 | Tortoise (<i>Baning</i>) |
| 20 | Ghost (<i>Hantu</i>) |
| 21 | Charcoal (<i>Harang</i>) |
| 22 | Man (<i>Orang</i>) or Shrimp (<i>Udang</i>) ²⁵⁷ |
| 23 | Grasshopper (<i>Belalang</i>) |
| 24 | Ray/Skate (<i>Pari</i>) |
| 25 | Peg (<i>Pasak</i>) |
| 26 | Slow Loris (<i>Pukang</i>)? |
| 27 | Worm (<i>Ulat</i>)? |
| 28 | Auspicious (<i>Punia</i>) (Sanskrit: <i>puṇya</i>) |
| 29 | Empty (<i>Sunia</i>) (Sanskrit: <i>śūnya</i>) |
| 30 | Arrow (<i>Panah</i>) or Bow (<i>Dahanu</i>) ²⁵⁸ |

²⁵⁵ From Voorhoeve 1975, pp. 183–184.

²⁵⁶ Voorhoeve 1975, p. 184 notes that this is often misread as Cow (*Sapi*).

²⁵⁷ Voorhoeve 1975, p. 184 notes that the spellings for both are similar.

²⁵⁸ Voorhoeve 1975, p. 184 notes that this is often misread as Leaf (*Daun*).

as *Peri Kucing* ('On Cats'). Here for instance a black cat with four white feet is considered unlucky.²⁵⁹ These texts are typically unillustrated, however Thai treatises on cats, known as *Tamra Maew* ('Cat Treatises'), do contain images of the animal.²⁶⁰

However, there is one type of text that is often accompanied by drawings. As noted in Chapter Two, the *keris* is a Malay weapon that is considered to be magically powerful, and it is important to ascertain if it is lucky or unlucky. This is determined by analysing its measurements as well as the damascene patterns on its blade (*pamor*) (Figure 154).²⁶¹ Within the manuscripts texts on the interpretation of the damascene patterns (*Pamor Keris*) are usually accompanied by illustrations showing the various designs of the *pamor* (Figures 24, 155, 225).

TABLE II *The Malay version of the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac*

| Malay | Chinese |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Rat (<i>Tikus</i>) | Rat |
| Ox (<i>Lembu</i>) | Ox |
| Tiger (<i>Harimau</i>) | Tiger |
| Mousedeer (<i>Pelanduk</i>) | Rabbit |
| Large Snake (<i>Ular Besar</i>) | Dragon |
| Second Snake (<i>Ular Sani</i>) | Snake |
| Horse (<i>Kuda</i>) | Horse |
| Goat (<i>Kambing</i>) | Goat |
| Monkey (<i>Kera</i>) | Monkey |
| Rooster (<i>Ayam</i>) | Rooster |
| Dog (<i>Anjing</i>) | Dog |
| Tortoise (<i>Kura</i>) | Pig |

259 PNM MS 1452, fol. 36v. For the Javanese tradition on lucky and unlucky animals, see Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, pp. 269, 275–278.

260 Clutterbuck 1998; Igunma 2013.

261 See discussions in Newbold 1839, vol. II, pp. 202–207; Skeat 1900, pp. 525–530, 654–656; Keith 1938; Woolley 1938; Laidlaw 1947; Woolley 1947, p. 76; Hill 1956, pp. 8–10, 37–42. For the Javanese tradition, see Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 1, pp. 269, 278–279; Behrend 1996, pp. 186–187.

The Art: Iconography, Style and Illumination

General Remarks on the Illustrations and Diagrams

The magic and divination manuscripts vary greatly in terms of quality. Some are plain and basic affairs, containing a few diagrams and talismanic designs that are drawn in a simple manner using the same black ink as the text. Yet although they were made primarily for practical usage, it does not mean that the manuscripts are devoid of decorative elements. There are many examples whereby the copyist-artist has taken the liberty of beautifying the books with numerous illustrations and illumination using a wide range of colours, indicating their value to the owners.

In terms of the *mise-en-page*, within the pages of the manuscripts the illustrations and diagrams are generally placed on their own, separated from the text. The sizes vary – in some cases the images take up part or half a page, and are placed either underneath or above the relevant paragraph (for example see Figure 43), while in other instances the illustrations or diagrams take up a full page (Figures 45, 46) or are even spread across two or more pages (Figure 44). Similar arrangements are found in Arabic illustrated manuscripts, and the approach chosen by the artist for the composition of a page may help in assigning manuscripts to different schools of production.¹ At the same time it must be noted that talismanic designs are sometimes jumbled together with the text, and when used in a talismanic context even figural drawings of humans and spirits may be treated in the same way (see for instance Figure 156).

In some manuscripts the illustrations are referred to by the terms *peta*² or *gambar*. Typically the drawings and paintings of living beings and objects are schematic, two-dimensional with a lack of depth and are not usually anatomically accurate or realistic.

The figures are often without much movement or expression, and even when action is being depicted they still come across as being fairly stiff. In most cases the figures are depicted singly without any background or landscape elements, and often without frames. Anthropomorphic beings are shown in either a frontal view or in profile, while animals and birds are almost always depicted in profile.

Identifying the models and sources for the images however is not straightforward. Malay literary manuscripts generally lack illustrations, which means that there is a dearth of comparable material for the drawings and paintings in the magic and divination manuscripts. However this does not mean that illustrated literary manuscripts do not exist. In fact, some of the known examples of such works demonstrate stylistic affiliations with the magic and divination manuscripts. In addition, one genre of text that is commonly illustrated comprises devotional works such as the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* of al-Jazūli and the *mawlid* texts (*kitab mawlid*). While these do not have depictions of living beings, nevertheless they often contain images of buildings that are comparable to those in the magic and divination manuscripts. The connections between these illustrated Malay literary and devotional manuscripts with those of magic and divination are discussed in more detail below.

Furthermore, for the study of figural illustrations we must also look at other forms of media, not only those on flat surfaces but also three-dimensional works. The iconography and style of anthropomorphic beings and animals in the manuscripts often show a strong connection with other Malay arts, especially that of woodwork and the theatre. At the same time they belong to a wider Southeast Asian milieu, as similar imagery can be found in the textiles, sculpture and theatre of other societies within the region such as those of the Batak, Javanese and Thai. In many cases this shared artistic vocabulary has roots in the early

¹ See discussion in Contadini 2012, pp. 103–104.

² In modern Malay usage *peta* means 'map'.



FIGURE 156 *Talismanic design against the pelesit spirit. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.543 (cat. 15), p. 1. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.*



FIGURE 157

Rajamuka human figures. Top row, left to right: a) Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2778 (cat. 66), side A, 15th opening (detail); b) Probably Palembang, nineteenth century. BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (cat. 5), fol. 32v (detail); c) Probably Malay peninsula, 1829–30. PNM MS 3231 (cat. 79), fol. rv (detail). Bottom row, left to right: d) Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 3179 (cat. 77), fol. 2r (detail); e) Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 1986 (cat. 48), fol. 6r (detail); f) Patani, c. 1857. DBP MS 82, (cat. 8), side A, 30th opening (detail). Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau and Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

animistic culture of the region, for example the anthropomorphic figures in the frontal spread-eagled squatting posture and the talismanic design known as Solomon's ring both indicate the survival of ancient motifs. Finally, while some manuscripts incorporate Western techniques and styles that are more naturalistic, this should not be seen as the 'pinnacle' in the evolution of Malay painting, but rather as another approach used in illustrating the texts.³

Anthropomorphic Beings

A prominent subject matter of the illustrations found in Malay magic and divination manuscripts is that of human beings and spirits. They appear in both magical and divinatory contexts, for instance as models for effigies to be used in love magic or protective spells, or as divinatory tools such as in the *rajamuka* wheel, the *Rejang* calendar and the pictorial *fālnāma*. In many cases spirits are depicted in an anthropomorphic or human form.

The ways in which anthropomorphic figures are depicted within the manuscripts vary. They may range from simple, schematic stick figures to those

that are more fully formed with detailed anatomical features and costume, and shown as being in motion carrying out various actions and activities. In such cases more extensive analysis of style and dress could be conducted.

While to some extent the differences in the way anthropomorphic beings are depicted depend on the style of the artist, they are also dictated by the type of text. For instance with the *rajamuka* wheel diagrams static stick figures are more commonly employed, but in the case of the pictorial *fālnāma* humans and spirits are more fully fleshed and often depicted as being in movement.

Stick Figures

The simplest depictions of anthropomorphic figures are usually found in the drawing of effigies and within diagrams such as those of the *rajamuka*. In PNM MS 2778 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 66) the figures in the *rajamuka* wheel are drawn simply as a circle with an upside-down 'V' underneath (Figure 157a); similar figures could also be seen in Thai divination tables.⁴ However, more commonly they are drawn as stick figures with a circle for the head, an upside-down triangle for the torso and single black lines denoting the

³ See Contadini 2010, pp. 5–7 for this issue in Arab painting.

⁴ See Pattaratorn 2011, p. 96.

arms and legs (Figures 157b, d). There are variations to this – sometimes the legs are curled upwards and the torso takes more of a heart shape (Figures 157c, f). Even though these *rajamuka* drawings are fairly simple and stylised, there are many examples whereby the artist has added decorative flourishes to enhance the figures (Figures 157d, e, f).

The Spread-Eagled Squatting Posture

With the exception of the pictorial *fālnāma*, in general anthropomorphic figures in the manuscripts are depicted singly, without any background, in a static position and shown in a frontal view. A particularly distinctive form is a spread-eagled figure in the so-called squatting posture, whereby both legs are apart and bent inwards at the knees, and both arms are raised upwards as if in invocation and bent at the elbows (Figures 57, 158, 159, 177, 286). There are a number of variations to this, for example whereby the arms are placed downwards along the side (Figure 160) or where the arms are



FIGURE 159 Human effigy. Malay peninsula, early twentieth century. PNM MS 2920 (cat. 72), fol. 10r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 158 Jin Bera'il. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 29th opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.

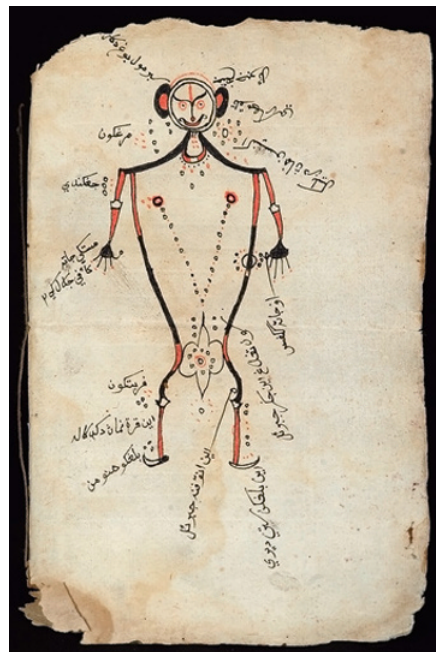


FIGURE 160 Human figure. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2799 (cat. 68), fol. 44v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

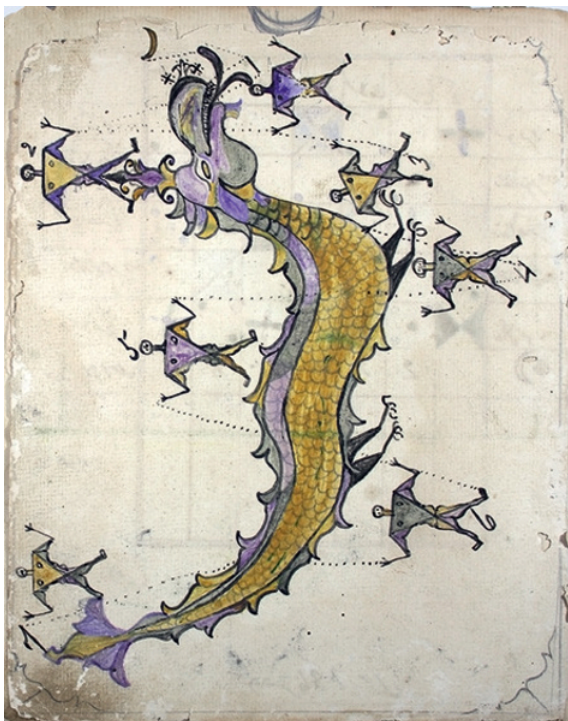


FIGURE 161 *Human figures around a nāga, used for divination. Palembang, c. 1890. Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (cat. 2), fol. 21r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.*

raised but the knees are not bent (Figure 161). The posterior might also be positioned lower so that the figure appears to be squatting on the ground. The fingers are often claw-like, and with a few exceptions the figures are generally naked, sometimes drawn with breasts or nipples and pronounced genitalia (Figure 159).

The iconography of the frontal spread-eagled squatting figure is an ancient and widespread one. Images similar to the Malay examples are found in every inhabited continent as can be seen in the surveys by Carl Schuster⁵ and Douglas Fraser.⁶ Certain animals, particularly frogs and lizards, are also depicted in a similar way with flexed limbs, and as such the line between human and animal

forms can sometimes be blurred.⁷ The figure is found throughout the world in a variety of contexts to which different meanings are assigned. For instance it is used to depict a woman in either a sexual or maternal role. The earliest example of a figure in the squatting posture that I have been able to find is that of a woman (but with one arm facing downwards, and possibly with a detached phallus at her vagina) that has been engraved onto a stone bench in the Neolithic site of Göbekli Tepe in Turkey (ninth millennium BC).⁸ Spread-eagled squatting figures of a woman giving birth with a baby emerging between her legs are among the most frequently found among the petroglyphs of South Siberia and northern Central Asia, dating from the pre-Bronze Age to the early Iron Age.⁹ The association of this iconography with maternity continued throughout the following centuries, as figures of a pregnant woman (*gravida*) in the squatting posture are found in medieval European medical manuscripts (Figure 162a), and are sometimes added as the sixth image in a series of anatomical illustrations that are dubbed by Karl Sudhoff as *Fünfbilderserie* ('Five-picture Series').¹⁰ In his study of the 'heraldic woman', Fraser argues that the iconography of a woman in this posture, which entails her private parts being displayed, not only symbolises regeneration and fertility but also has an apotropaic or protective function.¹¹

7 Schuster 1951, p. 8.

8 See discussion in Hodder & Meskell 2011, p. 239 and fig. 6.

9 Jacobson 1997.

10 The *Fünfbilderserie* depicts the five systems of the human body – bones, nerves, muscles, veins, arteries. The human figures illustrated are in the squatting posture but with the arms down by the side. Much has been written on the *Fünfbilderserie*, which appears in the European, Persian, Tibetan and Indian traditions, for example see Garrison 1929, pp. 211–214; O'Neill 1969; O'Neill 1977; Brandenburg 1982, pp. 30–39, 210–215; Savage-Smith 1997e; Savage-Smith 2010, pp. 155–159; Cuevas 2011, pp. 83–95.

11 D. Fraser 1966. Fraser's 'heraldic woman' is the figure of a woman with legs spread apart in the squatting posture, being flanked by two attendants.

5 Schuster 1951.

6 D. Fraser 1966.

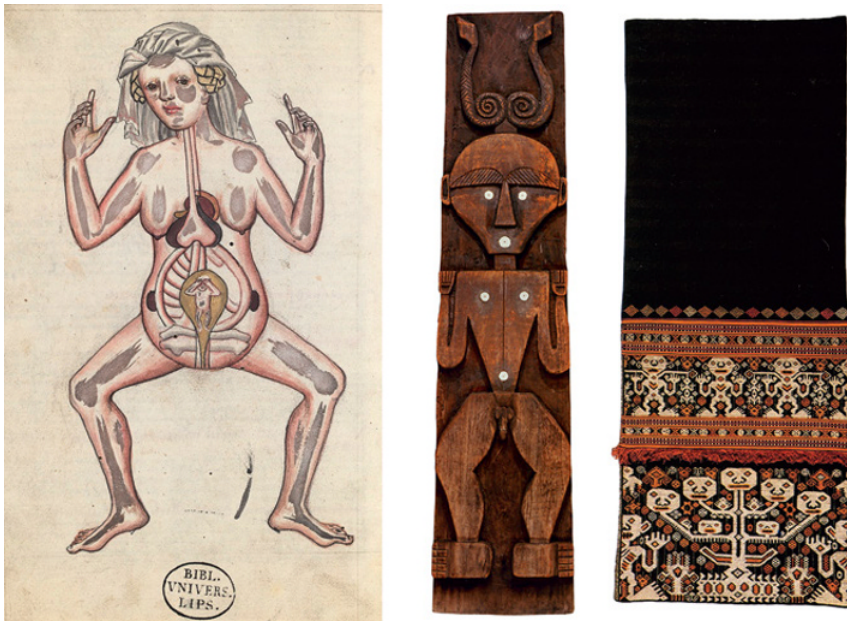


FIGURE 162 a) *Gravida in a medical manuscript, c. 1450. Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms n122, fol. 348v. Courtesy of the Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig; b) Male ancestral figure on doorway panel of ancestral house of the Paiwan, Taiwan, nineteenth century. Los Angeles, Fowler Museum at University of California, X72.833. After Maxwell 2010, p. 64; c) Woman's skirt (lau pahuda), Sumba, Indonesia, early twentieth century. Canberra, National Gallery of Australia, 1984.617. After Maxwell 2003, fig. 183.*

Similarly in Southeast Asia and New Guinea, spread-eagled squatting figures are linked to the concepts of protection, fertility and rebirth, and appear on various media such as shields, houses and mortuary structures.¹² They are usually identified with powerful supernatural beings, ancestors and deities. Among the earliest appearances of this figure in the region is on a group of bronze ceremonial axes found on the island of Roti in eastern Indonesia, dating to the Bronze Age. The blade of one of these axes contains an anthropomorphic frontal figure in the spread-eagled squatting posture wearing a large headdress.¹³ Noting the similarities with Balinese *cili* effigies of the rice goddess Dewi Sri, August Johan Bernet Kempers has suggested that the figure on the Roti axe might be

associated with the “goddess of agriculture and fertility”.¹⁴ Spread-eagled squatting figures may also be identified as guardian ancestors, such as with the man and woman carved on the doorway panels of ancestral houses of the Austronesian Paiwan people of Taiwan (Figure 162b).¹⁵ They also appear on Southeast Asian textiles, and Robyn Maxwell attributes the squatting posture and raised arms of the figures as denoting strength (Figure 162c).¹⁶ On the other hand, Bernet Kempers suggests that the squatting posture might relate to how the dead are buried in the foetal position, or alternatively it may

12 See D. Fraser 1966, pp. 47–51, 56–57, 62–65, 70–71.

13 Jakarta, Museum Nasional, inv. no. 1442, see Bernet Kempers 1988, pl. 22.20; Maxwell 2010, p. 39.

14 Bernet Kempers 1988, pp. 295–296.

15 Los Angeles, Fowler Museum at University of California, X72.833; Maxwell 2010, pp. 63–64.

16 Maxwell 2003, p. 128. For instance they appear on a woman's skirt from Sumba, east Indonesia, now in Canberra, National Gallery of Australia, 1984.617, see Maxwell 2003, fig. 183; Maxwell 2010, p. 119.

be an expression of “being alive”, as the figure is in movement between sitting and standing.¹⁷ Douglas Newton has noted that in Papua New Guinea the gesture of raised arms is used for protection.¹⁸

As such, there may be many interpretations that could be attributed to the meaning of this figure – ancestral spirits, fertility, strength, protection – but almost certainly it is the association with power and the supernatural that makes the spread-eagled squatting figure so prevalent among magical and divinatory illustrations throughout Southeast Asia. In Myanmar, the figure of the cannibal king Bawdithada (Porisāda from the Buddhist *Mahāsutasoma-Jātaka* tale) is used as a talismanic design to confer invulnerability,¹⁹ and he appears in this posture on a nineteenth – twentieth-century talismanic vest of the Shan people (Figure 163a).²⁰ The anthropomorphic figures in the Batak *pustaka* (Figures 17, 163b) are also depicted in the same way. It may also be added that in other parts of the world, supernatural entities are similarly shown in the spread-eagled squatting posture, such as in the portrait of the Devil in the *Codex Gigas* (‘Giant Book’), a thirteenth-century manuscript from Bohemia (Figure 163c),²¹ and that of the Beast of the Earth (*Dābbat al-ard*, a creature that is said to appear before the Apocalypse) in a number of Persian and Ottoman pictorial *fālnāma* from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (Figure 163d).²²

17 Bernet Kempers 1988, p. 376.

18 Newton 1961, p. 34.

19 Taw Sein Ko 1913, pp. 171–173; Conway 2006, p. 74.

20 London, British Library, Or. 15085, Conway 2006, fig. 102.

21 Stockholm, National Library of Sweden, A 148, produced in Bohemia, Czech Republic, datable to 1204–1230. For the manuscript and its illustrations see Kungliga Biblioteket [n.d.], <http://www.kb.se/codex-gigas/eng/>, last accessed 28 November 2012; also see Nordenfalk 1975; Nordenfalk 1987, who here suggests that the posture of the Devil is related to the *Fünfbilderserie*; Gullick 2007. I am grateful to Tanja Tolar for bringing this manuscript to my attention.

22 For instance in Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı, H.1702, fol. 47v and H.1703, fol. 22v, see Farhad & Bağcı 2009, fig. 4.10, cat. 54.

Thus it is clear that the depiction of anthropomorphic beings that appear in Malay magic and divination manuscripts belong to a much older and widespread pictorial tradition. The association of the spread-eagled squatting posture with powerful supernatural beings can be seen for instance in the illustrations of the jinn who are invoked to help defeat opponents in the sport of bull and buffalo fighting as depicted in the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23; Figures 57, 158, 286).

Similarly, figures depicted in this posture are also used in divination. As discussed in Chapter Five, a human figure found in a manuscript from Selangor has little dots surrounding his body which are counted in order to determine the outcome of an undertaking (Figure 164). He is depicted frontally, in the squatting posture with legs apart and bent at the knees, with one of the arms raised but the other facing downwards. According to Walter Skeat, this figure is identified as Unggas Telang, “an ‘old war-chief’ (*hulubalang tua*) of the Sea-gypsies (*Orang Laut*) and the Malay pirates.”²³ This shows that not only are powerful ancestral beings such as Unggas Telang invoked in Malay divinatory procedures, but also their depiction in the squatting posture could be interpreted as conveying their supernatural authority. Perhaps a similar reasoning lies behind the unidentified figure in Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (Palembang, c. 1890; cat. 2), which is probably meant to be employed in the same way (Figure 177).

In terms of sorcery, effigies of spirits and human beings are also shown in the spread-eagled squatting posture. For instance in PNM MS 2920 (Malay peninsula, early twentieth century; cat. 72) there are various instructions for creating effigies to be used in love magic. In one example the figure of the woman to whom the spell is directed to is drawn onto a piece of white cloth that is made into the wick of three candles, while another method prescribes hanging or burying

23 Skeat 1900, pp. 560–561; the illustration is published on pl. 25, fig 1.



FIGURE 163 a) King Bawdithada (*Porisāda*). Cotton talismanic vest, Shan people, Myanmar, nineteenth – twentieth century. London, British Library, Or. 15085 (detail). Photo by the author; b) *Simalungun-Toba Batak pustaha*, northern Sumatra, eighteenth century. SOAS MS 41836, side B, nth opening (detail). Courtesy of SOAS; c) *The Devil's Portrait*. Codex Gigas ('Giant Book'), Bohemia, c. 1204–30. Stockholm, National Library of Sweden, A 148, fol. 290r (detail). Reproduction: Per B. Adolphson, courtesy of the National Library of Sweden; d) *Dābbat al-arḍ* (*Beast of the Earth*). Pictorial *fāl-nāma*, probably Iran, 1580s. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı, H.1703, fol. 22v. After Farhad & Bağcı 2009, cat. 54.

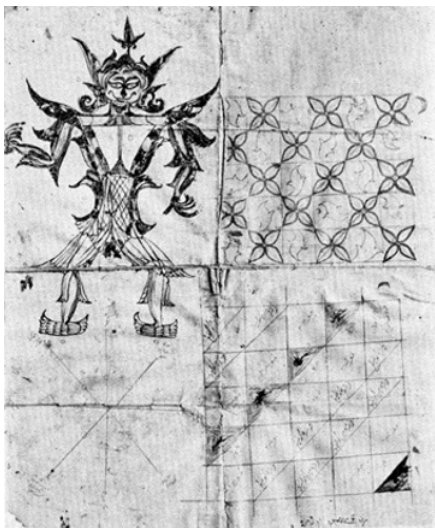


FIGURE 164 *The war-chief Unggas Telang, ketika tables and a compass rose from a Malay magic and divination manuscript. Selangor, nineteenth century (ex-cat.). After Skeat 1900, pl. 25, fig. 1.*

the drawing in the ground of the woman's path (Figure 159).²⁴ In the manuscript each figure is depicted frontally in the spread-eagled squatting posture, with a triangular torso and fingers and toes that are claw-like. Each is naked with exposed breasts and has a protuberance at the pubic area that represents the female genitalia, with Arabic letters and words written on certain parts of the body. Effigies that are drawn in the squatting posture are also found in other parts of the world such as Tibet, although here the figures are depicted with both arms downwards.²⁵

It is worth noting that even when drawings of anthropomorphic beings are more schematic and less detailed, the influence of this specific posture could still be detected, such as in the *rajamuka* figures described earlier (Figures 157b, d) which suggests that they may be meant to represent supernatural authority and power.

24 PNM MS 2920, fols. 9r–10r.

25 It has been observed that the Tibetan effigies are very similar to the human figures in the *Fünfbilderserie*, see discussion in Cuevas 2011, pp. 83–95.



FIGURE 165 *Drawing the outline for a shadow play puppet onto paper. After 'Ainu Sham & Mohd. Azmi 1996, p. 56, fig. A.*

Connections to Shadow Play Puppets and Classical Dance-Drama Costumes

In many parts of Southeast Asia there is a close relationship between manuscript painting and the theatre. In a number of Malay magic and divination manuscripts, it is clear that the iconography and style of the anthropomorphic figures depicted are related to aspects of theatre and dance, both in terms of iconography and style.

Some of the images show affinities to puppets of shadow plays. The shadow play is a common form of theatre in Southeast Asia. In Malay it is known as the *wayang kulit*, and is especially popular in the northern region and East Coast of the Malay peninsula.²⁶ The outlines for the puppets are first drawn onto paper (Figure 165) which is pasted onto leather. The designs are then carved out and painted. The puppet figures are thus flat and two-dimensional with anthropomorphic forms depicted in profile (except for their torsos which

26 The two major Malay forms are the *Wayang Siam* and the *Wayang Jawa*. For the various types of Malay shadow plays, see Sweeney 1972b, pp. 3–6; also Hill 1952, pp. 30–32.



FIGURE 166 Pawukon (Javanese divination calendar) in Malay. Java, c. 1811–16. RAS Raffles Malay 41, pp. 1–2. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

are *en face*). Similar links between manuscript painting and shadow play puppets are also found in other areas of the region, especially in Java, with *wayang*-style illustrations often being found in Javanese literary manuscripts as well as those on divination (Figure 166).²⁷ Connections between manuscript painting and shadow play puppets are also found in other parts of the world.²⁸ However the lack of surviving early examples of both manuscript painting and shadow play puppets in South-east Asia means that it difficult to trace their origins and evolution, as well as any early connections between the two art forms. In Java, traditional Javanese literature suggests that picture storytelling on palm-leaf and *dluwang* had preceded the use of freestanding puppets.²⁹ There, the employment of painted *dluwang* scrolls in picture storytelling,

known as *wayang beber*, still survives today (although rare) and “may represent an important link between *wayang* art and manuscript illustration.”³⁰ Additionally the narrative stone reliefs on Hindu-Buddhist temples in Java are another factor that must be taken into account in the development of painting and puppetry.³¹

Whether there was a similar evolution in the Malay pictorial tradition still needs further investigation, but in any case the relationship between Malay manuscript painting and shadow play puppets is certainly a long-standing one. In regard to magic and divination manuscripts however there may be a deeper underlying connection involved. While the similarities in style and iconography may be attributed to a shared artistic vocabulary, it must be remembered that many magicians and shamans, especially those in the East Coast of the Malay peninsula, are also

27 Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. 111, pp. 46–48; Behrend 1996, pp. 177–186.

28 Such as in medieval Arabic illustrated manuscripts, see George 2011.

29 Mrázek 2005, pp. 69–74.

30 Behrend 1996, p. 178.

31 Mrázek 2005, pp. 75–77.



FIGURE 167 Jin Sangkala Berdiri (*'The Standing Jinni of Time'*). Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 26th opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.



FIGURE 168 Mula Tani (probably an earth spirit), wayang kulit, Patani or Kelantan, mid-twentieth century. London, Horniman Museum, 1980.230. Courtesy of the Horniman Museum London.

shadow play puppeteers (*dalang*).³² Nevertheless at the present time it is unclear if the artists who worked on the manuscripts that are studied in this book were also shadow play puppeteers or were involved in the making of puppets.

The influence of the *wayang kulit* in Malay manuscripts is apparent in the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23). Shadow play puppets are defined by specific rules regarding their colour, size, bodily attributes, dress and other iconographic details. The characters are generally divided into two main types in terms of their appearances and nature – those that are refined (*halus*) and those that are coarse (*kasar*). In fact the nature of the characters play a major role in influencing their appearance. Refined characters such as heroes and princesses

are depicted with slim waists, thin arms and legs, narrow eyes, sharp noses and closed mouths. In contrast, coarse characters are the opposite: the puppets of demons, ogres, and animals (such as the warrior monkey Hanumān) have broad bodies, thick legs and arms with clawed fingers and round, bulging eyes; their mouths are also usually wide open with long tongues protruding out, displaying sharp teeth and fangs (Figure 168).³³ This iconography of demons in Malay shadow plays can be seen within the Nik Mohamed manuscript, for instance in the painting of a jinni called *Jin Sangkala Berdiri* (*'The Standing Jinni of Time'*; Figure 167).

In his study of Thai painting, Jean Boisselier makes the point that the commonalities between

32 Sweeney 1972b, pp. 31–32 reports that 60% of the shadow play puppeteers in Kelantan aged over 35 years were also magicians (*bomoh*).

33 For the types, iconography and forms of Malay shadow play puppets, see Scott-Kemball 1959; Sheppard 1963; Sheppard 1964; Sheppard 1965; Sweeney 1972a, pp. 25–42; Sweeney 1972b, pp. 4–5; Ghulam-Sarwar 2007, p. 97.



FIGURE 169 *Jin Merah (Red Jinni; right) and the Jemalang Tanah (Earth Spirit; left) with two bulls. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side A, 16th opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.*

painting and the theatre are due to the fact that both draw upon the same iconographic and artistic conventions, and thus it is misleading to say that one form of art has exerted influence on the other.³⁴ However in the case of the *Jin Sangkala Berdiri* we have an example in which the correspondences between manuscript painting and shadow plays extend beyond a shared vocabulary, as the way in which the image of the spirit is drawn appears to have been based on the physical form of a puppet. In shadow plays, the arms of the puppets are articulated, i.e. the joints at the shoulder and elbow pivot in order to enable manipulation by the puppeteer. This effect can clearly be seen in the illustration of the jinni, whereby the joints on the elbows are clearly drawn indicating the articulated arms of the shadow play figure, and furthermore the way in which the arm on the left hangs sharply downwards is also typical of a puppet.

34 Boisselier 1976, pp. 56–58.

Some of the other jinn in the Nik Mohamed manuscript are depicted with two or more faces, such as with the Red Jinni (*Jin Merah*) and the Earth Spirit (*Jemalang Tanah*) (Figure 169). This is probably derived from a motif found in Javanese shadow play puppets known as the *garuda mungkur* ('*garuda* turned backwards'), whereby the face of the *garuda* (the mount of Viṣṇu) peers out from the back of the puppets' heads. Soedarsono argues that the *garuda mungkur* motif is used to signify "righteous kings and princes", and he has traced them to the reliefs of temples in East Java from the Classical Period, the earliest being that of Candi Jago which dates to the late thirteenth to mid-fourteenth century.³⁵ Variations of the motif have also been found in Malay shadow play puppets (Figure 170), from which the figures in the Nik Mohamed manuscript were probably modelled.

Another manuscript from the Patani/Kelantan region that demonstrates connections to shadow

35 Soedarsono 1984, pp. 205–210, quote from p. 206.



FIGURE 170 *Maharaja Rawana (Rāvaṇa), wayang kulit, Kelantan, twentieth century. After Sheppard 1972, fig. 5.8.*

play puppets is a pictorial *fālnāma* of the text known as *Faal Nursi* ('Divination of Nursi') in PNM MS 1596 (Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72; cat. 38). Here, the tenth augury relates to the Prophet Ya'qūb (Malay: Nabi Yaakub) and the related illustration on the opposite page shows two men wrestling (Figure 171). It is possible that this represents an episode in the prophet's life, probably the antagonistic relationship between Ya'qūb and his twin brother, Esau.³⁶ Yet the iconography of the figures in this painting is derived from local Malay and Thai traditions. Both are painted black, and are naked except for a short, white striped lower garment (it is difficult to make out if it is a *sarung*, skirt or trousers) and a white collar. Their heads are bald and each has a short, round nose. They thus resemble clown

36 For the rivalry between Ya'qūb and Esau, see al-Kisā'i 1997, pp. 163–166; Hatun 1993, vol. 1, pp. 219–224. The Malay version of this story could be found in Hamdan 1990, pp. 32–33.

characters in Malay shadow plays especially that of Pak Dogol (Figure 172), who in actuality is the incarnation of the Great Deity Sang Yang Tunggal.³⁷

This dark, bald figure with a short nose and pot belly is also found in the Southern Thai version of the shadow play known as *nang talung*, where there is a similar clown character by the name of Kaew.³⁸ In a Thai fortune-telling manuscript from Southern Thailand, the character Chuchok (Jūjaka) from the Buddhist *Vessantara-Jātaka* tale is depicted with a similar iconography (Figure 173).³⁹ The illustration in PNM MS 1596 thus demonstrates two things: firstly, if the image is indeed of the Prophet Ya'qūb then there was no inhibition in Malay society of depicting the prophets of Islam. Secondly, even though the divinatory technique of the pictorial *fālnāma* may have been derived from the Persian or Ottoman traditions, the iconography used are of local figures taken from the theatre and other arts of the Malays and neighbouring Thai. Additionally, in some cases in PNM MS 1596 there is a decorative horizontal band at the bottom of the composition (Figures 150, 174). Similar bands appear in Malay shadow play puppets, where such decorative devices appear underneath objects.⁴⁰ This strengthens the argument that the illustrations in this manuscript were modelled on shadow play puppets.

A similar connection between manuscript painting and shadow play puppets is found in another area. The city of Palembang in Sumatra has had a long history of connections with Java, and thus it should not come as a surprise to find illustrated Malay manuscripts from there exhibiting a strong Javanese stylistic influence, such as in Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (Palembang, c. 1890; cat. 2). Among the

37 Sweeney 1972a, p. 71. For a history of the character, see Sheppard 1965; Sweeney 1972b, pp. 20–22.

38 See Paritta 1989, p. 40, fig. 11.

39 London, British Library, Or. 16482 (formerly I.O. Siamese 18), side B, third opening/fol. 34, see Ginsburg 2000, p. 124, cat. 63.

40 For instance in the puppet of a palm tree, Kelantan, nineteenth – early twentieth century, now in Paris, Musée du Quai Branly, 71.1933.61.330.



FIGURE 171
 Augury of Prophet Ya'qub. Faal Nursi
 ('Divination of Nursi'), Patani or
 Kelantan, 1871–72. PNM MS 1596
 (cat. 38), fol. 13r. Courtesy of
 Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 172
 Pak Dogol, wayang kulit, Patani
 or Kelantan, mid-twentieth
 century. London, Horniman
 Museum, 1980.122. Courtesy of
 the Horniman Museum London.



FIGURE 173
 Chuchok (Jūjaka) from a Thai
 divination manuscript.
 Southern Thailand, nineteenth
 – early twentieth century.
 London, British Library, Or.
 16482 (formerly I.O. Stamese
 18), side B, third opening/fol. 34.
 Photo by the author.



FIGURE 174
Raja Kumadi. Faal Nursi (*Divination of Nursi*), Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72. PNM MS 1596 (cat. 38), fols. 30v–31r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

divinatory techniques given in this manuscript is a row of seven human figures with the numbers 1 to 7 written above their heads and the words “Jaya” (“Victory”), “Talu” (“Continuous”) and “Berlawan” (“Fighting”) underneath them (Figure 175). The word “Bulan” (“Month”) is written on the top right-hand side. There is no accompanying text but it is probably used to determine good and bad days for defeating enemies during a week. The figures, particularly those whose faces are in profile, show a strong resemblance to Javanese shadow play or *wayang* puppets (Figure 176). They have a slim waist, thin arms and legs, narrow eyes, a long sharp nose and closed mouths – in other words the iconography of refined male characters. The crescent-shaped headdress is also found among shadow play puppets, and actually represents the hair of the character knotted in a bun shaped like a lobster claw (known as *gelung supit urang*), a fashion that is only worn by kings, princes and prime ministers.⁴¹ Like the *garuda mungkur*, this motif is also



FIGURE 175
Human figures, probably to determine good and bad times for defeating enemies. Palembang, c. 1890. Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (cat. 2), fol. 25v. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.

41 Mellema 1954, p. 22.



FIGURE 176 *Bambang Sakutrem from the Mahābhārata, wayang kulit, Java, first half of the twentieth century. London, Horniman Museum, 16.5.58/17. Courtesy of the Horniman Museum London.*

found on the temple reliefs of East Java.⁴² The bustle on the rumps of the figures, known as the *bokongan*, is the result of the folds and pleats of a type of textile called the *dodot*, and like the crescent-shaped headdress it is also worn by members of the royal court.⁴³ Each figure holds a *keris* in his left hand; the one on the far right also has an unidentified object in his right hand, while three others are holding a long sword upright. Thus the iconography of the figures together with their dress and weapons indicate that they belong in the royal court, and demonstrate how figures of kingly personages are employed in methods of divination.

Another Javanese connection in this manuscript can be seen in the divinatory figure of a man in the spread-eagled squatting posture (Figure 177). He has



FIGURE 177 *Divinatory figure. Palembang, c. 1890. Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (cat. 2), fol. 15v. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.*

long black hair and a beard, as well as large eyes. In terms of dress he has a bare torso and wears a cloth of green, red and gold around his waist, together with a crown or diadem, a chest-ornament, bracelets and ankle bracelets, all made of gold (the colour yellow is used here as a substitute). Similar costumes are found in classical Javanese dance-dramas. For instance the man's yellow face probably represents a golden mask, in which case the figure could have been based on a character from the *wayang topeng*, a form of dance-drama in which masks (*topeng*) are worn by the dancers. Gold-coloured masks are usually used to signify a noble character, but the overall look of the illustrated figure seems more closely related to that of the strong or aggressive male type, such as King Klana of the Prince Panji cycle.⁴⁴ Although Klana's fiery temperament is typically

42 Soedarsono 1984, pp. 204–205.

43 Mellema 1954, pp. 26–28.

44 For Klana in the *wayang topeng*, see Miettinen 1992, p. 93.



FIGURE 178 *King Klana from the wayang topeng, Java. After Miettinen 1992, col. pl. 26.*

depicted with a red mask, on occasion he sports a golden one instead (Figure 178).

Returning to the states of Patani and Kelantan on the East Coast of the Malay peninsula, we find further anthropomorphic figures in dress adopted from dance-dramas, but here they are of a Thai influence. In the Nik Mohamed manuscript discussed earlier, the jinni known as *Jin Pengikat Diri Hulubalang Tugal Setabang Alas* is shown frontally and with large bulging eyes, a round nose with spirals, a pair of pointed ears, and a mouth with fangs or tusks protruding from its corners (Figures 57, 179a). The bulging eyes and protruding tusks are part of the general iconography of demons and ogres in Southeast Asia, but the pointed ears of the jinni suggests that the figure might have been modelled on the masks worn in Thai masked dance-dramas known as *khon* (Figure 179b).⁴⁵

45 For the *khon* dance-drama and its costumes, see Miettinen 1992, pp. 55–59; Natthapatra & Promporn 1998, pp. 106–149; Daoreuk 2006, pp. 64–103, 112–115.

Influences from Thai dance-dramas can also be seen in other manuscripts. PNM MS 2778 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 66) contains an effigy used in love magic, which in this case is of the woman whom the spell is directed towards (Figure 62).⁴⁶ She is depicted in the frontal view with both feet pointed to one side, a form that is derived from shadow play puppets. Of interest is the figure's headdress which resembles that used in the *menora*, a Malay dance-drama derived from the Thai *lakhon nora* (Figure 180).⁴⁷ This headdress, known in Malay as *kecopong* or *chada* and in Thai as *chert*, consists of a tall *stupa*-like spire on a spiky base with two pointed ear ornaments, and is based on the Thai royal crown.⁴⁸

Another common feature in the costumes of Thai classical dance-dramas is the sharp, peaked epaulettes (*inthanu*) (Figure 181c). Similar epaulettes can be seen in an effigy of a spirit or demon (*hantu*) used in a ritual to cure menstrual cramps (*senggugut*) in PNM MS 3018 (probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 76; Figures 181 a, b).⁴⁹ Additionally, the body of this demon is also adorned with curved 'fins', and similar bodily embellishments appear on the figure of the war-chief Unggas Telang discussed above (Figure 164) and on a jinni in the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Figure 158). The sharp, curved pointed 'fins' or 'waves' are a common motif in Malay art, and can be seen for example in manuscript illumination from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula (Figure 249). This tendency to add 'waves' is also found in paintings of animals, such as on the bodies of the *nāga* and bird in DBP MS 82 from Patani, datable to c. 1857 (cat. 8; Figure 198).

Apart from the epaulettes, the head of the demon in PNM MS 3018 also shows connections to

46 PNM MS 2778 (cat. 66), side B, first opening.

47 Sheppard 1973; Ginsburg 1975; Ghulam-Sarwar 1982; Miettinen 1992, pp. 59–64, 149–150.

48 Miettinen 1992, p. 53 adds that the spire shape not only signifies royalty but also has religious overtones, as it resembles the *stupa* in Thai temples.

49 The image is drawn onto a white bowl, to which water is added for the patient to drink.



FIGURE 179 a) Jin Pengikat Diri Hulubalang Tugal Setabang Alas. *Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side A, second opening (detail). Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh; b) Khon mask of Nontayaksha, Thailand, c. nineteenth – twentieth century. Bangkok, National Museum. After Natthapatra & Promporn 1998, p. 141.*



FIGURE 180 *A lakhon nora dancer, Thailand. After Miettinen 1992, col. pl. 15.*

costumes of Southeast Asian dance-dramas, and indeed further anthropomorphic figures with similar headdresses or crowns are found in many Malay magic and divination manuscripts, even among the schematic *rajamuka* and talismanic figures (Figures 156, 157c). It has not been possible to link these other examples to any specific costumes, but rather it is more appropriate to describe them as a generic type of headdress or crown, consisting

of a peak or spire in the middle and pointed ears or ‘wings’ on the sides.

The wide distribution of this generic headdress/crown motif suggests a deeper significance to the dress of anthropomorphic figures in Malay magic and divination manuscripts. My belief is that this motif is derived from a broader, pre-Islamic Southeast Asian magical tradition, where it formed part of royal dress used to depict powerful beings and personages. Although in the discussion above connections have been made between the manuscript illustrations with costumes used in Southeast Asian classical dance-dramas, it must be emphasised that the latter are based on court attire, particularly those of olden times.⁵⁰ Thus, the anthropomorphic figures in Malay magic and divination manuscripts may have originally represented powerful royal and possibly ancestral figures, which over time have become stylised and their meaning forgotten. Indeed talismanic designs containing depictions of kingly and princely personages wearing court dress can be found in other parts of Southeast Asia, such as among the Tai of Lan Na, Northern

⁵⁰ Mahā Vajirāvuth 1975, p. 5; Miettinen 1992, p. 53; Brakel-Papenhuyzen 1995, p. 46.



FIGURE 181

a) Hantu Senggugut ('Demon of Menstrual Cramps'). Probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. PNM MS 3018 (cat. 76), fol. 1r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia; b) Detail; c) Thotsakan (Rāvaṇa) from the Ramakien in the khon dance-drama, Thailand. After Natthapatra & Promporn 1998, p. 109.



FIGURE 182 Paramesura Nat and Devayakkha Raajaa in a Burmese manual for making amulets. Myanmar, nineteenth century. SOAS PL MS 41891, fol. 4r (detail). Courtesy of SOAS.

Thailand and the Shan States in Myanmar.⁵¹ Alternatively, the anthropomorphic figures could originally have been images of Hindu and Buddhist deities or other spirits, who in Southeast Asia tend to be depicted in royal court attire.⁵²

They appear in the talismanic designs of the region, for instance in a Burmese palm-leaf manuscript which depicts images of the *Paramesura Nat* ('Supreme God of Hell or Unfortunate States') and *Devayakkha Raajaa* ('King of the Demons') to be used for protective tattoos (Figure 182),⁵³ and in a Khmer talisman containing a drawing of Viṣṇu to be used for military prowess (Figure 183).⁵⁴

Military prowess is also a common theme that threads through the anthropomorphic figures illustrated in Malay magic and divination manuscripts. As mentioned above, the human figures in Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (Palembang, c. 1890; cat. 2) are carrying weapons (Figure 175), while the figure of Unggas Telang in Skeat's Selangor manuscript is a war-chief or *hulubalang* (Figure 164). As mentioned in Chapter Two, in Malay society the warrior is believed to have

51 Conway 2014, pp. 49–53.

52 In Thai art the Buddha may also be depicted in court attire, H. Woodward 2005, pp. 54–56; McGill 2005, pp. 144–146.

53 SOAS PL MS 41891 fol. 4r. I would like to thank Jotika Khur-Yearn for identifying the figures and their function.

54 Published in Bernon 1998, p. 29.



FIGURE 183 *Viṣṇu in a Khmer talisman. Cambodia, twentieth century. After Bernon 1998, p. 29.*

magical and divinatory knowledge and powers, and as such it is not surprising that ancestral war-chiefs are sought for such purposes. A 70-year old female magician interviewed by Anita Hashim in 1996 says that when she was ill a man in a warrior's costume appeared in a dream and gave her a letter containing incantations.⁵⁵ At the same time, the court dress worn by the figures in the manuscripts also show an association between royalty and military prowess, which is understandable since in pre-modern times the power of a ruler is often directly correlated to his success in the battlefield. This connection is paralleled in Javanese magic and divination manuscripts, where a *rajamuka* wheel found in a manuscript in the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia depicts human figures holding weapons such as swords, spears and shields, as well as wearing crowns (Figure 184).⁵⁶

55 Anita 1996/7, pp. 59–60.

56 Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, KBG 166; Kumar & McGlynn 1996, fig. 203.



FIGURE 184 *Javanese rajamuka wheel. Java, nineteenth – early twentieth century. Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, KBG 166. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia.*

Stylistic Affiliations with Illustrated Malay Literary Manuscripts

Like PNM MS 1596, IAMM 1998.1.548 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 17) is a pictorial *fālnāma* of the text named *Faal Nursi*, and the manuscript contains 29 illustrations. Humans and jinn are depicted either frontally or in profile, and although many of them are shown performing certain actions, their movements are still fairly stiff. They are depicted wearing fairly elaborate costumes, and some have rather unnatural or strange facial and bodily features.

Unfortunately this manuscript does not have a colophon, but it is most likely from Patani or

Kelantan where the majority of the manuscript collection in the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia originated. Nevertheless the illustrations show some stylistic affiliations with a group of three illustrated manuscripts from Kampung Kapor, a Boyanese settlement in Singapore,⁵⁷ which date to the early 1900s. These are the *Hikayat Hanuman* ('The Tale of Hanumān', dated 10 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1322 AH / 15 February 1905 AD), the *Hikayat Dewa Mandu* ('The Tale of Dewa Mandu', dated 8 Rajab but without a year), and the *Hikayat Indra Mengindra* ('The Tale of Indra Mengindra') which comprises four volumes (Vol. II dated 25 Jumādā II and Vol. IV dated 3 Ramaḍān, again without a year being specified).⁵⁸ According to the colophon in the *Hikayat Hanuman*, the copyist and owner of the manuscript was a woman named Encik Siti Mariam bin Encik Sahbudin whose signature also appears in the *Hikayat Indra Mengindra*. If she was also the artist behind the illustrations in these manuscripts, then this demonstrates how in Malay society women were not only involved in the textual aspects of Malay manuscript production but also in its decoration (this issue will be addressed further in the next chapter).

A common element between IAMM 1998.1.548 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 17) and the Kampung Kapor group is the way in which the figures are drawn and painted. They were first sketched in pencil and then painted with watercolour, but a distinguishable feature in the manuscripts is that in some

instances the outlines have also been partially highlighted in black or dark brown ink (such as in Figures 185, 186).

The figures in the Kampung Kapor manuscripts also show the influence of the Javanese *wayang* or shadow play puppet style in terms of their facial features and costumes, especially when shown in profile. This can be seen for instance in scenes depicting royalty, warriors and courtiers seated or standing in a row in the *Hikayat Indra Mengindra* (Figure 187). Here the figures have the iconography of refined male characters with slim waists, thin arms, narrow eyes, long sharp noses and closed mouths. They are also wearing the crescent-shaped headdress of the nobility known as *gelung supit urang*. There are some parallels between the features and costumes of the figures, as well as in the composition of the scenes, with the depiction of "*Raja empat bersaudara*" ("The four brother kings") who are standing in a row in IAMM 1998.1.548 (Figure 188). However in this case the figures are less expertly rendered, but the crescent-shaped headdresses are still noticeable. However it must be noted that as yet there is no historical evidence of a link between IAMM 1998.1.548 and the Kampung Kapor group.

Animals

The animals depicted in the Malay magic and divination manuscripts include a mixture of both real and mythical creatures. Depending on their function and context they may be found either individually or as part of a set. In terms of style, animals are almost always shown in profile. In PNM MS 291 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 26) and the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23) some of the animals are illustrated in a Picasso-esque style of having two eyes on the same side of the face (Figures 43, 51, 189). This is also found in some of the figures of jinn in the Nik Mohamed manuscript.

57 I would like to thank Jan van der Putten for providing me with some background information on Kampung Kapor.

58 UM MS 30, UM MS 39 and UM MS 126 respectively. There is a fourth manuscript, of the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah* ('The Tale of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya', dated 27 Rajab 1323 AH / 27 September 1905 AD), which is also from Kampung Kapor and by the same copyist. It is now in the collection of the Muzium DiRaja Sultan Abu Bakar, Johor Bahru, but I have not yet seen it. All four manuscripts are discussed in Gallop 1991, pp. 185–186; UM MS 39 is published in Akayet 1989, p. 3.

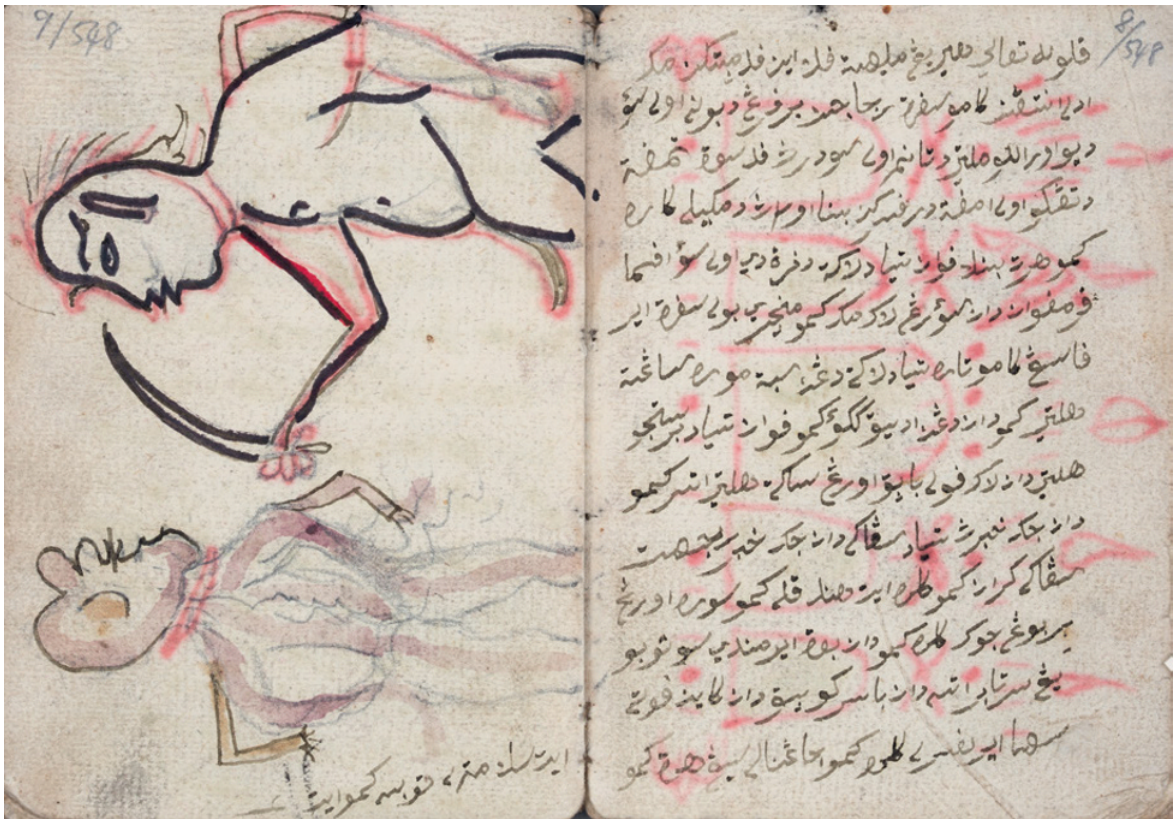


FIGURE 185 *King of the Jinn killed by a dewa (divinity) in battle* (Raja Jin berperang dibunuh oleh seorang dewa). Faal Nursi (*Divination of Nursi*), Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.548 (cat. 17), pp. 8–9. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

In Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (Palembang, c. 1890; cat. 2) and RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) the faces of the animals are depicted frontally even though their bodies are in profile. This is particularly applicable to members of the cat (Figure 127) and bovine (Figure 190) families. Similar depictions can be seen in manuscript art from other parts of Southeast Asia (Figure 191). This type of representation, whereby different postures are combined within the same figure, are also found in illustrated Arabic manuscripts,⁵⁹ although the Malay depictions are most likely due to the influence of shadow play puppets.⁶⁰ According to a Javanese

puppeteer interviewed by Jan Mrázek, the body parts of the puppets are depicted as such so that “each is shown in a way in which it can be (best) seen.”⁶¹

Additionally, although animals are typically shown in profile, certain creatures – such as turtles (Figure 58) and arthropods like centipedes – tend to be depicted as being viewed from above.

Nāga and Birds

In Southeast Asia, a common shared belief is that the universe is divided into three vertical layers, linked by an *axis mundi* (‘world axis’), with a major concern being the maintenance of a balance between the three realms. The top layer consists of the sky and heavens which contain birds and

59 Contadini 2012, p. 107.

60 For examples of Malay shadow play puppets with both eyes on the same side of the face, see Sweeney 1972a, pls. 12, 25, 31, 33.

61 Mrázek 2005, p. 23.



FIGURE 186 Hanuman (Hanumān) and Nilabat (Nilaphat) defeating the giants (raksasa). Hikayat Hanuman ('The Tale of Hanumān'), Singapore, 1905. UM MSS 30, p. 22. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.



FIGURE 187 Indra Mengindra and members of his court. Hikayat Indra Mengindra ('The Tale of Indra Mengindra'), Singapore, early 1900s. UM MSS 126, vol. II, p. 48. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.



FIGURE 188 The four brother kings (Raja empat bersaudara). Faal Nursi ('Divination of Nursi'), Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.548 (cat. 17), pp. 20–21. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.



FIGURE 189 Jin Lembu (*The Bull Jinni*). Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 15th opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.

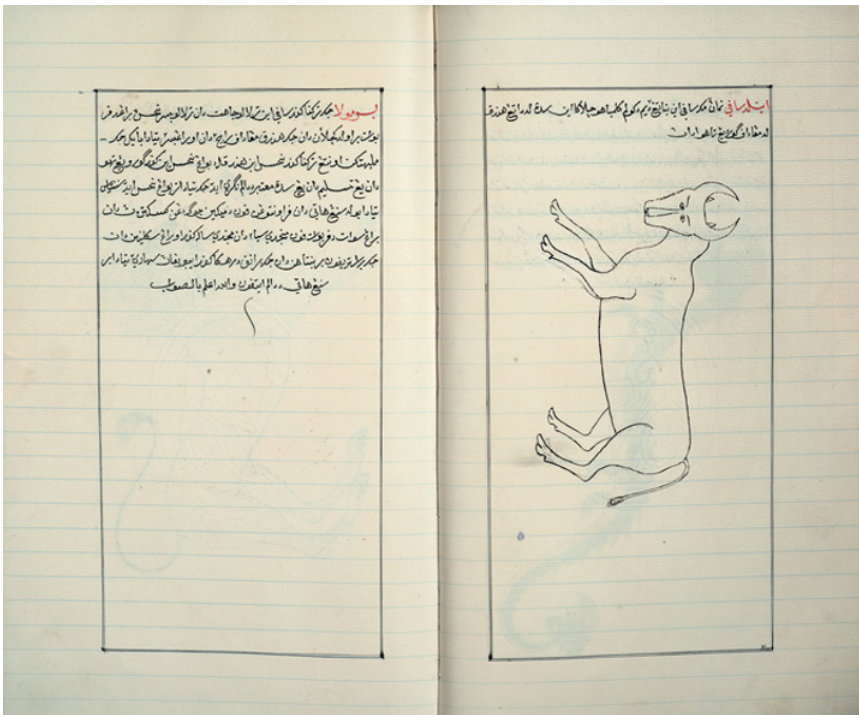


FIGURE 190 Zebu (*Sapi*). Peta Sembilan (*The Nine Illustrations*), Perak, 1882. RAS Maxwell 15 (cat. 84), fols. 33v–34r. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.



FIGURE 191 One of the eight Guardians of the Quarters in a divination manual, Laos, Myanmar or Thailand, nineteenth century. SOAS OS MS 42548, fol. 22v (detail). Courtesy of SOAS.

ancestors, while the earth in the middle is inhabited by human beings, and the watery underworld of the bottom layer is filled with demons and serpents.⁶² This tripartite division is reflected in many aspects of Southeast Asian life, not only within societies that still follow the animistic traditions but also among those that have embraced the major world religions. The importance of the *nāga* serpent and birds in Southeast Asia means that perhaps it is not surprising to find them as the most common animals depicted in the Malay magic and divination manuscripts.

In the manuscripts both creatures are found either on an individual basis or as part of a series with other animals. The *nāga* is a deified serpent that is a major part of the beliefs of many cultures within South and Southeast Asia. Originating from the practice of serpent worship (ophiolatry), it appears prominently in both Hinduism and Buddhism. The *nāga* is a chthonic or underworld creature, and is very strongly associated with rain and water as well as believed to be the guardian of

treasure.⁶³ It is by far the most common animal depicted in the manuscripts, and images of the creature accompany a number of divinatory techniques such as the Rotating *Nāga* (which is the most common), in a diagram used to determine the compatibility of a couple (*rasi*), and as the tenth symbol in the *Rejang* calendar. It also appears as one of the auguries in two of the pictorial *fālnāma*. However the use of *nāga* images as talismanic designs is yet to be found among the Malay manuscripts, which is surprising as they are used for such purposes in other parts of Southeast Asia. For example in a Burmese palm-leaf manuscript containing instructions on the making of amulets, an image of the *nāga* is found together with its archenemy the *garuḍa* as protection against snakebites, to be tattooed on the foot or lower part of the legs (Figure 193d).⁶⁴ Thus it is possible that there are Malay talismanic images of the *nāga* that are yet to be uncovered. This leads to the issue of the crossover of images between the magical and divinatory spheres. While images of the *nāga* in the Malay manuscripts may be limited to divination, other designs are found in both magical and divinatory contexts, such as the human figure in the spread-eagled squatting posture described above, and the *budūḥ* magic square as will be seen later.

Despite the South Asian origin of the term *nāga*, the Malay creature is usually depicted less like the Indian form (which are similar to cobras) but more akin to a local Southeast Asian iconography. In the manuscripts the *nāga* is typically depicted in profile, typically across the width or length of a page, or even over two pages, such as in the illustration that accompanies the divinatory technique of the Rotating *Nāga* in PNM MS 1080 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 28; Figure 192). Here it is drawn without a background or frame, and is fairly representative of the Malay iconography of the

63 For an overview of the *nāga*, see Vogel 1926.

64 Myanmar, nineteenth century. SOAS PL MS 41891, fol. 5r. I would like to thank Jotika Khur-Yearn for his help in this.

62 Wessing 2006, pp. 207–208; Maxwell 2010, p. 13.



FIGURE 192 *Rotating Nāga. Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1080 (cat. 28), side A, fifth opening. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

nāga. The body of the animal is short and scaly, with dorsal fins along its back and belly, and it has a rather elaborate tail. It does not have legs. On the head is a crest, and its mouth – which is lined with sharp teeth – is open showing a long, protruding tongue. Such forms appear in other Malay arts including metalwork, woodwork and shadow play puppets (Figure 193a). This iconography of the *nāga* is also found in manuscript illustrations of other cultures in Southeast Asia, both in the case of the Rotating *Nāga* as well as in other contexts, indicating a shared artistic heritage within the region (Figures 193b–d).

Birds are also used in divinatory techniques such as in the *Ketika Burung* described in Chapter Five, and they are often included among the auguries of the pictorial *fālnāma*. In the *Rejang* calendar the birds tend to be identified by individual species, for instance in PNM MS 291 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 26) the symbol for the seventeenth day of the month is the Kite (*Helang*), the twenty-third is the Brahminy Kite

(*Helang Laut*), the twenty-seventh is the Green Pigeon (*Punai*) and the twenty-eighth is a bird referred to as the ‘Auspicious Green Pigeon’, *Punai Punya* (Figure 194). Birds such as the Kite also appear as one of the eight compass animals (Figure 126). With regard to images of birds in magical rituals, in PNM MS 2920 (Malay peninsula, early twentieth century; cat. 72) a human effigy used in sorcery is drawn in a bird-like form (Figure 195).

As with many other creatures birds are shown in profile, and they are almost always depicted in flight, either with the wings upwards (Figure 194) or with the wings outstretched (i.e. one above and one below the body; Figures 125–127). Usually both legs are shown as well, and the birds typically have a prominent crest on their heads. The shapes of the tails vary – they can either be forked, graduated (tapered), fan-shaped or in the form of an elaborate plumage. Figures of crested birds with outstretched wings and forked tails similarly adorn textiles from the region (Figure 196).



FIGURE 193 Top row, left to right: a) Naga Belata Indera, wayang kulit, Patani or Kelantan, mid-twentieth century. London, Horniman Museum, 1980.99; b) Serat Menak Jayengrana (*The Tale of Menak Jayengrana*). Java, eighteenth century. SOAS MS 12899, fol. 5r (detail). Bottom row, left to right: c) Divination manual. Laos, Myanmar or Thailand, nineteenth century. SOAS OS MS 42548, fol. 1r (detail); d) Manual for making amulets. Myanmar, nineteenth century. SOAS PL MS 41891, fol. 5r (detail). Courtesy of the Horniman Museum London and SOAS.

In a few examples the birds are also depicted with a beard, and this feature combined with the crest and elaborate tail make them reminiscent of cockerels (Figures 197, 198). The cockerel is an important creature in Southeast Asia symbolising strength and fertility, and cockfighting is a popular sport across the region.⁶⁵ It is often employed in magical and

divinatory rituals, and in Malay society the cockerel is one of several animals represented in the form of tin ingots, which were most likely minted under the supervision of magicians for magical rituals.⁶⁶ It is thus possible that the cockerel-like appearance of the birds in the manuscripts is likewise evoking its role in Malay magic. Nevertheless it must also be noted that in Malay

65 For a brief overview of the cockerel in Indonesia, see Miksic 2007, p. 130.

66 Evans 1924–29b; Shaw & Mohd. Kassim 1970, pp. 6–9.



FIGURE 194 *The Green Pigeon (Punai, right) and the 'Auspicious Green Pigeon' (Punai Punya, left). Rejang calendar, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 291 (cat. 26), fols. 13v-14r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

iconography there are other types of birds that are shown with similar attributes. For instance, a royal ceremonial wooden barge from Kelantan, dated 1901, is made in the shape of a mythical bird called *Pertala Indera* ('Royal Mount'; Figure 199).⁶⁷ Its head is adorned with an ornate crest and beard.

Tigers and Lions

The tiger is an important animal in Malay magic. The tiger spirit (*hantu belian*) assists the shaman in the séance, and appears in a supernatural revelation to new practitioners as a 'call' to the profession.⁶⁸ Scholars such as Richard Winstedt and Kirk Michael Endicott argue that the tiger spirit helper is actually the spirit of a magician's or shaman's dead ancestors.⁶⁹ In Malay society it is also believed that tigers behave just as humans do, such

as by living in houses within villages of their own and even practising divination when hunting prey. Additionally in many parts of Malaysia and Indonesia there is a widespread belief in weretigers: people who could transform themselves into tigers (*harimau jadi-jadian*), with magicians and shamans among those who are often said to possess this power.⁷⁰ Yet considering its importance in Malay magical rituals and supernatural beliefs, when compared to the *nāga* and birds images of the tiger are not very common within the magic and divination manuscripts, although they are not unknown.⁷¹ The Tiger appears as the third animal in the *Rejang* calendar (Figure 200), and is sometimes one of the eight animals in the

67 The barge is now in the Istana Balai Besar, Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Syed Ahmad 1992, p. 42, fig. 34.

68 An example of a shamanistic ritual involving the tiger spirit is given by Skeat 1900, pp. 436–444.

69 Winstedt 1961, pp. 12–13; Endicott 1970, pp. 16–17, 21–22.

70 For beliefs regarding the tiger and were-tigers in Malaysia and Indonesia, see Skeat 1900, pp. 157–170; Boomgaard 2001, especially chapters 8 and 9. There are similar beliefs among the Thai, see Anuman 1968, p. 271. n. 1.

71 Images of the tiger as talismanic designs are found in other parts of Southeast Asia, such as in Tai manuscripts from the Shan States of Upper Myanmar and Lan Na in Northern Thailand, see Conway 2014, p. 67.

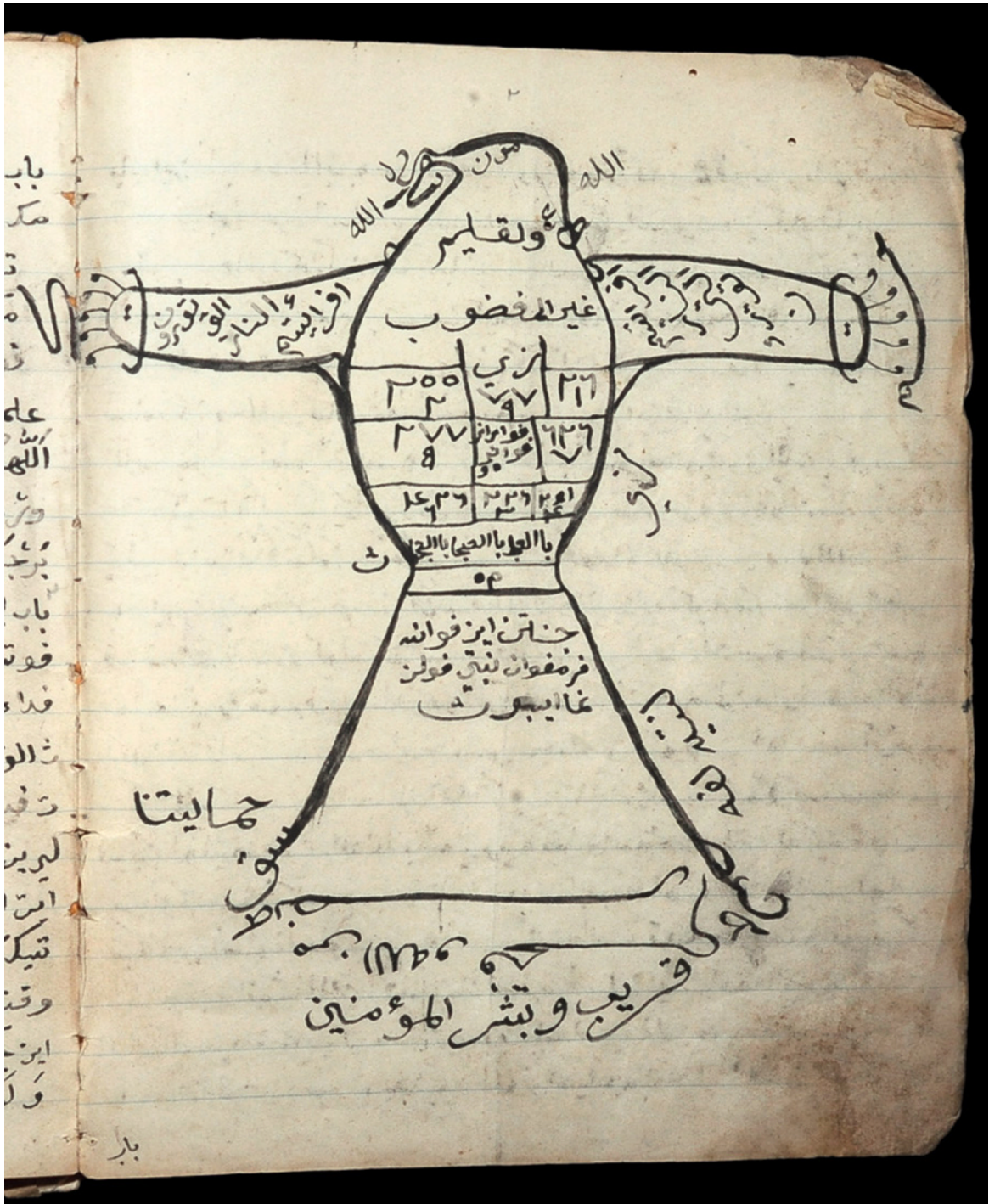


FIGURE 195 Human effigy. Malay peninsula, early twentieth century. PNM MS 2920 (cat. 72), fol. 8v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 196 *Silk ceremonial hanging, Kalimantan, late nineteenth – early twentieth century. Canberra, National Gallery of Australia, 1981.1172. After Bennett 2005, cat. 106, p. 65.*

compass diagrams (Figures 126, 201). As with most animals the creature is depicted in profile, usually with its tail curving upwards along its upper body and the stripes are clearly drawn. The artist of BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (probably Palembang, nineteenth century; cat. 5) however has taken a somewhat unusual approach in depicting the animal with a crest and multi-coloured scales (Figure 201).

The lion is another animal in the *Rejang* calendar, appearing as the fourteenth symbol in the series (Figure 202). It is also found as one of the auguries in a pictorial *fālnāma* (Figure 203). In the manuscripts the creature is usually distinguishable by its mane. However in Malay society there is often an ambiguity between the tiger and the lion, both in terms of terminology and imagery. The lion is not an indigenous animal in Southeast Asia and in Malay is known as *singa*,



FIGURE 197 *Rotating Nāga (right) and ketika table, Ketika Burung and a buduh magic square (left). Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 3179 (cat. 77), fol. 2v–3r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

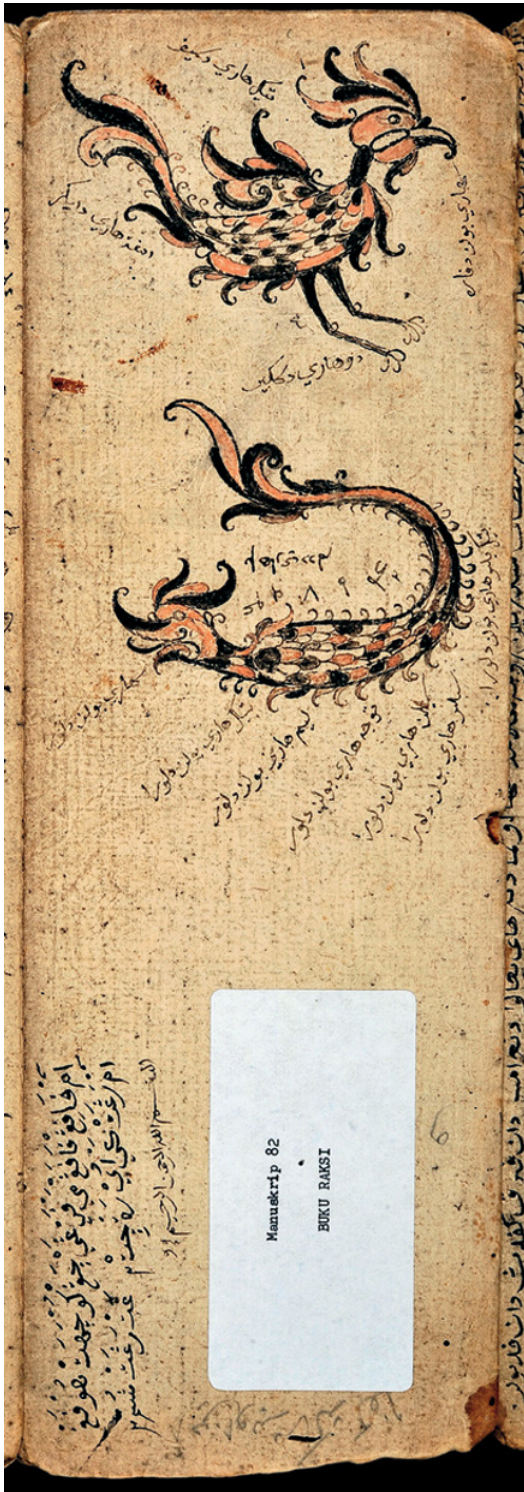


FIGURE 198
Ketika Burung (top) and probably the Daily Rotating Naga
(bottom). Patani, c. 1857. DBP MS 82 (cat. 8), side A, first opening.
Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.



FIGURE 199 *Wooden royal barge named Pertala Indera Seri Kelantan, Kelantan, 1901. Kota Bharu, Istana Balai Besar. Photo by the author.*

derived from the Sanskrit term *simha*. Yet as Russell Jones has shown the Malay term for tiger, *harimau*, is also used to denote the lion.⁷² A similar confusion extends to the magic and divination texts. The two animals are clearly separated in the *Rejang* calendar, but it is possible that in other cases an animal labelled “*Harimau*” might actually refer to the lion rather than the tiger. This ambiguity between the two beasts also extends to the images. When an illustration of a large type of cat does not have the distinguishing mane or stripes it is difficult to ascertain if the animal is a tiger or lion (Figure 127). Similarly a shadow puppet of a lion from Kelantan has a mane as well as a striped body (Figure 203).

In the Malay magic and divination manuscripts tigers or lions are also found in the form of zoomorphic calligraphy (text that is written in the shape of animals). Since the early sixteenth century the calligraphic lion has been in use in the wider Islamic world particularly in Iran, Ottoman Turkey and India, and it is often composed of verses extolling the Prophet Muḥammad’s cousin and son-in-law ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib who was known

as ‘The Lion of God’.⁷³ In Islamic Southeast Asia, calligraphic lions (it is possible that some of the creatures depicted are meant to represent tigers, however I will use the term ‘calligraphic lion’ here for simplicity) are also found across various media such as manuscript illumination, wood panels and textiles.⁷⁴ In textiles they are often used for protective purposes, and a talismanic vest from Indonesia contains a number of calligraphic lions composed from part of the Qur’anic verse 61:13 which reads: “help from God and a speedy victory. So give the Glad Tidings to the Believers”.⁷⁵ In Kelantan, a calligraphic lion made from the same Qur’anic verse appears on the standard (*bendera tubuh*) of Sultan Muhammad IV (r. 1899–1920), which was also used as the state flag (Figure 205).⁷⁶ Similar calligraphic lions composed from this particular Qur’anic verse appear in a couple of Malay magic and divination manuscripts from the Kelantan/Patani area. In PNM MS 2778 (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 66) the design serves a protective function to avoid misfortune (*bala*) upon one’s body (Figure 206). Meanwhile in the Nik Mohamed manuscript (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23) it is used in the sport of bull-fighting whereby the designs are either copied onto leaves to be consumed by the bull or drawn onto the animal itself (Figure 207). In one instance the text in the Nik Mohamed manuscript refers to the design as “*Azimat Singa*” (“Talisman of the Lion”), while in another case the accompanying incantation invokes ‘Alī and likens the competing bull to “*Rimau Allah*” (“Tiger of God”).⁷⁷

In the Nik Mohamed manuscript the lion is also one of the eight animals in the compass diagram used to determine the correct direction in which

73 Blair 2007, pp. 449–451; Zarcone 2010, pp. 108–114; Shani 2010; on figural calligraphy also see Hillenbrand 2006.

74 For instance see Maxwell 2003, p. 329; Bennett 2005, pp. 91 (cat. 98), 130, 171 (cat. 25). Also Jones 1970, p. 261, footnote 11.

75 Jakarta, Museum Nasional, inv. no. 3376.

76 Mohd. Zain 1987, pp. 41, 46.

77 Nik Mohamed collection, side A, 29th and 30th openings, side B, sixth opening.

72 Jones 1970.

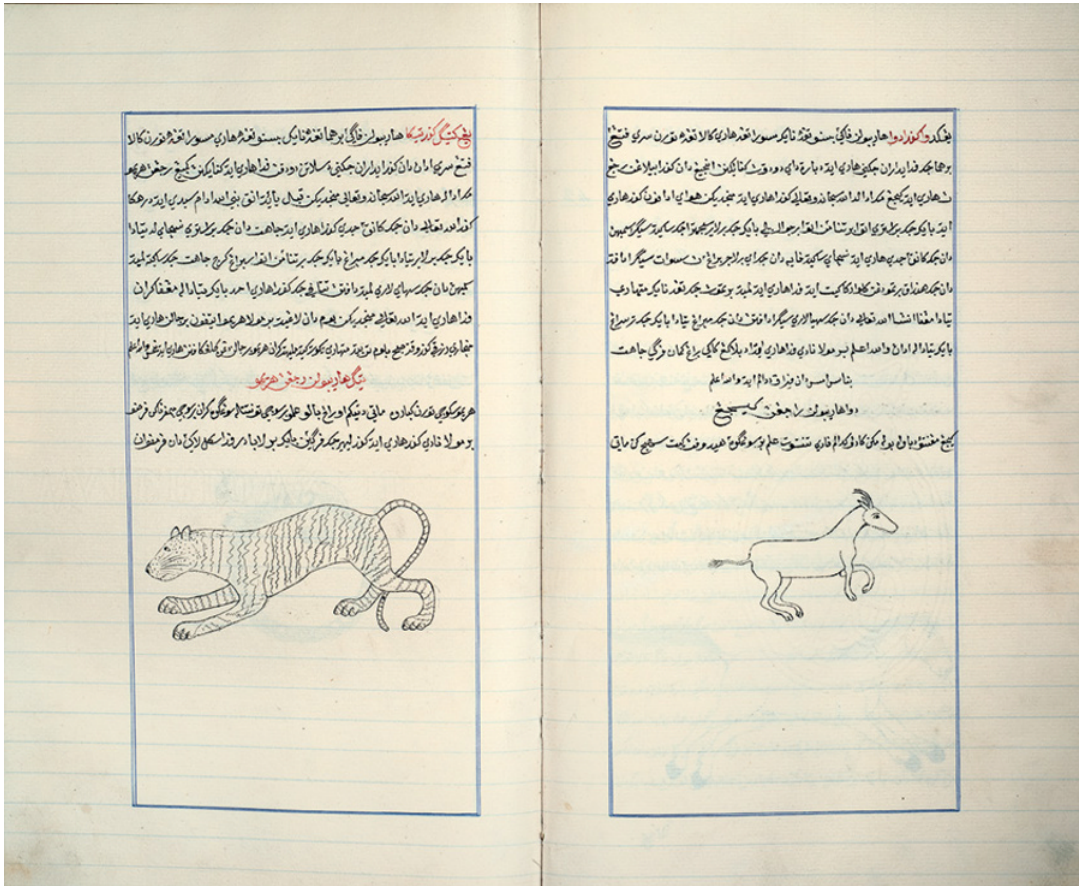


FIGURE 200 The Barking Deer (Kijang, right) and the Tiger (Harimau, left). Rejang calendar, Perak, 1882. RAS Maxwell 15 (cat. 84), fols. 82v–83r. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

to lead a bull or buffalo into and out of its pen on different days of the week (Figures 52, 125, 208).⁷⁸ The instructions tell the owner of the animal to tie the lead rope in three directions: one going in the direction of the *Nāga*, one to the Lion (*Singa*) and one to the Tiger (*Harimau*). In the diagram, while the tiger is easily recognisable, the image of the lion here is more of a mythical creature. Its head is like an elephant with a long trunk and two tusks, but it also has two horns on its head. Its four legs end in claws, and behind each leg is a spur. There are two wings that flank its body and it has a long tail. In the diagram for Sunday the lion is covered with fur, yet in the diagrams for Monday, Tuesday,

Wednesday and Saturday the body is covered with either feathers or scales, while for Thursday and Friday the animal is left uncoloured. It must be noted that the lion in PNM MS 291 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 26) is also depicted with a pair of wings (Figure 202).

This construct of a lion appears in other forms of Malay art such as in shadow plays,⁷⁹ but the beast actually belongs to an older, wider Southeast Asian tradition. A common creature that appears in the art of mainland Southeast Asia, possibly from as early as the seventh century, is the

78 Nik Mohamed collection, side B, 34th – 36th openings.

79 Such as one in London, British Museum As1970.02.117 (I am grateful to Alexandra Green for this reference). See Sweeney 1972a, p. 70, pl. 32.



FIGURE 201 *Compass diagram of eight animals. Probably Palembang, nineteenth century. BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (cat. 5), fol. 2v. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.*



FIGURE 202 *The Elephant (Gajah, right) and the Lion (Singa, left). Rejang calendar, Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 291 (cat. 26), fols. 6v–7r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

gajasinha ('elephant lion') – a composite animal that has the head of an elephant but the body of a lion.⁸⁰ Some *gajasinha* are depicted as having wings and antlers, and this combination of attributes is also seen in a Burmese mythical beast called the *pancarupa* ('five forms') or *pincaiyupa* ('five columns'), a being composed of five or more animals: the trunk of an elephant, the face of a lion, the ears and hooves of a horse, the horns of a deer, the body of a fish and the wings of the *garuḍa* (Figure 209).⁸¹ Although the *pancarupa* resembles the creature in the Nik Mohamed manuscript, it nevertheless has hooves rather than claws.

80 For the *gajasinha* see Roberts 2003 (I would like to thank Peter Sharrock this reference). A similar creature is the *makara* which has the trunk of an elephant but the body of a crocodile or fish, see Farish & Khoo 2003, pp. 108–109 for the Malay *makara*; Taylor 1994, pp. 69–70 for the Thai. In Southeast Asia both are often conflated with the *nāga*.

81 Roberts 2003, pp. 164–170; also Khoo 2007, p. 52.

Similar animals are found in maritime Southeast Asia. In Cirebon, West Java, there are two royal carriages that are comparable to the lions in the Nik Mohamed manuscript. One of them, now in the palace of Kraton Kasepuhan, is known as *singhabarwang* (both *singha* and *barwang* mean 'lion') and is shaped as a composite with an elephant's head, a lion's body and the wings of an eagle (Figure 210). The other carriage, now in Kraton Kanoman, looks like a similar animal but is said to be a combination of the phoenix (*peksi*), the *nāga* and the elephant (*liman*), and as such is known as the *peksinagaliman*.⁸² The *peksinagaliman* also appears as a motif on batik textiles from Cirebon.⁸³ The lions in the Nik Mohamed manuscript thus clearly belong to an

82 This *singhabarwang* carriage is said to date to 1549 and was later modified in 1910. See Jessup 1990, pp. 207–208, with reproductions on figs. 166 and 167; Bennett 2005, p. 52.

83 For example see Pepin 1993, p. 139.



FIGURE 203 *Lion, king of the animals, looking for food* (Singa, raja binatang, berjalan cari makan). Pictorial fālnāma, *Penyengat* or *Bintan*, early twentieth century. Aswandi N-06 (cat. 1), fol. 18r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.



FIGURE 204 *Lion, wayang kulit, Patani or Kelantan, mid-twentieth century. London, Horniman Museum, 1980.14. Courtesy of the Horniman Museum London.*



FIGURE 206 *Talismanic calligraphic lion. Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2778 (cat. 66), side A, eighth opening. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*



FIGURE 205 *Calligraphic lion on the standard of Sultan Muhammad IV of Kelantan (r. 1899–1920). After Mohd. Zain 1987, p. 41.*

ancient and widespread Southeast Asian iconography of composite animals, but more detailed connections with the *gajasimha*, *pancarupa*, *singhabarwang* and *peksinagaliman* would need to be investigated further.

Buildings

In the magic and divination manuscripts, buildings and structures usually appear within the technique of the pictorial *fāl-nāma*. For instance, within the *Faal Nursi* auguries associated with Islamic prophets are often represented by mosques. In PNM MS 1596 (Patani or Kelantan, 1871–72; cat. 38), the mosque of the Prophet Yaḥyā (Malay: Nabi Yahya) is shown as a single white rectangular building, with a pyramidal black roof that culminates in an elaborate finial on its apex (Figure 211). On the left and right sides of the building are thin, vertical projections, probably representing minarets. The image presented here resembles contemporary Malay mosque architecture, which typically consists of a square structure with a



FIGURE 207 *Talismanic calligraphic lions. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, sixth opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.*



FIGURE 208 *Four examples of lions (singa) in seven-day compass diagram of eight animals, clockwise from top left: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection (cat. 23), side B, 34th–36th openings (details). Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.*



FIGURE 209 *Burmese pancarupa in a monastery in Yangon, Myanmar. After Roberts 2003, p. 169, fig. 28.*

tiered pyramidal roof, topped by an elaborate finial (Figure 212).

Two-dimensional depictions of such structures are found in Malay paintings and other forms of art. As mentioned earlier, manuscripts of devotional texts often contain illustrations of buildings. In a copy of the *Dalā' al-khayrāt* that was

found in Kelantan, a number of structures shown within the compound of the Great Mosque of al-Ḥaram in Mecca have a distinctive Malay appearance, being of a similar shape to the buildings in PNM MS 1596 (Figure 213).⁸⁴ It is worth not-



FIGURE 210 Singhabarwang carriage, Cirebon, West Java, 1549. Cirebon, Kraton Kasepuhan. After Jessup 1990, fig. 166.

ing that puppets depicting houses or palaces in Malay shadow plays may also be constructed in the same way.

In IAMM 1998.1.548 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 17), the mosque of the Prophet Yaḥyā is depicted slightly differently, whereby the roof consists of two tiers that flare downwards at a curved slope (Figure 214). Again, there are similarities with illustrated Malay copies of the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt*, such as in the depiction of the mosque containing the pulpit and tomb of the Prophet Muḥammad in a manuscript attributable to Terengganu, dated 1835 (Figure 215).⁸⁵ Similar structures are also found in a *kitab maulid* from Indonesia, which as Annabel Gallop has noted shows a strong Chinese influence (Figure 216),⁸⁶ as

84 IAMM 1998.1.790, p. 21; see Farouk 2006, p. 100, pl. 6.

85 IAMM 1998.1.2607, dated 29 Ramaḍān 1250 AH / 29 January 1835 AD; see Guise 2005, p. 75.

86 Gallop 2005c, p. 167. The manuscript is in Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, A70, see Bennett 2005, cat. 30.

well as in illustrated Malay literary manuscripts such as the depiction of a palace in the *Hikayat Indra Mengindra* from Kampung Kapor, Singapore (Figure 217).⁸⁷

Talismanic Designs

In the magic and divination manuscripts there are certain talismanic designs that are more frequently employed than others, some of which are of pre-Islamic origin. One of the most common – known as the *angka kepala delapan* ('eight-headed cypher') or *cincin Sulaiman* ('Solomon's ring') – is composed of two overlapping squares, one diagonal to the other, with eight looped corners (Figure 218).⁸⁸ This design is an ancient one – Schuster has traced its earliest appearance to an amulet from Mohenjo-Daro dating to 1,300 BC (at the latest), and it is prevalent in South and Southeast Asia and even in Europe.⁸⁹ It is also used in magical rituals of the Batak in Sumatra, and in his study of the Batak *pustaka* Voorhoeve believes that the motif represents the earth and the eight cardinal directions,⁹⁰ while Schuster argues that it relates to the Hindu myth of the Churning of the Milk Ocean and the *axis mundi*.⁹¹ In Batak rituals the design is inscribed on a metal plaque buried under a sacrificial post called the *borotan* (see further discussion below),

87 UM MS 126, vol. II, p. 30.

88 Shaw 1971, pp. 14–16; Gallop 2001 [unpaginated] (I would like to thank the author for giving me a copy of this unpublished paper); Gallop 2002b, vol. I, p. 223, footnote 14.

89 Schuster 1975, p. 79, note 11.

90 Voorhoeve 1956, p. 39.

91 Schuster 1975, pp. 52–61. In the myth of the Churning of the Milk Ocean, the gods (*deva*) and the anti-gods (*asura*) were working together in order to obtain the elixir of immortality (*amṛta*). In order to do that they had to churn the Milk Ocean, and Mount Mandara was used as the churning pivot, supported by the turtle Kūrma on its back. The *nāga* Vāsuki acted as the churning rope with the gods at one end and the demons at the other. In the end the demons were tricked out of the elixir and then defeated by the gods, Williams 2003, p. 194.



FIGURE 211
 Mosque of Prophet Yahyā. Faal Nursi
 ('Divination of Nursi'), Patani or
 Kelantan, 1871–72. PNM MS 1596 (cat.
 38), fols. 20v–21r. Courtesy of
 Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 212 *Masjid Kampung Laut, Kelantan, seventeenth century. Photo by the author, 2006.*

although in one Batak manuscript in the SOAS collection it is used as a text marker (*bindu na godang*) (Figure 219).⁹²

Among the Gimán of Halmahera, Maluku, the design (known there as *cincing Suleman*) is employed during rice-planting rituals, and its association with Solomon helps to keep pests away from the rice fields due to his power over animals.⁹³ A similar reasoning is perhaps behind the use of the design in SOAS MS 25027(2) (Perak, c. 1830s–40s; cat. 91), whereby the symbol is to be drawn twice onto a piece of paper together with an inscription, which is then buried in the rice field to deter pests (Figure 220).⁹⁴ Meanwhile in PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44) it is to be drawn onto a piece of white cloth and placed on the house post (Figure 123; on this ritual see below).⁹⁵ In IAMM 1998.1.545 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 16) it is used to make someone have stomachaches, by drawing the design in combination with a triangle (together with magical

92 SOAS MS 41836, side A, 22nd opening. I am grateful to Uli Kozok for his help with this manuscript.

93 Teljeur 1990, pp. 88–92; also see Gallop 2001 [unpaginated].

94 SOAS MS 25027(2) (cat. 91), p. 4.

95 PNM MS 1797 (cat. 44), p. 148.



FIGURE 213 Mecca and Medina (right) and various objects (left). *Al-Jazūlī, Dalā'il al-khayrāt* ('Guidelines to the Blessings'), probably Kelantan, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.790, pp. 21–22. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.



FIGURE 214 Mosque of Prophet Yahyā. Faal Nursi ('Divination of Nursi'), Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.548 (cat. 17), pp. 4–5. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

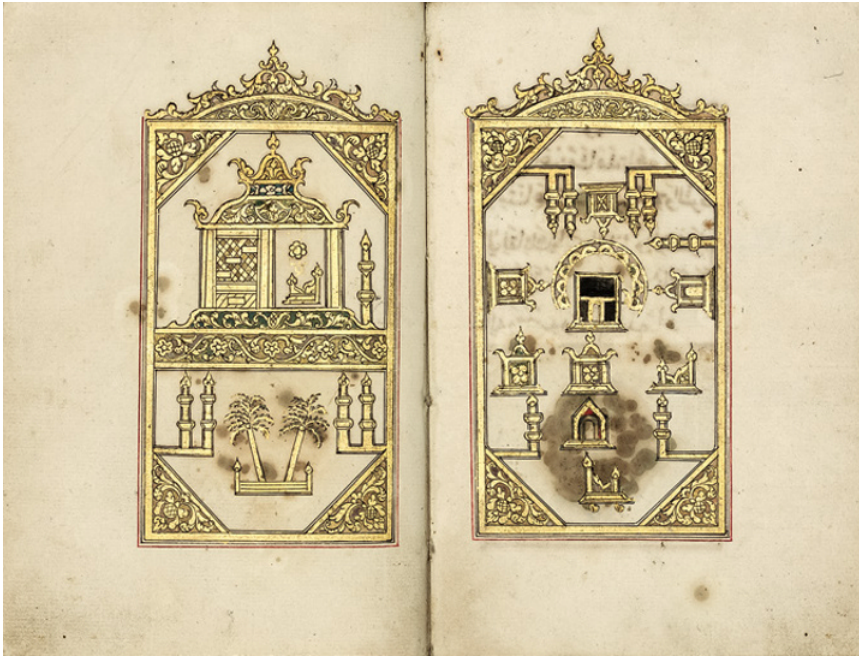


FIGURE 215 Mecca (right) and Medina (left). *Al-Jazūlī, Dalā'il al-khayrāt ('Guidelines to the Blessings')*, Terengganu, 1835. IAMM 1998.1.2607, pp. 10–11. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.



FIGURE 216 *Kitab maulid ('Book on the Nativity')*, Indonesia, nineteenth century. Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, A70. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia.



FIGURE 217 A palace. *Hikayat Indra Mengindra ('The Tale of Indra Mengindra')*, Singapore, early 1900s. UM MSS 126, vol. II, p. 30. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.

inscriptions) onto a piece of dried leather (*belulang kering*), which is then placed into their drinking well.⁹⁶ Meanwhile according to William

96 IAMM 1998.1.545 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 16), p. 61.

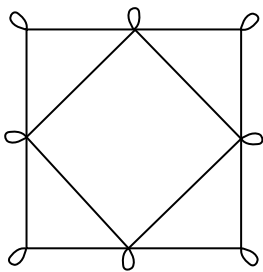


FIGURE 218 *Solomon's ring*



FIGURE 219 *Solomon's ring used as a text marker. Simalungun-Toba Batak pustaha, northern Sumatra, eighteenth century. SOAS MS 41836, side A, 22nd opening (detail). Courtesy of SOAS.*

Shaw, the design represents an eight-headed demon named *Iprick*, and is used to strike fear into one's opponents or enemies.⁹⁷

In the northern states of the Malay peninsula, the Solomon's ring design is often coupled with another symbol called the *angka sangga Siti Fatimah* ('Fāṭima's life-preserving cypher') which offers protection and invulnerability to its wearer.⁹⁸ This design is composed of multiple loops formed by a single continuous line (Figure 221), and although it is named after the Prophet Muḥammad's daughter Fāṭima, it is of pre-Islamic origin. Known among the Batak as the *tapak Raja Suleman betina* ('female seal of King Solomon'),⁹⁹ the design is found in South and Southeast Asia, China and Africa. The earliest record of it is found in Ancient Egypt on a seal dating to 1,800-1,600 BC, and a simpler version of the

design appears as a hieroglyphic sign in 2,900 BC.¹⁰⁰ In DBP MS 82 (Patani, c. 1857; cat. 8), the *angka sangga Siti Fatimah* and two other variations of it form a talismanic design used to make a thief return the item he had stolen to its rightful owner (Figure 222).¹⁰¹ Meanwhile in IAMM 1998.1.250 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 12) it is employed in love magic, together with ingredients such as spider eggs, blood and semen.¹⁰² In the manuscripts the *angka sangga Siti Fatimah* design may also be combined with that of Solomon's ring.

The name *tapak Sulaiman* (lit. 'Solomon's hand/footprint', i.e. Solomon's seal) is also the Malay term for the pentagram (five-pointed star),¹⁰³ an ancient symbol already used by the Ancient Egyptians and Babylonians and employed in the West as a powerful magical tool.¹⁰⁴ Within the Jewish tradition, the pentagram and the hexagram (six-pointed star) are known as the 'Shield of David' (*Magen David*) while in Islam they are referred to as 'Solomon's seal' (*khātam Sulaimān*). This is in reference to the ring owned by Solomon who had control over animals, birds and jinn, and his magical power was derived from this talismanic ring on which is inscribed the Ineffable Name of God.¹⁰⁵ Within Malay magic and divination manuscripts the pentagram is found on numerous occasions. In IAMM 1998.1.250 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 12), the design is used in love magic, whereby it is drawn onto a piece of paper together with part of the aforementioned Qur'anic verse 61:13 "help from God and a speedy victory. So give the Glad Tidings to the Believers" (Figure 223). The paper is then burnt and the ashes given to the victim to consume. The pentagram is also drawn together with effigies used in sorcery against

97 Shaw 1971, p. 14.

98 They are both engraved upon the goads of mahouts of work-elephants or placed onto the horns of fighting bulls, Shaw 1971, pp. 14-16.

99 For a discussion of the 'male' version, see Schuster 1975, p. 81, note 33.

100 Schuster 1975, pp. 65-68.

101 DBP MS 82 (Patani, c. 1857; cat. 8), side B, seventh opening.

102 IAMM 1998.1.250 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 12), p. 47.

103 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "Sulaiman"; "tapak".

104 Guiley 2006, s.v. "pentacle".

105 Winkler 1930, pp. 55-149, Hasson 1998; Guiley 2006, s.v. "Seal of Solomon"; Scholem 2007.

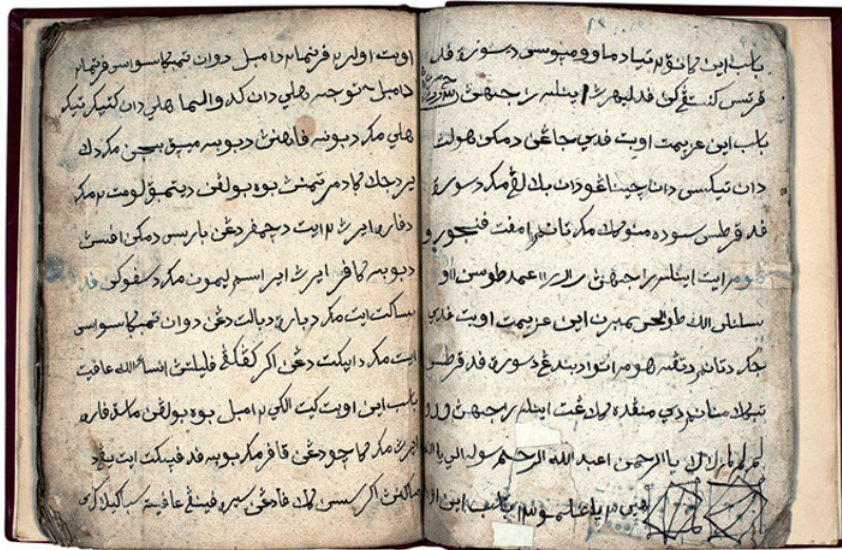


FIGURE 220 Various spells and talismanic designs including for deterring pests from the rice field (right) and recipes for herbal medicine. Perak, c. 1830s–40s. SOAS MS 25027(2) (cat. 91), pp. 4–5. Courtesy of SOAS.

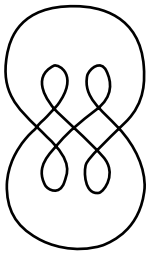


FIGURE 221 The angka sangga Siti Fatimah.

others (Figure 71) or in talismans against evil spirits (Figure 156). In PNM MS 2459 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 59) it appears on a seal (Figure 39a).

In the Islamic tradition, the pentagram or hexagram is the first of a group of seven symbols collectively known as the Seven Seals of Solomon. The form and sequence of the symbols may vary but they are typically as follows (see Figure 224 from right to left): a pentagram or hexagram, three vertical lines topped by a horizontal line, the letter م, the ‘ladder’, four vertical lines, the letter ه and the letter و (with its tail going above itself). These seven symbols are believed to represent the Most Exalted Name of God, and they are also associated

with the prophets, the seven days and the seven planets.¹⁰⁶

In PNM MS 2836 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 70) the Seven Seals are one of the patterns on the blade of the *keris* dagger in the divinatory technique of the *Pamor Keris* (Figure 225). I have yet to find a *keris* with the Seven Seals on its blade, but they appear on the blade of a sword (*barong*) from Borneo where they are found alongside other talismanic inscriptions and magic squares (Figure 226).¹⁰⁷ The design also appears on the seal of an eighteenth-century sultan from Tallo’ in Sulawesi.¹⁰⁸ In IAMM 1998.1.579 (Malay peninsula, nineteenth century; cat. 20), the design of the Seven Seals is called ‘Solomon’s ring’ (*cincin Nabi Allah Sulaiman*) and the seven symbols are placed in a 7 × 7 Latin square, whereby each row drops the first symbol of the preceding line and places it at the

106 Winkler 1930, pp. 55–149; Spoer 1935, pp. 239–244; Dawkins 1944; Savage-Smith 1997c, p. 60; Canaan 2004, pp. 169–170; Gallop 2002b, vol. 1, pp. 223–224; Porter 2004, pp. 189–190.

107 IAMM 1998.1.3921, Borneo, nineteenth century.

108 Gallop 2002b, vol. 1, pp. 223–224, vol. III, p. 519.

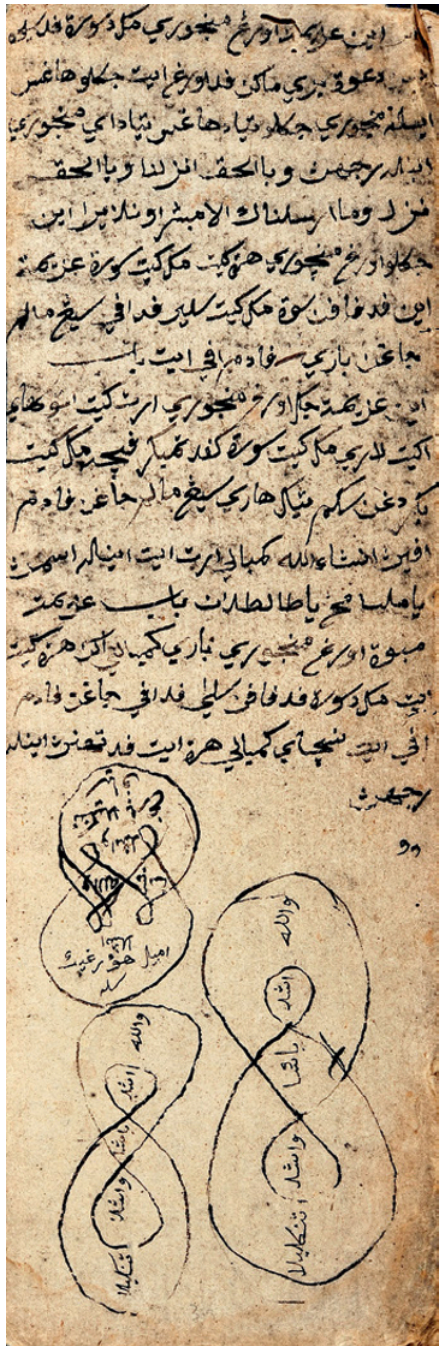


FIGURE 222
 The angka sangga Siti Fatimah employed to make a thief return stolen items.
 Patani, c. 1857. DBP MS 82, side B, seventh opening. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.



FIGURE 223 Various talismanic designs including the pentagram. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.250 (cat. 12), p. 3. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

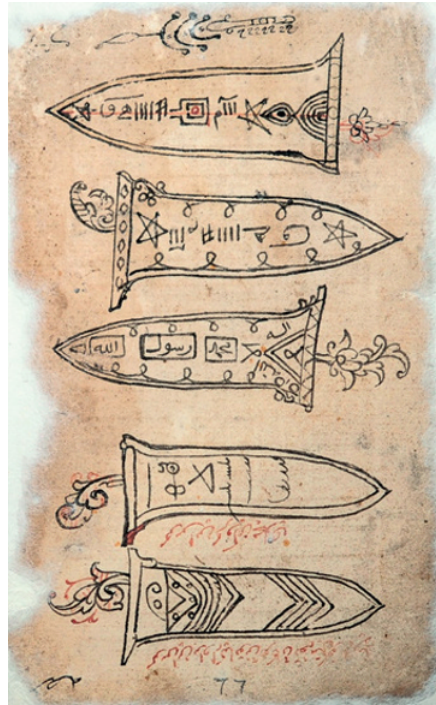


FIGURE 225 Pamor Keris. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2836 (cat. 70), fol. 33v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

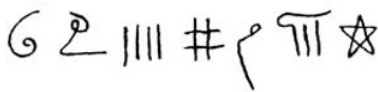


FIGURE 224 The Seven Seals of Solomon. After Canaan 2004, p. 170, fig. 30a.

end of the sequence (Figure 227).¹⁰⁹ Although the Seven Seals are said to represent the Name of God, and in the manuscript itself the diagram is preceded by the *basmala*, in this instance the symbols are employed for a darker purpose in summoning evil spirits:

109 A Latin square is a form of magic square, where “each row and each column contain the same set of symbols, be they numerals, letters, words or abstract marks. In order to avoid repetitions, no two rows or columns have the symbols in the same order”, Savage-Smith 1997d, p. 107.

“Fasal ini cincin Nabi Allah Sulaiman. Apabila kita hendak memanggil jin atau syaitan, maka surat pada mangkuk putih. Maka bancuh dengan air nyiur hijau santan di dalam itu. Kemudian maka tanak pada kual. Sudah ia, masukkan ke dalam tubuh kita hingga hilang minyak itu di dalam tubuh kita. Barang apa kita kehendak kita habislah dikhabarkan kepadanya.”¹¹⁰

“[This section is on the ring of the Prophet of God, Sulaimān. When we wish to summon jinn or Satan, draw it onto a white bowl. Mix into it the milk of the green coconut. Then cook it in a wok, and consume it until all of it has disappeared into our body. Any of our wishes will then be fully communicated to them.]”

110 IAMM 1998.1.579, p. 70.



FIGURE 226

a) Sword (barong), Borneo, nineteenth century;

b) Detail of blade with the budūḥ magic square;

c) Detail of blade with the Seven Seals of Solomon.

IAMM 1998.1.3921. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

In PNM MS 3017 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 75) is a Latin square containing the letters ش, ا, ف and ي (Figure 228). These letters form the word *shāfi* ('healer') – a word typically used in Islamic talismans for curing diseases.¹¹¹ Around the square are a number of verses from the Qur'an that are also related to healing: suras 9:14 (part), 10:57, 16:69 (part), 17:82 (part), 26:80 and 41:44 (part). These verses are known as 'the verses of healing' or 'verses of restoration' (*āyāt al-shifā*) as they have words that are derivations of *shafā* ('to cure').¹¹²

Apart from Latin squares there are also verse squares, in which the cells contain words that are arranged in such a way that "in each consecutive row one word is dropped on the right side and a new one added on the left side, so that an entire verse from the Qur'an is worked into the square, and can be read in its entirety by reading across the top row

and down the left-hand column of the square."¹¹³ Among the magic and divination manuscripts verse squares appear in two examples, and in both cases they are of the sura *al-Ikhlāṣ* (112:1–4).¹¹⁴ While the function of the verse square in UM MSS 120 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 95) is not given in the manuscript, in PNM MS 3007 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late 1870s–80s; cat. 74) it is used to ward off evil spirits from the home (where it is hung in the house) or from children (where it is hung above their bed) (Figure 229).¹¹⁵

More common than the Latin and verse squares is the magic square – a grid containing numbers that are "arranged in such a way that each column,

111 Canaan 2004, p. 132.

112 Blair 1998, p. 215; Canaan 2004, p. 131 (who refers to sura 9:15 rather than 9:14).

113 Savage-Smith 1997d, p. 107.

114 This sura is also sometimes referred to in Malay as '*Qul huwallāh*', in reference to its opening words. In Islamic magic, this sura – which talks of the Oneness of God – is one of the most popular ones to be used for talismanic purposes, see Canaan 2004, p. 129.

115 UM MSS 120, fol. 11r; PNM MS 3007, p. 65.



FIGURE 227 *The Seven Seals of Solomon in a Latin square. Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.579 (cat. 20), p. 70. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.*



FIGURE 228 *A Latin square forming the word shāfi. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 3017 (cat. 75), fol. 8r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

and every row, and the two main diagonals would all give the same sum.”¹¹⁶ The smallest type is the 3 × 3 magic square which contains the numbers 1 to 9 with the sum of each row, column and two main diagonals equalling fifteen (Figure 230a). It is thought to have originated from China (where there are oblique references to it as early as the fourth century BC) and later spreading to the Islamic world, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Europe.¹¹⁷

Within the Islamic tradition, if the numbers within this square are substituted with letters using the *abjad* system (Figure 230b), the four letters at the corners – ب ,

و , د and ح – form the artificial word *budūh*, and this has led to the square being called by that name. Throughout the Muslim world the *budūh* magic square is used for various purposes such as easing childbirth, attracting customers, providing protection and ensuring the safe arrival of letters and packages. It is considered to be a powerful talisman, and the word *budūh* itself and its numerical equivalent also function as talismanic devices.¹¹⁸ Among Muslim societies in Southeast Asia this square appears on objects such as magic-medicinal bowls and plates, weapons (Figure 226b) and seals (Figure 231).¹¹⁹

In the Malay manuscripts, the *budūh* magic square (or variations of it) is given for various purposes such as for facilitating childbirth (*selusuh*), increasing business (*pelaris*), making oneself receptive to knowledge (*penerang hati*) and protecting boats. It

116 Cammann 1969a, p. 181.

117 For the history of magic squares, see Cammann 1960; Cammann 1961; Cammann 1969a; Cammann 1969b.

118 For the *budūh*, see MacDonald “Budūh”.

119 For seals, see Gallop 2002b, vol. 1, pp. 216–220; Gallop 2010b, pp. 169–175.



FIGURE 229 The sura al-Ikhlās in a verse square. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late 1870s–80s. PNM MS 3007 (cat. 74), p. 65. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | 9 | 2 |
| 3 | 5 | 7 |
| 8 | 1 | 6 |

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| ب | ط | د |
| ز | هـ | ج |
| و | ا | ح |

FIGURE 230 a) The 3 × 3 magic square; b) The 3 × 3 square with abjad letters.

is even used for divination via the techniques of scrying¹²⁰ and sortilege. The square is also employed in pre-Islamic rituals such as in house construction. The Southeast Asian concept of a tripartite division of the world is reflected in architecture whereby the area under the house symbolises the underworld, the floor of the house the middle world, and the attic the upperworld.¹²¹ The central house post thus

120 Scrying “is a means of gaining knowledge preternaturally characterized by falling into a trance by staring at a fixed point (often combined with hypnotic suggestion, fasting, and/or the use of narcotics) until visual (and possibly auditory) hallucinations are experienced”, Nelson 2000, p. 365.

121 Schefold 2003, p. 21.



FIGURE 231 The seal of Seri Nara DiRaja of Kedah, dated 1208 AH / 1793–94 AD. SOAS MS 40320/6, fol. 95 (detail). Courtesy of SOAS.

represents the *axis mundi*,¹²² and is also believed to be the residence of the guardian spirit of the house. Therefore among many Southeast Asian societies (including the Malays) certain rituals and taboos accompany the placement and erection of house posts to prevent danger, ill-fortune and evil spirits.¹²³ For instance the location of the first post to be erected is partly dependent on the Rotating *Nāga* divinatory technique (discussed in Chapter Five), while objects such as gold coins, talismans, textiles or other items are normally buried underneath the posts as well as fixed to their tops.

Malay magic and divination manuscripts often provide information on the necessary talismans and objects that are used in the construction of the house posts. As mentioned above, in PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44) the Solomon’s ring design is drawn onto a piece of white cloth and placed on top of the house post (*bunga tiang*; Figure 123).¹²⁴ Meanwhile one particular text that has been found in two manuscripts – DBP MS 82 (Patani, c. 1857; cat. 8) and PNM MS 1603

122 As noted by Schuster 1975, p. 57.

123 For house posts and the rituals surrounding them, see Waterson 1993, pp. 122–129. For the Malay tradition, see Skeat 1900, pp. 143–145; Gibbs 1987, pp. 79–96; Lim 1987, pp. 96–101.

124 PNM MS 1797 (cat. 44), p. 148.



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 2 |
| 1 | 5 | 9 |
| 8 | 3 | 4 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| 2 | | | 8 |
| 6 | | | 4 |
| 4 | 2 | 8 | 6 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 |
| 6 | 8 | 2 | 4 |
| 4 | 2 | 8 | 6 |

FIGURE 232 Budūh magic square and two Latin squares for house posts. Patani, c. 1857. DBP MS 82 (cat. 8), side A, ninth opening. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

(probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 39) – describes the use of three magic squares aimed at preventing danger, ill-fortune and evil spirits (Figure 232). According to this text, a 3 × 3 numerical *budūh* square is to be inscribed onto a square piece of tinned iron (*timah putih*) and buried under the house post (*tapak tiang*). Additionally two 4 × 4 Latin squares are to be drawn onto a piece of white cloth. Here the four numerals (2, 4, 6, 8) that represent the four corner letters of a *budūh* magic square are placed in the corners of the two Latin squares, which are then filled in using only these four numerals (in one of the squares however the middle cells are empty, indicating that it was probably intended as an intermediate stage in the making of a complete square). The cloth is then placed at the top of the house posts (*puncak tiang*). The text reads:

“*Bab ini angka maha besar gunanya. Maka disurat pada timah putih empat persegi. Surat peta[?] angka ini pada perca putih. Maka bubuh pada puncak tiang rumah kita maha baik, dianugerahi Allah Taala. Dan segala marabahaya pun diluputkan Allah Taala daripada sekaliannya. Inilah angkanya pada tapak tiang akan menolakkan bala; syaitan dan iblis tiada hampir dengan berkat angka ini. Inilah rajahnya.*”¹²⁵

“[This chapter is on an extremely useful talisman. Draw it onto a square piece of tinned iron. Draw it on a piece of white cloth, it will be extremely good to place it on the top of the house post, [you will

125 Based upon DBP MS 82 (Patani, c. 1857; cat. 8), side A, ninth opening, PNM MS 1603 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 39), fols. 18r-18v; also found in PNM MS 489 (ex-cat.), partially transliterated in Harun 2006a, p. 122.

be] blessed by God the Exalted. And [you will be] spared from all danger by God the Exalted. This is the talisman for [placement] underneath the house posts to push away misfortune; Satan and the Devil will not come near with the benefit of this talisman. This is the *rajah*.]"

The use of the *budūh* magic square for house posts is also found in PNM MS 2107 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 53) where the post is referred to as *tiang ibu*, although it does not provide an explanation for how it is to be used (Figure 108).¹²⁶ Meanwhile PNM MS 1646 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 41) provides a 4 × 4 magic square – containing the numbers 1 to 16 – to be drawn on a piece white cloth for the house post (*bunga tiang*) (Figure 233).¹²⁷

Among Thai society a piece of white cloth with talismanic diagrams is similarly placed at the top of the house post along with other items. One of the designs inscribed on it is known as the *yan trinisinghe* ('three-in-lion'), which is composed of the Solomon's ring design with a diagonally-oriented grid inside it containing the numbers 1 to 9 (Figure 234).¹²⁸ When they are added up in a row they produce mystic numbers.¹²⁹ It is perhaps derived from the 3 × 3 magic square, and similarly the number 5 is placed in the middle of the grid (although here it is repeated four times). However the positions of the digits in the *yan trinisinghe* are slightly different to the 3 × 3 magic square and they do not add up to fifteen.

The placement of metal plaques underneath posts is also found among many non-Islamic cultures of Southeast Asia. In Cambodia, a ritual to the Earth Spirit (*Preah Phum*) involves the construction of five posts in the centre of a village, with pieces of lead plaques inscribed with magic characters buried underneath them (Figure 235).¹³⁰ As mentioned earlier, among the Batak of Sumatra a



FIGURE 233 A 4 × 4 magic square for house posts. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1646 (cat. 41), fol. 6v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

sacrificial post called the *borotan* is planted on the ground, underneath which is buried a metal plaque inscribed with the Solomon's ring design together with a turtle and two *nāga*, while at the top of the pole is placed a piece of white cloth “to represent the ‘pure’ sky which lies beyond the sun.”¹³¹

Roxana Waterson has suggested that the similarities among the various Southeast Asian groups in these rituals indicate that “we are dealing with an ancient and widespread tradition, to which elements such as written formulae have been added as later accretions.”¹³² It is of course possible that the Malays were already using 3 × 3 magic squares with Indic numerals prior to the arrival of Islam. Nevertheless the employment of Arabic numbers in the squares as found in the Malay manuscripts places them as belonging to the Islamic corpus of talismanic designs. As such, the Malay use of the *budūh* magic square in rituals of house construction is a good example of how symbols from the Islamic tradition have been adapted to fit into local practices.

126 PNM MS 2107, fol. 10v.

127 PNM MS 1646, fol. 6v.

128 Terwiel 2001, p. 149.

129 Anuman 1968, p. 283, who also notes that the *yan trinisinghe* is used for protection during childbirth.

130 Choulean 2004, pp. 149–163.

131 Schuster 1975, p. 55.

132 Waterson 1993, p. 126.

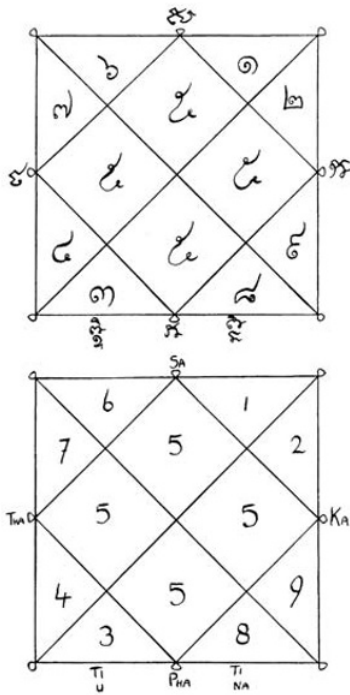


FIGURE 234 *The Thai yan trinisinghe diagram. After Terwiel 2001, fig. 5.*

The use of the *budūh* magic square is not limited to talismans but it is also employed for divinatory purposes, demonstrating how certain designs may be used in both magic and divination. For instance, in RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) the square is placed inside the Solomon’s ring design, around which are written the names of prophets, the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs and angels (Figure 236). A child is asked to place a small stone onto one of the numbers in the square which would indicate either a positive or negative outcome. For example, if the child chooses the numbers 2 or 8, the outcome would be unsuccessful, but if 3 or 7 are chosen then it would be successful.¹³³

Illumination and Decorative Elements

A major artistic element of Malay manuscript art is illumination. Like other parts of the Islamic world,

133 RAS Maxwell 15, fol. 31r.

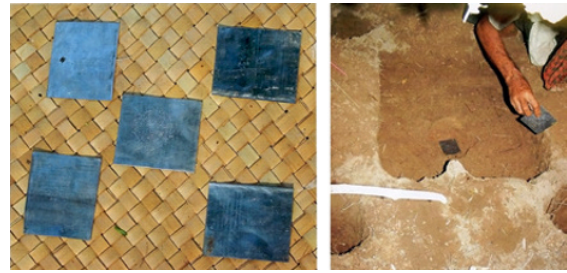


FIGURE 235 *Lead plaques buried underneath posts for earth spirit ritual, Cambodia. After Choulean 2004, p. 161, figs. 146–147.*

in Southeast Asia the Qur’an is the most important book for the Muslim population, and together with other devotional texts account for the majority of illuminated manuscripts in the region. In contrast, while manuscripts on secular works such as literary, poetry and legal texts may also be illuminated, they are of a lesser extent and quality, and the styles of the illumination are more eclectic compared to the more conservative designs found in Qur’ans.¹³⁴ Although magic and divination straddle an ambiguous zone between the sacred and secular sphere, in terms of illumination the manuscripts on these topics fall into the latter camp.

Illumination of Initial and End Pages

Within the Malay manuscript tradition, illumination is typically found on the initial and end pages of a manuscript, with vegetal motifs being the primary form of ornamentation. For the initial pages, the format of the illumination is usually one of two types. One format consists of a decorative double frame, which is “often symmetrical about the gutter of the book, with more substantive ornamentation on the three outer sides than on the inner vertical side.”¹³⁵ Gallop has identified a number of regional variations for this type of illumination,¹³⁶ but so far this format has not been found among the magic and divination manuscripts. The other format consists of a decorative headpiece above the text on a page, which is typically in the form of a triangular

134 Gallop 2005c, pp. 174–176.

135 Gallop 2004, p. 195.

136 See overview in Gallop 2005c.

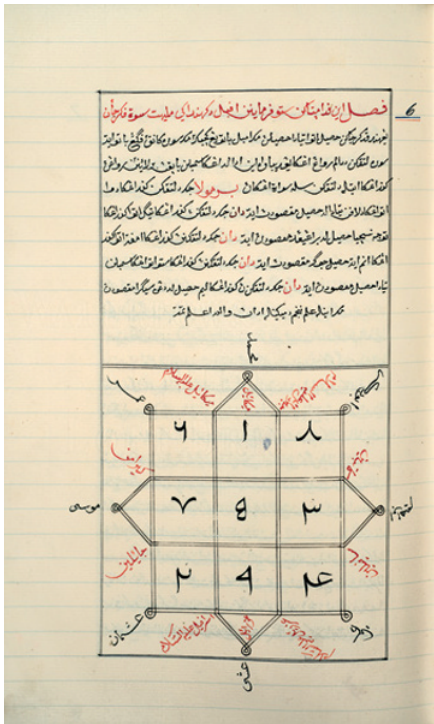


FIGURE 236 A buduh magic square placed in an eight-headed cypher and employed as a form of divination. Perak, 1882. RAS Maxwell 15 (cat. 84), fol. 31r. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

arch flanked by two half-arches on the sides. This headpiece may be found either on both of the initial pages or only on the first page. In this book, headpieces have been found in a few of the manuscripts consulted, and some will be discussed here briefly.

In PNM MS 4080 (Terengganu, 1903; cat. 82), a single headpiece decorates the first page of the manuscript, coloured in black, purple and the off-white of the paper (Figure 237); however the text block underneath it is blank. According to Gallop, one of the characteristic elements of the Terengganu style of illumination is a stepped ogival arch that encloses a smaller semi-circular arch,¹³⁷ and this is indeed the shape of the headpiece in this manuscript. Within the semi-circle is a five-petalled

flower, and the rest of the arch is filled with a scrolling vegetal motif. ‘M’-shaped patterns are found scattered outside the arch, which is another characteristic of Terengganu illumination.¹³⁸ The manuscript was copied by Haji Abdul Rahman (or Derahman) ibn Encik Long (1834–1914), an imam of Masjid Seberang Bukit Tumbuh, Terengganu who had also copied the historical text *Tuhfat al-nafis* (‘The Precious Gift’) for Sultan Zainal Abidin III of Terengganu (b. 1866, r. 1881 – d. 1918; Figure 290), dated Thursday 15 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1318 AH / 4 April 1901 AD.¹³⁹ The illumination in the latter manuscript however is more ornate, but there are certain resemblances in the motifs used. It is possible that Haji Abdul Rahman had copied PNM MS 4080 for the same royal patron, Zainal Abidin III, although it is not specified in the colophon. Additionally, the illumination in the opening pages of a *kitab maulid* from Terengganu in the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore is even more similar to that in PNM MS 4080, particularly with the five-petalled flower within a semi-circular arch in the middle of the headpiece, as well as in the shape of the leaves and the composition of the vegetal scrolls.¹⁴⁰ The relationship between this manuscript with PNM MS 4080 and the copy of the *Tuhfat al-nafis* is still to be investigated.

The examples of illumination found in the manuscripts are clearly related to other forms of Malay decorative arts. RAS Maxwell 106, which was copied in Perak and completed in 1879 (cat. 86), is prefaced by a double illuminated headpiece, each in the form of a stepped central arch topped by a trefoil finial, flanked by two lesser semi-arches (Figure 238). The arches contain scrolling vegetal motifs with the spaces in between filled with tiny dots. The shape of the central arch is very similar to the design on the inside panels of Malay brass

138 Gallop 2005d, p. 117.

139 Now in the estate of the late Tengku Ismail bin Tengku Su. It has been produced in facsimile as Raja Ali 1991.

140 Singapore, Asian Civilisations Museum, 2007.53427.

137 Gallop 2005d, p. 117.



FIGURE 237 Illuminated headpiece. *Terengganu*, 1903. PNM MS 4080 (cat. 82), p. 1. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

chests (Figure 239).¹⁴¹ Apart from the overall structure of the arch there are further similarities in the vegetal motifs. For instance in the middle of both arches are two leaves going upwards following the contours of the arch, with their tips joining at the apex, which is topped by a trefoil motif.

The illumination of the initial pages in PNM MS 3429 (cat. 80) is not typical of the Malay style (Figure 240). The manuscript was copied in Kampung Kapor, Singapore, and completed in 1907. On the first page of the main text is a headpiece which has in its centre a sun-shaped rosette or *shamsa*, an illumination style that is rare in a Malay context but more commonly found in Persian, Ottoman and Indian manuscripts. The rays of the inner ring are in red, while those of the outer ring are outlined in blue but are blank inside. The *shamsa* is topped by a finial with “Allāh” (repeated three times) and “Muḥammad”. It is flanked by two narrow columns, each with vegetal motifs at the top and base. Within the *shamsa* itself is a prayer in

Arabic. Underneath this headpiece is an introductory text, which mentions the date when the copying of the manuscript commenced, a supplication (*du‘ā*), an attribution of the text to the great Islamic sage Luqmān al-Ḥakīm, and how the reader must present gifts to his teacher. This introduction then continues onto the opposite page, and is followed by the main contents of the manuscript. This is marked by a second headpiece, which is in the form of an onion-shaped dome of a mosque, flanked by two short columns that are also topped with smaller domes. Within the dome is an esoteric text written in a mixture of Arabic and Malay (this is still to be deciphered), and at the base are the names “Allāh” and “Muḥammad”. On either side of the dome are two pentagrams.

The illumination in PNM MS 3429 is different to those of the other three Kampung Kapor literary manuscripts discussed earlier (although further research is needed to ascertain the connections between them). In any case, the composition of a large dome flanked by two smaller ones recalls elements of Indo-Islamic architecture, such as in the main entrance portal of the Badshahi Mosque adjacent to the Lahore Fort in Pakistan (dated

141 For instance IAMM 1998.1.3813, see Guise 2005, p. 199, and another in Taiping, Muzium Perak [accession number unknown].



FIGURE 238 Double illuminated headpiece. Perak, 1879. RAS Maxwell 106 (cat. 86), flyleaves. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.



FIGURE 239 Brass chest, Malay peninsula, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.3873. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

1673–74).¹⁴² The influences from the Islamic art of South Asia suggest that the copyist-artist of the manuscript was of Indian descent. Indeed Kampung Kapor is adjacent to an area in Singapore known as Little India that has a large population of Indian Muslims. Within this neighbourhood is a mosque

known as Masjid Abdul Gaffoor which was built in 1907,¹⁴³ and which therefore dates to the same time period as PNM MS 3429. Although it is difficult to say if it served as a direct model for the illumination, nevertheless both manuscript and building share many similar motifs and ornaments. The mosque is in the Indo-Islamic style favoured by Indian Muslim communities in the Malay peninsula, comprising a central bulbous dome, multiple stunted minarets and polylobed ogee arches.¹⁴⁴ Of particular interest to the present discussion is the main entrance of the mosque. Here the central arch is topped by a sort of *pīshṭāq* composed of a bulbous ogee flanked by miniature minarets (Figure 241), just like the second headpiece in the manuscript. In addition, the polylobed arch of the entrance is, like the dome in the second headpiece, flanked by two pentagrams. In the centre of this structure is a calligraphic *shamsa* which is in a similar style to the first headpiece in the manuscript.

¹⁴² See Frishman & Khan 2002, p. 168. I would like to thank Mehreen Razvi for her help on South Asian Islamic architecture.

¹⁴³ Lee 1990, p. 75; Lee 2002, pp. 90–93.

¹⁴⁴ For an overview of mosques built by Indian Muslims in Peninsular Malaysia, see Mizan Hashim 1998.



FIGURE 240 *Illuminated opening pages. Singapore, 1907. PNM MS 3429 (cat. 80), flyleaf verso-p. 1. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

A number of magic and divination manuscripts contain the tailpiece, which is the illumination found at the colophon or the end of a text (see for instance Figure 242). The format of the tailpieces is broadly in line with those generally found in Malay manuscripts, i.e. in the form of “two right-angled triangles filled with floral or foliate patterns flanking the tapered final lines or words of the text.”¹⁴⁵ In DBP MS 13 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 6) however the triangular tailpiece design is found on the first page, with another one placed upside-down on the opposite page, forming a style of illumination that is unusual for the initial pages of a Malay manuscript (Figure 243).

Illuminated Diagrams and Talismanic Designs

Among the Malay magic and divination manuscripts, illumination is not only restricted to beautifying the initial and end pages. Other parts of the book such as divinatory tables, charts and even talismanic designs may also be illuminated. These often employ the same forms and motifs drawn

from a wider Malay artistic vocabulary that includes other forms of media such as woodwork.

As discussed previously, in the divinatory technique of the *Ketika Lima*, each watch of a time period is associated with a colour. In the tables, this association can be represented in three ways. Firstly, the names of the colours can be written in as text, usually within the cells (for example in Figure 244) but occasionally along one of the sides of the table. In some manuscripts the colours are painted into the cells. Here the whole cell could be coloured in (Figures 49, 245), but an alternative way is to divide each cell diagonally with the colour painted in one of the halves (Figures 40, 246). As noted in Chapter Four, occasionally the colours used might not always be accurate but rather are approximations.

A few manuscripts have gone a step further by adding decorative elements to the tables. In PNM MS 2989 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 73), a tailpiece-like triangular design with foliage motifs has been added underneath a *Saat Lima* table (Figure 247). In PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44), an arch motif of red, yellow and white fashioned like an ‘interlocking wave’ has been added around three sides of the *Ketika*

145 Gallop 2005d, p. 115.



FIGURE 241 Main entrance portal of Masjid Abdul Gaffoor, Singapore, 1907. Photo by the author, 2009.



FIGURE 242 Illuminated tailpiece. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth – early twentieth century. PNM MS 199 (cat. 29), fol. 5v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

Lima and *Saat Lima* tables (Figure 248). In her study of illuminated Malay manuscripts from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula, Gallop has identified this ‘interlocking wave’ motif to be one of the main characteristics of the Patani style of illumination (Figure 249).¹⁴⁶ This strongly suggests that PNM MS 1797 was produced in that area.

Apart from tables, circular diagrams especially compass roses and *rajamuka* wheels are also illuminated, where the decorative elements may be found in the centre of the circle (Figure 250), around its perimeter (Figure 251) or on the spokes. In PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47), the *rajamuka* wheel is shaped as an eight-petalled lotus flower viewed from above (Figure 252). In Hinduism the lotus signifies “the beauty and freshness of ever-renewing creation”,¹⁴⁷ while in Buddhism it symbolises spiritual growth and purity, and the eight petals of the white lotus represent the Eightfold Path of Buddhism.¹⁴⁸ The lotus motif is found throughout Southeast Asia, and in Malay art it appears on numerous objects such as on metalwork (Figure 253) and seals (Figure 231).¹⁴⁹

Besides divinatory diagrams and tables, illumination is also found on talismanic designs (for instance see Figure 254). Certain key texts may also be illuminated, for example in PNM MS 2750 (Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65) a page containing the sura *al-Fātiḥa* from the Qur’an is decorated with vegetal motifs in the corners (Figure 255).

Some manuscripts share certain similarities in the style of the images, suggesting a connection between them. For example, in the divinatory technique of the *Angka Tiga*, the diagrams containing the numbers 1, 2 and 3 may be depicted in a variety of forms. However in PNM

146 Gallop 2005d, p. 120.

147 Stutley 2003, p. 104.

148 McArthur 2004, p. 125.

149 For the lotus motif in Malay art, see Evans 1924–29a; for seals, see Gallop 1994, p. 49; also Gallop 2002b, vol. 1, p. 255 notes that a third of Malay seals are of this shape.



FIGURE 243 *Illuminated initial pages. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. DBP MS 13 (cat. 6), pp. 1–2. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.*



FIGURE 244 *Ketika Lima table. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late 1870s–80s. PNM MS 3007 (cat. 74), p. 33. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*



FIGURE 245 *Alternate Ketika Lima table (top left) and two other ketika tables (top right and bottom). Probably Palembang, nineteenth century. BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (cat. 5), fol. 1r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153/Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.*



FIGURE 246 Ketika Lima table. Probably Terengganu, 1877–78. PNM MS 1948 (cat. 45), fol. 2r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 247 Saat Lima table. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 2989 (cat. 73), fol. 13r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

MS 1230 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 30) and PNM MS 1995 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 51) there are similarities in the shape of the diagrams used, which are in the form of a lobed triangle with tiny decorative shoots or flames in between the joints (Figures 256, 257). Unfortunately neither manuscript has a colophon, but the similar choice of design indicates that they might come from the same region or school.

Additionally there is often a strong relationship between illustrations and the ornamental motifs used in manuscript illumination. For instance the *nāga* in RAS Raffles Malay 34 (most likely Penang, 1806; cat. 87) has a fleur-de-lis type design jutting out from its forehead that is probably meant to represent its crown (Figure 258a). The motif used here is one that is commonly found in Malay manuscript illumination (Figure 258b) and belongs to a set of Malay patterns that are derived from the

lotus flower viewed in profile.¹⁵⁰ The body of the *nāga* then tapers into a slender tail that ends with a large club which is shaped like a palmette topped by a trefoil finial. Once again, this is reminiscent of the motifs used in the illumination of Malay manuscripts (Figure 258c). The use of decorative elements for parts of the *nāga*'s body is an ancient tradition and can be seen for example in the reliefs of Angkor in Cambodia, where the creature's hood may be decorated with motifs of scrolling foliage.

Other illustrations also show similar connections – in PNM MS 2836 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century; cat. 70), the hilts of the *keris* are formed from ornamental motifs that are typically found in manuscript illumination (Figure 225).

150 Ling Roth 1910, pp. 5–7; Evans 1924–29a, p. 165, figs. IV, V.

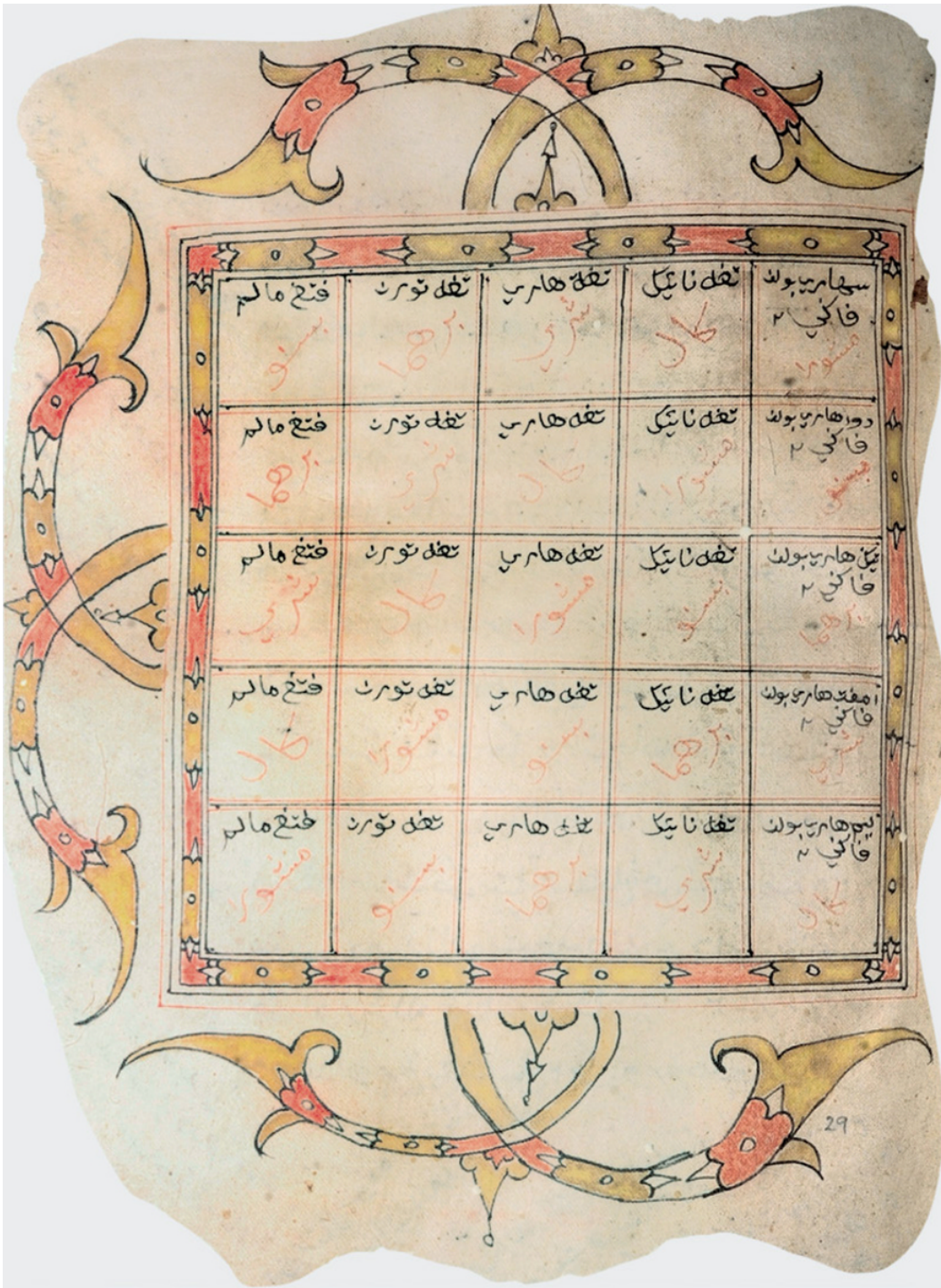


FIGURE 248 Ketika Lima table. Probably Patani, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1797 (cat. 44), p. 57. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 249 *Qur'an, Patani, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.3505, pp. 2–3. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.*

Chinese and Western Influences and the Impact of Printing and Photography

Some of the Malay magic and divination manuscripts consulted in this book show a number of Chinese artistic influences. The appearance of such elements in Malay art is not surprising considering the long connection between China and Southeast Asia, and motifs and styles have been transmitted into the region over millennia via Chinese immigrants and settlers together with imported objects such as ceramics and textiles.¹⁵¹ The objects also included magical equipment. For example magic-medical bowls and plates with Qur'anic

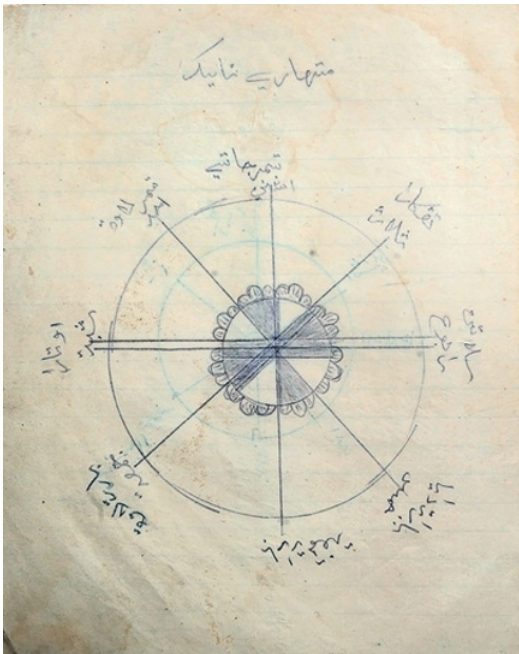


FIGURE 250 *Divinatory compass rose with days of the week. Patani, nineteenth – early twentieth century. PNM MS 1641 (cat. 40), p. 28. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*

151 For a general discussion of Chinese influence in Southeast Asian art, see Kerlogue 2004, pp. 155–177; for silverware, see Ling Roth 1910; for textiles, see Maxwell 2003, pp. 239–297; for ceramics, see Richards & Bennett 2005; for coins, see Gallop 2005b; for vernacular architecture, see Knapp 2010. In Islamic Southeast Asia Chinese influence on local culture is particularly prominent in certain regions such as in the kingdom of Cirebon, East Java, for which see Miksic 2005.



FIGURE 251 Rajamuka wheel. Singapore, 1907. PNM MS 3429 (cat. 80), p. 35. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (photo by the author).



FIGURE 252 Rajamuka wheel (right) and Rotating Nāga (left). Probably Kelantan, 1894. PNM MS 1957 (cat. 47), fols. 4v–5r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 253 Gold belt buckle (pending), Terengganu, eighteenth – nineteenth century. Kuala Lumpur, Department of Museums and Antiquities, E132.1979 After Bennett 2005, cat. 2, p. 57.



FIGURE 254 Talismanic design of the Seal of Prophethood (Mohor Nabuwat) worn by Muhammad. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. UM MSS 120 (cat. 95), fol. 1r. Courtesy of University of Malaya Library.

inscriptions and magic squares were produced at the Jingdezhen kilns for export to the Islamic world, including Southeast Asia (Figure 259).¹⁵²

In the art of the Malay manuscript, Chinese influence is typically found in the form of motifs and iconography. Gallop for example has noted

152 For these bowls, see Cheng 1972, Othman 1981, pp. 8–9, 20, 28–37, 73–83; Savage-Smith 1997d, pp. 101–105; Richards & Bennett 2005.

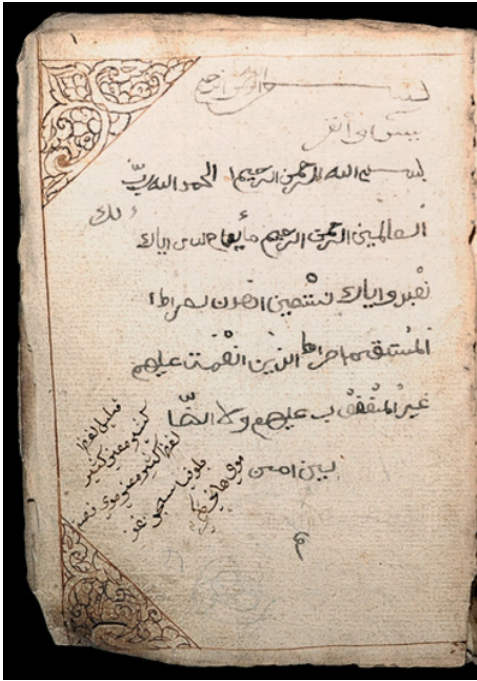


FIGURE 255 Illuminated page with the sura al-Fātiha. Aceh, 1895-96. PNM MS 2750 (cat. 65), fol. 65r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 257 Angka Tiga diagram. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century. PNM MS 1995 (cat. 51), fol. 1r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.



FIGURE 256 Angka Tiga diagram. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1230 (cat. 30), fol. 6v. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

that a number of Malay manuscripts have illuminated opening pages in the form of rectangular frames with lotus motifs and scrolling foliage which are strongly reminiscent of those found in Chinese Qur'ans.¹⁵³ This type of illumination has been found in a manuscript dating to at least the seventeenth century,¹⁵⁴ and continued up to the early nineteenth century with a group of manuscripts from Penang in the Stamford Raffles and John Leyden collections.¹⁵⁵ In addition, Chinese influence could also be seen in the pagoda-like buildings of the *kitab maulid* in the Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia mentioned earlier (Figure 216).¹⁵⁶

153 Gallop 2009.

154 The *Hikayat Pelanduk Jenaka* ('The Tale of the Resourceful Mousedeer'), probably from Java, dating to before 1684, now in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Mal.-Pol. 70, see Proudfoot 2001; Gallop 2009.

155 For which see Chapter Seven.

156 Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, A70.

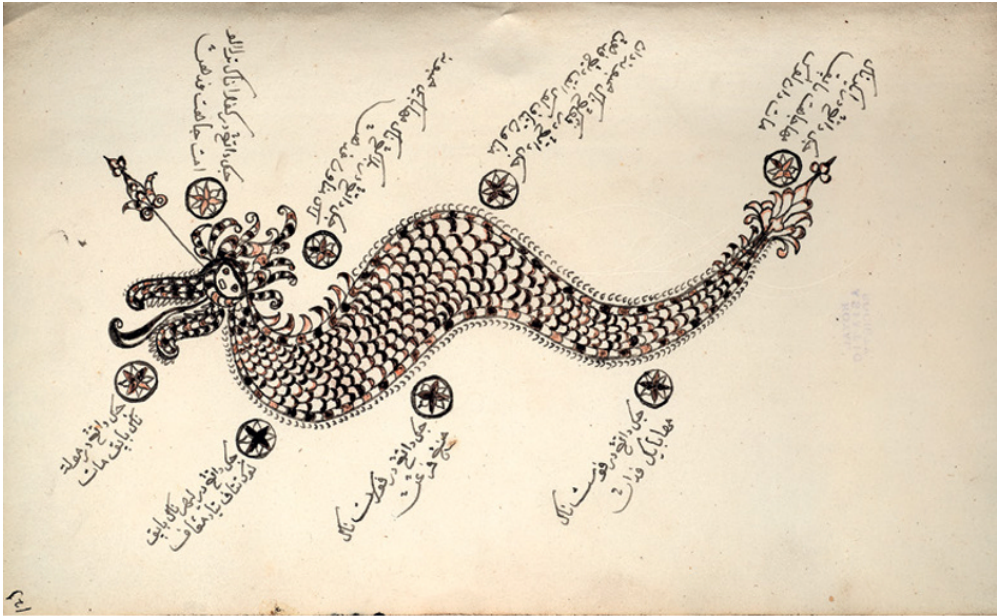


FIGURE 258 a) *The Rotating Nāga*. Most likely Penang, 1806. RAS Raffles Malay 34 (cat. 87), p. 122. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland; b) *Tailpiece*. *Syair Selindung Delima* ('Poem of Selindung Delima'), Bengkulu, c. 1784. SOAS MS 40322, p. 80. Courtesy of SOAS; c) Marginal ornament indicating the *juz* in a Qur'an, probably Patani, nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.3505, p. 21 (detail). © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

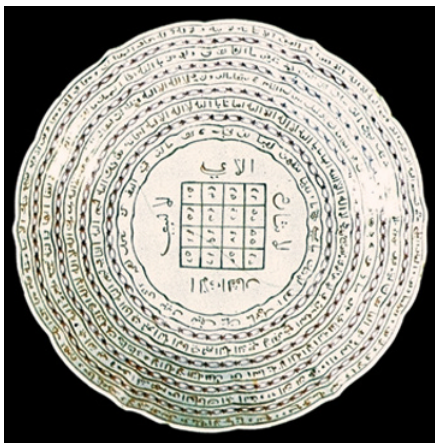


FIGURE 259 *A Chinese porcelain saucer with a 4 × 4 magic square in the bottom, Jingdezhen, Jianxi province, China, Qing Dynasty, eighteenth century. Kuala Lumpur, Department of Museums and Antiquities, BKP.223.1979.1S(29). After Othman 1981, pl. 17.*

Further examples of Chinese motifs appear in Malay magic and divination manuscripts, such as in RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84). One of the auguries in the pictorial *fālnāma* section is of a garden named *Taman Seganda Indera Bayu* ('The Garden of the Divine Wind'; Figure 260) which is depicted as a plant within a pot, an iconographic device also deployed in Javanese illustrated manuscripts.¹⁵⁷ The surface of the pot is covered in a pattern of interconnecting swastikas, a motif that in Southeast Asia is usually associated with the Chinese. In Java it is known as the *banji* (a word of Chinese origin meaning 'ten thousand'), signifying luck and prosperity,¹⁵⁸ and appears on various media such as textiles, metalwork and manuscript illumination (Figure 269). The swastika is also found in Malay art, for instance it appears in the wood panelling of the Mosque of Wadi Husin

in Patani,¹⁵⁹ and on gravestones in Kelantan (Figure 261). In these cases it is unclear if the motif was purely decorative, or was chosen due to an underlying spiritual significance in religious and funerary contexts.

A more obvious evidence of Chinese influence in Malay magic and divination manuscripts can be seen in the illustrations of the *nāga*. In Southeast Asia these creatures are usually depicted less like the Indian form of a cobra, but instead their iconography is more similar to that of the Chinese dragon. Even so, the Southeast Asia *nāga* are still very much linked to local traditions, iconography and styles, for instance in their rather short bodies and in the absence of legs. Yet at the same time there are a number of Malay manuscripts in which depictions of the *nāga* show more explicit similarities with Chinese dragons. One example is in PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47) where the *nāga* has been given a set of four legs and feelers – typical attributes of the Chinese dragon (Figure 252). In such cases the iconography of the animal was most likely based on architectural elements in Chinese temples (Figure 262) or from depictions of the creature on objects produced by Chinese craftsmen such as ceramics, textiles and lacquerware.

In most cases however it is often difficult to ascertain if the existence of Chinese elements in Malay manuscript art was due to a long-standing general permeation of Chinese culture in Southeast Asia, or if there was a direct involvement by Chinese artists in the manuscript production. The latter scenario is certainly not unusual. Throughout the centuries Chinese settlers had intermarried local women, giving rise to new communities called the *peranakan* who not only kept the culture of their homeland (albeit in a rearticulated form) but also adopted local customs. This included speaking, reading and writing in the native languages such as Malay and Javanese. New works were composed or translated from Chinese originals, and manuscripts in local languages were read, copied and commissioned.¹⁶⁰

157 For instance in a copy of the *Serat Damar Wulan* ('The Tale of Damar Wulan'), possibly Cirebon, north coast of Java, late eighteenth century, now in London, British Library, MSS Jav 89, fol. 19v, see Coster-Wijsman 1953, p. 157.

158 Maxwell 2003, p. 279.

159 See Farish & Khoo 2003, pp. 45, 76–78.

160 Kumar & Proudfoot 1996.

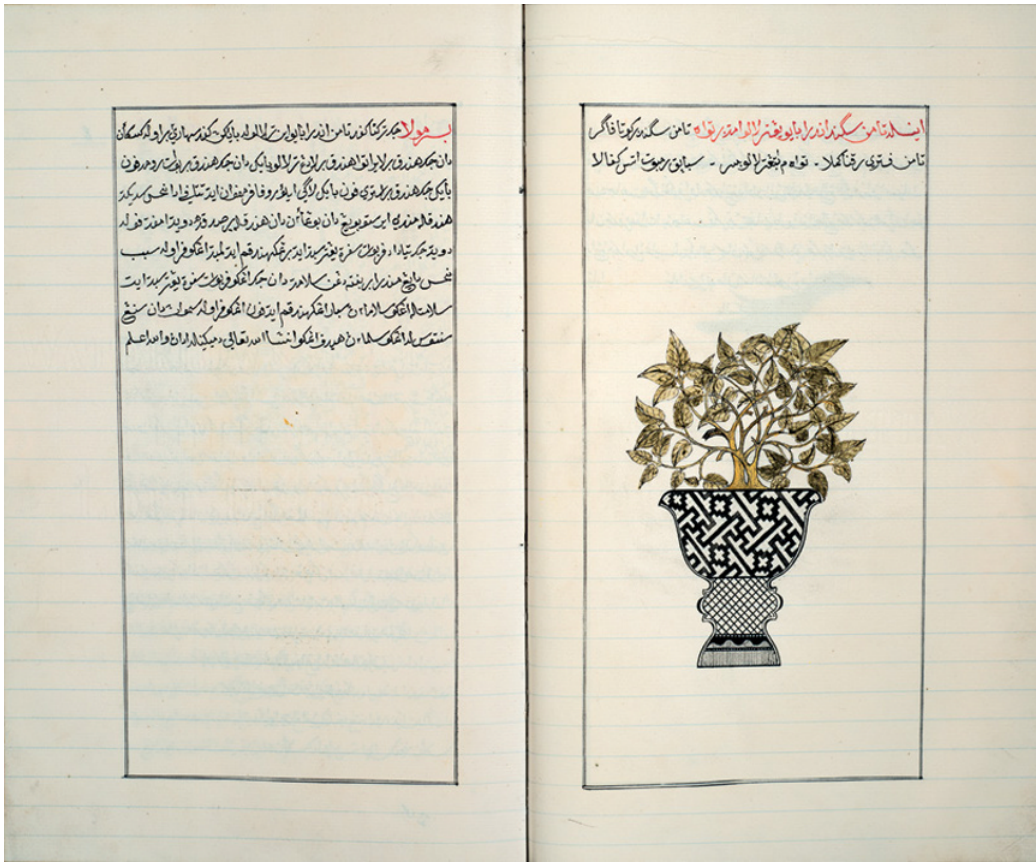


FIGURE 260 *The Fragrant Garden of the Divine Wind* (Taman Seganda Indera Bayu). Peta Sembilan ('The Nine Illustrations'), Perak, 1882. RAS Maxwell 15 (cat. 84), fols. 32v-33r. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the *peranakan* were also involved in the book-printing industry.¹⁶¹

However, how much all of this translates into Malay manuscript art is unclear. As Gallop has noted, although Chinese flower motifs such as lotuses and chrysanthemums appear in manuscripts that have Chinese connections,¹⁶² they also

appear in manuscripts that do not (for instance in the Raffles and Leyden manuscripts mentioned above). Conversely, Malay manuscripts copied by known Chinese copyists such as Muhammad Cing Saidullah (who worked at the General Secretariat of the Dutch Government in Batavia) do not demonstrate any Chinese artistic influences.¹⁶³ Such discrepancies can be seen in one of the magic and divination manuscripts. PNM MS 1603 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 39) contains a mixture of texts on divination and theology which has been copied into an exercise book. The upper cover of the manuscript is blank, but in the top right corner there are two Chinese characters written in

161 Proudfoot 1993, pp. 20–27.

162 Such as the chrysanthemum in a manuscript of the *Syair Berang-berang* ('The Lay of the Love-bird') in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Malay.e.2(R), probably late eighteenth century, which was owned by a Kapitan To Sih; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 104–105; Gallop & Arps 1991, pp. 66–67, cat. 38.

163 Gallop 2009, p. 331.



FIGURE 261 a) Gravestones with the swastika pattern, Kota Bharu, Kelantan, nineteenth – early twentieth century; b) Detail. Photos by the author, 2010.



FIGURE 262 Dragon on the roof of a Chinese temple, Tin Hin Kong (To' Kong Mek), in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Photo by the author, 2010.

pencil: 曲子 (*Qu Zi*) which is a song or piece of music composed for the harp or piano.¹⁶⁴ The reason for this inscription is unknown and the manuscript does not give any hint of a Chinese copyist or owner, nor are there any obvious Chinese influences in its images (Figure 263).

At the same time, a few of the manuscripts demonstrate Western influences in their illustrations.

¹⁶⁴ I am grateful to Angela Chiu for finding out this information.

This can be seen in the depiction of people who are dressed in a Western fashion, as well as in terms of artistic style whereby the figures are naturalistic and show some fluidity in movement. In addition the painting technique is more refined and involves the use of shading. An example of the employment of Western-style painting techniques is found in SOAS MS 12917 from the William Marsden collection (Sumatra, late eighteenth – early nineteenth century; cat. 90). The manuscript is clean, with the text written in neat, straight lines, and the diagrams and illustrations are tidy and painted in red with the use of shading (Figure 264). Indeed Merle Ricklefs and Petrus Voorhoeve suggest that the manuscript was copied by a European.¹⁶⁵

Another manuscript with Western-style illustrations is RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) mentioned earlier. The animals and birds are lifelike and three-dimensional, with clearly defined features and depicted as being in movement. In addition, the man who is drawn as part of the *Rejang* calendar has sideburns and a moustache that are typical of Victorian fashion (Figure 272).

The use of Western drawing and painting techniques is particularly prominent in the pictorial *fālnāma* of Aswandi N-06 (Penyengat or Bintan, early

¹⁶⁵ Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 159.



FIGURE 263 Ketika Burung. Probably Patani, nineteenth century. PNM MS 1603 (cat. 39), fol. 18r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

twentieth century; cat. 1). Here images of humans, jinn, animals, plants, buildings and landscape are depicted in a naturalistic style. In addition some of the people are depicted wearing Western clothes, such as the king in the augury titled “*Raja kesukaan*” (“A happy king”; Figure 265). He is wearing a European military uniform consisting of a coat with buttons and epaulettes, a plumed hat and a sword. This type of dress was also adopted by Malay rulers of this period, and therefore it is possible that the illustration in the manuscript was modelled after a local sultan.

Within this manuscript there are also illustrations of Western-style structures. An augury titled “*Negeri jauh*” (“A far away country”) depicts a city with a number of rectangular stone or brick buildings on a waterfront, with the dome and the spire most likely being the tops of churches (Figure 266). There is a strong probability that it represents a city in Europe, and was probably copied from a painting, book or magazine brought from the West. Alternatively it might have been based on the view of one of the major cities in the region, such as nearby Singapore or possibly Batavia (Jakarta). Meanwhile the painting for the augury “*Rumah batu*

besar” (“A large brick house”; Figure 267) is reminiscent of the homes of Dutch colonial officers or the villas built for the wealthy Chinese *peranakan* during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, where the combination of features such as Greek columns, deep verandahs and shuttered windows reflects the use of European architectural styles that has been adopted for the tropics.

It is as yet unclear if the Western influences in the above manuscripts are due to the direct influence of European patrons, or whether they merely reflect a Westernisation trend among Malay society in general which was becoming apparent in its art. The former is indeed possible, although factors such as the existing local artistic traditions and the prevailing European colonial attitudes within a particular area and time period must also be taken into account. At the same time there were similar developments in manuscript painting in other parts of Southeast Asia. An example of a Javanese manuscript with Western-style illustrations is a copy of the *Babad Blambangan* (“The Chronicles of Blambangan”), which recounts a war in the kingdom of Blambangan in East Java, dated 1774.¹⁶⁶ Here, as Tim Behrend has observed, not only are the officers clad in European military uniform, but there was also an attempt to make them three-dimensional and convey movement.¹⁶⁷ Pigeaud has argued that the adoption of Western techniques in Java was actually facilitated by the Javanese painting tradition itself. Although human figures are typically flat and are drawn to resemble shadow-play puppets, as he points out in the *wayang* imagery clown and demon figures are usually depicted in a more naturalistic manner, and this probably helped ease the transition into Western-style painting.¹⁶⁸ Behrend has further suggested that in Java, apart from the influx of European art into the region, Dutch patronage might have also played a part in the adoption of Western styles of

166 Jakarta, Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, KBG 63, see Kumar & McGlynn 1996, fig. 193.

167 Behrend 1996, pp. 182–183.

168 Pigeaud 1967–80, vol. III, pp. 48–49.



FIGURE 264 *Talismanic designs. Sumatra, late eighteenth – early nineteenth century. SOAS MS 12917 (cat. 90), fols. 1v–2r. Courtesy of SOAS.*



FIGURE 265 *A happy king (Raja kesukaan). Pictorial fālnāma, Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century. Aswandi N-06 (cat. 1), fol. 34r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.*



FIGURE 266 *A far away country (Negeri jauh). Pictorial fālnāma, Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century. Aswandi N-06 (cat. 1), fol. 20r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.*

painting. He cites the example of Mas Ngabèhi Kramaprawira, who between c. 1868 and 1885 provided material for Dutch scholars and produced sketches that were naturalistic.¹⁶⁹ It is possible

that the influence of European patronage in the adoption of Western styles in Javanese manuscripts began even earlier. For instance the frontispieces of a two-volume copy of the *Babad Mataram* ('The Chronicles of Mataram'), dated AJ 1723–4 / 1797 AD, are illuminated in the Rococo style

169 Behrend 1996, p. 183.



FIGURE 267 *A large brick house (Rumah batu besar). Pictorial fālnāma, Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century. Aswandi N-06 (cat. 1), fol. 9r. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Aswandi Syahri.*

(Figure 268),¹⁷⁰ the designs of which were probably based upon European etchings.¹⁷¹ The manuscripts were owned by a Dutch man named J.J. Claas (Johannes Jacobus Claas), and although it is unclear if Claas had played an active role in the artistic aspects of the manuscript, it nevertheless demonstrates a connection between manuscript ownership by Europeans and the use of Western artistic styles.

The pictorial *fālnāma* of Aswandi N-06 was most likely produced in the Riau Archipelago, which like Java was also under Dutch control. Unfortunately the manuscript does not have a colophon, and thus it is unknown if the Western-style illustrations were the result of direct European involvement in its production. As for Malay manuscripts produced under British-controlled territories, the situation is

similarly still unclear. The original manuscripts of those copied for Europeans (such as RAS Maxwell 15, Perak, 1882; cat. 84) are now lost, which means that it is difficult to ascertain if the patron had played a part in the artistic style of the illustrations. Furthermore there is not always a correlation between British patronage of Malay manuscripts and the usage of Western techniques. For example, the illustration of the *nāga* in RAS Raffles Malay 34 (most likely Penang, 1806; cat. 87) which was commissioned by Raffles is still very much in the Malay tradition in terms of style and iconography (Figure 258a). This discrepancy could possibly be explained by the fact that unlike other colonial powers in the region, during the nineteenth century the British administration was not concerned with developing local Malay artists in learning European painting techniques. According to Redza Piyadasa this was due to concerns about imposing Western cultural forms onto the Malay population which would have been seen “as a threat to their Islamic beliefs and customs”, and instead the focus of art education was on crafts such as basket-weaving and pottery.¹⁷²

On the other hand, the illustrations and illumination found in Javanese manuscripts that were collected and copied for Raffles in Java between 1811 and 1816 do show an influence of the Western style. The copy he made of an illustrated Javanese astrological and divinatory treatise from Cirebon contains many human and animal figures that are more three-dimensional and employ the use of shading even though traces of the *wayang* style can still clearly be seen (Figure 75).¹⁷³ The illumination found in another Javanese manuscript dated 1813 that was collected and probably copied for Raffles demonstrates an even stronger Western influence.¹⁷⁴ This manuscript contains three texts, each of which is illuminated in the initial pages

170 RAS Raffles Java 17 and 18, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 79; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 96, cat. 66.

171 For instance the frontispiece in vol. 1 is very similar to a shield design by Matthias Lock published in *A Book of Shields*, c. 1746, printed Paris, 1801, a copy now in London, Victoria & Albert Museum, 29564:122. I would like to thank Alice McEwan for bringing this to my attention.

172 Redza 1997, p. 229; Redza 2007a, p. 131.

173 RAS Raffles Java 1. On this manuscript see Chapter Five, footnote 77.

174 RAS Raffles Java 6, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 78; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 86, cat. 58. Many thanks to Mark



FIGURE 268 Babad Mataram ('The Chronicles of Mataram'), Java, AJ 1723 / 1797 AD. RAS Raffles Java 17, vol. 1, frontispiece. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

with designs evoking the Rococo style (Figure 269). At the same time there is also a Chinese connection, as the incorporation of the *banji* pattern in one of the designs strongly suggests that the illumination in this manuscript was executed by a Chinese artist. This would not be unusual – indeed Werner Kraus has argued that the adoption of Western-style painting in Southeast Asia was led by the Chinese who were already proficient in working in this style.¹⁷⁵ For instance, throughout the nineteenth century Chinese artists in Southeast Asia were producing natural history paintings of the local flora and fauna in the Western style for British

patrons such as Marsden and Raffles.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, the establishment of art groups and the beginnings of Western modernist art movements in Penang and Singapore during the 1920s–30s were instigated mainly by local Chinese artists.¹⁷⁷

As for Malay manuscripts, the convergence of Western and Chinese influences can be seen in a letter written in Penyengat by Raja Ali ibn Raja Jaafar, the *Yang Dipertuan Muda* (Viceroy) of Riau (b. 1809, r. 1844–57) to the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, Jan Jacob van Rochussen (1797–1871), dated 15 Sha'bān 1265 AH / 6 July 1849 AD.¹⁷⁸ Here the letter is decorated with flowers such as chrysanthemums that are painted clearly in the European style, while on the top right corner is a Chinese geometric pattern (Figure 270). At this point it is also worth noting that both Aswandi N-06 (Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century; cat. 1) and RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) which have Western-style illustrations also contain some Chinese artistic elements, such as in the dragon-like depictions of the *nāga* and the use of the *banji* pattern. However as mentioned earlier, the issue of whether Chinese artists had worked on the Malay magic and divination manuscripts requires further investigation.

A brief mention must also be made of the drawings by Munsyi Abdullah (Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir, 1796–1854). Often called the 'Father of modern Malay literature', Abdullah (who was partly of Tamil and Yemeni descent) was a language teacher (*munsyi*), copyist and informant for a number of Western administrators and missionaries in the Malay peninsula during the nineteenth century (including Raffles and Thomas Newbold).¹⁷⁹ In his autobiography the *Hikayat Abdullah* ('The Tale of Abdullah'; 1849), he mentions how he had

176 See Archer 1992, p. 188; Gallop 1995, pp. 92–110; Bastin 1999; Kraus 2005, pp. 72–73; Noltie 2009.

177 Redza 1997, pp. 230–231; Muliyadi 2007, p. 107; Muliyadi & Redza 2007; Redza 2007b, p. 110.

178 Jakarta, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, no. 4. Published in Kumar & McGlynn 1996, fig. 58; Mu'jizah 2008, p. 194.

179 For his biography, see Hill 1970, pp. 1–28; Traill 1981; Muhammad 1998.

Dean and Erika Winstone for their help with this manuscript.

175 Kraus 2005, p. 66.



FIGURE 269 Raja Kapa-kapa ('The Kings of Yore'), Java, 1813. RAS Raffles Java 6, pp. 1–2. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

provided information on Malay spirits for the missionary Reverend William Milne, together with a drawing of the *penanggalan* (a vampire birth spirit), which were later published in the journal *The Indo-Chinese Gleaner* in 1819.¹⁸⁰ Unlike the drawings of spirits in many of the Malay magic and divination manuscripts that are usually fairly schematic, the figure of the *penanggalan* here has recognisable facial features as well as shading on its entrails (Figure 271). Earlier in his autobiography Abdullah mentions that he learnt to draw by observing the Chinese.¹⁸¹

It is most likely that in the majority of cases the European influence in Malay and Javanese

illustrated manuscripts was indirect, i.e. through imported books, magazines, newspapers and photographs from the West, as well as local publications by Western printers and publishers operating in the region. As Kraus notes, Western drawings and paintings were already being brought into Southeast Asia probably as early as the late sixteenth century, although it was only during the nineteenth century that Western art was being appreciated together with other Western modes of living.¹⁸² In the case of Aswandi N-06 (Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century; cat. 1) and RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84), the exact models for the illustrations are yet to be identified, but they might have

180 Hill 1970, pp. 113–118 where the figure is published on p. 116; Kassim 2004, pp. 110–114.

181 Hill 1970, p. 44; Kassim 2004, p. 25.

182 Kraus 2005, pp. 62–64.



FIGURE 270 *Letter from Raja Ali to Jan Jacob van Rochussen, 1849. Jakarta, Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, no. 4. After Kumar & McGlynn 1996, fig. 58.*

been taken from Western illustrated books on animals.¹⁸³

Apart from printed material, photographs also played an important part in the adoption of Western art styles. In the printed book *Shaer Almarhum Sultan Abubakar di Negeri Johor* ('Poem of the Late Sultan Abubakar of Johor'; 1896), the illustration of the Sultanah of Johor has been found to have been based on a photograph.¹⁸⁴ Similarly, the drawing of a European-looking man in RAS Maxwell 15 (Perak, 1882; cat. 84) might have been taken from a photographic portrait (Figure 272).¹⁸⁵

183 Among the printed Malay illustrated books on animals (*Hikayat Binatang*, 'Tales of Animals') published during the nineteenth century was one that was translated by Munsyi Abdullah (Mission Press, Singapore, 1846), and another that was written or translated by A.F. von de Wall (Batavia, 1882).

184 Gallop 1990, p. 115, note 46.

185 For instance compare it with a photographic portrait of Andrew Cecil Bradley (1851–1935) from *Portraits of Many Persons of Note Photographed by Frederick*

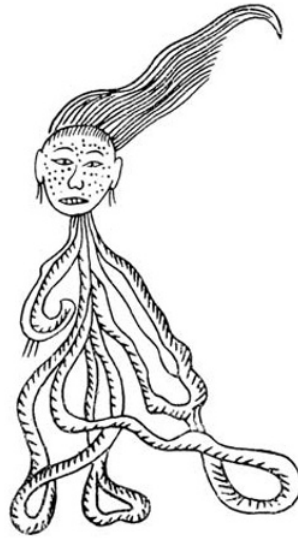


FIGURE 271 *The penanggalan spirit drawn by Munsyi Abdullah, published in an article by Milne as Sianu ('Anybody') in the Indo-Chinese Gleaner, vol. 2, July 1819, p. 140. After Hill 1970, p. 116, fig. b.*

At the same time, photographs were also used in lieu of drawings and paintings in Malay manuscripts and books during the early twentieth century. Umar Junus suggests that photographs were employed in Malay printed books during the 1920s–30s as a cheap substitute for when artists were not available to provide drawings or paintings.¹⁸⁶ Additionally, the photographs also functioned as a way of telling the readers that the events and characters in the books were real.¹⁸⁷ A similar case could be made for the images found in a group of manuscripts from the island of Penyangat, Riau, which contain photographs that have been cut and pasted from Western magazines. One of them, BMKMR No. 09 (Penyangat, 1911; cat. 4), contains a treatise on magic and divination that was composed by Khadijah Terung (c. 1885–1955), one of the most well-known female

Hollyer, vol. 1, c. 1890, now in London, Victoria & Albert Museum 7620–1938.

186 Umar 1988, p. 104.

187 Umar 1988, pp. 111–113.

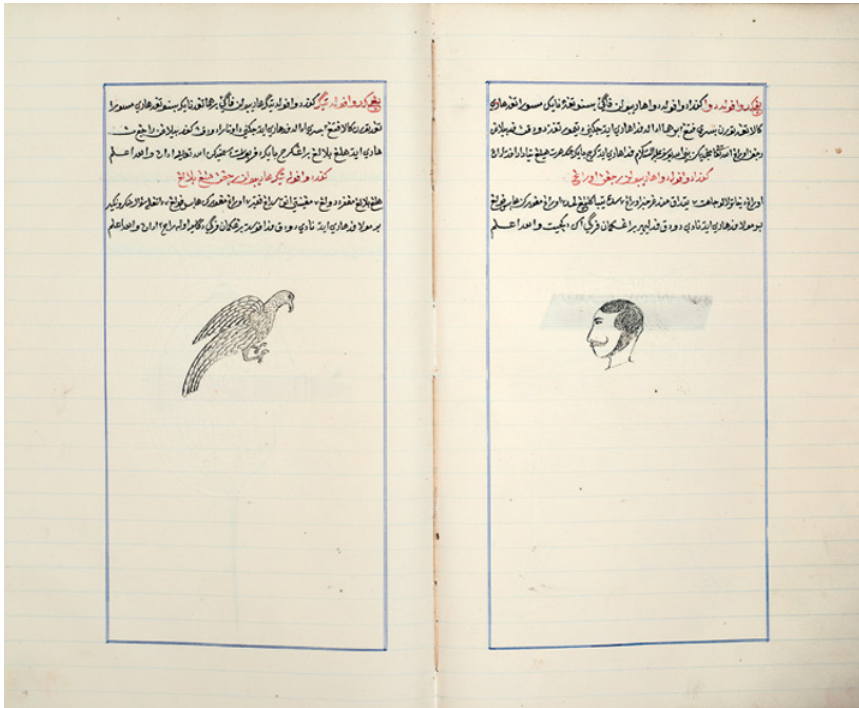


FIGURE 272 *Man (Orang, right) and the Black-thighed Falconet (Helang Belalang, left).* Rejang calendar, Perak, 1882. RAS Maxwell 15 (cat. 84), fols. 92v–93r. Copyright of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

magicians on the island.¹⁸⁸ The text is titled *Perhimpunan Gunawan bagi Laki-Laki dan Perempuan* ('A Compendium of Charms for Men and Women') dated 5 Rajab 1329 AH / 2 July 1911 AD (Figure 280), but there are also a number of addenda and notes dated between 1910–11 and 1923 by Khadijah and others. This is the only known magic and divination manuscript written by a woman, and the contents of Khadijah's work and her place in the Malay magic and divination literary tradition will be explored in Chapter Seven, but for the moment the discussion will focus on the illustrations within the manuscript.

While Khadijah's 'Compendium' includes a number of talismanic designs, of more interest are the photographs taken from magazines that are attached to the upper cover and the later sections

of the manuscript, which comprise images of clothed women that have had naked breasts drawn in (Figure 273). These pictures were probably added by her husband, Raja Haji Abdullah bin Raja Hassan (d. 1926), the grandson of the great author and scholar Raja Ali Haji (c. 1809–c. 1873).¹⁸⁹ Raja Haji Abdullah was amongst other things a judge, qadi (Islamic judge), healer, magician, artist and author and translator of Malay texts.¹⁹⁰ His own works include similar images to those in Khadijah's manuscript. Photographs of women that have been made to look naked are found in the poem

189 Raja Ali Haji "is considered to have been responsible for an entire literary 'renaissance' of traditional Malay literature", Mukherjee 1997, p. 29.

190 For Raja Haji Abdullah's life, see Matheson 1985, p. 14; Ding 2006, p. 78; Putten [forthcoming], p. 8 (I would like to thank the author for sending me a copy of his forthcoming article).

188 For Khadijah Terung, see Mukherjee 1997, pp. 31–33; Ding 2006, p. 77.



FIGURE 273 *A woman with thick and long hair* (Perempuan yang amat lebat dan panjang rambutnya). *Penyengat*, 1911. BMKMR No. 09 (cat. 4), p. 59. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.



FIGURE 274 *Photograph of a woman with naked breasts drawn in. Raja Haji Abdullah (as Abu Muhammad Adnan), Syair Ghāyat al-munā ('Poem of Supreme Wishes'), Penyengat, 1902–3. BMKMR EAP153/13/6, vol. 1, p. 82. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.*

Syair Ghāyat al-munā ('Poem of Supreme Wishes') dated 1320 AH / 1902–3 AD (Figure 274),¹⁹¹ as well as in a text on erotology, magic and divination entitled *Perhimpunan Pengetahuan bagi Segala Laki-Laki dan Segala Perempuan* ('A Compendium of Knowledge for All Men and All Women').¹⁹² In the latter, we are told that the pictures of

the naked women (some of which were later censored) illustrate the ideal physical characteristics of a woman that indicate that she is a good sexual partner (such as dense armpit and pubic hair).¹⁹³ Jan van der Putten argues that the use of these naked images demonstrates an ambiguous perception held of the Western woman, where on the one hand she is desired for her sexuality, yet at the same time she is scorned for having loose morals.¹⁹⁴

In summary, the images in the magic and divination manuscripts tell us a number of things about Malay art and culture. From an artistic point of view they range from the very simple to the richly illuminated, and demonstrate a strong relationship between manuscript painting and other forms of art such as textiles and the theatre. On a broader level the images give us an insight into Malay

191 In the Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau (BMKMR), no accession number but it has been digitised under the British Library Endangered Archives Programme under the numbers EAP153/13/6 (vol. 1) and EAP153/13/7 (vol. 3). The poem, written under the pen name of Abu Muhammad Adnan, is in three volumes, but only the first volume has been found in lithograph form, printed by Muhammad Idris in Singapore. The lithograph copy is also in the BMKMR, accession No. 29. See Putten 2007, where images from it are reproduced in figs. 1–8.

192 In the Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau (BMKMR), no accession number (ex-cat.). See Putten [forthcoming], pp. 11–13.

193 Putten [forthcoming], p. 12.

194 Putten 2007, p. 160.

beliefs and practices, especially of how pre-Islamic and Islamic elements have not only co-existed but also fed into one another. There is still a survival of pre-Islamic iconography that shares much in common with other non-Muslim cultures in the region, which not only gives us a glimpse into Malay magic and divination practices prior to the arrival of Islam but more importantly demonstrates the relationship between pre-Islamic practices and an Islamic way of life. The continued usage of pre-Islamic iconography indicates the acceptance of Islam of local traditions, while at the same time the transmission of foreign ideas into Malay culture involved a degree of indigenisation. Symbols deriving from the Islamic tradition have been used in

non-Islamic rituals, and conversely indigenous traditions have been transplanted into practices that derive from the Islamic tradition. Additionally some of the art display Chinese and Western influences. All of this reflects a complex system, of which there is still much to be learned.

The images in the manuscripts were made for primarily practical purposes as they aid magicians in their work, whether on an individual basis, within a religious milieu or in the royal courts. At the same time, some of the manuscripts were copied for European patrons. The issues relating to the production, patronage and consumption of the manuscripts will be discussed in the following chapter.

Production, Patronage and Consumption

The manuscripts studied in this book show a great variety of styles, and this is due not only to geographical provenance but also to socio-economic reasons. In general, Malay manuscripts up to the early twentieth century were being produced under two main circumstances: individually for private consumption, or copied by copyists who were ordered to do so by someone else. Patrons in the latter category include royalty and European colonial officials as well as other interested individuals.¹ The magic and divination manuscripts certainly fit into this framework, and both private and commissioned manuscripts may be produced in any number of physical locations – in individual homes either in villages or urban cities, in religious schools, in royal palaces or in the offices of colonial governments – indicating a widespread usage of the texts and images across all levels of society. A survey conducted in 1954 by P.E. de Josselin de Jong and A.H. Hill on private manuscript collections in Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang and Kedah shows that magic and divination manuscripts were being kept not only by professional magicians but also by teachers of the *silat* martial art and members of the royal families.²

Unfortunately the lack of colophons and the anonymous nature of the manuscripts often make it difficult to ascertain the circumstances relating to their production. It can be hard to determine the backgrounds of the manuscript compilers, i.e. whether they were professional magicians, members of the religious milieu who also practised magic and divination, or even literate laypersons who were interested in these topics. At the same time, as mentioned in Chapter Two the boundaries between the different types of magic practitioners are often blurred.

¹ Cf. Behrend 1993 for Javanese manuscripts.

² Josselin de Jong 1983.

Professional Magicians

Among the main users of magic and divination manuscripts are the professional magicians (*bomoh* or *pawang*). However even when the manuscripts contain colophons and notes of ownership, the names of the copyists and owners do not include the terms *bomoh* or *pawang* which would otherwise indicate if they were professional magicians. This leads on to the question as to whether Malay magicians refer to themselves as *bomoh* and *pawang* in writing, or if these titles are only used by others when referring to them – based on the corpus of manuscripts investigated perhaps it is the latter. Another difficulty faced is that although there are many historical and anthropological reports on Malay magicians, they often ignore discussions on how the manuscripts were compiled and used. This is perhaps partly due to the secretive nature of Malay magicians who tend to keep their knowledge closely guarded, including access to their manuscripts. Writing in 1900 Walter Skeat notes that:

“... like members of their profession all the world over, these medicine-men are, perhaps naturally, extremely reticent; it was seldom that they would let their books be seen, much less copied, even for fair payment...”³

Skeat also describes how he was not allowed to purchase or borrow a book belonging to a Selangor magician, although he was allowed to copy its contents.⁴ This notion of secrecy is carried on into more recent times. In her investigation into Malay manuscripts kept in private collections, Siti Hawa Salleh similarly remarks that she encountered

³ Skeat 1900, p. 60. Secrecy is also important for Balinese medical and magical manuscripts, see Hooykaas 1980, p. 10.

⁴ Skeat 1900, p. 2.

guarded responses among magicians and shadow play puppeteers. She however notes that the owners were usually more forthcoming with certain groups, such as people whom they were familiar with and have met before, male researchers and Western scholars.⁵ My own experience supports this, when requests for interviews with magicians were denied or only cautiously given.

This secrecy may be partially due to the sacred nature of the information contained within the manuscripts. Magical knowledge must be kept secret for it to be effective, and a student magician must be formally initiated into the fold and made to swear to keep the knowledge learned secret.⁶ However quite often there are more practical reasons involved for the secrecy, particularly to protect proprietary knowledge and the threat of professional rivalry.⁷ A different concern might lie behind the notion of secrecy during modern times – Siti Hawa suggests that the reluctance to acknowledge possession of such manuscripts may be due to an embarrassment of being associated with antiquated traditions.⁸

Copying Texts from Other Magicians

Ian Proudfoot writes that the tradition of copying Malay manuscripts was dictated by personal relationships, i.e. between the owner of the original manuscript and the person who borrowed it to be copied. This is especially pertinent to texts on magic and divination, which “are personally compiled journals of discipleship, recording the fruits of relationships with teachers with whom the owner of the manuscript has been involved.”⁹ A magician might compile manuscripts from the texts belonging to his teacher while training to become one. In order to become a magician, a person must obtain magical knowledge (*ilmu*). There are a number of ways in

which this could be done (this includes learning via supernatural means), which in turn relates to how he or she will be viewed by the public.¹⁰ Magicians usually inherit their positions from their parents or grandparents, while those who do not come from a lineage of magicians may study under the tutelage of a more senior and experienced magician. However, although hereditary magicians have the opportunity to observe and help their elders at work,¹¹ according to Jeanne Cuisinier they actually often prefer to formally study under an outsider, sometimes even journeying to another country.¹²

As a student (*murid*), the prospective magician is taught a variety of skills by the teacher (*guru*).¹³ From the anthropological studies it is unclear if this includes a written transmission of knowledge in addition to an oral one. The Kelantanese shaman whom I had interviewed in 2010 said that he does not have any written texts, and that his knowledge was transmitted orally by his father.¹⁴ Nevertheless, in a study published in 1986 by Roland Werner, the training of an apprentice includes topics such as the memorisation of Qur’anic verses and the drawing of talismanic diagrams, which suggests some use of written material (at least within certain circles).¹⁵ Apart from learning the *ilmu*, a magician must also obtain a right to use it. A person born into a family of magicians has this given automatically, but if a student does not have this lineage, then he must be initiated. During the initiation ceremony the teacher blesses the student who responds appropriately

5 Siti Hawa 2010, pp. 278–279.

6 For a discussion of secrecy, see Cuisinier 1936, pp. 14–15; Endicott 1970, pp. 19–20; Golomb 1985a, p. 84.

7 Gimlette & Burkill 1930, p. 337; Endicott 1970, pp. 19–20.

8 Siti Hawa 2010, p. 278.

9 Proudfoot 2002, p. 120.

10 For the acquisition of magical knowledge, see Cuisinier 1936, pp. 3–12 (I would like to thank Francois Tainturier for his help with the French passages); Endicott 1970, pp. 14–19; Mohd. Taib 1989, pp. 70–73.

11 Anita 1996/7, p. 54.

12 Cuisinier 1936, pp. 6–7.

13 The teaching of magic is described in Cuisinier 1936, pp. 7–12; Werner 1986, pp. 17–22. Endicott 1970, pp. 14–15; Mohd. Taib 1989, pp. 71–72; also see Haron 1996, pp. 301–304.

14 Pers. comm. 6 July 2010.

15 Werner 1986, p. 18.

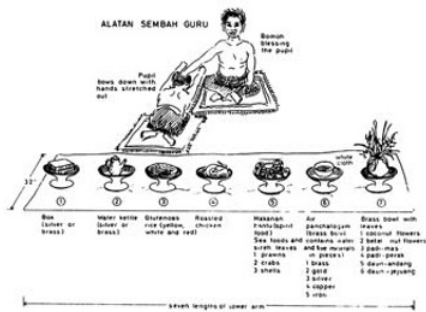


FIGURE 275 The initiation ceremony of a Malay magician. After Werner 1986, Fig. 2.

and presents the teacher with seven trays of gifts (*alatan sembah guru*; Figure 275).¹⁶ A magic and divination manuscript may also be involved in this rite, as Cuisinier writes:

“Dans les cas – d’ailleurs rares, car l’écriture risque toujours de provoquer une déperdition du secret – où il y a cession de formules écrites, le grimoire est étalé sur le coussin après avoir été aussi passé au-dessus de l’encens.”¹⁷

The rite signals that the student has obtained “the right to use the *ilmu* of his master and the line of magicians through which it has passed.”¹⁸ After this rite a magician could also seek further knowledge from other practitioners. In the manuscripts there are some references to the granting of a licence to practise or *ijāza* (Malay: *ijazah*). The author of BMKMR No. 9 (Penyengat, 1911; cat. 4), Khadijah Terung, notes that in order to obtain magical knowledge a person must study with a teacher and receive an *ijāza* from him (see further discussion

below). Similarly, Amran Kasimin reports that an informant in Selangor whom he had interviewed in 2002 explained that a person is not permitted to make a talisman (*tangkal*) unless he had studied under a teacher who has granted him an *ijāza*.¹⁹

Unfortunately, unlike the Batak *pustaka* manuscripts which often give the chains of transmission,²⁰ Malay manuscripts do not usually contain similar information. Thankfully there are a few examples whereby the copyist is explicit as to where the material was obtained. For instance, in the colophon of a *Faal Quran* from Melaka, dated 1913 (SOAS MS 40328; cat. 93), a school teacher writes that he had copied the manuscript from a book belonging to his father (who was a also school teacher).²¹ More commonly however individuals are thanked for specific items within the texts. Khadijah Terung writes that she had obtained one of her spells from someone in Penang (see below). We also know that manuscripts were lent: BMKMR EAP153/13/32 (probably Palembang, nineteenth century; cat. 5), contains a note asking whoever was borrowing the manuscript to return it to its owner as soon as possible.²² The borrower could therefore make copies of part or even the whole work for their own use.

Manuscripts as Inheritance and Gifts

A magic and divination manuscript may be inherited. For instance one of the most famous Kelantan royal magicians in recent times, the late Nik Abdul Rahman bin Haji Nik Dir (also known as Pak Nik Man, b. 1906, royal magician 1961 – d. 1988), was known to have kept a manuscript that belonged to his grandfather, who was also a magician.²³ One manuscript that was bestowed from a teacher to a student is PNM MS 1948 (probably Terengganu, 1877–78; cat. 45) which contains divinatory techniques such as auspicious and inauspicious times (including the *Ketika Lima* and the *Rejang*) as well

16 This ceremony is described in Werner 1986, pp. 19–20; also see Werner 2002, p. 16.

17 Cuisinier 1936, p. 11. This may be translated as: “In the cases where there is a transfer of written secret formulas – but this is rare because writing is always a risk of causing the loss of secrecy – the grimoire is spread on the pillow after having been passed over the incense.” Many thanks to Francois Tainturier for his help with the English translation.

18 Endicott 1970, p. 14.

19 Amran 2009, pp. 179–180.

20 Voorhoeve 1975, pp. 45–48.

21 See Appendix.

22 See Appendix.

23 Salleh [n.d.], p. 8.

as texts on onomancy and bibliomancy. Although the manuscript is dated 1877–78, on the upper cover is a note dated some fifty years later (1928–29) saying that it was being given as an *ijāza*.²⁴ In another example, a compilation of auspicious and inauspicious times, PNM MS 2121 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, 1932; cat. 54) has a note on the front page that says that it was “presented as a gift” (“*dihadiahkan*”) to be kept by the recipient.²⁵

Additionally, within some manuscripts we find additional notes written in different hands and inks, indicating that it had multiple owners. There are other indications that the manuscripts were used for a long time after they were first compiled. For example, PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47) contains a note describing a birth in 1913, almost twenty years after the date of the colophon.²⁶

Orality vs. the Written Word

A key point that runs through a study of the manuscripts is the tension between orality and literacy in the learning and usage of magic and divination. It is clear that the written texts do not account for the entire corpus of a magician's knowledge, and that even topics that are preserved in the manuscripts are often incomplete. There are many instances where an illustration or chart is provided without any explanations on how it is supposed to be used. This indicates that knowledge on how they work would have been transmitted orally from a teacher or colleague to the manuscript owner. As will be seen below, in the introduction to her manuscript Khadijah Terung notes that it does not contain all of her knowledge, and that whoever wishes to learn such material must study it under the guidance of a proper teacher.

Furthermore there is an emphasis in Malay culture on the superiority of a supernatural transmission of knowledge in terms of the power of a magician. This transmission involves receiving a

‘call’ to the profession from a supernatural being or legendary personage in a dream, who will then teach the recipient how to carry out magical and divinatory practices without having to study them formally.²⁷ As a result the written text is marginalised and even thought to be humiliating. Louis Golomb reports that in Patani if a practitioner uses “any texts other than an occasional astrological or numerological chart, they are careful to keep them out of sight. The presence of such aids would suggest consciously learned rather than supernaturally revealed knowledge.”²⁸ Additionally, he notes that contact with other magicians – in terms of an exchange of knowledge and ideas – is limited to those from outside the community, or done far away from home, for fear of displaying weakness in terms of magical power and knowledge. As such, according to Golomb the magicians do not keep written texts, but instead the preferred method for dissemination of knowledge is by oral transmission or demonstration.²⁹

Yet in many cases the contents of the manuscripts are clearly copied from written sources. There are paragraphs or chapters that appear across multiple manuscripts, often with an identical choice of words, phrases and structure, with errors that can only be explained by a misreading of the text. The presence of written texts alongside a predominantly oral tradition could possibly be reconciled if we think of the former as being a supplement to the latter. Amin Sweeney argues that in an oral-oriented society, the aim of a student is to gather the teacher's knowledge intact, which is directly transmitted rather than discussed and critiqued. Writing simplifies this process, as the student now has the teacher's knowledge precisely word-for-word, and thus the written text could be seen as “an aid to the oral transmission of learning.”³⁰ In the case of magic

24 See Appendix.

25 See Appendix.

26 PNM MS 1957, fol. iv.

27 Amran 2009, p. 99. Cuisinier refers to this supernatural revelation as *tuntut* (see Cuisinier 1936, p. 3), but many other scholars use the term *tuntut* to refer to learning from a teacher.

28 Golomb 1985b, p. 465.

29 Golomb 1985b, p. 465.

30 Sweeney 1987, p. 269.

and divination, this is a plausible explanation for the presence of written texts in a field where an oral and supernatural transmission of knowledge is highly valued.

At the same time the manuscripts were probably also seen as sacred. As noted earlier, Cuisinier reports that during a magician's initiation ceremony the manuscript was passed over incense, a common Malay tradition for ritual objects. Since the words contained within them carry a great amount of power, it would be reasonable to assume that the manuscripts themselves would have been treated with reverence. Sweeney argues that in an oral-oriented society with low literacy rates, writing would have been seen as having great power and was used by oral-based magicians to enhance their position and authority. He notes that for many communities in the region such as the Batak, much of their written literature was reserved for magical and divinatory texts. Furthermore in his own research Sweeney has found that even illiterate Malay magicians have learned to write certain words in order to be used as talismans.³¹

Magicians and Art

The colophons of the manuscripts do not give any information on the individuals responsible for the diagrams and illustrations contained within, but in most cases the images were almost certainly produced by the copyists themselves, as they are usually drawn using the same ink as the text. Furthermore there is evidence of the involvement of Malay magicians in artistic production. In his 1986 study, Werner remarks that the training of an apprentice includes artistic pursuits such as making and designing kites.³² The strong ritualistic element in Malay art means that there is considerable overlap between magic and fields such as theatre, dance, woodcarving and *keris*-making. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter Six, some of the illustrations in the magic and divination manuscripts show affinities with the iconography and style of shadow play puppets, and this may relate



FIGURE 276 *Painting of the Kelantanese royal barge Pertala Indera by the woodcarver Nik Rashiddin. After Farish & Khoo 2003, p. 151.*

to the fact that many magicians and shamans are also shadow play puppeteers (*dalang*). For instance the Kelantanese royal magician, the late Nik Abdul Rahman bin Haji Nik Dir, was also a shadow play puppeteer and puppet maker.³³

Furthermore there is the possibility that the artists working on the manuscripts might have been involved in other crafts as well. The relationship between woodcarvers and silversmiths with Qur'an illumination has been briefly explored by Annabel Gallop.³⁴ The connection between manuscript painting with other forms of Malay art is not surprising as craftsmen are also expert draughtsmen, who would draw their designs directly onto paper or the raw material. They are often able to work in both two and three-dimensional media, as exemplified by the Kelantanese woodcarver Nik Rashiddin Nik Hussein (1955–2002) who has produced a number of beautiful drawings and paintings (Figure 276). The Kelantanese woodcarver Haji Wan Su bin Othman (1900–2011), who in 1997 received the Malaysian National Cultural Award (*Anugerah Seni Negara*), was also a maker of shadow play puppets as well as a boatbuilder.³⁵ All this demonstrates the

31 Sweeney 1987, pp. 108–111.

32 Werner 1986, p. 18.

33 For his biography see Salleh [n.d.] (I am grateful to the author for giving me a copy), and additional information could be found in Sweeney 1972b, pp. 17–20.

34 Gallop 2010a, p. 152.

35 Sheppard 1972, p. 46.



FIGURE 277 Drawing of Hanumān by the farmer Awang Chicha, Kelantan, c. 1930s. After Rentse 1936, pl. XIV.

fluidity of roles within the production of Malay art. In fact the magic and divination manuscripts demonstrate these linkages quite well. For instance certain body parts of the *nāga* such as its crest and tail are formed from motifs that are found in manuscript illumination as well as other media such as woodwork.

It may also be the case that many of the individuals who produced the drawings in the manuscripts were not professional craftsmen, but laypersons who had learned to do so from observation. The production of fairly sophisticated paintings by amateurs within Malay society is certainly not unusual. In 1936 Anker Rentse published a number of drawings of shadow play characters by a farmer named Awang Chicha (Figure 277), which he believes is “a good example of the spirit of artistic capability found in so many of the Kelantan Malays.”³⁶

³⁶ Rentse 1936, p. 300.

Female Magicians

A woman can equally become a magician or shaman, and the work and skills involved are essentially the same as those of men, with some female practitioners being highly celebrated within their fields. Within Malay society an important area in which women are involved is healing,³⁷ but female magicians also work in other areas such as in tin mining³⁸ and in controlling the weather.³⁹ More recently Douglas Farrer describes women taking part in the martial arts of *silat*, a tradition that involves much use of magic, and he also notes the belief that the founder of *silat* was a woman.⁴⁰ Although there does not seem to be much separation in the work between the sexes, one field in which women predominate is in assisting with childbirth. The midwife (*bidan*) would conduct a number of rituals and ceremonies to ensure the protection and wellbeing of the mother and child, and these include the use of magic spells and incantations to ensure their safety, as well as divinatory practices to ascertain the newborn baby's future.⁴¹ Some of these tools are found in a number of Malay manuscripts, as can be seen in the continuation of the early Islamic prescription of using the 3×3 *budūh* magic square as a talisman to help with childbirth.⁴² Another design commonly

³⁷ For example see Mills 1997, p. 47; Swettenham 1895, pp. 147–160; Davaraj 1980, pp. 15–24.

³⁸ Skeat 1900, pp. 262–263.

³⁹ Abisheganaden 1962; Wooden 1962; Lamah 1962; Davaraj 1980, p. 25.

⁴⁰ Farrer 2009, pp. 47, 123.

⁴¹ For Malay birth rituals and the role of the midwife, see Skeat 1895, pp. 260–263, 276–280; Skeat 1900, pp. 332–352; Wilkinson 1908, pt. 1, pp. 1–10; Fraser 1960, pp. 176–177, 193–197; Wazir 1984; Laderman 2004, pp. 822–823; Merli 2008, pp. 61–217, especially pp. 97–122.

⁴² Aswandi EAP153/3/16 (Palembang, c. 1890s; cat. 3), fol. 15v, PNM MS 3007 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late 1870s–80s; cat. 74), p. 59. The earliest mention in the Islamic tradition of this square being used for childbirth is in the *Kitāb al-mawāzīn al-ṣaghīr* (‘The Little Book of Balances’) attributed to the alchemist Jābir ibn Ḥayyān (721–815), see Cammann 1969a, pp. 189–190.

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FIGURE 278 Selusuh Fatimah.

found in the manuscripts is one called *selusuh Fatimah* ('Fāṭima's talisman for facilitating childbirth'; Figures 278, 279). According to the text, the angel Jibrā'īl gave this talisman to Fāṭima (Muḥammad's daughter) when she was giving birth to her sons Ḥasan and Ḥusain. It is to be drawn on a piece of paper and tied with white thread on the right arm of the woman giving birth:

*"Bab ini selusuh Fatimah. Tatkala beranakkan Hassan dan Hussain, Jibrail membawa azimat ini dengan firman Allah Taala. Disuratkan pada kertas, maka ikatkan pada tangan kanan dengan benang putih. Tiada sakit beranak dengan berkat Nabi Muhammad Rasulullah SAW. Inilah yang disurat."*⁴³

"[This is Fāṭima's talisman to facilitate childbirth. When she gave birth to Ḥasan and Ḥusain, Jibrā'īl brought it to her with the command of God the Exalted. Draw it on a piece of paper and tie it on the right arm with white thread. The birth will be painless with the blessings of the Messenger of God Muḥammad, blessings and peace be upon him. This is what is drawn.]"

However, while we know that women are equally likely to be magicians and shamans, examples of magic and divination texts that were composed, copied or owned by women are rare. Even without

43 IAMM 1998.1.249 (Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 11), p. 5, PNM MS 1458 (Patani or Kelantan; c. 1870s-80s; cat. 37), fol. 24r, PNM MS 2381(1) (Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century; cat. 57), side A, 10th opening, PNM MS 2812 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 69), fol. 92v. A shorter version of this text is transliterated in A. Samad 2005, p. 132.

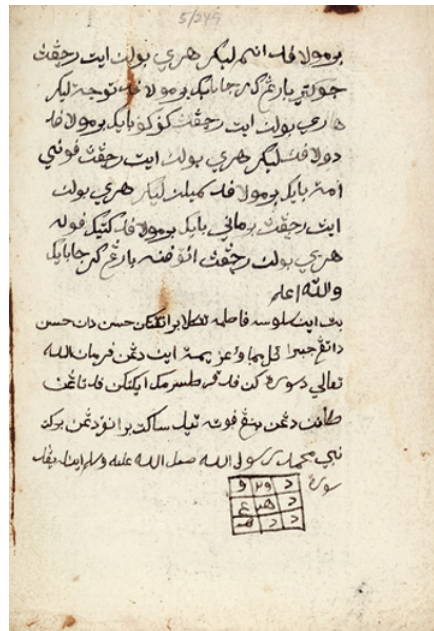


FIGURE 279 Selusuh Fatimah. Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century. IAMM 1998.1.249 (CAT. 11), p. 5. © Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, 2015.

taking into account the issue of the lack of colophons, the contents of many magic and divination manuscripts indicate that their primary users were men. Much of the love magic contained is focused on the pursuit of obtaining a woman's love, shielding a woman away from other men, or concerned with increasing a man's sexual potency and virility. Yet on the other hand a number of spells found within the manuscripts are to do with facilitating childbirth. However, the presence of such items within the manuscripts could be explained by the fact that a midwife's magical expertise is limited, and recourse is still made to the magician to deal with spirits when there are severe problems during childbirth.⁴⁴

The lack of female involvement in the production and usage of magic and divination manuscripts could be seen as an extension of the situation in

44 Gimlette 1923, p. 20; Fraser 1960, p. 176.

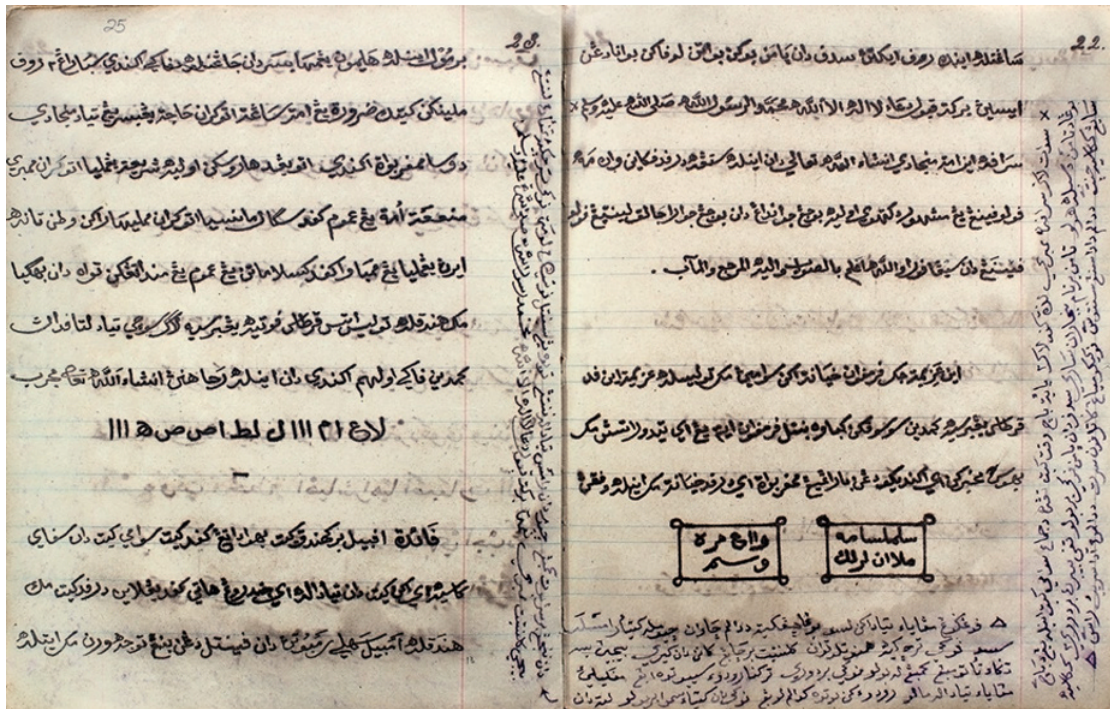


FIGURE 280 *Talismanic designs. Khadijah Terung, Perhimpunan Gunawan bagi Laki-laki dan Perempuan, Penyengat, 1911. BMKMR No. 9 (cat. 4), pp. 24–25. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.*

Malay literature in general. Although there is evidence of a literary tradition among Malay women especially among the elite, records of written compositions and manuscript ownership by women are rare.⁴⁵ One exception is the Riau Archipelago where there is evidence of a tradition of literary output by women during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴⁶ Indeed it is from Riau that there is the only clear example of a magic and divination text written by a woman. This is the manuscript discussed in Chapter Six, BMKMR No. 9 (Penyengat, 1911; cat. 4) that contains a text titled *Perhimpunan Gunawan bagi Laki-Laki dan Perempuan* (‘A Compendium of Charms for Men and Women’)

that was composed by Khadijah Terung, a female magician from the island of Penyengat. As Wendy Mukherjee notes, four-fifths of its fifty-three chapters/sections “are devoted to the means to enhance sexual relations within marriage.”⁴⁷ The bulk of the text is aimed towards women, focusing on matters such as making oneself attractive to men, ensuring the husband is obedient, increasing the husband’s sex drive and enticing him to have sexual intercourse (Figure 280).⁴⁸ There is an addenda, dated c. 1923, on how to increase sexual pleasure.⁴⁹ Jan van der Putten sees Khadijah’s work as a ‘female’ counterpart to her husband’s similarly-titled text *Perhimpunan Pengetahuan bagi Segala Laki-Laki*

45 For female participation in Malay literary culture, see Mulaika 2011, pp. 29–47.
 46 Mukherjee 1997; Andaya 2003, pp. 98–101; Ding 2006; Mulaika 2011.

47 Mukherjee 1997, p. 37.
 48 Mukherjee 1997, p. 31. For a list of topics within the text, see Ding 2006, p. 79.
 49 Putten [forthcoming], pp. 9–11.

dan Segala Perempuan ('A Compendium of Knowledge for All Men and All Women'), which discusses sexual practices from a male point of view.⁵⁰

In her text Khadijah warns that not all of her magical knowledge has been put onto paper, and that it must be learned from a qualified teacher from whom an *ijāza* or licence to practise must be received:

"... melainkan terlebih dahulu mengambil ijazah daripada guru yang mengetahui akan segala rahsia yang halus-halus dan ibarat teladan yang dalam-dalam, baharulah boleh diamalkan. Jika tidak nescaya sia-sialah penat lelah saudara aku dengan tiada faedah kerana segala rahsia itu tiada dituliskan di dalam kitab yang amat pendek dan simpan ini, melainkan didengar pada guru serta ijazah yang sah daripadanya..."⁵¹

"[... unless you have first obtained an *ijāza* from a teacher who knows all of the deep secrets and correct practices, only then can they be practised. Otherwise your efforts will go to waste, as all the secrets cannot possibly be contained in this short and brief book, it must be learned from a teacher together with a valid *ijāza* from him...]"

The identity of the teacher whom she had studied under is unknown, but it seems that Khadijah also gained knowledge from various other sources. For instance she writes that one of her spells was obtained from a woman named "Wan Mah of the island of Penang" ("*Dan inilah setengah daripada pakaian Wan Mah, Pulau Pinang*").⁵² Mukherjee observes that Khadijah's work has an "orientation towards an Arabic tradition", and also suggests that she might have obtained additional material from the various libraries in Penyengat.⁵³ Both Mukherjee and Ding Choo Ming have suggested that Khadijah's decision to write the text might have been influ-

enced by the environment of Riau at that time which provided a number of female literary role models, and that by virtue of being written by a woman and with a focus on a female audience, her work is highly unusual within the magic and divination literary tradition.⁵⁴

However there is further evidence of female involvement in the Malay written tradition of magic and divination. In a visit to Singkep in the neighbouring Lingga Archipelago in 1983, Virginia Matheson reports that a woman by the name of Tengku Sepiah, a descendant of Sultan Muhammad of Lingga (d. 1841), "explained to us how horoscope books were used".⁵⁵ Meanwhile a woman's name, 'Halimah', appears as the owner of a copy of the Singapore 1915 edition of the *Syair Raksi* ('Poem for Determining Compatibility') now in the Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau (Figure 281a).⁵⁶ Both of these examples indicate that the usage of books on magic and divination by women might be wider than realised.

On the other hand, the lack of female participation in the written tradition of magic and divination could be due to a difference between men and women in the method of learning and the transmission of magical knowledge. In his research conducted during the 1970s in the Pasemah (Besemah) region in South Sumatra, William Collins notes that the *dukun* in that area were predominantly female because women were less expected to be "good Muslims", and thus unlike men could continue to practise animistic traditions.⁵⁷ Yet there might also have been more practical reasons – in his research on Thai and Malay societies in Thailand during the 1970s, Golomb observed that women had fewer opportunities

50 Putten [forthcoming], p. 12.

51 BMKMR No. 09 (Penyengat, 1911; cat. 4), p. 2. Translation partially based on Mukherjee 1997, p. 32, also see pp. 36–37.

52 BMKMR No. 09, p. 22. Mukherjee 1997, p. 32.

53 Mukherjee 1997, pp. 32–33, 35.

54 Mukherjee 1997, p. 31, 33, 34; Ding 2006, pp. 78–82.

55 Matheson 1985, p. 9.

56 BMKMR No. C 31 (this has been digitised under the British Library Endangered Archives Programme under the number EAP153/13/40). 'Halimah' most likely refers to Raja Halimah Ahzan who is also the owner of the aforementioned *Syair Ghāyat al-munā*, for which see Chapter 6, footnote 191.

57 Collins 1979, pp. 230–232.



FIGURE 281 Syair Raksi Macam Baru (*'New Poem for Determining Compatibility'*), published by Haji Muhammad Amin, Singapore, 1915. BMKMR No. C 31. a) Inscription with the name 'Halimah'; p. 4; b) Illustration of flower pot on back cover, p. 34. Courtesy of the Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 153 / Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau.

to travel in order to study magic, and were thus less likely to be able to engage in practices that involved specialist knowledge or required lengthy studies under a teacher. As a result they instead focused more on spirit-mediumship whereby knowledge is transmitted via supernatural means. The female practitioners were thus limited in the scope of their learning, in contrast to the men who had “greater access to the teachings of established master practitioners, many of whom have had careers as Buddhist monks or Islamic scholars” and were therefore part of a wider literary tradition.⁵⁸

Gallop observes that there is evidence of female participation in the artistic aspects of manuscript production in Java, and possibly women were similarly involved in the illumination of Malay manuscripts.⁵⁹ Indeed some illustrated Malay manuscripts

were compiled and owned by women. A manual on court dance titled *Joget Gamelan*, written by Tengku Ampuan Besar Mariam (1889–1975), a princess of Pahang and Queen of Terengganu, contains numerous illustrations of dancers depicting various dance movements (Figure 282).⁶⁰ Similarly, as noted in Chapter Six, the group of three illustrated literary manuscripts from Kampung Kapor, Singapore were also copied and owned by a woman (Figures 1, 186, 187, 217). However apart from Khadijah's manuscript there is no clear evidence of female participation in the images and artistic aspects of the magic and divination manuscripts that have been studied.

The Religious Milieu and Pondok Schools

Although mention was made earlier on the difficulty in ascertaining the identities of the compilers

58 Golomb 1985a, p. 79. Golomb 1988, p. 766, footnote 2.

59 Gallop 1994, p. 43.

60 Harun & Siti Zainon 1986.



FIGURE 282 Perang Manggung dance. *Tengku Ampuan Besar Mariam*, Joget Gamelan (‘Joget Gamelan Dance’), twentieth century, vol. 3. After Harun & Siti Zainon 1986, Fig. 50.

of the magic and divination manuscripts, from the colophons there are a number of examples that can be associated with the religious milieu. PNM MS 4080 (Terengganu, 1903; cat. 82) and PNM MS 4084 (Terengganu, early twentieth century; cat. 83) were copied by an imam, while SOAS MS 25030 (Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 92) was copied for the *bilal* (muezzin) of a mosque.⁶¹ The titles of individuals connected to other manuscripts similarly show a relatively high degree of religious piety. DBP MS 23 (most likely Perak, nineteenth century; cat. 7), DBP MS 119 (Melaka, c. 1845; cat. 9) and PNM MS 1993 (probably Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 50) were copied or owned by individuals who have the title *Haji* to their name (used by someone who has undertaken the pilgrimage to Mecca), while PNM MS 1321 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth

61 The mosque is referred to as Masjid Raja (‘Royal Mosque’), which might be the Masjid Besar (‘Great Mosque’) in Kota Bharu or the Langgar Mosque which is at the royal mausoleum complex in Langgar (I am grateful to Dato’ Salleh Mohd. Akib for these suggestions).



FIGURE 283 A pondok school in Pasir Tumboh, Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Photo by the author, 2006.

century; cat. 31) was owned by a *lebai* (a title given to a particularly pious person).⁶² The colophons however do not provide information on where the manuscripts were copied (i.e. whether in private homes, the mosque, madrasa, etc.).

Other manuscripts show evidence of being used by religious scholars (‘ulama’) and students of the *pondok* or *pesantren* schools (Figure 283), a Southeast Asian form of “religious boarding schools at which male students reside and study under the direction of a teacher.”⁶³ These schools are different to the madrasa in that they are usually centred around a particular teacher (*tok guru* or *kyai*), whose reputation affects the growth (or otherwise) of his school. As such there is no fixed curriculum between one school and another. The discussions of the classes are based on classical Arabic texts as well as Malay works (the books are typically known as *kitab jawi* or *kitab kuning*). During the lessons the teacher would read aloud and explain the texts to the students who would take notes in their own copies of the texts, and after completing each text the student received an *ijāza*.⁶⁴ Being for practical

62 See Appendix.

63 Winzeler 1975, p. 92. Matheson & Hooker 1988, p. 43 however note that girls also enrol in the *pondok*.

64 For the *pondok* and *pesantren*, see amongst others Winzeler 1975; Abdullah Alwi 1980, pp. 190–196;

use, manuscripts from the *pondok* and *pesantren* schools are usually untidy, incomplete and often contain extraneous matters.⁶⁵

Although they are considered to be orthodox religious centres, magic and divination are also performed and studied in these schools. A study by Robert Winzeler on the *pondok* system in Kelantan conducted during the 1960s-70s has highlighted the fact that certain teachers were believed to be embodied with magical power and often helped the local population in areas such as healing, protection and divination.⁶⁶ In his 1990 study of the Indonesian *pesantren*, Martin van Bruinessen observed however that magic and divination were not taught by the teacher and were not part of the official curriculum. Instead, these books “occupy a central place in peer learning” as the older students “often experiment together with the various magical techniques set out in these books.”⁶⁷

Works on magic and divination are not recorded in the study on the *pondok* schools in Patani by Virginia Matheson and M.B. Hooker,⁶⁸ but it is possible that if they were not part of the official curriculum then they would not appear in the report. Nevertheless a couple of the magic and divination manuscripts studied in this book show connections to *pondok* schools in that region. For instance, IAMM 1998.1.578 (probably Patani, late nineteenth – early twentieth century; cat. 19) is primarily concerned with auspicious and inauspicious times, such as the *Ketika Lima* and the Rotating *Nāga*. There is no colophon, but attached to it is a loose sheet of paper containing miscellaneous scribbled notes, one of which mentions a *tuan guru* (teacher) named “al-Haji Wan Ahmad, *pondok* Bermin, Jambu, Patani, Jerim”, next to a calligraphic bird.⁶⁹ This is most likely a reference to

the well-known Malay religious scholar Haji Wan Muhammad bin Haji Wan Idris Bermin al-Fatani (also known as Tok Bermin; b. Kampung Jambu, Patani, 1873 – d. Bermin, 1957),⁷⁰ suggesting that the user of the manuscript had attended his school.

PNM MS 2228 (probably Perlis, 1933; cat. 55) is similarly focused on auspicious and inauspicious times (Figure 42). In the colophon the copyist makes a reference to “his teacher” Abdul Kadir bin Mustafa al-Fatani, another well-known Malay religious scholar from Patani (also known as Tok Bendang Daya II; c. 1818–95).⁷¹ Unfortunately part of the colophon is missing so it is difficult to determine the exact relationship between this manuscript and Abdul Kadir, but it is possible that the copyist had attended the *pondok* school run by him. Meanwhile the copyist of DBP MS 119 (Melaka, c. 1845; cat. 9), Haji Abdul Rauf bin Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman, was mostly likely the father of Haji Ahmad (1856–1928), the first mufti of Melaka and the founder of a mosque there. Abdul Rauf himself was apparently a well-known member of the ‘ulama’ in Melaka.⁷²

What is noteworthy about these manuscripts that were copied and owned by the religious milieu is that they contain figural images, which counters the widespread perception of an ‘Islamic prohibition’ of depicting living beings (as discussed in Chapter One). DBP MS 119 (Melaka, c. 1845; cat. 9) contains drawings of spirits (Figure 72) while IAMM 1998.1.578 (probably Patani, late nineteenth – early twentieth century; cat. 19) has illustrations of a *nāga* (Figure 113) and the calligraphic bird mentioned above. SOAS MS

Matheson & Hooker 1988; Bruinessen 1990; Bruinessen 1994; Mohammad Redzuan 1998.

65 Proudfoot & Hooker 1996, pp. 62–63.

66 Winzeler 1975, pp. 98–99.

67 Bruinessen 1990, p. 262.

68 Matheson & Hooker 1988.

69 See Appendix.

70 Wan Mohd. Shaghir 2006c, <http://ulama-nusantara.blogspot.com/2006/11/tok-bermin-al-fathani-cergas-ceramat.html>, last accessed 16 May 2010.

71 See Appendix. For Abdul Kadir and his writings, see Wan Mohd. Shaghir 2006a, <http://ulama-nusantara.blogspot.com/2006/11/syeikh-abdul-qadir-al-fathani-tok.html>, last accessed 24 May 2010. A diagram of his family tree can be found in Matheson & Hooker 1988, p. 28.

72 Tok Pakeh Temenggong 2011, <http://tokpakehtemenggong.blogspot.co.uk/p/mufti-haji-ahmad-melaka.html>, last accessed 9 January 2015; Tahiraro4 [n.d.], <http://abrm-semabok.tripod.com>, last accessed 9 January 2015.



FIGURE 284 Two human effigies. Kelantan, nineteenth century. SOAS MS 25030 (cat. 92), fols. 15v-16r. Courtesy of SOAS.

25030 (Kelantan, nineteenth century, cat. 92) is especially interesting as among its illustrations are effigies used to harm other people, and some of the methods in which these images are employed are also particularly obscene. For instance, the manuscript gives two examples in which the human effigies are made by drawing them on the ground (“*dibuat bangun orang itu dari tanah*”) (Figure 284). The purpose of these images is for defence rather than attack, in order to stop others from causing us harm. According to the first method, while defecating, the user draws the figure of the intended victim on the ground using his big toe. He then stands on the shoulders of the image and defecates onto its chest and urinates into its mouth, while reciting, “*Aku berak di atas dada orang itu, aku kencing di dalam mulut orang itu*” (“I defecate on the person’s chest, I urinate in the person’s mouth”). This is to be done for seven days. The other method is to draw the image (*rupa*) using the toe on the ground in the fork of a road. The user then turns around on the image’s navel with the heel, and says, “*Aku pusarkan hati orang itu, si anu itu*” (“I twist that person’s heart, that so-and-

so”). Using a stick, he then stabs the heart and beats the image while reciting an incantation. This is to be done three times a day.⁷³

A specific mention must also be made of the illustrated notebook of Tuanku Imam Bonjol (1772–1864), a Minangkabau religious scholar who led the local resistance against the Dutch.⁷⁴ It mainly consists of mystical, religious and devotional works, but at the same time it also includes talismanic designs and divinatory techniques (Figure 285). As it is from the Minangkabau region of West Sumatra the manuscript is beyond the purview of this book, but nevertheless it demonstrates the use of texts and images of magic and divination among the religious milieu in other parts of Southeast Asia.

In her study of illuminated Qur’ans from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula, Gallop has observed that the decorations in manuscripts that

73 SOAS MS 25030, fols. 16r-v. Also see Gimlette 1923, pp. 105–106.

74 Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 1751; see Wieringa 1998, pp. 111–114.



FIGURE 285 *Talismanic designs of the Seal of Prophethood (Mohor Nabuwat). Notebook of Tuanku Imam Bonjol, West Sumatra, late eighteenth – early nineteenth century. Leiden University Library, Ms. Cod. Or. 1751, fols. 6v-62r. Copyright of Leiden University Library.*

were copied in the milieu of *pondok* schools are less sophisticated in contrast to those produced for the royal courts.⁷⁵ Indeed the simple decorations found in many of the magic and divination manuscripts studied in this book are indicative that they were the result of individual efforts for private use. Nevertheless there are also more lavish examples that were produced under royal patronage, although it must be noted that some of the manuscripts that were copied within court circles are not necessarily beautifully illuminated either.

Royal Patrons and State Magicians

Within Malay society the most important patrons of Malay manuscripts were the sultans and the

royal families. The importance of magic and divination in society means that there is an interest in them even in the upper echelons of power, and a number of manuscripts containing these topics once belonged to the local rulers. During the late eighteenth century the crown-prince of Palembang had commissioned the translation of an Arabic work on divination,⁷⁶ and indeed the contents of the Palembang royal library during the early nineteenth century included further works on similar topics.⁷⁷ In her investigation of the book and manuscript collection of the descendants of the Sultan of Lingga, Matheson reports that they included “both handwritten and printed

75 Gallop 2010a; also see Gallop 2012, p. 90.

76 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Malay d.1. Published in Greentree & Nicholson 1910, between columns 4 & 5; also see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 104.

77 Iskandar 1986, pp. 67, 69, 74.



FIGURE 286 A jinni named *Awang Kasim*. Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87. Nik Mohamed collection, side A, fourth opening. Courtesy of Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh.

books of prayers (spells) and horoscopes.”⁷⁸ Texts on magic and divination also appear in the manuscript collection of other Islamic Southeast Asian monarchies, such as that of Boné in South Sulawesi.⁷⁹

An important illustrated text on magic and divination that was commissioned by a member of Malay royalty is the aforementioned manuscript in the Nik Mohamed collection (Kelantan or Patani, between 1838–87; cat. 23), which was produced for a *Raja Muda* (Heir Apparent or Heir Presumptive) of Kelantan and is now in a private collection in Malaysia. This manuscript is untitled but it contains various spells and divinatory methods to ensure the success of an animal in the sport of bull fighting (Figure 287), buffalo fighting and ram fighting, as well as the practice of trapping spotted-doves



FIGURE 287 A bull fight in front of the palace *Istana Balai Besar*, Kota Bharu. Kelantan, c. 1908. After Moore 2004, p. 138, Fig. 4.

(*burung tekukur*).⁸⁰ As discussed in the preceding chapters the texts here are accompanied by numerous diagrams and illustrations of spirits, animals and humans, many of which have been enhanced with gold and silver (for instance Figure 286).

The manuscript does not have a colophon, and thus there is no information on the date and place of copying or the name of the copyist. However the text does provide the names of those from whom the spells and divinatory techniques were obtained. These individuals belonged to a variety of professions, including the royal cow-herdsman of Patani (*gembala lembu Raja Patani*), a magician (*bomoh*), members of the Islamic religious milieu (*khatib*, *haji* and *lebai*) and a Buddhist monk (*tokca*).⁸¹ As for the patron, he is named in the manuscript as the “*Raja Muda* of Kelantan who lives in the district of Kampung Penambang.”⁸² There were a number of individuals who held the title of *Raja Muda* in Kelantan during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but the mention of Penambang (a district near the capital, Kota Bharu) points towards Tengku Bongsu Bachok bin Tengku Temenggung Long Tan (d. 1887), younger brother of Sultan Muhammad II (r. 1838–86). Tengku Bongsu, also known as ‘*Raja*

78 Matheson 1985, p. 8.

79 Tol 1993, p. 629.

80 For bull-fighting in Kelantan, see Brown 1928; Hill 1952, pp. 20–26.

81 See Nik Mohamed 1990, pp. 122–123; Nik Mohamed 1992, pp. 86–87.

82 Nik Mohamed collection, side B, 36th opening.

Muda Penambang, held this title from 1838 until his death at the Istana Raja Muda in Kampung Penambang in 1887.⁸³

He was certainly very wealthy and powerful due to a close relationship with his brother the sultan. A British report in 1846 notes that Tengku Bongsu (referred to here as Raja Kechil) seemed to have acted as a ‘gate-keeper’ to the sultan in negotiations, and that he “is reported to be rich”.⁸⁴ As such Tengku Bongsu certainly would have had the means, resources and interest to gather the resources necessary for the compilation of this manuscript.

Research on the books that were in Tengku Bongsu’s library has yet to be conducted,⁸⁵ but besides this manuscript there is another one that might have also been from his collection. This is a copy of the *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* (‘The Tale of the Wise Parrot’; dated Friday 17 Rabi’ II 1296 AH / 11 April 1879 AD), in which the introductory paragraph makes reference to an “*Engku Muda*”, which probably refers to Tengku Bongsu as he was the *Raja Muda* when the manuscript was completed.⁸⁶ It is also worth noting that the manuscript is stamped with a seal bearing the words “*Raja Muda Kelantan*”.⁸⁷ Nevertheless this seal is dated 1308 AH / 1890–91 AD, and therefore refers to the succeeding *Raja Muda*, Tengku Long (later Sultan) Mansur (*Raja Muda* 1887–90). This would suggest that Tengku Bongsu’s library passed onto Mansur (who was his brother’s

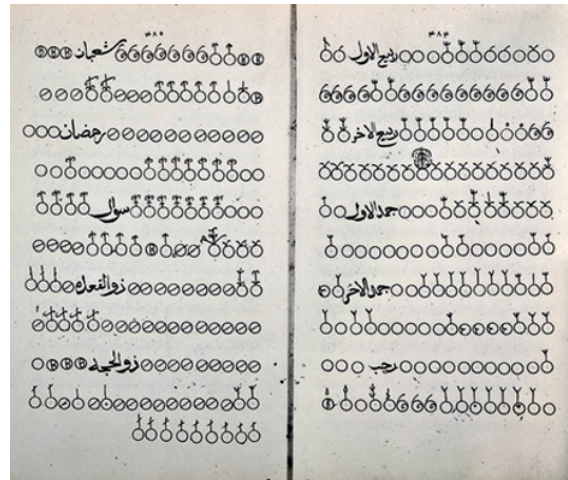


FIGURE 288 *Weather chart in a kitab tib, Kelantan, dated 1871–72 (facsimile). DBP MS 33 (ex-cat.), pp. 484–485. Courtesy of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.*

grandson) upon his death. A further study of the library’s manuscript collections could help to shed light on the transmission of books within the Malay royal families.

If Tengku Bongsu was indeed the patron of these two manuscripts, then it demonstrates that he had interests in the fields of both literature and sports. It also shows that the topics of magic and divination were widely accepted within the Malay court circles, and indeed another manuscript that contained these matters belonged to the Sultan of Kelantan himself. A *kitab tib* (‘medical book’) dated Shawwāl 1288 AH / December 1871–January 1872 AD deals with prescriptions for curing illnesses and contains a number of talismanic designs as well as a weather chart (Figure 288).⁸⁸ There is a note stating that the manuscript belongs to the “Great King himself” (“*Raja Besar sendiri*”), i.e. Tengku Bongsu’s brother, Sultan Muhammad II.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the name of the copyist, Muhammad Saleh ibn Ahmad Penambang, implies a possible connection

83 For details on Tengku Bongsu’s life and his genealogy, see Buyers 2000–08a, <http://www.royalark.net/Malaysia/kelant4.htm>, last accessed 12 July 2012.

84 Journal 1854, pp. 178–179; also see Skinner 1965, pp. 68–69.

85 For manuscript collections held by other members of the Kelantan royal family, aristocracy and other prominent individuals, see Nik Mohamed 1990, pp. 75–81.

86 Kota Bharu, Muzium Negeri Kelantan, MZ(KN)/P/91. This manuscript was later owned by Tengku Zainab binti Tengku Muhammad Petra (1917–92), consort of Sultan Yahya Petra and granddaughter of Sultan Muhammad IV.

87 Gallop 2007, p. 143. An undated copy of the *Hikayat Bakhtiar* also contains this seal; Kota Bharu, Muzium Negeri Kelantan, MZ(KN)IP/92 (a facsimile copy is in the DBP AS MS 8).

88 DBP MS 33, colophon on p. 488. The text has been transliterated by A. Samad 2005.

89 DBP MS 33, p. viii.



FIGURE 289 *The palace Istana Balai Besar, built by Sultan Muhammad 11 of Kelantan, Kota Bharu. Photo by the author, 2006.*

between this manuscript with Tengku Bongsu and the manuscript in the Nik Mohamed collection. Although the scribal practices at the Kelantan royal court during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have not been fully investigated, the colophon of Sultan Muhammad 11's *kitab tib* informs us that it was copied at the ruler's palace (*kota raja*), strongly suggesting that other royal manuscripts such as that in the Nik Mohamed collection were also produced within the palace compound (Figure 289).

While the Kelantan royal family was active in copying and collecting manuscripts, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was the royal house of neighbouring Terengganu that was one of most important centres for manuscript production in the region. Up to the early twentieth century manuscripts of Qur'ans and other texts produced by this court were of the highest quality with fine calligraphy, ornate illumination involving a profuse use of gold, and leather bindings, with outputs from the Terengganu atelier being found distributed across Islamic Southeast Asia.⁹⁰ Unfortunately documentation regarding the practice of manuscript production at this court has been lost, but it almost certainly comprised a well-organised



FIGURE 290 *Sultan Zainal Abidin III of Terengganu, c. 1900. After Moore 2004, p. 137, Fig. 5.*

atelier, possibly also involving craftsmen of other media such as metalwork and woodwork.⁹¹

Before its decline during the early to mid-twentieth century, one of the final flourishes of the Terengganu manuscript production industry was during the reign of Sultan Zainal Abidin III (b. 1866, r. 1881 – d. 1918; Figure 290). He was a politically astute and deeply religious man, with close connections to 'ulama' such as Syekh Ahmad al-Fatani.⁹² According to Hugh Clifford, he was also a strong supporter of arts and crafts, which included "silks, cotton fabrics, native weapons, and metal and wood work."⁹³ A list of books and manuscripts from his library has yet to be compiled, but his collection appears to have included Western books. In an account of his visit to Terengganu in 1899, Skeat

91 Gallop 2010a, pp. 151–152; Gallop 2012, p. 89.

92 For Sultan Zainal Abidin III, see Buyers 2000–08b, <http://www.royalark.net/Malaysia/treng11.htm>, last accessed 29 June 2012; Wan Mohd. Shaghair 2005b, <http://ulama.blogspot.co.uk/2005/03/sultan-zainal-abidin-iii.html>, last accessed 29 June 2012.

93 Clifford 1897, p. 27. Skeat 1953, p. 122 gives a similar impression.

90 Gallop 2005d, Gallop 2010a; Gallop 2012.



FIGURE 291 Weather chart. Terengganu, 1903. PNM MS 4080 (cat. 82), pp. 53–54. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

reports that the sultan showed him a copy of Rev J. G. Wood's *Illustrated Natural History* (1853), "in which we were able to pick out illustrations of some of the beasts that we had been discussing."⁹⁴

Among the copyists who worked for the Terengganu royal court during this time was the aforementioned mosque imam, Haji Abdul Rahman ibn Encik Long of Masjid Seberang Bukit Tumbuh, located a few miles outside the state capital of Kuala Terengganu. In 1901 he produced a copy of the *Tuhfat al-nafis* ('The Precious Gift') for Zainal Abidin III in 1901.⁹⁵ As noted earlier Abdul Rahman had also copied two works on divination: PNM MS 4080 (1903; cat. 82; Figures 35, 237, 291) and PNM MS 4084 (early twentieth century; cat. 83; Figure 147).⁹⁶

94 Skeat 1953, p. 121.

95 For this manuscript see Chapter Six, footnote 139.

96 PNM MS 4084 does not have a colophon but according to Muhammad Pauzi Abdul Latif, Imam Haji Abdul Rahman was its copyist, pers. comm. 7 July 2012.

Although there are no indications within the two manuscripts as to whom they were copied for, it is possible that both were similarly commissioned by the sultan. If so, then they demonstrate the ruler's interests in matters of divination.⁹⁷

Additionally these manuscripts provide us with some information about the scriptorium at the Terengganu royal court. Firstly it shows that the copyists employed included members of the religious milieu, most likely as they were literate. Secondly, judging by the inks and colours used in PNM MS 4080, it is almost certain that Haji Abdul Rahman was also responsible for the illumination in this manuscript and that of the *Tuhfat al-nafis* as well, which as discussed in the previous chapter contain many characteristic of the Terengganu illumination style. However they are not as lavish as the Qur'ans which were most probably the

97 Note however that PNM MS 4080 is simply bound in tree-bark, unlike the *Tuhfat* which is bound in leather.

product of a dedicated atelier of craftsmen. If this is correct, then it demonstrates the somewhat lesser regard for secular works (which are illuminated by the copyists themselves) when compared to the Qur'an which, as the Word of God, deserves the most extravagant decoration possible.⁹⁸

Apart from these examples, there are other manuscripts on magic and divination that might have belonged to Malay sultans based on internal evidence. RAS Raffles Malay 74 (probably Selangor, c. 1775; cat. 88) mentions a son being born in 1785 to Sultan Ibahraman/Ibaraman(?), possibly referring to Sultan Ibrahim Syah of Selangor (b. c. 1736, r. 1778 – d. 1826), while in DBP MS 82 (Patani, c. 1857; cat. 8) there is a note that a son named Tengku Abdullah was born in 1857 to the Raja of Patani (who is as yet unidentified).⁹⁹ Although it is difficult to tell if these manuscripts once belonged to the rulers themselves, the addition of these notes implies that the copyists were on intimate terms with members of the royal households. Additionally, the names of the copyists and owners of a number of other manuscripts indicate that they were of royal blood, with titles such as *Tengku* and *Raja*.¹⁰⁰ However it must be noted that there is evidence that other Malay texts were considered to be more important than those on magic and divination among the aristocracy. In his 1954 survey of Malay manuscripts kept in private collections, Josselin de Jong remarks that a member of the Terengganu royal family was unwilling to part with a manuscript that contained his genealogy, but freely lent or gifted his medical and magic and divination manuscripts.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless one group within the royal circles who would certainly have valued the manuscripts were the royal or state magicians (*pawang/bomoh diraja*), who would have had a more practical use for the texts. For instance the royal magician of Kelantan, the late Nik Abdul Rahman bin Haji Nik Dir, was known to have kept a number of manuscripts on magic and divination, including one that he had inherited from his grandfather.¹⁰² Elsewhere, an important example of a manuscript that was owned by a royal magician is the aforementioned SOAS MS 25027(2), datable to the 1830s–40s, which according to Richard Winstedt had once belonged to a *Sultan Muda* of Perak (cat. 91; Figures 65, 220, 292).¹⁰³ During the nineteenth century, the *Sultan Muda*¹⁰⁴ was a member of the royal family who was given the post of state magician and was in charge of the spiritual and supernatural issues of the kingdom.¹⁰⁵ Yet considering the importance of the office, the general appearance of this manuscript is rather plain and there is nothing to distinguish it from those produced by the general public. The layout is fairly untidy, the calligraphy is simple, and the diagrams are drawn rather carelessly. The manuscript also shows signs of heavy use, indicating that it was referred to often. This indicates that to the royal magicians, manuscripts on magic and divination were primarily for practical usage, although this manuscript does contain some minor illumination. The royal magician whom I had interviewed in 2010 however said that he does not have any written texts.¹⁰⁶

98 Gallop 2005c, pp. 174–176.

99 See Appendix. For Sultan Ibrahim, see Buyong 1971, pp. 22–44; Buyers 2000–09, <http://www.royalark.net/Malaysia/selangor.htm>, last accessed 12 July 2012.

100 PNM MS 2228 (probably Perlis, 1933; cat. 55), PNM MS 2459 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 59). In other manuscripts the individuals do not have royal titles but their fathers do, such as in PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47) and PNM MS 2121 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, 1932; cat. 54). See Appendix.

101 Josselin de Jong 1983, p. 27.

102 Salleh [n.d.], p. 8. One of his manuscripts has been transliterated in Werner 2002.

103 As he notes on the upper cover of the manuscript, see Appendix.

104 Note that this is different to the *Raja Muda* who is the Heir Apparent.

105 See Wilkinson 1908, pt. 1, pp. 51–58; Winstedt 1927, pp. 346–347; Winstedt 1929; Wilkinson 1932b, pp. 93–97; Winstedt 1961, pp. 9–10, 68–71, 158. For the current institution of the Perak state magician, see Khoo 1992, pp. 88–89.

106 Pers. comm. 22 July 2010.

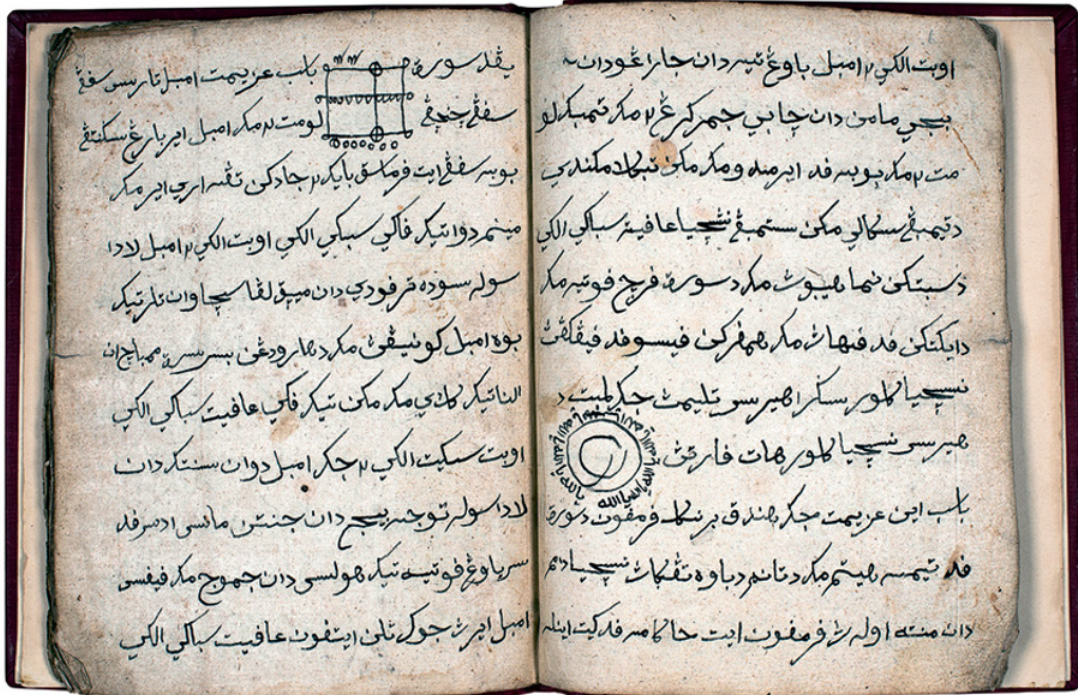


FIGURE 292 *Talismanic designs. Perak, c. 1830s–40s. SOAS MS 25027(2) (cat. 91), pp. 6–7.*
Courtesy of SOAS.

Commissions by European Colonial Collectors

As discussed in Chapter Three, European colonial administrators, scholars and missionaries collected Malay texts in order to study Malay culture. These manuscripts were either purchased, received as gifts or captured as war booty. However quite often the owners of the manuscripts did not want to let them go, and therefore the European collectors had to have copies made of the contents. While the manuscripts of the Dutch merchant Pieter Willemsz van Elbinck were copied by the man himself, European collectors of Malay texts often employed local copyists to make copies of the manuscripts they wanted. This practice was already underway by the early eighteenth century through the efforts of the Dutch missionary, François Valentijn (1666 – 1727) who was in the service of the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) in Ambon and Java.¹⁰⁷

Valentijn's collection however does not appear to contain works on magic and divination.

A number of features characterise Malay manuscripts that were copied for these European collectors. Firstly, they are usually still in a very clean and good condition. The contents are typically laid out neatly, with the texts written out clearly and illustrations executed in a careful manner. All this points to the fact that they were commissioned for personal libraries and not used in day-to-day practices. Secondly, there is often a detailed colophon that gives the place and date of copying together with the name of the copyist and patron, making it easier to identify the provenance, date and background of a manuscript. Even when colophons are lacking, the accession records and historical data (such as reports and diaries) can help in tracing the history behind the manuscript. Furthermore, by analysing groups of manuscripts that were commissioned by a single patron, some information behind the workings of the Malay scriptoria can be gleaned. The large-scale collecting by Europeans during the nineteenth century however

107 For Valentijn and his manuscript collection, see Braginsky 2010.

also changed the social aspects of manuscript production and usage. As Proudfoot notes, they were now commodities, and the lending and copying of manuscripts changed from being governed by personal relationships to commercial ones.¹⁰⁸

The European colonial collectors often seemed more interested in the texts rather than the art contained or the manuscripts themselves. Stamford Raffles and William Maxwell for example did not appear to have written on the artistic aspects of the manuscripts they collected, even though some of them contain a large number of illustrations or beautifully executed illumination. Yet on the other hand, the literary manuscripts that were commissioned by European patrons are often more likely to be illuminated when compared to those produced within a local Malay milieu,¹⁰⁹ suggesting that they played some influence in the production of the art. In terms of magic and divination manuscripts there are a few illustrated copies that were made for European patrons, but unfortunately the original Malay manuscripts are no longer extant, and therefore we do not know how far these copies resemble the originals in terms of text and art. Thus it is difficult to answer the question as to whether European patronage had also influenced the adoption of a Western style of painting within the manuscripts, and as noted in the discussion on this issue in Chapter Six the situation is still unclear.

As mentioned in Chapter Three Raffles had amassed a great number of Malay and Javanese manuscripts for which he either obtained the originals or had copies made. He first arrived in 1805 on the island of Penang to take up the post of Assistant-Secretary, yet only a few months later he was already collecting Malay manuscripts and employing six copyists to copy them, including “four Malays, one native of Mecca, and one native of the Coromandel coast” (their number was later

reduced to four).¹¹⁰ When he arrived in Melaka in 1810 to plan the British takeover of Java, Raffles also employed new copyists including Munsyi Abdullah, who in his autobiography writes that they worked on various texts including letters, literary works and poetry, and that four or five people were tasked with copying manuscripts alone.¹¹¹ Raffles’ manuscript copying activities were not only restricted to the Malay peninsula but also extended to Java where he was Lieutenant-Governor between 1811 and 1816, during which time he commissioned copies of many Malay and Javanese manuscripts.

One of Raffles’ copyists in Penang and Melaka on whom we have some information is Munsyi Ibrahim (Ibrahim ibn Hakim Long Fakir Kandu, b. 1780).¹¹² By piecing together the documents that he had written and copied, Gallop has managed to provide us with an idea of the work copyists such as Ibrahim undertook. These included writing and delivering official letters for Raffles and the East India Company (EIC), making copies of the letters for the archives, annotating and filing incoming letters, and copying Malay manuscripts.¹¹³ There is also evidence that manuscripts copied by Raffles’ copyists such as Ibrahim were given to other British scholars, most notably his close friend, John Leyden (1775–1811).¹¹⁴ When travelling Raffles also took one or two of his copyists including

108 Proudfoot 2002, pp. 124–126. For the prices of buying and copying manuscripts, see Proudfoot 2003, pp. 42–43.

109 Gallop 2005c, p. 176.

110 Boulger 1897, p. 43.

111 Hill 1970, pp. 74–77; Kassim 2004, pp. 62–63, 65.

112 For his life, see Skinner 1976.

113 Gallop 1994, pp. 157–159.

114 For instance a copy of the *Hikayat Parang Puting* (‘The Tale of the Masterless Knife’), Penang, dated 1810, now in London, British Library, MSS Malay D. 3, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 126; Gallop 1991, p. 179; Gallop 1994, p. 153, figs. 186–187. Ibrahim also took a copy of the *Sejarah Melayu* (‘Malay Annals’) to Leyden in Calcutta and helped him with its translation, see Matheson Hooker & Hooker 2001, p. 33. For Leyden’s biography and his relationship with Raffles, see Boulger 1897, pp. 36–42, 131–133; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. xxv–xxvi; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 124; Matheson Hooker & Hooker 2001.

Ibrahim to places such as Melaka, Java and Calcutta.¹¹⁵

Another copyist who worked at the Raffles scriptorium was Muhammad Kasim, to whom a number of Malay manuscripts can be attributed. These include RAS Raffles Malay 34 dated 15 Şafar 1221 AH / 4 May 1806 AD (most likely Penang; cat. 87), which although titled *Undang-undang Negeri Mengkasar dan Bugis* ('The Laws of the Countries of Mengkasar [Makassar] and Bugis') includes a large amount of texts on divinatory techniques and talismans as well as a full-page drawing of the Rotating *Nāga* (Figure 258a). A month afterwards Kasim had completed another manuscript for Raffles, the *Hikayat Budak Miskin* ('The Tale of the Poor Boy'), dated Wednesday 8 Rabī' II 1221 AH / 25 June 1806 AD.¹¹⁶ Apart from these he also worked on two manuscripts in the British Library that were acquired by Leyden: *Hikayat Perang Pandawa Jaya* ('The Tale of the Victorious Pāṇḍavas', dated Monday 22 Sha'bān 1219 AH / 26 November 1804 AD)¹¹⁷ and *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah* ('The Tale of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya', dated Monday, 29 Jumādā II 1220 AH / 23 September 1805 AD).¹¹⁸ However the dates of these two manuscripts are too early for them to have been commissioned by either Raffles or Leyden,¹¹⁹ which indicates that Kasim was already an established copyist when Raffles employed him. The *Hikayat Perang Pandawa Jaya* in fact has an owner's mark of an individual named Tunku P-a-n.¹²⁰ A comparison with the manuscripts that Muhammad Kasim copied for Raffles highlights some differences in

the production between local and European patrons. The *Hikayat Perang Pandawa Jaya* is copied on what may be Chinese paper, and has a binding with a floral-patterned cloth cover and doublures that are made of plaited screw-pine leaves (*pandan*, *Pandanus amaryllifolius* or *mengkuang*, *Pandanus tectorius*). On the other hand, RAS Raffles Malay 34 which he copied for Raffles is on European paper and has a Western-style leather binding.

As for Maxwell, who was the British Assistant Resident of Perak in 1878–82, the organisation of his scriptorium differs in a few respects from that of Raffles. Not much is known about his copyists apart from one individual named Raja Haji Yahya bin Raja Haji Daud. A manuscript that was copied by him for Maxwell (RAS Maxwell 106, Perak, 1879; cat. 86; Figures 64, 238) was done at the instigation of a member of the royal family, Raja (later Sultan) Idris of Perak (b. 1849, r. 1887–1916), which suggests that he was part of the royal scriptorium. As for Maxwell's other copyists, information on them can only be gleaned from the colophons of the manuscripts. The copyist of RAS Maxwell 15, dated 1882 and copied in Taiping, Perak (cat. 84), is named in the colophon as Uda Muhammad Hashim ibn al-Marhum Khatib Usuluddin Perak.¹²¹ He also copied two other manuscripts for Maxwell – RAS Maxwell 107, a collection of spells for elephants (*Surat Mantera Gajah*) dated 1879,¹²² and RAS Maxwell 24, a compilation of texts on lucky and unlucky fowls, gunnery, and history, dated 1882.¹²³ The colophons of these three manuscripts indicate that Hashim was based primarily in the Taiping/Larut area during Maxwell's tenure in Perak. His name does not appear in earlier or later manuscripts, suggesting that he only worked for Maxwell in Perak and not in Maxwell's other postings such as Penang or Selangor. Furthermore, from the colophons of Maxwell's other manuscripts we know that he employed a number of other copyists during his time in Perak. These included

115 Skinner 1976, pp. 203–205.

116 London, British Library, MSS Malay D. 6 (B), see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 126.

117 London, British Library, MSS Malay B. 12, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 124–125; Gallop 1991, pp. 178–179, fig. 4; Gallop 1994, p. 96, fig. 102.

118 London, British Library, MSS Malay B. 6, see Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 123; Gallop 1991, pp. 177–178; fig. 3; Gallop & Arps 1991, p. 71, cat. 41; Gallop 2009, fig. 7.

119 Who arrived in Penang on 19 September 1805 and 22 October 1805 respectively, Boulger 1897, pp. 21, 39.

120 Gallop 1991, p. 177.

121 See Appendix. For this manuscript see Farouk 2013, vol. 1, 384–411, vol. 2: 220–230 (cat. 86); Farouk 2015b.

122 Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 150.

123 Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 146.

not only those living in the local area but also individuals who were based in Singapore and Penang. Their employment was probably less of an obstacle for Maxwell than it would have been during Raffles' time due to the improvement in transportation and communication. It is unknown if the copyists who worked for Maxwell were employed by the colonial government or worked for him on a freelance basis, but when Maxwell was transferred from Perak to Singapore and Selangor, he did not use the same copyists but recruited new ones. Additionally, like Raffles there was a close working relationship between the British colonial scholar-administrators of this period in their collecting activities of Malay manuscripts. For instance, RAS Maxwell 53 (Perak, 1879; cat. 85; Figure 146) was copied for Maxwell from a manuscript that belonged to his colleague, Hugh Low, the then Resident of Perak (1877–89).

Printed Books on Magic and Divination during the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

Malay texts on magic and divination also appear in the printed form, and they are either general compilations on a wide range of topics, or booklets on a specific subject (such as on dream interpretation).

The printing of the Malay language began in Europe and Southeast Asia during the seventeenth century.¹²⁴ The primary focus of these printed works was on producing vocabularies and phrase books for the use of merchants, as well as Malay translations of Christian works such as the Bible for the use of missionaries. Proselytisation continued to be the main focus of printing in Malay during the early nineteenth century, when printing presses were set up by British, Dutch and American missionaries in the region.¹²⁵ By



FIGURE 293 Saat Musytari (*The Times of Jupiter*), Penyengat, 1856. Leiden University Library, Plano 53 F 1: 28. Copyright of Leiden University Library.

the 1840s–50s, a number of Muslims in Southeast Asia (of both Malay and Arab descent) began to participate in the printing process by acquiring lithographic presses.¹²⁶ One of the places where a lithograph press was established is the island of Penyengat in the Riau Archipelago, and what appears to be the first item printed there is the table of planetary hours, demonstrating a demand for such works within Malay society. Dated Monday, 11 Rajab 1272 AH / 17 March 1856 AD it was titled *Saat Musytari* (*The Times of Jupiter*) and printed on a single sheet of paper measuring 42 × 33.5 cm (Figure 293). According to the colophon the table was obtained from (*“asalnya saat ini keturunan daripada”*) a certain Tengku Said Muhammad Zain al-Qudsi.¹²⁷

124 For the history of Malay printing, see Gallop 1990; Bruinessen 1990, pp. 230–234; Proudfoot 1993, pp. 1–96; for Riau see Putten 1997.

125 For a history of Malay printing by Europeans, see Gallop 1990, pp. 85–87; Proudfoot 1993, pp. 9–20.

126 A short description of the lithographic process is given in Putten 1997, p. 171, note 1.

127 Proudfoot 1993, p. 449; also Putten 1997, p. 721. A copy of this is in Leiden University Library, Plano 53 F 1: 28 (listed as *‘Sa’at Moesjtari’*).

In Singapore, by the 1860s printing was no longer restricted to the government and missionaries, enabling indigenous publishers and printers to begin establishing themselves there. By the late nineteenth century Singapore became the leading centre for Malay books in the region. Works on poetry (*syair*) were the most popular, including those on dream interpretation known as *Syair Takbir Mimpi* ('Poem on Dream Interpretation'), which was published a minimum of eight times by at least four Singaporean Muslim publishers between c. 1887 and 1909.¹²⁸ Another divinatory technique that appeared in the printed form was onomancy, known as the *Syair Raksi* ('Poem for Determining Compatibility'), that was published four times between c. 1888 and 1915.¹²⁹ The 1915 edition which was printed by Maṭba'a Haji Muhammad Amin in Singapore contains an illustration of a flowering plant in a pot on its back cover (Figure 281b).¹³⁰ A copy of the *Syair Rejang* ('Poem of the *Rejang*') was printed in 1893,¹³¹ while the second version of the *Faal Quran* of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (with a wheel diagram as well as a compass rose) was printed by Maṭba'a al-Aḥmadiyya in Singapore (no date given).¹³²

However Singapore's hegemony in Malay publishing and printing began to decline during the early twentieth century, due to the flooding-in of Malay publications from the Middle East and India. In fact Malay printing in these regions had already taken place a number of decades earlier.

By the second half of the nineteenth century Malay books for religious study were being printed in Cairo, Istanbul and Mecca, being either printed forms of existing texts or new works by Southeast Asian 'ulama'.¹³³ One of these is the most famous Malay work on magic and divination, the *Tajul Muluk* ('The Royal Crown', full title *Tāj al-mulūk al-muraṣṣa' bi anwā' al-durar wa-l-jawāhir al-manzūmāt*, 'The Royal Crown Inlaid with Many Kinds of Pearls and Jewels Set in a Pattern').¹³⁴ It was composed sometime between 1888 and 1891 by a member of the 'ulama' from Aceh by the name of Syeikh Ismail ibn Abdul Mutalib al-Asyi, a student of a well-known Patani religious scholar Syeikh Ahmad al-Fatani.¹³⁵ The *Tajul Muluk* is a compendium of a number of topics such as the Islamic calendrical system, divination (including sortilege, dream interpretation, physiognomy), medicine and house-building. Jelani Harun has found that the section on physiognomy is taken from Book VII of the *Bustān al-salāṭīn* ('The Garden of Kings') by Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī,¹³⁶ and the book furthermore contains a work by another Acehnese religious scholar, Syeikh Abbas Kutakarang (d. 1895), titled *Sirāj al-ḡalām* ('Lamp in the Darkness') which covers information on the Islamic calendar as well as astrological tables such as the planetary hours.¹³⁷ The *Tajul Muluk* also includes religious

128 Proudfoot 1993, pp. 500–502, also see p. 38. One of these publications is discussed in Overbeck 1929.

129 Proudfoot 1993, pp. 440–441. One of these is discussed in Overbeck 1923.

130 A copy of this is in the Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau (BMKMR), No. C 31 (see footnote 56 in this chapter), while another copy is in the private collection of Tengku Muhammad Saleh in Lingga, Riau (digitised under the British Library Endangered Archives Project under the number EAP153/11/23).

131 Proudfoot 1993, p. 443.

132 There is a copy of this in the Museum Dinas Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Kota Tanjungpinang, Tanjungpinang, Bintan, 094.(3).03.2007. It has been digitised under the British Library Endangered Archives Project under the number EAP153/2/9.

133 Gallop 1990, p. 97.

134 For this book see Hashim 2006. A transliteration of the *Tajul Muluk* can be found on the website grapesseeker 2010, <http://grapesseeker.livejournal.com/683.html>, last accessed 4 April 2011.

135 For whom see Wan Mohd. Shaghir 2006b, <http://ulama-nusantara.blogspot.com/2006/11/syeikh-ismail-al-asyi-ketua-mahasiswa.html>, last accessed 4 April 2008; also see Heer 2010, p. 36, <http://faculty.washington.edu/heer/handlist.pdf>, last accessed 9 May 2010.

136 Jelani 2006, p. 231.

137 Full title *Sirāj al-ḡalām fī ma'rifat al-sa'd wa al-naḥs fī al-shuhūr wa al-ayyām* ('Lamp in the darkness in the knowledge of good and ill fortune according to the months and days'). For Syeikh Abbas Kutakarang see Snouck Hurgronje 1906, vol. 1, pp. 183–187; Wan Mohd. Shaghir 2007, <http://ulama-nusantara-baru.blogspot.com/2007/10/syeikh-abbas-kutakarang-ahli-astrologi.html>, last accessed 4 April 2008.



FIGURE 295 Front cover of the *Maṭḥa'a Bin Halābī* edition of the *Tajul Muluk* ("The Royal Crown") by *Syeikh Ismail al-Asyī, Pattani, c. 2000s*. Author's own collection.

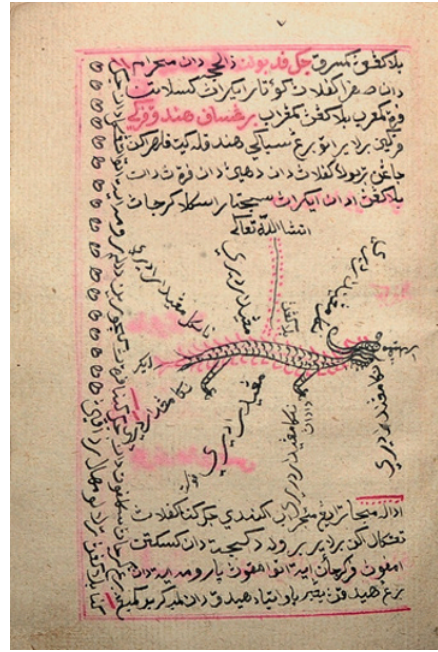


FIGURE 296 *The Rotating Nāga*. Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth - early twentieth century. PNM MS 1199 (cat. 29), fol. 7r. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

Although a manuscript of the *Tajul Muluk* has yet to be found, elements from the book appear in a number of manuscripts that date to after the work was first published. For instance, PNM MS 3429 (cat. 80) was copied in Singapore in 1907, i.e. 16 years after the first printing of the *Tajul Muluk*. Here, there are a number of sections (*fasal*) that are very similar to the printed work but arranged differently, and it includes many other topics that are not found within the *Tajul Muluk*. The disparities between the printed text and the manuscript demonstrate their differing nature. If the sections in PNM MS 3429 were indeed copied from the *Tajul Muluk*, then it appears that the compiler was only interested in certain portions of the book, and that he felt the need to rearrange the contents to follow his own system and methodology. Thus, while printed books can be reproduced quickly and reach a large audience, they are fixed in terms of their content. Instead, manuscripts can be customised and better reflect the owner's

training and usage, which would account for the continuation of the manuscript copying process even after printed books became widely available.

In PNM MS 1957 (probably Kelantan, 1894; cat. 47) there are notes written in the margin in which the copyist comments on the differences of the *Rotating Nāga* text between the manuscript and the *Tajul Muluk* (Figure 252).¹⁴⁴ Meanwhile in PNM MS 1199 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth – early twentieth century; cat. 29) the text on the *Rotating Nāga* is identical to that of the *Tajul Muluk* (apart from a few missing words; Figure 296).¹⁴⁵ However, here a major difference between the two is that the manuscript also includes an illustration of the *nāga*, whereas the printed copies of the *Tajul Muluk* that I have consulted so far do not. It is unclear if there are

144 PNM MS 1957, fol. 5r.

145 PNM MS 1199, fols. 6v-7r.

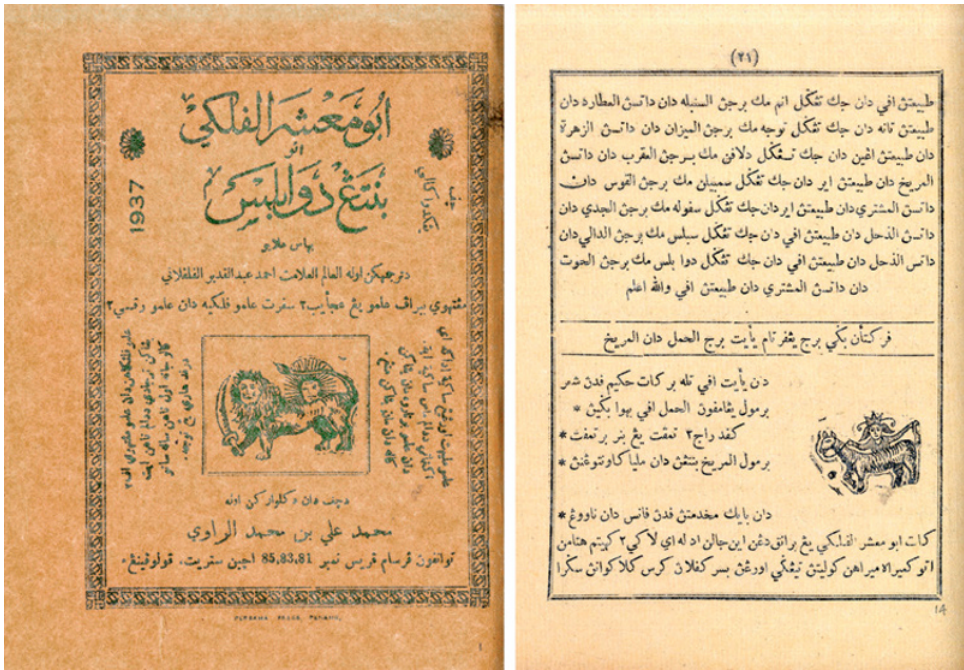


FIGURE 297 Ahmad Abdul Kadir al-Falfalani, *Kitab Bintang Dua Belas* ('Book on the Twelve Stars', published by Persama Press, Penang, 1937 (first published 1910). PNM 133.5 ABU MN, p. 21. a) Cover; b) Aries, p. 21. Courtesy of Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.

illustrations of the *nāga* in the 1891 Cairene and 1893 Meccan editions of the book, or in the source text that Syeikh Ismail had copied from. Yet in his discussion on house-building in the Maluku islands, Dirk Teljeur publishes an image of the Rotating *Nāga* taken from a Ternate manuscript that has the title *Tajul Muluk*.¹⁴⁶ Whether this is the same work as Syeikh Ismail's text however is still to be determined.

Nevertheless there are other Malay printed books on magic and divination that do contain illustrations. A prominent example is the *Kitab Bintang Dua Belas* ('Book on the Twelve Stars'; Figure 297), a Malay translation by Ahmad Abdul Kadir al-Falfalani of a work said to be by the great astrologer Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī (787–886).¹⁴⁷ This book has yet to

be investigated in detail, but it seems to have been based on an Arabic text on astrology and geomancy entitled *Abū Ma'shar al-falakī al-kabūr, al-muḥaqqiq al-mudaqqiq al-yūnānī al-faylasūf al-shahīr* ('Abū Ma'shar the Great Astronomer, the Meticulous Greek Investigator and Famous Philosopher') which has been attributed (perhaps wrongly) to Abū Ma'shar.¹⁴⁸ A copy of this Arabic work with similar illustrations was printed in Singapore by Sulaiman Mar'ie, titled simply *Abū Ma'shar al-falakī* ('Abū Ma'shar the Astronomer'; Figure 298), where it is accompanied by a short tract by Abū Ḥayy Allāh al-Marzūqī titled *Al-ṭālī' al-ḥadsī* ('The Ascendant/

146 Teljeur 1990, fig. 16. A photocopy was donated by Teljeur to the KITLV Library, Leiden, D Or. 516.

147 Ahmad 1937. For the book see Abdul Rahman 2006; Bazrul 2006b. For Abū Ma'shar, see Millás "Abū

Ma'shar...". Abū Ma'shar is also attributed as the author of the astrological texts in the *Kitāb al-bulhān* ('Book of Wonderment'), fourteenth - fifteenth century, now in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodl. Or. 133, see Carboni 1988.

148 Savage-Smith & Smith 2004, pp. 217–218.



FIGURE 298 *Abū Ma’shar al-Balkhī and Abū Ḥayy Allāh al-Marzūqī*, [n.d.], *Abū Ma’shar al-falakī, wa yalihi al-tālī’ al-ḥadsī* (*‘Abū Ma’shar the Astronomer and the Ascendant/Rising Star’*), published by Sulaiman Mar’ie, Singapore [n.d.]. SOAS V.4.a.69.2/249414, pp. 10–11. Photo by the author.

Rising Star’).¹⁴⁹ The Malay *Kitab Bintang Dua Belas* by Ahmad Abdul Kadir al-Falfalani includes illustrations of the zodiacal signs that are similar to those found in the printed copies of this Arabic work. While the connections between both Arabic and Malay versions of the text require further research, this form of artistic influence found in illustrated Malay printed books could also be seen in other texts. For instance the *Syair Indra Sebaḥa* (*‘Poem of the Court of Indra’*) is an adaptation of a popular Urdu musical play, and Gallop has shown that the illustrations in a Malay lithographed edition published in Singapore in 1891 are connected to those found in an undated Bombay edition of the original Urdu text known as *Indar Sabhā* (*‘The Court of Indra’*).¹⁵⁰

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Malay books were also being printed in

Bombay, probably not only for readers in Southeast Asia but also for the diaspora in the Middle East.¹⁵¹ Among the works published there is the *Syair Takbir Mimpi* (*‘Poem on Dream Interpretation’*), printed by Maṭṭba’ a Muḥammadi, dated 1358 AH / 1939–40 AD.¹⁵² In addition there is a Malay version of a treatise on magic entitled *Kitāb al-mujarrabāt* (*‘Book on That Which Has Been Tried and Tested’*) by the Egyptian scholar Aḥmad ibn ‘Umar al-Dayrabī’ (1651–1738)¹⁵³ which was translated by Muhammad Yūsuf bin Ahmad al-Kalantani, more famously known as Tok Kenali (in the book he gives his name as Awang Kenali; c. 1868–1933; Figure 299).¹⁵⁴ Tok Kenali, a student of Syeikh Ahmad al-Fatani, was a prominent Kelantanese

149 *Abū Ma’shar & al-Marzūqī* [n.d.]; SOAS V.4.a.69.2/249414.
 150 Gallop 1990, p. 108.

151 For the printing of Malay works in Bombay, see Gallop 1990, pp. 103–104; Proudfoot 1994.
 152 Proudfoot 1994, p. 18.
 153 For al-Dayrabī’, see Kruk 2005, p. 50, footnote 9.
 154 Muhammad Yūsuf [n.d.].



FIGURE 299 Tok Kenali, c. 1920s. After Roff 1974, frontispiece.

religious scholar who in 1915 was one of the leading figures in the setting up of the *Majlis Ugama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan* (Council for the Islamic Religion and Malay Customs of Kelantan).¹⁵⁵ His book was first published in Bombay in 1895 (Figure 300).¹⁵⁶

Another founding member of this council was Nik Mahmud bin Haji Nik Ismail Qadhi (d. 1964; Figure 301), another student of Syeikh Ahmad al-Fatani who later became the Chief Minister of Kelantan (*Dato' Perdana Menteri Paduka Raja*, 1921–45).¹⁵⁷ In 1944 Nik Mahmud composed a book on magic and divination entitled *Pati Rahsia* ('The

Secret Essence'), and in 1946 he sought for permission from the council for its publication which was then granted. The *Pati Rahsia* shows not only how a book on this subject was composed by a leading member of the 'ulama', but also how the publication of such works had the support of the Islamic governing bodies until fairly recent times. It is still in print, and in 2010 I obtained a copy at a bookshop in Kota Bharu, Kelantan (Figure 302).¹⁵⁸ The book contains a number of talismanic designs primarily in the form of magic squares. The involvement of members of the 'ulama' in the publication of the above works demonstrates how esoteric works on magic and divination were not only acceptable, but also seen as another type of knowledge that was felt worthy of distribution.

The printing of Malay texts on magic and divination could also be found among the *peranakan* Chinese community, whose book publishing industry was mainly concentrated in Singapore.¹⁵⁹ There a book on physiognomy, *Kitab Ilmu Nasib* ('Book of Fortune'), was printed by the Kim Yew Hean Press in 1897.¹⁶⁰ The content, derived from the Malay and Islamic traditions, was edited by a Chinese Muslim.¹⁶¹

The advances of printing changed the way Malay texts were produced and consumed. Manuscripts were rare, often closely guarded, and producing copies was an investment in time and effort. Printing, however, resulted in a massive amount of texts being made available to the public. The impact of this was that Malay texts became democratised, as the appearance of works in the printed form provided an easier access to previously restricted material that was once only spread through very specific lines of transmission. In short, texts had become

155 For Tok Kenali, see Abdullah al-Qari 1974; Wan Mohd. Shaghir 2006d, <http://ulama.blogspot.co.uk/2006/10/tok-kenali.html>, last accessed 29 August 2012.

156 See Winstedt 1961, p. 93; Proudfoot 1993, pp. 353–354; Proudfoot 1994, p. 11.

157 Wan Mohd. Shaghir 2005a, <http://ulama.blogspot.com/2005/03/datuk-nik-mahmud.html>, last accessed 11 March 2011.

158 Nik Mahmud [n.d.].

159 For a discussion of book publishing by the *peranakan* Chinese (Chinese settlers who speak Malay as a mother tongue), see Gallop 1990, p. 110; Proudfoot 1993, pp. 20–27.

160 Gallop 1990, pp. 110, 121; Proudfoot 1993, p. 269, also see pp. 21–22.

161 Proudfoot 1993, p. 22.



FIGURE 300 Muhammad Yusuf bin Ahmad al-Kalantani (Awang Kenali), *Kitāb al-mujarrabāt* ('Book on That Which Has Been Tried and Tested'), published by Shaykh Faḏlullāh / C. P. Press, Bombay, 1890s? SOAS ER2055 / 40398, pp. 30–31. Courtesy of SOAS.



FIGURE 301 Nik Mahmud, 1920s. After *Gambar* 1989, p. 135.

commodities.¹⁶² With regard to magic and divination texts, as mentioned earlier the manuscripts were sourced via personal transmission and individually compiled, as a result of which no two copies are exactly the same. With the advent of printing however, works like the *Tajul Muluk* spread and became the benchmark for the study of Malay magic and divination and are now seen as authoritative works. Parallels could be seen in other genres of Malay literature that were traditionally compiled based on individual needs. In his study of Arabic-Malay dictionaries, Michael Laffan has noted how printing transformed them from being private notes compiled by students to help them understand Arabic texts on the religious sciences, to becoming works that catered to the wider audience of a mass market.¹⁶³ Thus

162 The changes brought by printing are discussed in much greater detail in Proudfoot 1993, pp. 49–53.

163 Laffan 2003, pp. 371, 383. Incidentally, one of the magic and divination manuscripts has an Arabic-Malay dictionary within it (PNM MS 2750, Aceh, 1895–96; cat. 65).



FIGURE 302 Front cover of Nik Mahmud's *Pati Rahsia* (*The Secret Essence*), published by *Ketereh Jaya*, Kota Bharu, c. 2000s. Author's own collection.

whereas previously magical knowledge was passed to a student from a teacher (who can either be a human being or a supernatural entity), prospective magicians could now learn their trade independently from books. Fraser, writing in 1960, reports that in Rusembilan, Patani, magical knowledge “in present times may be acquired through reading.”¹⁶⁴ It is doubtful however whether such magicians would have been very effective. As mentioned earlier, texts on magic and divination are often obscure and incomplete, and a teacher is needed in order to impart the necessary knowledge and to explain the texts. Additionally, there is also the Malay belief that the power of a magician is far superior when there is a supernatural transmission of knowledge.

Nevertheless works like the *Tajul Muluk* remain popular, but in spite of this the tradition of compiling magic and divination manuscripts still continues today. This is due to how such works are used, i.e. as a personal notebook of the magician.

Magic and Divination Manuscripts and Books during the Late Twentieth and Early Twenty-First Centuries

The tradition of publishing books on magic and divination still continues at present, although mostly in romanised Malay (Rumi) rather than the Arabic-based Jawi script. In Indonesia there are a number of books known collectively as *mujarobat* (Arabic: *mujarrabāt*, ‘that which has been tried and tested’) which contain a mixture of prayers and talismanic designs for healing, protection and wealth. These books are still popular and widely available, and van Bruinessen notes that they “may be of greater influence in shaping popular religious attitudes than the more serious works studied in the pesantren.”¹⁶⁵ In 2007 I purchased a couple of these books (written in Rumi script) from Tanjungpinang, Bintan, both of which were published in Surabaya, Java.¹⁶⁶ Such books often have esoteric or mysterious covers. One of the books that I had bought features an illustration of a *keris* with a *nāga*-headed hilt (Figure 303), while the other has a painting of a man in Arab garb holding his hands out in supplication behind a collage of items that are typically used in magical rituals (Figure 304).

The concern that there are elements contained within Malay magic that is deemed un-Islamic has led to an increase in magical practices that are more ‘Islamic’ orientated. Much of this is in the form of alternative medicine, especially in the treatment of illnesses caused by spirits and sorcery and is usually referred to as ‘Islamic healing’ (*perubatan/pengubatan Islam*).¹⁶⁷ Many books have been published in Malaysia recently on this subject, such as one by Azahari Ibrahim titled *Ubat-ubatan Tradisional Melayu, Doa-doa Penawar Penyakit, Rahsia Kebaikan Surah al Fatihah* (‘Malay Traditional Medicine, Supplications for Healing,

165 Bruinessen 1990, p. 262.

166 Ms. Mariyah [n.d.]; Labib 2003.

167 For similar developments in Java, see Woodward 2011, pp. 108–109.

164 Fraser 1960, p. 172.

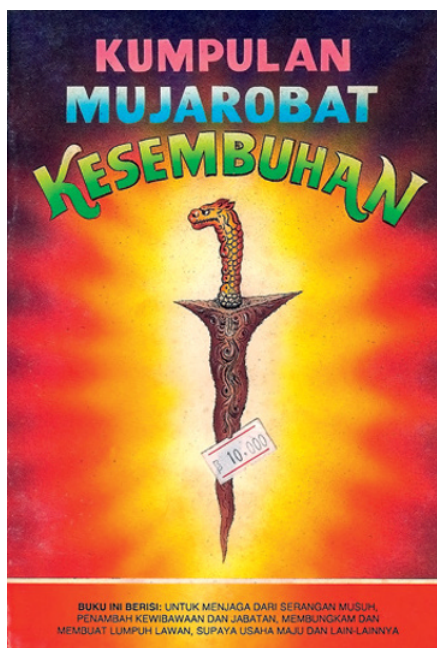


FIGURE 303 *Front cover of Ustadz Ms. Mariyah, Kumpulan Mujarobat Kesembuhan ('A Compilation of Mujarrabāt for Healing'), published by Mahkota, Surabaya, c. 2000s. Author's own collection.*

the Secret Benefits of the Sura *al-Fātīḥa*) which I obtained from a bookshop in Kuala Lumpur in 2010.¹⁶⁸ The treatments prescribed are based on Qur'anic verses and herbal medicine, and photographs of the plants and spices used are featured on the cover as well as inside the book (Figure 305).¹⁶⁹ There are no talismanic designs, yet despite a heavy Islamic focus there are still many similarities with earlier practices. For instance, the book discusses the practice of burying metal plaques underneath house-posts for protection and wellbeing. However, while the nineteenth - early twentieth century manuscripts prescribe inscribing them with magic squares (Figure 232), this book suggests the use of a Qur'anic verse instead

168 Azahari 2009.

169 Kruk 2005, pp. 50–51 notes a similar trend in recent years of books containing treatment largely based on Qur'anic verses being published and sold in the Middle East.

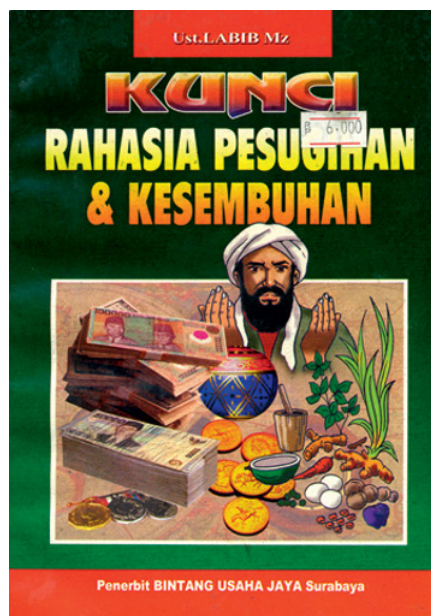


FIGURE 304 *Front cover of Ust. Labib Mz, Kunci Rahasia Pesugihan & Kesembuhan ('Key to the Secrets of Wealth & Healing'), published by Bintang Usaha Jaya, Surabaya, 2003. Author's own collection.*

(sura 1:4, which reads: “Master of the Day of Judgement”).¹⁷⁰

In Malaysia, Islamic healing is nowadays carried out by large, well-run organisations, with Darussyifa' (founded by Dato' Dr. Haron Din in 1998) being one of the most well-known with branches all across the country.¹⁷¹ According to a Darussyifa'-trained practitioner in Kuala Lumpur whom I had interviewed, this form of Islamic-based healing differs from that of traditional Malay practices in that the power of God is invoked rather than of spirits, and that it employs Qur'anic verses, supplications (*du'ā'*) and items that are deemed 'halal' (usually plant-based materials and holy water) (Figure 306). In contrast things usually associated with traditional magic such as benzoin, yellow cloth and the *keris* are prohibited, as well as the use of talismans, talismanic designs and

170 Azahari 2009, pp. 167–168.

171 Their website is <http://www.darussyifa.org/>, last accessed 4 March 2015.



FIGURE 305 Front cover of Azahari Ibrahim, *Ubat-ubatan Tradisional Melayu, Doa-doa Penawar Penyakit, Rahsia Kebaikan Surah al-Fatihah* (*Malay Traditional Medicine, Supplications for Healing, the Secret Benefits of the Sura al-Fātiha*), published by Darul Nu'man, Kuala Lumpur, 2009. Author's own collection.

figural images. Instead only text is employed, with a preference for the oral form as it has to be recited in order to be effective and not merely written down.¹⁷² Nevertheless, despite a focus on a more 'Islamic' form of healing, the treatments meted out by the Darussyifa' are still tinged with a Malay element, for example in the use of local products such as coconut water.¹⁷³

The system put in place by Darussyifa' to train future practitioners is more akin to modern colleges or universities in the form of mass lectures rather than one-to-one tutoring. From the lectures the

172 Pers. comm. 23 February 2010.

173 In Malay society, coconut water is "believed to have 'cooling' properties and is thus essential for the treatment of poisoning and other ailments whose manifestations include excessive [humoral] heat", Peletz 1988, p. 149, also see p. 155, footnote 11; Peletz 1993a, p. 154.



FIGURE 306 A Darussyifa'-trained practitioner in Kelantan treating a boy. Photo by the author, 2010.

students take down notes either in the books and handouts provided or into their own personal notebooks. Another Darussyifa'-trained practitioner based in Kelantan had very kindly let me look at his notebook (in Rumi script), which contains explanations on the various types of supernatural illnesses as well as the appropriate treatment required (Figure 307). Although the method of learning and the treatments meted out are different from that of the earlier Malay tradition, it could be argued that the notebooks compiled by the Darussyifa practitioners demonstrate that the practice of compiling magic and divination manuscripts is still alive within Malay society in the twenty-first century (a manuscript is after all a handwritten book). However in keeping with the principles of an Islamic-based practice, these notebooks are unlikely to contain images.

Yet at the same time there are still magic and divination manuscripts of a more 'traditional' nature being compiled, a few of which have been published by Amran Kasimin.¹⁷⁴ They are usually in the Rumi script, with Qur'anic verses and *du'ā'*

174 Amran 2009.

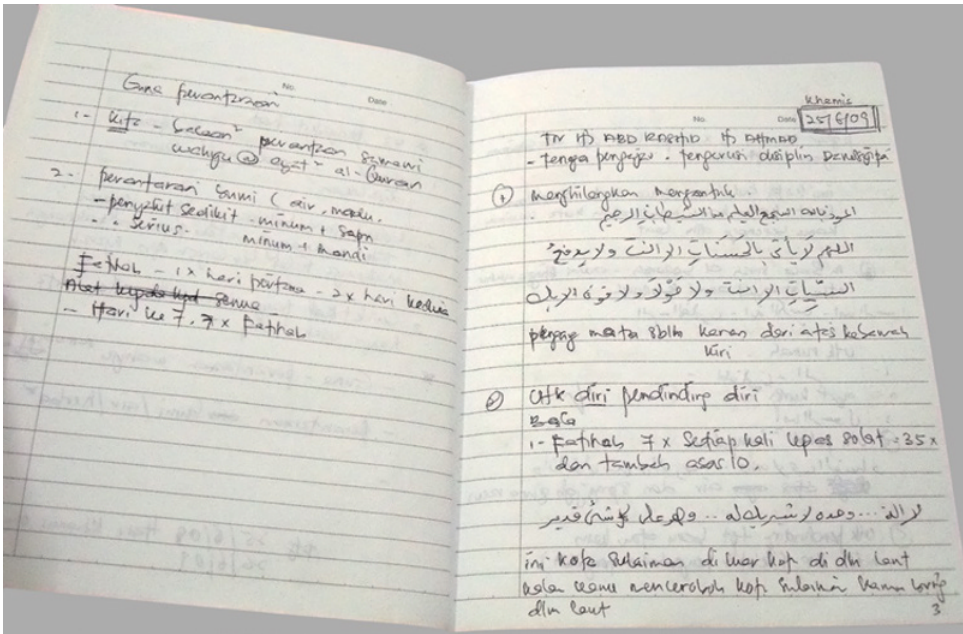


FIGURE 307 Personal notebook of a Darussyifa²-trained practitioner in Kelantan, compiled c. 2009. Photo by the author, 2010.



FIGURE 308 Drawings in a magic and divination manuscript. Negeri Sembilan, twentieth century. After Amran 2009, Fig. 4.8.

being transliterated, which Amran notes often result in the original Arabic texts being misunderstood by their users.¹⁷⁵ Some of these manuscripts contain esoteric illustrations (Figure 308).

175 Amran 2009, pp. 192, 199, 226.

Conclusion

This book has investigated a number of important issues relating to illustrated Malay magic and divination manuscripts from the late eighteenth up to the early twentieth century. Apart from highlighting examples that are unknown and are discussed here for the first time, it is hoped that this research has contributed to increasing our knowledge and understanding of the artistic and textual aspects of the Malay manuscript tradition, as well as that of the Malay magical and divinatory practices.

As laid out in the Introduction, the questions posed relate to a number of points, in particular on the type of images and texts that the manuscripts contain together with their sources, iconography, style and relationship to other media, as well as issues surrounding the production, function and consumption of the manuscripts. The preceding chapters have explored these issues using a large number of examples as well as focusing on specific manuscripts and texts. From those discussions a number of important conclusions can be drawn.

To begin with, in terms of the format and materials used, magic and divination manuscripts are not much different to Malay manuscripts of other textual genres. This can be seen for instance in the predominant use of European paper, as well as in the relative lack of documentary evidence such as colophons and seals. These aspects indicate that magic and divination are to be considered part of the wider Malay textual tradition.

With regard to the contents however, the magic and divination manuscripts differ markedly from the other textual genres in that they are idiosyncratic, with no two copies being the same. A study of the contents has highlighted the great variety of magical and divinatory techniques that are found in the manuscripts, demonstrating a rich and complex tradition. Furthermore, many of the techniques and images described within the manuscripts are shared with other societies, both

Islamic and non-Islamic, not only within Southeast Asia but also the wider world. This demonstrates that the literary and artistic tradition of Malay magic and divination did not exist in isolation but was part of an extensive and long-running transmission of ideas and knowledge between many cultures. For instance the Malay version of the Rotating *Nāga* can be seen to be part of an architectural tradition that is distributed across much of Southeast Asia, South Asia and East Asia. The spread-eagled squatting human figure has similarly been discussed in the context of an ancient and widespread iconography.

Closely related to the above point is the fact that the techniques described in the texts and their accompanying images are derived from a wide range of sources. Although tracing the history and evolution of the texts and images is still a difficult task due to the lack of early evidence, there are indications that the Malay magic and divination tradition has a long history, incorporating influences not only from an indigenous Southeast Asian tradition, but also from South Asia, China and the wider Islamic world. For instance talismanic designs such as Solomon's ring and the *angka sangga Siti Fatimah* are pre-Islamic in origin, but the *budūh* magic squares are derived from the Islamic tradition. At the same time the Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac is also the basis for a number of divinatory techniques.

Another important theme that has been highlighted is how these disparate influences co-existed alongside each other. For example, in the manuscripts images of the lion appear in both a calligraphic form that has been derived from the Islamic tradition, as well as in a fantastical version taken from local Southeast Asian iconography. At the same time, it must be emphasised that these various elements have often been reinterpreted and adapted to fit into the Malay tradition. For

instance there is a strong possibility that the *Ketika Lima* table is a local derivation of the planetary hours concept, while the *budūh* magic square is employed in indigenous house-building rituals. Additionally, the employment of stories from the *Mahābhārata* and the usage of local shadow play (*wayang*) imagery in the pictorial *fālnāma*, as well as the appearance of Chinese dragons in the South Asian-derived technique of the Rotating *Nāga*, similarly demonstrate how foreign influences have been reconstructed into a new paradigm.

A similar eclecticism is also seen in terms of the artistic styles of the images contained in the manuscripts. In general, illustrations of living beings, objects and buildings are highly stylised, schematic and two-dimensional with a lack of depth and shading, a common trait found in Malay manuscript painting of other textual genres such as literary and devotional works. It is as yet difficult to pinpoint specific regional styles or schools, although a few connections have been uncovered, such as between two manuscripts containing a similarly-shaped diagram of the *Angka Tiga*. Additionally the close relationship between the images in the magic and divination manuscripts with those of other media and art forms is another common theme that runs throughout. Apart from the use of motifs commonly found in Malay woodwork, metalwork and textiles, within the manuscripts there is also a prominence of iconography and artistic styles associated with shadow play puppets and classical dance-dramas. All these connections demonstrate a shared artistic vocabulary within the Malay visual arts. The introduction of Western media has further enhanced the Malay artistic tradition by bringing in new techniques and styles, resulting in figures that are more naturalistic and lifelike.

This melting-pot approach demonstrates the adaptability of the Malay magic and divination tradition of mixing numerous influences. At the same time it also highlights a tension between pre-Islamic and Islamic elements, which is a common theme not only in the field of magic and divination but also in other aspects of Malay culture such as the theatre. It must be remembered that when

these manuscripts were produced, the Malays (and much of maritime Southeast Asia) have been Muslim for hundreds of years. Furthermore, the format and contents of early Malay manuscripts show that the Islamic magic and divination tradition has been a major part of Malay society since at least the sixteenth century. Yet there is still a strong maintenance of pre-Islamic traditions. An 'Islamic prohibition' of depicting living beings is often cited to explain the lack of figural images in Malay art, but the depiction of humans, spirits and animals in the manuscripts demonstrate the continuing importance of these figures in Malay culture.

This leads to a consideration of the deeper meaning behind the images, i.e. why certain motifs and iconographic conventions were particularly prominent and continued to be so. This is an issue that is important in the study of Malay visual art in general, but it is often difficult to investigate as in many cases the meanings are not always clear and often forgotten. Nevertheless we can attempt to uncover the significance behind some of the images contained in the magic and divination manuscripts. For instance it could be argued that representations of power and rank lie behind the iconographic conventions used in the depiction of anthropomorphic beings, such as in the squatting spread-eagled posture and the employment of royal costumes. Additionally the ubiquity of illustrations of birds and the *nāga* serpent reflects the Southeast Asian cosmology of the upperworld and underworld. Apart from images of living beings, the importance of pre-Islamic beliefs and concepts is also reflected in the illustrations of objects, decorative motifs and diagrams. The importance of the *keris* in Malay society is demonstrated by the many drawings aimed to help the reader understand their *pamor* designs, while the appearance of the eight-petalled lotus in manuscript illumination shows a continuing regard for this motif as the Hindu-Buddhist symbol of purity and beauty. The use of tables and compass roses helps to visualise the placement of supernatural beings in the Malay cosmology across both time and space.

Yet despite the prominence of pre-Islamic beliefs, at the same time it must be emphasised that the character of many of the images and texts contained in the manuscripts is still strongly Islamic. This is not only in terms of incorporating magical and divinatory techniques from other parts of the Islamic world, but also by the continuous appeal to God and His intercessors, as well as in the prominent use of the Qur'an in various incantations, talismanic designs and divinatory diagrams. This tension between the notion of what is Islamic and non-Islamic also leads to a discussion of the individuals behind the production and consumption of the manuscripts. While it may be assumed that the compilers, owners and users of the manuscripts are professional magicians (*bomoh/pawang*), as shown in the preceding chapters members of the Islamic religious milieu also use and own such items. As we have seen, there are a number of examples whereby the owners and compilers of the manuscripts include muezzins of mosques and scholars of religious schools. It is important also to emphasise that the contents of the books compiled or owned by these individuals sometimes include material that are destructive and would seem at odds with Islamic teachings, such as with the use of effigies in harming others. All of this shows an acceptance (or at least tolerance) amongst the Islamic milieu up to the early twentieth century of practices that are normally considered 'non-Islamic'. This is in direct contrast to the situation among Malay society within the present-day, where there is an increase in 'Islamic' healing which discards and prohibits elements and practices traditionally connected with Malay magic and divination such as the use of images.

The manuscripts are therefore not only an important resource for a study of Malay visual art and magical and divinatory practices, but also for an understanding of the production and consumption of Malay manuscripts in general. The private and personal nature of their contents means that the manuscripts are different to Malay manuscripts of other textual genres such as poetry, literary and devotional works which are often

recited aloud in public. Yet at the same time the widespread usage of magic and divination means that the manuscripts are found among all levels of Malay society, enabling a comparative study of their usage between various social groups. There is not a great deal of difference between manuscripts compiled and owned by magicians, members of the religious milieu and royalty, although those belonging to the latter group are occasionally more heavily illuminated. However there are two groups in which there are distinct differences in manuscript production and consumption. There is a lack of authorship and ownership by women, which could be explained by lower levels of literacy and greater restrictions in access to wider sources of knowledge, although it is very likely that female involvement is underplayed among the surviving evidence. Another group of manuscripts in which there is a clear demarcation of patronage and usage includes those that were commissioned by European patrons for scientific interest. These are typically denoted by their usually clean and neat condition.

Studies on specific manuscripts also help provide an insight into the social aspects of Malay society during this period. An investigation into the contents of a manuscript helps to reveal the types of issues that were of significance to its owner and user, and research conducted on selected examples has found that the main concerns are usually to do with healing and personal relationships. Additionally, a study into the history of a manuscript also sheds light on the interpersonal relationships between the individuals involved in the production and consumption of the manuscript.

These interpersonal relationships that lie behind the production of manuscripts however were changed with the advent of printing, when the texts became more commercialised and had a wider diffusion. Yet the survival of the magic and divination manuscript tradition in current times demonstrates the continuing role they play in the relationship between a teacher and student. It also highlights the fact that although the tradition is an

ancient one, it has been able to adapt to a new environment and is constantly evolving.

In conclusion, illustrated Malay magic and divination manuscripts offer a rich source of knowledge on the Malay artistic and intellectual history prior to the early twentieth century. They are an integral part of the study of Malay culture

especially with regard to the visual arts, the manuscript tradition, and magic and divination practices within an interdisciplinary arena that includes studies on texts and images as well as the cultural contacts between the Malay area with the rest of Southeast Asia and the wider world.

Catalogue

This Appendix contains details of the ninety-six illustrated Malay magic and divination manuscripts that form the core of this book. This is not an exhaustive list of all Malay magic and divination manuscripts, but nevertheless constitute a good sample of the range of texts and images that are contained.

The manuscripts are listed in the alphabetical order of institutions and collections in which they are currently stored. In summary they are arranged as follows:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Aswandi | Private collection of Mr. Aswandi Syahri, Tanjungpinang, Riau |
| BMKMR | Balai Maklumat Kebudayaan Melayu Riau (Riau Malay Culture Information Centre), Penyengat, Riau |
| DBP | Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literature Institute), Kuala Lumpur |
| IAMM | Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur |
| Nik Mohamed collection | Private collection of Dato' Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd. Salleh, Kuala Lumpur |
| PNM | Pusat Manuskrip Melayu, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (Malay Manuscripts Centre, National Library of Malaysia), Kuala Lumpur |
| RAS | Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London |
| SOAS | Library of the School of Oriental & African Studies, London |
| UM | University of Malaya Library, Kuala Lumpur |

1 Aswandi N-06

A pictorial *fālnāma*, titled by the present owner as *Kitab Tamsil Manusia* ('Book on Similes Concerning Humans') (Figures 3, 29, 76, 203, 265–267)

Penyengat or Bintan, early twentieth century.

European lined exercise book, 58 folios, 21.2 × 20.3 cm, cover wrapped with Dutch newspaper *Het Nieuws van den Dag*, No. 210 dated 10 September 1912, this in turn wrapped with German publication *Die Woche: moderne illustrierte Zeitschrift*.

Digitised under the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153 as EAP153/3/6:

http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=238091;r=9758, last accessed 28 February 2015.

Literature: Aswandi 2001; Putten 2009b, p. 9.

2 Aswandi EAP153/3/15 (No Accession Number)

A compilation of divinatory techniques and talismanic designs, includes *ketika* tables, compass diagram of eight animals, divinatory counting-off method, talismanic designs, *rajamuka* wheel (Figures 40, 120, 127, 161, 175, 177)
Palembang, c. 1890

European laid paper with watermarks of (i) "GUTHRIE & CO" (ii) elephant among palm trees with "Guthrie and Company" in Chinese and Jawi scripts; also (iii) "FRATELI KRANZ" (iv) Crown with "F K" (v) Deer with "SINGAPORE",¹ 26 folios (some pages are numbered but it is unclear and the ordering is confused), 21 × 17 cm.

On the last page is a note:

"175 nombor, 1307 Zulkaedah 13."

"[Number 175, 1307 Dhū al-Qa'da 13 [1 July 1890 AD].]"

And:

"Yang punya ini surat di Kampung 13 Ulu, orang Palembang."

"[The owner of this manuscript lives in Kampung 13 Ulu, of Palembang.]"

¹ I am grateful to Aswandi Syahri for providing this information.

Also there is an illegible signature. On fol. 17v is a seal with the name “Muhammad Salih...”. There are also two loose leaves inside the manuscript on lined/checked paper, containing talismanic designs in blue ink in a different hand, both dated 18 Šafar 1351 AH / 23 June 1932 AD.

The manuscript does not have an accession number. Digitised under the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153 as EAP153/3/15:

http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=238100;r=900, last accessed 28 February 2015.

Literature: Putten 2009b, p. 18.

3 Aswandi EAP153/3/16 (No Accession Number)

A compilation of spells and talismanic designs (Figure 74)

Palembang, c. 1890s

Lined, laid paper with watermarks of (i) “GUTHRIE & CO” (ii) elephant among palm trees with “Guthrie and Company” in Chinese and Jawi scripts; also Dutch laid paper with watermarks of (i) deer with “SINGAPORE” (ii) Dutch lion with “LIBERTATE PROPATRIA” and “VRYHEID”,² foliated as 39 folios but some are unnumbered (43 folios in total), 21 × 17 cm.

The hand is similar to that of another manuscript in the Aswandi collection, EAP153/3/15 (cat. 2) which suggests it was copied by the same person.

The manuscript does not have an accession number. Digitised under the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153 as EAP153/3/16: http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=238101;r=32591, last accessed 28 February 2015.

Literature: Putten 2009b, p. 19.

4 BMKMR No. 09

Perhimpunan Gunawan bagi Laki-Laki dan Perempuan (‘A Compendium of Charms for Men and Women’) and

² I am grateful to Aswandi Syahri for providing this information.

miscellaneous notes including erotology (Figures 273, 280)

Penyengat, main text dated 5 Rajab 1329 AH / 2 July 1911 AD, and the miscellaneous notes are dated between 1910–11 and 1923.

Two lined exercise books pasted together, 100 pages, 22.5 × 17.5 cm; cover is wrapped with an unidentified English newspaper.

Colophon on p. 1 reads:

“*Termaktub di dalam bandar negeri Pulau Penyengat, lima haribulan Rejab, sanāt 1329, seribu tiga ratus dua puluh sembilan...*”

“[Completed in the town of Pulau Penyengat, fifth of Rajab, the year 1329, one thousand three hundred and twenty nine...]”

On p. 54 reads:

“*Hamba yang hina Khadijah Terung, barang diam-punkan Allah sekalian dosanya dan dosa ibubapanya, āmin, yā rabb al-‘ālamīn. Sanāt 1328.*”

“[The lowly servant Khadijah Terung, may God forgive all of her sins and those of her parents, O’ Ruler of the Worlds. Year 1328.]”

Digitised under the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153 as EAP153/13/5: http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=238363;r=7627, last accessed 28 February 2015.

Literature: Yayasan 1983, p. 3; Mukherjee 1997; Yayasan 1998, p. 6; Ding 2006, pp. 77–82; Putten 2009a, pp. 5–6; entry in Malay Concordance Project 2009, http://mcp.anu.edu.au/N/Guna_bib.html, last accessed 7 March 2011; Aswandi Syahri 2013; Putten [forthcoming], pp. 8–11.

5 BMKMR EAP153/13/32

A compilation of various texts including a *du‘ā’* from *Kitāb ḥayāt al-ḥayawān* (‘The Life of Animals’) by Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Damīri, *Asal Kejadian Nur Muhammad* (‘The Origins of the Light of Muḥammad’), on writing talismans, calendrical

calculations, *ketika* tables, compass diagrams of eight animals, *rajamuka* wheel, Rotating *Nāga* (Figures 114, 126, 157b, 201, 245)

Probably Palembang,³ nineteenth century.

Dutch laid paper with watermarks of (i) Maid of Holland (ii) “L Pannekoek”, 32 folios, 20.5 × 16.2 cm.

The manuscript lacks a colophon, but there is a note on fol. 23v that says:

“... ini alamat surat tib[?] Encik Bastabi[?] di Kampung Air, sekalian b-a-r-ny[?]. Siapa orang meminjam dia, pulangkan segara adanya.”

[“... this treatise on tib[?] [of] Encik Bastabi[?] in Kampung Air, all b-a-r-ny[?]. Whoever borrows it, return it as soon as possible.”]

The manuscript does not have an accession number. Digitised under the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), EAP153 as EAP153/13/32: http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=238390;r=14270, last accessed 28 February 2015.

Literature: Putten 2009a, p. 20.

6 DBP MS 13

A compilation of invocations and talismanic designs (Figures 46, 243)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) two-headed eagle with possibly “FNF” underneath (ii) moonface-in-shield, 103 pages, 10 × 9 cm.

Literature: DBP 1983, p. 12; Kamariah & Wan Salhah 2006, p. 64, illustrated on plate opposite p. 43; PNM 1995, p. 91.

7 DBP MS 23

***Faal Quran* (Figure 44)**

Most likely Perak, nineteenth century

³ Suggested by Aswandi Syahri, pers. comm. 15 November 2008.

European blue laid paper (no watermarks detected), flyleaves has watermarks of concentric circles with two leaves and “BURNIE” underneath, 32 pages, 20 × 16 cm, bound in red hard cover with the title “*Kitab Fa'al*”.

There are some notes on fol. 1r, most of which are difficult to read but there is a mention of “the *faal* of Haji Muhammad Rashid”. This name is repeated in the margins of fols. 4v and 5r: “al-Haji Muhammad Tambu Rashid Tambu Dalus”. According to DBP 1983 and Kamariah & Wan Salhah 2006, the manuscript was formerly owned by Ismail bin Shariff, Sekolah Kebangsaan Slim Village (Slim Village National School), Perak.

Literature: DBP 1983, pp. 56–57; Kamariah & Wan Salhah 2006, p. 64, illustrated on plate opposite p. 43.

8 DBP MS 82

A compilation of talismans and divinatory techniques including the *rajamuka* wheel, weather chart, compass roses and *ketika* tables (Figures 157f, 198, 222, 232)

Patani, c. 1857

Folding-book manuscript of *khoi* paper, 37 openings, 36 × 12 cm when folded.

There is a notice of a birth on side B, 37th opening, right-hand page:

“*Ini peringatan kita: pada tahun Kuda, hijrah Nabi seribu dua ratus tujuh puluh empat tahun, kepada delapan likur hari bulan Rabiulawal, kepada hari Ahad, kepada waktu jam pukul sepuluh, Raja Patani beroleh putera seorang, anaknya laki-laki bernama Tengku Abdullah, itulah adanya.*”

“[This is a notice: in the year of the Horse, in the year of the Prophet’s hijra of one thousand two hundred and seventy-four, on the twenty-eighth of Rabī‘ 1 [15 November 1857 AD], on Sunday at ten o’clock, the Raja of Patani had a son, named Tengku Abdullah.]”

On side B, 37th opening, left-hand page, there is another notice of a birth:

“*Ini peringatan kita: pada tahun Kuda, pada hijrah Nabi seribu dua ratus tujuh puluh empat tahun, kepada bulan*

Rabiulakhir, tujuh hari bulan, kepada hari Isnin, kepada waktu jam pukul delapan, Tuan Sulung beroleh putera seorang, anaknya perempuan bernama Tuan Fatimah, itulah adanya."

"[This is a notice: in the year of the Horse, in the year of the Prophet's hijra of one thousand two hundred and seventy-four, in the month of Rabi' II, on the seventh [25 November 1857 AD], on the night of Monday at eight o'clock, Tuan Sulung had a daughter, named Tuan Fatimah.]"

Literature: DBP 1983, p. 12; Kamariah & Wan Salhah 2006, p. 65, illustrated on plate opposite p. 43.

9 DBP MS 119

A compilation of talismanic designs, erotology and *ketika* (Figures 33, 61, 72, 81)

Melaka, c. 1261 AH / 1845 AD

Blue European laid paper (no watermarks detected), the edges of some folios are pasted with an English newspaper *The Straits Times?*, 227 pages (paginated in three sequences: first as pp. 1-90, then 1 to 3 with some unnumbered pages, then pp. 1-126), 33 × 20 cm, dark brown leather binding with blind tooling on the borders and lined with blue/white floral patterned cloth.

At the back of manuscript is a detached torn page with a note on a marriage, written in the same hand as the rest of the manuscript. The text here is incomplete but the same note appears in full on p. 1 of the second sequence of numbered pages:

"*Sanat 1254, kepada sepuluh haribulan Zulkaedah. Bahawa dewasa itu pada menyatakan saya, Haji Abdul Rauf bin Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman Melaka ada menikahkan Encik Abdul Rahman bin Bab kepada kawan Engku Temenggung Singapura, namanya Safiah, di hadapan Encik Sulaiman, menantu Datuk Naim Peranu [Pernu] dan lagi di hadapan Encik Muhammad Teluk Mas dan lagi di hadapan Haji Bidin bin Haji Encik Abdul Kadir dan lagi di hadapan Tambi Said, menantu saudaranya Encik Abdul Rahman dengan mas kahwinnya setahil mas, itulah adanya.*

Wa-katibuh Haji Abdul Rauf bin Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman sendiri tersurat, kepada tujuh belas haribulan Safar, pada sanat 1261."

"[In the year 1254, on the tenth of Dhū al-Qa'da [25 January 1839 AD]. On that day to explain that I, Haji Abdul Rauf bin Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman Melaka performed marriage rites on Encik Abdul Rahman bin Bab to a friend of Engku Temenggung Singapura whose name is Safiah, in front of Encik Sulaiman, the son-in-law of Datuk Naim Peranu [Pernu] and also in front of Encik Muhammad Teluk Mas and also in front of Haji Bidin bin Haji Encik Abdul Kadir and also in front of Tambi Said the son-in-law of his relative Encik Abdul Rahman with a dowry of one *tahil* of gold. And copied by Haji Abdul Rauf bin Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman himself, on the seventeenth of Şafar, in the year 1261 [25 February 1845 AD].]"

The reverse side of this folio is a text on medical preparations in Tamil. Additionally in the manuscript there are further notes on life events that are written in different hands, containing names of other individuals.

Literature: DBP 1983, p. 51 (under the entry for MS 183); Kamariah & Wan Salhah 2006, p. 67.

10 IAMM 1998.1.100

Untitled but includes divinatory methods such as the *Angka Tiga*, the seven planets, weather chart, talismanic designs (Figure 129)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

Blue European paper, 24 pages, 17.5 × 11.3 cm

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 138; IAMM 2010, pp. 28–29.

11 IAMM 1998.1.249

Untitled but includes the *Rejang* and talismanic designs (Figure 279)

Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermark of moonface-in-shield, 11 pages, 16.9 × 11.8 cm.

There is no colophon, but on the upper cover is a note saying:

“Ini surat Muhammad Jusoh Kampung Ru[...?].”

“[This is the text of Muhammad Jusoh of Kampung Ru[...?].]”

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, pp. 152–153; IAMM 2010, p. 59.

12 IAMM 1998.1.250

Untitled but includes various talismanic designs, erotology (Figure 223)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

Laid European paper, 66 pages (pp. 17 & 18 are not in the correct sequence, pp. 61–62 missing), 17.8 × 13 cm.

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 153; IAMM 2010, p. 59.

13 IAMM 1998.1.494

Untitled but includes compass roses with the *rijāl al-ghaib* (Figure 106)

Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermark of Dutch lion with “CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT”, 23.3 × 18 cm (after conservation; original size around 21 × 15.5 cm), 17 pages (although there are two p. 5), bound in green modern hard cover.

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 182; IAMM 2010, p. 104.

14 IAMM 1998.1.527

Untitled but includes a weather chart, *rajamuka* wheel, compass roses, *Ketika Lima* (Figure 116)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) two-headed eagle with “[]C[?]P” underneath (ii) probably moonface-in-shield, 28 pages, 18.7 × 13.2 cm (after conservation; original size around 16 × 10 cm), bound in green modern hard cover.

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 188; Ros Mahwati & Latifah 2008, illustrated on p. 59; IAMM 2010, p. 109.

15 IAMM 1998.1.543

Untitled but includes various talismanic designs and *du‘ā’* (Figure 156)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

In two parts – pp. 1–24: Dutch laid paper with watermark of Maid of Holland, 14.3 × 10.6 cm; pp. 25–36: European paper (did not check watermark), 16.4 × 10.2 cm.

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 192; IAMM 2010, p. 111.

16 IAMM 1998.1.545

Untitled but includes the *Rejang, Ketika Burung* and talismanic designs (Figure 119)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) “FNF” (ii) *tre lune*, 82 pages, 17.2 × 11.5 cm.

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 192; IAMM 2010, p. 112.

17 IAMM 1998.1.548

***Faal Nursi* (Figures 77, 149, 185, 188, 214)**

Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks probably of moonface-in-shield and two-headed eagle, 58 pages, 12.3 × 8.8 cm.

The manuscript does not have a colophon, but on the front page is written the name Abdullah.

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 193; IAMM 2010, p. 112.

18 IAMM 1998.1.574

Untitled but includes talismanic designs, compass rose and *ketika* table (Figure 84)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

British laid paper with watermarks of (i) “[M?] ONCKTON” (ii) “[SUPE]RFINE” (iii) horn in crowned shield, 38 pages, 20.5 × 12.7 cm (after conservation; original size around 17.5 × 11 cm), bound in green modern hard cover.

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 199; IAMM 2010, p. 115.

19 IAMM 1998.1.578

Untitled but includes compass roses, the Rotating *Nāga* and *Angka Tiga*, treatise on prayers (Figures 100, 113)

Probably Patani, late nineteenth – early twentieth century

Italian laid paper with *tre lune* watermark, 18 pages, 22 × 15 cm (after conservation), pp. 17-18 was previously a loose leaf on European paper with watermark of elephant among palm trees with “Guthrie and Company Limited” in Chinese and Jawi scripts.

On p. 18 are various scribbles in different hands, including names such as “... *tuan guru* [teacher] al-Haji Wan Ahmad, *pondok* Bermin, Jambu, Patani, Jerim...” as well as a couple of calligraphic birds. On p. 17 is a treatise on prayers (*sembahyang*).

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, pp. 199-200; Ros Mahwati & Latifah 2008, illustrated on p. 58; IAMM 2010, p. 116.

20 IAMM 1998.1.579

Untitled but includes various talismanic designs and weather chart (Figures 71, 227)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

European paper, 105 pages, 20 × 14 cm (after conservation; original size around 18 × 11.5 cm).

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 200; IAMM 2010, p. 116.

21 IAMM 1998.1.698

Untitled but includes the *Rasi* diagram, compass roses, *ketika* tables, *Angka Tiga* and talismanic designs (Figures 79, 135)

Malay peninsula, second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermark of Dutch lion with “CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT”, pp. 5-8 light blue Dutch(?) laid paper, 115 pages (p. 71 is repeated), 17.4 × 11.6 cm, also there is a loose leaf measuring 22.8 × 16.8 cm between pp. 95-96.

On p. 115 is a note:

“*Maka adakah [adalah] hari Sabtu dua puluh haribulan, rejang Hantu, daripada bulan Rabiulakhir, maka lembu Pak Ma’ Semail makan padi hamba, maka Pak Salih[?] m-a-s-ng t-h-r-nya adalahny. Maka lembu empat ekor – kecil dua ekor, ibu dua ekor adalahny.*”

“[Thus on Saturday, on the twentieth day, on the *rejang* of the Ghost, in the month of Rabī‘ II, the cows of Pak Ma’ Semail ate my rice crop, thus Pak Salih[?] *m-a-s-ng t-h-r-nya*. There were four cows – two calves and two dams.]”

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 216; IAMM 2010, p. 139.

22 IAMM 1998.1.701

Untitled but includes the *Rejang* and the *rajamuka* wheel (Figure 121)

Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

Dutch or British paper with watermark of Britannia, 22 pages, 17 × 10.2 cm

Literature: Engku Ibrahim & Osman 1992, p. 217; IAMM 2010, p. 140.

23 Nik Mohamed Collection [No Accession Number]

Treatise on bull fighting, buffalo fighting, ram fighting and trapping spotted-doves (Figures 37, 47, 48, 50, 52, 54, 57, 125, 158, 167, 169, 179a, 189, 207, 208, 286)

Kelantan or Patani, between 1838-87

Folding-book manuscript of *khoi* paper, 58 openings (side A paginated as 116 pages), 18 × 11.5 cm when folded (resulting thickness of 6 cm), cover of brown leather with gold tooling with inscription in the middle, also with remnants of fabric on the edges of inner covers: one is dark blue (side A, first opening), the other red with tiny flowers (side B, 58th opening).

The various magical and divinatory techniques given in the manuscript were provided by a number of individuals for the *Raja Muda* of Kelantan. For example on side B, 36th opening:

“Bab ini tuntub ilmu pelaga lembu, keturunan daripada bahma [bomoh?] Pak Man Nik orang negeri Patani, daerah Taranam kampungnya. Maka ia sembahkan pada Raja Muda negeri Kelantan daerah Kampung Penambang diamnya.”

“[This chapter is on the learning of the knowledge of bull-fighting, originating from *bahma* [bomoh?] Pak Man Nik of Patani, of the district of Taranam. He presents it to the *Raja Muda* of Kelantan who lives in the district of Kampung Penambang.]”

The *Raja Muda* in question can be identified as Tengku Bongsu Bachok bin Tengku Temenggung Long Tan of Penambang who was made *Raja Muda* in 1838 and died in 1887, and who was known as *Raja Muda Penambang*.

Literature: Nik Mohamed 1990, pp. 118-121, illustrated on pp. 122-123; Nik Mohamed 1992, pp. 85-87, illustrated on p. 95; PNM 1995, p. 42, illustrated.

24 PNM MS 273

Untitled but includes various talismanic designs (Figure 69)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, early twentieth century (post-1903)

European laid paper with watermarks of (i) “GUTHRIE & CO LTD” (ii) elephant among palm trees with “Guthrie and Company Limited” in Chinese and Jawi scripts, 8 folios, 20.6 × 16.5 cm.

Literature: PNM 1987, p. 23; PNM 1990, p. 57; Harun & Siti Mariani 2002, illustrated on pp. 198-199, figs. 105, 106.

25 PNM MS 290

Untitled but includes talismans, incantations, treatise on bulls and buffaloes, house-building, *Rejang* (Figure 92)

Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century

Folding-book manuscript of *khoi* paper, 29 openings (side A paginated as 59 pages), 18 × 12 cm when folded.

Literature: PNM 1987, p. 25.

26 PNM MS 291

***Rejang* (Figures 43, 51, 194, 202)**

Malay peninsula or Sumatra,⁴ nineteenth century

European laid paper with unidentified watermark, 14 folios, 11 × 7.5 cm.

Literature: PNM 1987, p. 25.

27 PNM MS 292

Untitled but includes a weather chart, *rajamuka* wheel, *Rasi*, *Ketika Lima*, *Angka Tiga*, *Ketika Burung*, *Rotating Nāga* and talismanic designs (Figure 45)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European laid paper with watermarks of (i) “G M” underneath a crowned shield (ii) “1” in the corner of

4 The term *Asu* is used here for the *rejang* symbol of the Dog, instead of the more usual *Anjing*. *Asu* is a common Austronesian word, found in many parts of maritime Southeast Asia; see Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “Asu”. It is rarely used in the Malay peninsula, although not unknown.

folios; flyleaves laid paper with watermark of “Director”; 31 folios, 24 × 17.8 cm (after conservation); modern tan leather binding.

Literature: PNM 1987, p. 25; PNM 1990, p. 57; Harun & Siti Mariani 2002, illustrated on pp. 196-198, figs. 101, 102, 104.

28 PNM MS 1080

Untitled but includes talismanic designs, Rasi, Rotating Nāga and compass roses (Figure 192)

Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century

Folding-book manuscript of *khoi* paper, six openings, 12 × 18.6 cm when folded.

Literature: PNM 1990, p. 8; PNM 1993, p. 5; Syed Ahmad 1992, illustrated in fig. 156.

29 PNM MS 1199

Untitled but includes good and bad days, Rotating Nāga, rituals for house-building (Figures 242, 296)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth – early twentieth century

Italian laid paper with watermark of moonface-in-shield, 14 folios, 18 × 11.5 cm, has a white cardboard cover.

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 8.

30 PNM MS 1230

Untitled but includes the Rejang and Angka Tiga (Figure 256)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European laid paper with watermark of “J S”, 6 folios, 25.7 × 18 cm (after conservation).

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 18.

31 PNM MS 1321

Ketika, includes a compass rose, ketika tables, Rejang, twelve-year animal zodiac (Figure 99)

Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) moonface-in-shield (ii) “Andrea Galvani Pordenone”, 10 folios, 17 × 12.3 cm.

On fol. 1r there is a colophon with the day, date and month but unfortunately without the year. At the end of it the copyist adds a note to his brother asking for some paper.

“Pada hari Sabtu pada bulan Zulkaedah, empat haribulan, Lebai Abdul Samad yang menyurat akan dia[?] ketika ini. Maka hendak khiringkan[kirimkan?] pada tangan yang bahagia lagi mulia lagi kesenangannya, iaitu adinda[?] Tuan Haji Ibrahim, duduk daerah Kampung Nakhahalu[?]. Iaitu kekanda[?] Abdul Samad yang daif lagi dagang sangatlah miskin lagi kepayahan mengarang[?] ini. Iaitu kekanda hendak minta sedikit kertas yang buruk-buruk, usang-usang sekeping. Jikalau ada kasih sayang rindu dan boleh r-u-n pada kekanda yang d-g-i boleh berhubungan di dalam dunia (dan) pada hari akhirat. Wallāhu a’lam.”

“[On Saturday, in the month of Dhū al-Qa’da, on the fourth, Lebai Abdul Samad wrote this *ketika* text. He would like to deliver via a hand that is blissful, noble and content, that is my younger brother Tuan Haji Ibrahim, who lives in the village of Kampung Nakhahalu[?]. I, Abdul Samad, who is weak and a ‘foreigner’ [i.e. someone without any friends to support him], very poor and in dire straits has composed[?] this. I would like to ask for a piece of paper that is old and obsolete. If you love me and miss me and can r-u-n to me who is d-g-i is able to contact in this world (and) in the Hereafter. God knows best.]”

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 27.

32 PNM MS 1367

Untitled but includes ketika tables, weather chart and talismanic designs (Figure 95)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European paper with unidentified watermark, 12 folios (some pages are upside down), 17 × 12 cm.

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 30.

33 PNM MS 1394(3)

Untitled but includes an illuminated diagram with names of the archangels, the *Rejang* in the form of a table, various *du'ā'* and talismanic designs (Figure 73)

Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century

A mixture of different European papers (some thicker), main run seems to be Dutch laid paper with watermarks of (i) Maid of Holland (ii) Dutch lion, 12 folios, 16.9 × 10.2 cm.

There seems to be an inscription in Thai script on fol. 1r.

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 32.

34 PNM MS 1416

Untitled but includes *ketika* tables, divinatory compass roses, talismanic designs and treatise on sexual relations (Figure 58)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with Maid of Holland watermark, 51 folios, 17 × 10.5 cm.

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 34.

35 PNM MS 1452

Untitled but includes *ketika* tables, divinatory compass roses, weather chart, *Rejang*, interpretation of dreams, interpretation of body movements, treatise on animals (Figure 104)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

Probably European paper (no laid lines, chain lines or watermarks detected), 47 folios, 16 × 11.5 cm, white cloth binding.

At the end of a text on the interpretation of dreams, on fol. 28v is a colophon:

“Surat ini pada waktu Asar, dua likur haribulan Ramadan, pada hari Sabtu. Yang menyurat dia al-Haji Abdul Hamid ibn Abdul Rahim, ’antahī bil kalām.”
 “[This manuscript [was copied] during the time of the ‘Aṣr prayer, on the twenty-second of Ramaḍān, on Saturday. The copyist is al-Haji Abdul Hamid ibn Abdul Rahim, the end.]”

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 38.

36 PNM MS 1456

Untitled but includes the *Rejang*, omens of animals, treatise on house-building, *ketika* tables, divinatory compass roses, divination for shapes of clothes after being eaten by mice etc., talismanic designs, erotology (Figures 9, 103)

Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s-80s

British laid paper with watermarks of (i) “MUNRO” (ii) “187[final digit missing]” (iii) Britannia, 52 folios, 17.3 × 13.1 cm

At the end of a text on good and bad days of the week, on fols. 28v-29r is a colophon:

“Maka empunya surat ini Lebai Sirun, boma [bomoh?] yang tahu pada zaman dahulukala sudah lamanya. Maka diturun kepada fakir Allah Taala Abdul Salleh, yang menyuratkan dia daripada hendak menyampaikan kh-r-t Encik Abdullah, lalu temurun kepada boma [bomoh?] Abdul Rahman Na’dam[?], kemudian daripada itu pula lalu disama[?] oleh fakir Awam [Awang?] bin al-Talib.”

“[The owner of this manuscript is Lebai Sirun, the boma [bomoh?] who knows of the old traditions. It has been passed on to the lowly servant of God the Exalted Abdul Salleh, who copied it from borrowing the possession[?] of Encik Abdullah, and then passed on to boma [bomoh?] Abdul Rahman Na’dam[?], and then from there it was copied by the lowly Awam [Awang?] bin al-Talib.]”

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 38.

37 PNM MS 1458

Untitled but includes herbal medicine, *du'ā'*, talismanic designs, *Ketika Lima*, interpretation of body movements (Figure 82)

Patani or Kelantan, c. 1870s-80s

British laid paper in *octavo* format; watermarks of (i) “[MUN]RO” (ii) “[18]7[?]” (“18” missing, final digit

not clear) (iii) Britannia, 40 folios, 17.3 × 13.1 cm (after conservation; original size 16.9 × 10.6 cm), originally had a cover of thick dark brown paper (which is now loose).

Probably copied by the same copyist as PNM MS 1456 (cat. 36).

Literature: PNM 1993, p. 39.

38 PNM MS 1596

Faal Nursi (Figures 31, 53, 56, 150, 171, 174, 211)

Patani or Kelantan,⁵ dated 1288 AH / 1871-72 AD

European laid paper (no watermarks detected), 33 folios, 17.6 × 9.7 cm (after conservation; original size around 16.5 × 8.5 cm), bound with dark brown chequered cloth.

The colophon gives the date 1288 AH / 1871-72 AD on fol. 33v.

Literature: PNM 1997, p. 7.

39 PNM MS 1603

Compilation of texts including *Ketika Burung*, divinatory compass rose, talismanic designs, house-building, Sufi mystical tracts and fatwa on eating animals of two worlds (Figure 263)

Probably Patani, nineteenth century

European laid paper (no watermarks detected), 20 folios, 20.5 × 16 cm.

Two Chinese characters are written in pencil on fol. 1r: 曲子 (*Qu Zi*) which is a song or piece of music composed for harp or piano. At the end of the fatwa on eating animals of two worlds (fol. 14v) is written the name Ahmad ibn al-Haji Muhammad Tin Patani.

Literature: PNM 1997, p. 8.

5 One of the auguries (with the subject of Raja Harman Syah on fol. 24v) uses the word *burung ketitir* for the zebra dove. This word is commonly found in the East Coast of the Malay peninsula (in other areas the term *burung merbuk* is used instead). I am grateful to Harun Mat Piah for noticing this.

40 PNM MS 1641

Untitled but includes the *Rejang*, good and bad days, house-building, weather chart, divinatory compass roses (Figure 250)

Patani, nineteenth – early twentieth century

Lined exercise book (no watermarks detected), 21 pages, 21 × 17 cm.

On the front page is an ownership note:

“Yang dimiliki oleh Wan Abdul Rahman bin Wan Abdul Rahim Patani, Kampung Kuda.”

“[Owned by Wan Abdul Rahman bin Wan Abdul Rahim Patani, Kampung Kuda.]”

Literature: PNM 1997, p. 12.

41 PNM MS 1646

Untitled but includes a weather chart, *Rejang*, good and bad days, *du‘ā’, fiqh* (Figure 233)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermark of two-headed eagle with “E P” underneath, 25 folios, 16.5 × 12 cm.

Literature: PNM 1997, p. 13.

42 PNM MS 1789

Bustān al-‘arīfīn (“The Garden of the Wise”); includes compass diagrams of eight animals, *Ketika Lima*, *Rejang*, letter-number interpretation, weather chart, astrology, house-building, omens on clothes eaten by mice, *Faal Quran*, physiognomy of people and bulls, *du‘ā’, talismanic designs* (Figure 153)

Kelantan, dated Wednesday 13 Sha‘bān 1273 AH / 8 April 1857 AD

Lined European laid paper with watermark of Zenobia holding a spear with “ZENOBIA”, final folio is a lined laid paper with watermark “GUTHRIE & CO LTD”, 86 pages, 33 × 21 cm, blue hardcover binding.

Colophon on p. 85 reads:

“*Buṣṭān*[sic] *al-‘arīfīn waqat duḥā, pada tiga belas haribulan Syaaban, pada hari Arba’a, pada hijrah sanat 1273.*”

“[Transmitted the *Buṣṭān*[sic] *al-‘arīfīn* [‘Garden of the Wise’] at the time of forenoon, on the thirteenth of Sha‘bān, in the year of the hijra 1273 [8 April 1857 AD].]”

There is also an owner’s stamp on the doublure of the lower cover which says: “Ismail bin Haji Abdullah; Pejabat Pengarah Tanah dan Galian [The Office of the Director of Land and Excavations], Kota Bharu, Kelantan”; underneath it is written in black ink “Ahad [Sunday] 13/1/74-20/12/93”.

Literature: PNM 1995, p. 89, illustrated; PNM 1997, p. 26.

43 PNM MS 1790

Table of planetary hours (Figure 27)

Probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

British paper with watermarks of (i) “TREASURY ULTRA SUPERFINE” (ii) crown and shield (Britannia?), 6 pages, 33 × 20.5 cm

Literature: PNM 1997, p. 26.

44 PNM MS 1797

Untitled but includes the *Rejang*, divinatory compass roses, *Ketika* and *Saat Lima*, *Faal Kalam Allah*, physiognomy, *Rasi*, *Rotating Nāga*, house-building, interpretation of dreams (Figures 123, 248)

Probably Patani, nineteenth century

Paper of unknown origin (no laid lines, chain lines or watermarks detected), 168 pages, 23 × 18 cm (after conservation; original size around 19.5 × 14.5 cm), modern dark brown leather binding.

Literature: PNM 1997, p. 26.

45 PNM MS 1948

Untitled but includes *Ketika* and *Saat Lima*, *Angka Tiga*, *Rejang*, *Rasi*, *Faal Quran* (Figure 246)

Probably Terengganu, dated 1294 AH / 1877-78 AD
British laid paper with watermarks including “SUPERFINE 1876”, 23 folios, 22 × 17 cm.

There is a note on fol. 1r that says:

“*Sanat 1294, tahun za.*

Sanat 1347, ijazah kepada Abdul Wahab bin Haji Abdul Rahman Kampung Temilan[?].”

“[Year 1294 [1877-78 AD], year of *zā*’.

Year 1347 [1928-29 AD], *ijāza* to Abdul Wahab bin Haji Abdul Rahman Kampung Temilan[?].]”

This might refer to Kampung Tembilan in Besut, Terengganu.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 6.

46 PNM MS 1951

***Kitab Ilmu Firasat dan Ubat* (‘Book on Physiognomy and Medicine’); includes good and bad days, *Ketika* and *Saat Lima*, interpretation of body movements, *Rasi*, the seven planets, *Rotating Nāga* (Figure 83)**

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European laid paper (watermark unclear), 43 pages (although numbering is confused, e.g. p. 21 is missing, two pages are numbered 32, pp. 23–24 is written as 32–42, text is missing between sequential pages e.g. between pp. 2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9, 12–13, 20–22, 25–26, 32–34, 37–38 and 39–40, folios were not arranged in order and the page numbers were added later), 25 × 17.6 cm, has a cover of thick plasticky paper.

There is a title and possibly date on p. 1. Text is unclear and damaged:

“*Kitab Ilmu Firasat dan Ubatan. [...] on [...] 30.... 28112[?].*”

“[Book on physiognomy and medicine. [...] on [...] 30.... 28112[?].]”

On p. 15 in the bottom corner is written “11 Rabiulawal 6801[sic] hijra”. The number “o” might be a mistake for “2”, and if so then it is probably referring to the date 11 Rabi’ 1 1286 AH / Monday 21 June 1869 AD.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 7; Harun & Siti Mariani 2002, p. 202, illustrated on p. 203, fig. 111.

47 PNM MS 1957

Compilation of techniques to determine auspicious and inauspicious times, including *ketika* tables, *rajamuka* wheel, Rotating *Nāga*, *Rejang*, *Angka Tiga* (Figures 39b, 86, 98, 252)

Probably Kelantan, dated Friday, 2 Jumādā II 1312 AH / 30 November 1894 AD

Austrian laid paper with the watermark of a rickshaw puller with a passenger and "AUSTRO TRANSMARINE TRADING CO", 14 folios, 22.5 × 17 cm.

There is a colophon on fol. 14v:

"Telah selesailah (*al-ḥaqīr al-ḥaqīr al-fānī Zainal Abidin ibn al-Marhum Tuan al-Haji Raja Kecil ibn al-Marhum Raja Senik ibn al-Marhum Tuan Raja Hakim Abdul Latif, rafā'ahu Allāh ta'ālā 'alaih fī al-darajāt, āmīn. Maka adalah hamba memungutkan naskah ini selesainya pada hari Jumaat, dua haribulan Jamadil Thani, waktu duḥā, pada hijrah Nabi saw. seribu tiga ratus dua belas tahun, sanat 1312. Adalah selesainya tiada cukup kertas. Jika ada lagi surat lagi bilang-bilang belajar. Dan hamba surat ini sangat-sangat k-u-t-a-ny kerana bersangatan k-n-d-u-h[?] dengan menimpa tiada bersudahan adanya.*"

"[Completed by this humble and transient pauper Zainal Abidin ibn al-Marhum Tuan al-Haji Raja Kecil ibn al-Marhum Raja Senik ibn al-Marhum Tuan Raja Hakim Abdul Latif, may God the Exalted raise him in status, amen. I compiled the book, completed on Friday, the second of Jumādā II, at the time of forenoon, in the year of the Prophet's hijra one thousand three hundred and twelve, the year 1312. Completed without having enough paper. If there is more to write, study it. And I wrote this being very *k-u-t-a-ny* because very *k-n-d-u-h[?]* and falling without end.]"

Next to this colophon is a round, black seal in ink that also appears on fol. 13v.

There are also records of life events such as births, deaths etc. on various pages, for instance on fol. 1v:

"*Aku buat rumah atas Sungai Pulau Melaka Pauh,⁶ sanat 1314, serta tanam nyiur di i-k-s[?] rumah itu.*"

"[I built a house on the Pulau Melaka Pauh River, in the year 1314 [1896-97 AD] and I planted a coconut at its site.]"

And on fol. 2r:

"*Ini nyatakan aku berkhatan di dalam Pahang, daerah Kampung Pulau Rusa, pada Masjid Tuan Haji Abu Bakar Penghulu Bali, anak bagi Encik Ibrahim, pada hari Khamis, lapan hari Rabiulawal, pada tahun waw, sanat 1313.*"

"[This explains that I performed circumcision in Pahang, in the district of Kampung Pulau Rusa, in Masjid Tuan Haji Abu Bakar Penghulu Bali, the son of Encik Ibrahim, on Thursday, eighth of Rabī' I, in the year of *wāw*, 1313 [29 August 1895 AD].]"

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 7.

48 PNM MS 1986

Untitled but includes a text on the *rijāl al-ghaib*, good and bad days, *rajamuka* wheel, compass diagram of eight animals, interpretation of dreams, divinatory compass roses (Figures 122, 157e)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermark of Dutch lion with "CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT", 20 folios, 22.5 × 17.8 cm (after conservation; original size around 19 × 14.5 cm), modern dark brown leather binding.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 11.

49 PNM MS 1990

Untitled but includes the Rotating *Nāga*, *ketika* tables, divinatory compass roses (Figure 111)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

6 Pulau Melaka is in Kelantan.

Paper of unknown origin (no laid lines, chain lines or watermarks detected), 20 folios, 19.5 × 13.2 cm.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 11.

50 PNM MS 1993

Untitled but includes talismanic designs, good and bad days, *Ketika Lima, Rejang* (Figure 97)

Probably Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermark of moonface-in-shield, 12 folios, 24 × 17 cm.

There is an ownership note and notice of a birth on fol. 1r:

“Ini kitab Haji Muhammad Mubin Rubing.

Peri tentang Mek Kej [Kecil?] beranak pada hari Isnin, empat likur haribulan adanya.”

“[This book (belongs to) Haji Muhammad Mubin Rubing. On the matter of Mek Kej [Kecil?] who gave birth on Monday, the twenty-fourth.]”

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 11.

51 PNM MS 1995

Untitled but includes the *Angka Tiga*, herbal medicine, *Ketika Lima*, divinatory compass roses such as on the *rijāl al-ghaib*, compass diagram of eight animals (Figures 107, 257)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra; second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermark of Dutch lion with “CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT”, 13 folios, 22.3 × 16.9 cm.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 11.

52 PNM MS 2017

Untitled but includes a *ketika* table, *rajamuka* wheel, good and bad days, *Rejang* (Figure 93)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European laid paper (no watermarks detected), 31 folios, 17.2 × 10.6 cm; there is also a loose sheet on European laid paper with watermark “KRANZ” measuring 17.2 × 10.6 cm.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 13

53 PNM MS 2107

Untitled but includes the *Rejang*, house-building (Figure 108)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

Paper of unknown origin (no laid lines, chain lines or watermarks detected), 10 folios, 18.6 × 12.3 cm.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 27

54 PNM MS 2121

Untitled but includes a table of planetary hours, *Rejang*, good and bad days and other calendars, treatise on funerary arrangements (Figure 78)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, dated 5 Jumādā I 1351 AH / 6 September 1932 AD

European laid paper (no watermarks detected), 16 folios, 27.8 × 17.3 cm (after conservation; original size around 25.5 × 16.3 cm).

There is an ownership note on fol. 1r:

“Bahawasanya ini kitab sepanjang-panjang dalihnya. Yang tersurat bahawasanya hamba Allah Muhammad Taib ibn Daing Yaakub bahawa sesungguhnya dihadihkan menjadi haknya Kun Basuti[?]”⁷ hingga sampai turun temurun anak-anak atau cucu cicit adanya, antahī. Wallāhu a’lam bi-l-ṣawāb.”

“5-5-1351, [signed] Muhammad Taib Yaakub.”

“[This is the book of the full truths that are told. The servant of God Muhammad Taib ibn Daing Yaakub with earnestness presents it to be his property to Kun Basuti[?] until his descendants, ends. God knows best.

⁷ “Kun Basuti” is written in blue ink unlike the rest of the text which is in brown.

5-5-1351, [signed] Muhammad Taib Yaakub.]”

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 29.

55 PNM MS 2228

Untitled but includes the *Rejang*, Daily Rotating *Nāga*, good and bad days, *Ketika Lima*, compass roses, interpretation of dreams (Figures 42, 101)

Probably Perlis, dated Monday 22 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1351 AH / 17 April 1933 AD

European laid paper (no watermarks detected), 75 pages (although some pages missing), 30.5 × 21 cm (after conservation; original size around 27.5 × 19 cm), originally the covers were of brown paper but is now in a modern dark brown leather binding.

The colophon on p. 74 reads:

“... *aitu tilmīdh al-‘ālim al-‘allāma tuan gurunya Abdul Kadir bin Mustafa Fatani, raḥimahum Allāh ta‘ālā ‘alaihi, Muhammad Taib bin Wadu[?] daripada menyempurnakan q-ṣ-d Maulana Amir al-Mu‘minin dengan taufik Allah SWT daripada awalnya hingga khatamnya. Pada hari Isnin 22 haribulan Zulhijjah, ‘ām 1351.*”

“[... that is the pupil of the greatest scholar, his teacher Abdul Kadir bin Mustafa Fatani, mercy of God the Exalted upon him, Muhammad Taib bin Wadu[?] having completed for[?] Maulana Amir al-Mu‘minin with the help of God the Glorified and Exalted from its beginning to its end. On Monday, 22 Dhū al-Ḥijja, year 1351 [17 April 1933 AD].]”

On the same page as the colophon there is an owner's sticker of Ku Ibrahim Ku Ahmad of Arau, Perlis. In a different hand there are notes that refer to the publications “Pengasoh 521” and “Dewan Budaya (Feb) 2/1993” and the name “Tok Bendang Daya”.

Literature: PNM 1999, p. 41

56 PNM MS 2344(B)

Untitled but includes *ketika* tables, *rajamuka* wheel, *Rejang*, good and bad days, divinatory compass roses, talismanic designs (Figure 80)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) moonface-in-shield (ii) “Andrea Galvani Pordenone”,⁸ 16 folios,⁹ 17 × 12.3 cm (after conservation; original size around 16.7 × 11.8 cm).

Literature: PNM 2000, p. 69; Harun & Siti Mariani 2002, p. 205, illustrated on fig. 113; PNM 2006b, p. 49, illustrated.

57 PNM MS 2381(1)

Untitled but includes the Rotating *Nāga*, good and bad days, *Rejang*, talismanic designs, *du‘ā*, *Angka Tiga* (Figure 117)

Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century

Folding-book manuscript of *khoi* paper, 13 openings, 18.5 × 12 cm when folded.

Literature: PNM 2000, p. 94.

58 PNM MS 2381(2)

Untitled but includes a text on taking ablutions, *du‘ā*, *ketika* tables, herbal medicine, *Rasi*, treatise on elephants, treatise on naming children (Figures 36, 131)

Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century

Folding-book manuscript of *khoi* paper, seven openings, 12 × 18.5 cm when folded, upper cover has border of multi-layered paper.

Literature: PNM 2000, p. 94; Harun & Siti Mariani 2002, p. 199; PNM 2006b, p. 50, illustrated.

59 PNM MS 2459

Untitled but includes talismanic designs, *Ketika* and *Saat Lima*, a text on the *rijāl al-ghaib*, Rotating *Nāga*,

8 According to PNM 2000, p. 69 the watermarks are (i) “FIUME” (ii) six-pointed star. However these refer to PNM MS 2344(A), which although is the same size as (B), is of a different hand and layout and should probably be considered as a separate manuscript. (A) also has the Guthrie watermark, as well as that of Gaṇeśa and “FINE”.

9 Foliated as fols. 15r-30v (fols. 1-14 are for PNM MS 2344(A)).

dhikr* for Eid and the Prophet's birthday, *du'ā'
(Figures 39a, 112)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian and Dutch laid papers with watermarks of (i) *tre lune* (ii) "A G" (iii) moonface-in-shield (iv) crowned Dutch lion with the words "CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT" (v) "VAN GELDER", 24 folios, 22.5 × 17 cm.

From fols. 16r-20r, the text is written upside down in a different hand and ink, also the paper appears to be different. It contains the following (on fol. 16):

"*Ini kitab milik Tengku[?] Yap Din Tanjung Majahu[?] kepada tengku lain Zakaria and Mu'lut[?] bagi Kampung Tanjung Katong Sabihan r-d-a[?]. Mula-mula Tengku Muhammad kemudian Tengku Saleh dan kemudian Tengku Din dan kemudian Tengku Din dan kemudian Lebai Mika dan yang lain... [unable to decipher the rest].*"
"[This *kitāb* is owned by Tengku[?] Yap Din of Tanjung Majahu[?] to the other *tengku* Zakariya and Mu'lut[?] for the village of Kampung Tanjung Katong Sabihan *r-d-a*[?]. Firstly Tengku Muhammad and then Tengku Saleh and then Tengku Din and then Tengku Din and then Lebai Mika and the others... [unable to decipher the rest].]"

There is a circular lamp-black seal on fol. 15r with an illegible inscription in the centre, and pentagrams and probably the *shahāda* in its border.

Literature: PNM 2001, pp. 36-37.

60 PNM MS 2487

Untitled but includes the *Faal Quran*, letter-number interpretation, interpretation of omens (body movements, animals, eclipse, lightning), astrology (Figure 137)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermarks of (i) Dutch lion with the words "CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT" (ii) "DK & Z^N" (iii) "S S & Z" (iv) "F [?] C Z", 39 folios, 20.5 × 16.5 cm (after conservation).

Literature: PNM 2001, pp. 62-63; PNM 2006b, p. 51, illustrated (the folios are photographed here in the opposite order, i.e. fol. 14v is on the left, and fol. 15r on the right) and on pp. 56-57 under the entry for PNM MS 3000.

61 PNM MS 2517

Untitled but includes good and bad days, talismanic designs, *Faal Quran*, *du'ā'*, *Ketika Lima*, the seven planets, invocations, herbal medicine, movement of our breath (Figure 144)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European laid paper with watermarks of (i) "A C" (ii) horse with split horn, 49 folios,¹⁰ 27.3 × 10.3 cm.¹¹

Literature: PNM 2001, pp. 81-82; PNM 2006b, p. 53, illustrated.

62 PNM MS 2532

Untitled but includes the *Faal Kalam Allah*, *Ketika Lima*, talismanic designs, treatise on ship buying, treatise on house building, letter-number interpretation, interpretation of dreams, invocations, *du'ā'*, Rotating *Nāga*, *Rejang*, good and bad years, treatise on our breath, calculating years, medical prescriptions (Figure 143)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Main run (up to fol. 34) is of Dutch laid paper with watermark of Dutch lion with the words "CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT"; fol. 39 onwards seem to be different laid paper but no watermarks detected; also a mixture of other papers, e.g. fol. 1 is blue laid paper with watermark "JOHN ExTR[A?]", fol. 76 is lined, laid paper with watermark "UNION TIMES PR[ESS LTD?] SINGAPO[RE]"; 76 folios (some folios missing or mixed up), 22 × 17.7 cm (after conservation; original size around 19.2 × 16.4 cm).

Literature: PNM 2001, p. 92.

63 PNM MS 2578

Untitled but includes good and bad days, treatise on house-building, *Rejang*, Rotating *Nāga*, *Rasi*, *Ketika*

¹⁰ There are also some folios that are blank and not included in the total. PNM 2001, p. 81 gives as 53 fols.

¹¹ Some folios have been trimmed, such as fols. 13-16.

Lima, talismanic designs, invocations, weather chart (Figure 134)

Probably Malay peninsula, dated on Saturday, 1 Sha'bān 1312 AH / 28 January 1895 AD

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) moonface-in-shield (ii) "B G" (iii) "I M C", 22 folios, 25.5 × 12.3 cm; there are also four miscellaneous loose sheets of paper.

There is a colophon on fol. 22r:

"*Ini hak Wan Sahak ibn al-Marhum Wan Min. Maka sudah tamat al-kalam pada hari Sabtu, sehari bulan Syaaban, waktu jam [...illegible...], 1312.*"

"[This is the property of Wan Sahak ibn al-Marhum Wan Min. Thus completed writing on Saturday, the first of Sha'bān, on the hour of [...illegible...], 1312.]"

Literature: PNM 2001, p. 118.

64 PNM MS 2588

Untitled but includes a treatise on boats, medical prescriptions, astrology, *Ketika Burung*, Rotating *Nāga*, divinatory compass roses, *rajamuka* wheel, letter-number interpretation, interpretation of omens on animals (Figures 105, 118)

Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) moonface-in-shield (ii) two-headed eagle with "FNF" underneath, 78 folios (although some missing e.g. between fol. 24v and fol. 25r), 24.5 × 17.3 cm.¹²

Literature: PNM 2001, pp. 128-129.

65 PNM MS 2750

Untitled but includes *du'ā'*, talismans, house-building, *Faal Kalam Allah*, medical prescriptions, interpretation of dreams, interpretation of earthquakes, interpretation of body movements, Arabic-Malay

dictionary, planting rice, *Rejang, Ketika Lima*, physiognomy (Figure 255)

Aceh, 1313 AH / 1895-96 AD

Italian laid paper with watermark of moonface-in-shield with "A" within shield, 78 folios with three loose leaves/fragments, 17.2 × 12 cm.

Dated 1313 AH / 1895-96 AD on fol. 68r at the end of a *du'ā'*.

Literature: PNM 2002b, pp. 96-97.

66 PNM MS 2778

Untitled but includes a weather chart, talismanic designs, *du'ā'*, *Pamor Keris, ketika* tables, *rajamuka* wheel, compass roses, effigies (Figures 62, 157a, 206)

Patani or Kelantan, nineteenth century

Folding-book manuscript of *khoi* paper, 18 openings, 12 × 18.5 cm.

Literature: PNM 2002b, p. 119.

67 PNM MS 2796

Untitled but includes good and bad days, *Ketika Lima, Rejang*, Rotating *Nāga*, planetary hours, divinatory compass roses (Figure 109)

Patani or Kelantan, c. 1890s

Dark blue paper (no laid lines, chain lines or watermarks detected), 39 folios, 19 × 15.5 cm.

On fol. 24r is a note with the date Thursday 23 Rabī' I 1314 AH / 1 September 1896 AD and names such as Encik Ibrahim, Encik Umar, etc.

Literature: PNM 2002b, pp. 129-130.

68 PNM MS 2799

***Pamor Keris* and medical prescriptions (Figure 160)**

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

British laid paper with watermarks of (i) "GEORGE SMITHS LONDON" (ii) "C S G" (could be read as "C S C"), 51 folios, 20.5 × 12.5 cm, bound in dark brown cloth.

Literature: PNM 2002b, pp. 130-131.

¹² PNM 2001, p. 128 gives the measurements as 24.5 × 12 cm.

69 PNM MS 2812

Untitled but includes the *Angka Tiga, Rasi, Ketika Lima, Rejang*, interpretation of dreams, the seven planets, Rotating *Nāga*, house-building, omens of clothes gnawed by mice or rats, talismanic designs (Figures 32, 63, 152)

Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) moonface-in-shield (ii) "A G" (iii) "Andrea Galvani Pordenone" in cursive script (iv) two-headed eagle with "T S G" underneath, 100 folios, 17.1 × 12.4 cm, bound in dark-coloured coarsely woven fabric.

The final folio and the doublure of the lower cover contains text in Thai script, as well as a note in Jawi script that says:

"*Inilah 'k tib[?]. Inilah hamba Muhammad Ranan[?].*"
 "[This is 'k tib[?]. This is the servant Muhammad Ranan[?].]"

Literature: PNM 2002b, pp. 137-138.

70 PNM MS 2836

Untitled but includes medical prescriptions, effigies, talismanic designs, *Pamor Keris* (Figure 225)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermarks of (i) Maid of Holland (ii) "C. I B", 42 folios, 17.2 × 10.5 cm.

Literature: PNM 2002b, p. 154.

71 PNM MS 2843

Compilation including a treatise on death (*Bāb sakarāt al-mawt*), calendrical calculations, Rotating *Nāga*, a text on the *rijāl al-ghaib* (Figures 28a, 115)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermarks of (i) Dutch lion with the words "PROPATRIA EENDRAGT MAAKT MAGT" (ii) "V d L", 12 folios, 21 × 17.2 cm.

Literature: PNM 2002b, pp. 158-159.

72 PNM MS 2920

A compilation of effigies and talismanic designs (Figures 30, 55, 159, 195)

Malay peninsula, early twentieth century

Lined exercise book with light blue chequered cover, 22 folios,¹³ 21 × 16 cm, wrapped in paper design template for a tailor.

Literature: PNM 2003, p. 36.

73 PNM MS 2989

Compilation of *ḥadīth*, *Ketika* and *Saat Lima*, the *rijāl al-ghaib*, *Syarah Ayat Lima Belas* ('Treatise on the Fifteen Sentences'), good and bad years, location of a woman's secretion (*mani perempuan*) on days of the week, *du'ā'*, *Tārikh mukhtaṣar fī bayān silsilat al-nabī* ('A Brief History of the Genealogy of the Prophet'), notes on Sultan Iskandar Muda, a brief sermon and a short note on the *Ism al-a'zam* ('The Greatest Name') to be read after prayers, astrology (Figure 247)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European laid paper with watermarks of (i) "[POR] RATA" (ii) crest with the letters "A" and "P" visible (iii) other unidentifiable watermarks including what looks like the hind legs of a horse with the letter "V" underneath it, 87 folios (although sequence of folios jumps from fol. 13 to 16), 15 × 10 cm.

At the end of the section on the eight-year cycle (fol. 18v), it is written:

"*Tammat waqd faragh (min) sūrat al-ḥurūf sanat, yawm al-aḥad, waqt zuhr fī makān shaykhinā Abdul Mu'min ibn Hasan.*"

"[Finished and completed this treatise on the Letters of the Years, on Sunday, at noon [or the time of Zuhur], in the place of our shaykh Abdul Mu'min ibn Hasan.]"

Literature: PNM 2003, pp. 80-81, PNM 2006b, p. 55, illustrated.

¹³ Fol. 17 written as 18, and fol. 18 written as 17.

74 PNM MS 3007

Untitled but includes the *Ketika Lima*, letter-number interpretation, table of planetary hours, talismanic designs (Figures 229, 244)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late 1870s-80s (post-1876)

British laid paper with watermarks of (i) "SUPERFINE 1876" (ii) horn in crowned shield with "IM" underneath, 35 folios (paginated but some folios missing as it starts from p. 6, also pp. 66-67 missing), 22 × 16 cm, loose paper cover.

There is a possible name of the copyist/patron/owner on p. 57:

"*Bism faqīr Allāh ta'ālā Umar bin Ahmad 'ṭ-b-f.*"

"[In the name of the servant of God the Exalted Umar bin Ahmad 'ṭ-b-f.]"

Literature: PNM 2006a, p. 5.

75 PNM MS 3017

Untitled but includes the *Ketika Lima*, talismanic designs, erotology (Figure 228)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, nineteenth century

European laid paper (no watermarks detected), 25 folios (folios mixed up as text is not in sequence), 14.5 × 9.5 cm.

Literature: PNM 2006a, p. 10.

76 PNM MS 3018

A collection of talismanic designs (Figures 181a, b)

Probably Malay peninsula, nineteenth century

Paper of unknown origin (no laid lines, chain lines or watermarks detected), 4 folios, 15.3 × 10 cm.

Literature: PNM 2006a, p. 11

77 PNM MS 3179

Kitab Ilmu dan Jampi ('Book of Knowledge and Incantations', as on cover); includes the *rajamuka*

wheel, Rotating *Nāga*, *Ketika Burung*, *ketika* tables, weather chart (Figures 130, 157d, 197)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermark of Dutch lion with the words "CONCORDIA RESPARVAE CRESCUNT"; 7 folios, 17 × 10.5 cm, cardboard cover (not original).

Literature: PNM 2006a, p. 88.

78 PNM MS 3225

Pelbagai Petua ('Miscellaneous Rules', as on cover); includes the *Faal Quran*, *faal* using dice of *hā'* and *wāw*, *ketika* tables, table of planetary hours, *Rasi*, *Angka Tiga*, *Rejang* (Figure 139)

Pontianak, dated 1303 AH / 1885-86 AD

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) two-headed eagle with "A G" underneath (ii) moonface-in-shield (iii) "Andrea Galvani Pordenone", 23 folios (the pages are numbered beginning with what looks like "5" on fol. iv, suggesting that some pages are missing), 23.5 × 17 cm, loose white sheet of paper as cover (not original).

Dated 1303 AH / 1885-86 AD on p. 4/fol. 1r. There are also various notes in the margins and blank pages detailing life events such as births and deaths that happened in Pontianak, western Borneo, during the second half of the twentieth century. For example in the margin of p. 6/fol. 2r is the following notice:

"*Daud dapat anak laki-laki hari Ahad, 4 bulan Safar (di) Pontianak, tahun 1396.*"

"[Daud obtained a son on Sunday, 4 Şafar, (in) Pontianak, in the year 1396 [5 February 1976 AD].]"

Literature: PNM 2006a, p. 110.

79 PNM MS 3231

Untitled but includes a compass rose, *rajamuka* wheel, *ketika* table, calendar (Figures 85, 157c)

Probably Malay peninsula, dated 1245 AH / 1829-30 AD

European laid paper with watermark of a crest with what looks like an "M" inside it, 2 folios, 34.2 × 21.4 cm.

Dated 1245 AH / 1829-30 AD on fol. 2r.

Literature: PNM 2006a, p. 112.

80 PNM MS 3429

Ramal ('Divination'); includes *ketika* tables, table of planetary hours, *rajamuka* wheel, *faal* using dice of *hā'* and *wāw*, letter-number interpretation, *Rasi* (Figures 34, 133, 140, 240, 251)

Singapore, 1907

European laid paper with pre-printed pink margins (no watermarks detected), 99 pages,¹⁴ 28 × 21.5 cm, binding of ochre brown with geometric patterns and yellow fabric lining inside, wrapped in plastic with a piece of paper stuck on the front.

In the introduction to the text (flyleaf verso), the copyist notes down the date when work on the manuscript first began:

"Maka tatkala saya mulakan ini ramal pada malam Jumaat, kepada bulan Safar, tanggal empat belas hari, kepada tahun seribu tiga dua ratus dua puluh empat, kepada malam Jumaat pada jam pukul 8 lapan."

"[Thus I began this *ramal* on the night of Friday [i.e. Thursday night], in the month of Šafar, on the fourteenth, in the year one thousand three two hundred twenty four [9 April 1906 AD], on Friday night at 8pm.]"

As the copyist progresses throughout the manuscript other dates are mentioned: Saturday 28 Šafar 1325 / 13 April 1907 AD on p. 53, Tuesday 30 Rabī' 1 1325 / 14 May 1907 AD on p. 79.

On p. 40 is written:

"Tamat faal ini kepada bulan Safar, tanggal 24, pada malam Isnin, jam pukul sepuluh enam minit. Tertulis di

dalam negeri Singapura, Kampung Kapor, di Jalan Kelantan a-r-w-t, rumah nombor dua belas, kepada tahun 1325 adanya."

"[This *faal* was completed in the month of Šafar, on the 24th, on Monday night, at six minutes past ten. Copied in Singapore, Kampung Kapor, Kelantan Road a-r-w-t, house number twelve, in the year 1325 [7 April 1907 AD].]"

The final date is given on p. 92 (this is not the end of the text):

"Tamat kepada hari Sabtu, kepada jam pukul dua petang, bulan Rabiulakhir, tanggal 4 hari, 1325."

"[Completed on Saturday, at two pm, in the month of Rabī' 11, on the 4th, 1325 [17 May 1907 AD].]"

On fol. 1r is a signature: "B.O. Phih[?] 1907".

Literature: PNM 2006a, p. 213, illustrated on p. 212 (where the publication incorrectly captions the photo as MS 3427).

81 PNM MS 3498

Ilmu Dunia [illegible] ('Knowledge of the [illegible] World', as on cover); includes the *Rejang*, good and bad days, *Rotating Nāga*, *Ketika Lima*, house-building, talismanic designs, weather chart (Figures 28c, 94)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, late nineteenth century

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) two-headed eagle (ii) moonface-in-shield, 42 pages (although pp. 19-33 are missing and the final page is unpaginated), 25.5 × 18 cm, loose cardboard cover (probably not original).

Literature: PNM 2006a, pp. 242-243.

82 PNM MS 4080

Surat Bicara Meraksi ('Written Text on Determining Compatibility'); includes astrology, letter-number interpretation, weather chart (Figures 35, 237, 291)

Terengganu, dated Thursday 7 Muḥarram 1321 AH / 5 April 1903 AD

14 Folio 1 is made up of two sheets stuck together. The folio containing pp. 17-18 is not between pp. 16 and 19 but instead is found between pp. 24 and 25, also p. 18 is on the recto side and p. 17 is on the verso, thus the sequence of pages is pp. 24-18-17-25. The folio containing pp. 33-34 might be missing.

Italian paper with watermarks of (i) moonface-in-shield (ii) “Andrea Galvani Pordenone”,¹⁵ 54 pages, 23.5 × 18 cm, tree bark binding.

Colophon on p. 52 reads:

“Telah selesailah daripada surat bicara meraksi ini kepada hari Khamis, kepada tujuh haribulan al-Muharram, Haji Derahman yang menyurat ibn Encik Long; orang negeri Terengganu, yang duduk di atas di Kampung Seberang Bukit Tumbuh, sanāt 1321.”

“[Completed this discussion on *raksi* methods on Thursday, seventh of Muharram, written by Haji Derahman ibn Encik Long; a Terengganu man who lives in Kampung Seberang Bukit Tumbuh, year 1321.]”

Literature: Muhammad Pauzi 2007, p. 5, no. v; PNM 2011, pp. 109–110.

83 PNM MS 4084

A form of *Faal Quran* using strings (Figure 147)

Terengganu, early twentieth century

Circular sheet of paper that has been pasted onto yellow cloth, divided into ten parts with a string on each section, 33 cm in diameter.

It was previously owned by a member of the royal family.¹⁶ It does not have a colophon but according to Muhammad Pauzi Abdul Latif, it was copied by Haji Abdul Rahman ibn Encik Long.¹⁷

Literature: Muhammad Pauzi 2007, p. 5, no. i; PNM 2011, p. 111, also illustrated on the front cover.

84 RAS Maxwell 15

Titled in English on flyleaf as “*Treatise on Magic, Divination etc.*” (Figures 90, 91, 190, 200, 236, 260, 272)

Taipung, Perak, dated 3 Jumādā II 1299 AH / 22 April 1882 AD

¹⁵ According to PNM 2011, p. 109.

¹⁶ Muhammad Pauzi 2007, p. 5.

¹⁷ Pers. comm. 7 July 2012.

British lined paper with watermarks of (i) Britannia (ii) “Waterlow & Sons Limited Loft dried”, 120 folios, 32.5 × 20 cm. William Maxwell bequest, 1898.

Colophon on fol. 119v says:

“Telah tamat surat ini di dalam Taipung, kepada 3 haribulan Jamadilakhir, tahun 1299. Tetapi ada lagi hubungan surat ini kepada buku nombor 2 adanya. Maka adalah surat ini salinan daripada buku Engku Haji iaitu Raja Yahya. Yang empunya surat ini Tuan William Edward Maxwell, Assistant Resident negeri Perak yang memerintah Larut serta sekalian jajahannya. Wa-kātibuh yang menyurat ini hamba Allah Taala yang hina, Uda Muhammad Hashim ibn al-Marhum Khatib Usuluddin Perak. Āmīn.”

“[Thus completed this text in Taipung, on the 3rd of Jumādā II, the year 1299. But there is a continuation in Book No. 2. This text is a copy from a book of Engku Haji, i.e. Raja Yahya. The owner of this text is William Edward Maxwell, Assistant Resident of Perak who governs Larut and all of its districts. And copied by the lowly servant of God the Exalted, Uda Muhammad Hashim ibn al-Marhum Khatib Usuluddin Perak. Amen.]”

Literature: Blagden 1899, p. 122; Voorhoeve 1963, p. 70; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 145; Farouk 2013, vol. 1, pp. 384–411, vol. 2, pp. 220–230 (cat. 86); Farouk 2015b.

85 RAS Maxwell 53

***Faal Quran*, titled *Surat Faal Keluar daripada Hayat Quran* (“*Treatise on Faal that is Derived from Sentences of the Qur’an*”) (Figure 146)**

Larut, Perak, dated 5 Sha’bān 1296 AH / Thursday 24 July 1879 AD

English laid paper with watermarks of (i) “T H SAUNDERS” (ii) “SUPERFINE”, 21 folios, 22 × 17 cm. William Maxwell bequest, 1898.

On the flyleaf is Maxwell’s signature and “Larut. 1879” together with the following note: “*Surat fa-al*’ for divining fate. Copied from a Borneo M.S.S. belonging to

Hugh Low Esq^{re}, Resident of Perak". The colophon on p. 41 says:

"Tamat surat ini pada lima haribulan Syaaban sanat 1296, kepada 24 Julai, 1879 tahun, di dalam Larut, daerah Taiping di Bukit Maruan[?]. Yang empunya Tuan Maxwell, Assistant Resident Larut, negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan, tamat. Wa-kātibuh 'Imad Uddīn ibn Th-y-n-h-ʿ-y-l-y-h [?]."
 "[Completed on the fifth of Sha'bān, year 1296, equivalent to 24 July, year 1879, in Larut, the district of Taiping on Bukit Maruan[?]. Owned by Mr. Maxwell, Assistant Resident of Larut, Perak Darul Ridzuan, ends. And copied by 'Imad Uddīn ibn Th-y-n-h-ʿ-y-l-y-h [?].]"

There is also a large, loose folded sheet of the wheel diagram on blue laid European paper, with the colophon:

"Tamatlah ketika ini pada 17 Julai 1879, jadi 28 haribulan Rejab 1296. Yang empunya Tuan Maxwell, Assistant Resident Larut, negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan. Ditulis di Larut daerah Klian, Taiping, tamat. Wa-kātibuh 'Imad Uddīn ibn Th-y-n-h-ʿ-y-l-y-h [?]."
 "[This *ketika* was completed on 17 July 1879, equivalent to 28 Rajab 1296. Owned by Mr. Maxwell, Assistant Resident of Larut, Perak Darul Ridzuan. Written in Larut in the district of Klian, Taiping, ends. And copied by 'Imad Uddīn ibn Th-y-n-h-ʿ-y-l-y-h [?].]"

Literature: Blagden 1899, p. 125; Voorhoeve 1963, p. 72; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 147.

86 RAS Maxwell 106

Kitab Perintah Pawang ('Book of Instructions for the Magician'); includes texts on the Original Magician and various incantations (Figures 64, 238)

Belanja, Perak, dated 21 Sha'bān 1296 AH / 10 August 1879 AD

Italian laid paper with watermarks of (i) two-headed eagle with "FNF" underneath (ii) moonface-in-shield, 144 pages, 24.5 × 17 cm. William Maxwell bequest, 1898. Partial romanisation in RAS Maxwell 106 A in three lined exercise books, measuring 24 × 18 cm.

Transcription ends on p. 137 of original manuscript. There is supposed to be a continuation in the third exercise book, but the relevant pages have been torn out.

The title on the flyleaf reads:

"9 Syaaban 1296 di Belanja tarikh yang ini[?]. Inilah Kitab Perintah Pawang Tuan Maxwell, sahah Pawang Yahya punya ilmu. Menyuratkan dengan hukuman Tengku Raja Idris, hakim besar."

"[9 Sha'bān 1296 [29 July 1879 AD] in Belanja on this date[?]. This is the 'Book of the Pawang's Instructions' of Mr. Maxwell, verified[?] as [containing] the knowledge of Pawang Yahya. Written under the instructions of Tengku Raja Idris, the high judge.]"

On the margin of p. 1 of the manuscript is a note saying that the text was obtained(?) from the Queen of Jambi (*salih daripada Tengku Puan Jambi*). Similar accounts also appear elsewhere in the same manuscript: e.g. on p. 81 where a note on the margin says that the text was obtained(?) from the magician Pawang Na'am, and on p. 144.

On p. 140 is a colophon with the date 14 Sha'bān 1296 AH / 3 August 1879 AD, but a later date is given in the colophon on p. 144:

"Kepada 21 Syaaban, tahun 1296 wa-kātibuh al-Haji Raja Yahya, penghulu mukim di Belanja, waktu jam pukul 8, tamat."

"[On 21 Sha'bān, in the year 1296 [10 August 1879 AD], and copied by al-Haji Raja Yahya, the headman [*penghulu*] of the district of Belanja, at 8 o'clock in the morning, ends.]"

Literature: Maxwell 1881, pp. 521-523; Winstedt 1950b, pp. 325-327; Voorhoeve 1963, p. 74; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 149-150.

87 RAS Raffles Malay 34

Undang-undang Negeri Mengkasar dan Bugis ('Laws of the Countries of Mengkasar [Makassar] and

Bugis'); includes legal codes, treaty between King Hasanuddin of Gowa and Admiral Speelman, chronicle of Makassar, Rotating *Nāga*, measurement of the *keris*, spells and talismans, *ketika*, good and bad days, omens, letter-number interpretation (Figures 28b, 258a)

Most likely Penang, dated Sunday, 15 Šafar 1221 AH / 4 May 1806 AD

English paper with watermarks of (i) "I Sellers" (ii) "1800", the flyleaves are on British paper with watermarks of (i) "VEIC" in a heart shape within shield with "4" above (ii) "1808", 121 pages, 30.5 × 20 cm, bound in dark brown marbled cover with "UNDANG UNDANG" ("Laws") and "M" embossed on the spine. Thomas Stamford Raffles bequest, 1830.

On the flyleaf is written:

"Inilah Kitab Undang-undang Negeri Mengkasar dan Bugis, tamat. Pada sanat 1221, tahun dal akhir, pada lima belas haribulan Safar, pada hari Ahad, sudah tamat. Wa-kātibuh Muhammad Kasim."

"[This is the Book on the Laws of the Countries of Mengkasar [Makassar] and Bugis, ends. On 1221, year of the final *dāl*, on the fifteenth of Šafar, on Sunday [4 May 1806 AD], ends. And copied by Muhammad Kasim.]"

Literature: possibly Raffles 1818; Tuuk 1866a, pp. 436-439; Tuuk 1866b, pp. 107-110; possibly Raffles 1879a; possibly Raffles 1879b; Winstedt & Josselin de Jong 1956; Voorhoeve 1963, pp. 61-62; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 137.

88 RAS Raffles Malay 74

Untitled but includes legal texts, *Rejang*, *du'ā*, the seven planets, *Ketika Lima* (Figure 49)

Probably Selangor, c. 1189 AH / 1775 AD

Dutch laid paper with watermark of Maid of Holland, the flyleaves are on British paper with watermarks of (i) "VEIC" in a heart shape within shield with "4" above (ii) "1808", 103 folios, 21 × 15.5 cm, bound in dark brown marbled cover with "UNDANG UNDANG" ("Laws") and

"M" embossed on the spine. Thomas Stamford Raffles bequest, 1830.

Fols. 79r-82v is a slave law of Selangor from Sultan Salehuddin, dated Sunday 10 Sha'bān 1189 AH / 6 October 1775 AD.

On fol. 100v there is a notice of a birth:

"Hijrah Nabi saw seribu seratus sembilan puluh tiga tahun, kepada tahun waw, kepada dua puluh haribulan Jamadilawal dan kepada malam Sabtu, dan kepada waktu Isyak, bahawa adalah kepada ketika itu Engku Raja Ahmad berputera perempuan bernama Raja Murah, dan kepada rejangnya Nabi Ismail."

"[In the hijra of the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, one thousand one hundred ninety-three, year of the letter *wāw*, on the twentieth of Jumādā I [5 June 1779 AD] and on Saturday night, and at the time of the 'Ishā' prayer, at that time Engku Raja Ahmad had a daughter by the name of Raja Murah, and the *rejang* was of the Prophet Ismā'il.]"

Also on fol. 100v is an unidentified record with the year 1198 AH / 1783-84 AD and the name Sultan Ibahraman/Ibaraman (Ibrahim?). This name also appears on another note on fol. 101r:

"Hijrah Nabi saw. seribu seratus sembilan puluh sembilan tahun, kepada tahun za, kepada dua puluh tiga haribulan kepada bulan Jamadilawal, kepada hari Rabu kepada tengah malam, kepada ketika Maswara, Sultan Ibaraman[?] berputera seorang laki-laki..."

"[In the hijra of the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, one thousand one hundred ninety-nine, year of the letter *zā*, on the twenty-third of Jumādā I [3 April 1785 AD], on Wednesday at midnight, during the *ketika* of Maheśvara, Sultan Ibaraman[?] had a son...]"

Literature: possibly Raffles 1818; Tuuk 1866a, p. 455; Tuuk 1866b, p. 124; possibly Raffles 1879a; possibly Raffles 1879b; Winstedt & Josselin de Jong 1956; Voorhoeve 1963, p. 66; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 142; Jelani 2007, pp. 26-29.

89 SOAS MS 7124

Malayan Tracts; includes the *Şirāṭ al-mustaqīm* ('The Straight Path') by Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānirī, *Qawā'id al-Islām* ('The Principles of Islam'), *Undang-undang Melaka* ('The Laws of Melaka'), astrology, charms, *Pamor Keris*, *Bāb fi 'alāmat sakarāt al-mawt* ('On the Signs of Approaching Death'), a tale of Abū Bakr, a tract on the Shattariyya doctrine (Figure 155)

Singkel, Aceh, c. 1199 AH / 1784–85 AD

European paper with watermark of "S G", flyleaf has watermark Britannia and "1795", bound in brown leather with "Malay religious writings &c" on the spine, 636 pages, 20 × 14.5 cm. William Marsden collection.

The section on the *Pamor Keris* has a colophon (p. 571) which says:

"*Tammāt al-qalam al-kātib fi yawm al-khamīs fi bilād al-Singkel fi hijrat annabī sanat 1199, wa-ṣāhibuh Lebai[?] Abdul Kahar ...*"

"[Finished by the hand of the writer on Thursday in Singkel in the year of the Prophet's hijra 1199 [1784-85 AD], the owner/author being Lebai[?] Abdul Kahar ...]"

Having looked at the manuscript it is uncertain whether the folio with the colophon is indeed part of the text on the *keris* or was a separate sheet that got bundled in together with it.

Literature: Marsden 1827, p. 304 ("Malayan Tracts: principally a translation of that part of the Arabic *Hedaya* or legal Guide which relates to Ceremonials, Ablutions, &c."); Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 155.

90 SOAS MS 12917

Titled in English as *Book of Instruction in the Art of Divination*; includes incantations, *ketika* tables, compass diagram of eight animals (Figure 264)

Sumatra, late eighteenth – early nineteenth century

European paper with unidentified watermark, modern marbled binding with brown spine and corners, embossed with "Malay Manual of Divination", 22 folios, 21.5 × 17 cm. William Marsden collection.

Literature: Marsden 1827, p. 304 ("Instruction in the Art of Divination, in the Malayan language."); Ricklefs & Voorhoeve, p. 159.

91 SOAS MS 25027(2)

Titled in English as *Book of Malay Charms* (Figures 65, 220, 292)

Perak, c. 1830s-40s

British and Italian papers with watermarks of (i) "Robert Weir 1833" (ii) Britannia (iii) *tre lune*, 31 pages (first three pages bound upside down), 23.5 × 17.5 cm, bound with two other texts (*Hikayat Abu Samah*, 'The Tale of Abu Samah'; and the chronicles of Melaka) in modern red hard cover with "3 MALAY MSS." on the spine. Donated by Richard Winstedt.

A note on the cover says:

"A book of Malay charms formerly belonging to a Sultan Muda of Perak & given to R.O. Winstedt by Raja Haji Yahya of Chenderiang. It contains the charm of Si Awang Lebeh & others quoted in 'Shaman Saiva & Sufi' (R.O. Winstedt). Undated."

Literature: Winstedt 1925, various pages; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 160.

92 SOAS MS 25030

Untitled but includes talismanic designs, effigies, *ketika* tables, chart for planting rice (Figures 66, 96, 284)

Kelantan, dated Saturday, 17 Jumādā I, no year given in colophon but probably nineteenth century

Italian paper with watermarks of (i) moonface-in-shield (ii) "Andrea Galvani Pordenone", 30 folios (but foliated in the Western manner; also fol. 30 which contains the colophon should be moved to fol. 1), 21.5 × 16 cm, modern marbled binding with brown spine and corners embossed with "Kelantan charm book". Donated to SOAS by Richard Winstedt, 1931. There is also a romanised transliteration with the same accession number as the original, on European paper, 75 pages, 32.5 × 20 cm.

The colophon on fol. 30v:

“... hamba menyalinkan surat ini daripada naskahnya pada tujuh belas hari bulan Jamadilawal pada hari Sabtu waktu jam pukul 8 siang hari. Iaitu yang menyuratnya Haji San Lundang, yang empunya Tuan Bilal Haji Yusuf, bilal Masjid Raja, itulah adanya.”

“[... I copied this text from my book on the seventeenth of Jumādā I, on Saturday, at 8 o'clock in the morning. The person who copied was Haji San Lundang, the owner is Tuan Bilal Haji Yusuf, muezzin of Masjid Raja.]”

The year 1324 AH / 1906-07 AD is written in a different hand on fol. 19r. The manuscript was later obtained by Dr. John D. Gimlette. In the second edition of his book *Malay Poisons and Charm Cures*, Gimlette writes the following:

“The old book was lent to me by Nik Ismail, of the Kelantan Medical Department; the script was partly translated by the help of Mr. A.F. Worthington, British Adviser, Kelantan, and has been further revised and checked by Dr. Winstedt, who discerns that a knowledge of Arabic is shown by the copyist. It is incomplete; some pages are missing and a good deal of it seems to be inexplicable. Nik Ismail told me that it belonged to his father, who is now a very old man.¹⁸”

Literature: Winstedt 1922; Gimlette 1923, pp. 98-109, illustrated on plate opposite p. 109; Winstedt 1925, various pages; Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, p. 160; Contadini 2007, p. 54, cat. 41, illustrated.

93 SOAS MS 40328

Faal Quran and Saat Lima (Figure 145)

Melaka, dated 1332 AH / 19(?) December 1913 AD

Lined notebook paper (no watermarks detected), 16 folios, 33 × 20.5 cm. Donated by Richard Winstedt. There is also a romanised transliteration in SOAS MS 40331, on blue European paper with a crest at the top of the sheet, 39 pages, 33 × 20.5 cm.

¹⁸ Gimlette 1923, p. 98.

There is a colophon on fol. 14r:

“Telah tamatlah sudah ketika ini kepada tarikh sanat 1332, bersamaan dengan tarikh Masihi kepada sanat 19[?] 12.1913. Diterjemahkan oleh al-ḥaqīr al-faqīr Ahmad bin Ja'idin. Ahmad, guru sekolah gamen K.[?] A. Gajah & Malacca.”

“[This *ketika* was completed in the year 1332, equivalent to the Christian date of 19[?].12.1913. Translated by the humble and poor Ahmad bin Ja'idin. Ahmad, school teacher at the government school in A. Gajah & Malacca.]”

On fol. 15r, Ahmad writes:

“Diterjemahkan oleh al-ḥaqīr al-faqīr Ahmad kepada bulan Muharram, dari dalam buku ayahanda aku Ja'idin, guru sekolah Padang Sebang.”

“[Translated by the humble and poor Ahmad during the month of Muḥarram, from the book belonging to my father Ja'idin, a school teacher in Padang Sebang.]”

A note by Winstedt on fol. 16v says:

“A Malay version of the prognostications of Jaafar Sidek – vide Shaman, Saiva & Sufi by R. O Winstedt. Collected at Alor Gajah. [signed] R. O Winstedt.”

Literature: Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 163-164.

94 SOAS MS 40779

Malayan Tracts; includes A: *Kitāb al-ḥarf fī ma'rifat al-marīḍ murattab 'alā ḥurūf abjad ta'lif al-ḥakīm Abū Hurmus* ('On the Diagnosis of Disease Organised According to the *Abjad* Order of Letters by the Great Medical Authority Abū Hurmus'), B: *Qur'a 'azīma fī 'ilm al-raml ta'lif al-Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq raḍiya Allāh ta'ālā 'anhu* ('The Great Lot Divination of Geomancy by Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, may God the Exalted be pleased with him'), C: *Al-'awāmil fī al-naḥw al-m'a* ('The Hundred Governing Words of Grammar') by 'Abd al Qāhir al-Jurjāni, D: *Paradigms of Arabic verbs* (Figure 142)

Probably Sumatra, late eighteenth century

Dutch paper with watermark of "V O C" monogram crowned with "A", "S C K", "L V G" and "D & C Blauw", modern binding, 68 folios, parts A, B and C 28 × 21 cm, part D 26.5 × 21 cm. William Marsden collection.

Literature: Marsden 1827, possibly p. 304 ("A Collection of Malayan Tracts"); Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977, pp. 164-165.

95 UM MSS 120

Collection of various talismanic designs and incantations (Figure 254)

Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century

Dutch laid paper with watermark of Dutch lion with "PROPATRIA EENDRAGT MAAKT MAGT", 47 folios, 16.5 × 10.3 cm, spine stitched with thread with some remnants of brown cloth attached to it.

Literature: Perpustakaan Peringatan Za'ba [n.d.], p. 5.

96 UM MSS 225

A treatise on astrology (zodiacal signs) (Figures 41, 138)

Singapore, early twentieth century

Lined exercise book by "E. Abdullahsah Book Binder & Dealersin [*sic*] Papers 102-2, Middle Rd., Singapore", 13 folios, 20.3 × 16.2 cm.

On the cover are stamps with the name 'H Combar, 700, North Bridge Road'. However there is also a sheet accompanying the manuscript (perhaps acquisition record?) that mentions 'Tuan Abdul Rahman bin Che Husin, Kg. Pauh Manis, Mayar[?], Patani, 13 May 1974'. In addition there is a possible signature on fol. 13r.

Literature: Perpustakaan Peringatan Za'ba [n.d.], p. 8.

Glossary

Abjad

A system whereby each letter of the Arabic alphabet corresponds to a number. Here the positions of the letters are different to the standard Arabic alphabetical sequence, but are instead based on an earlier, ancient ordering (the term *abjad* is based on the first four letters: *alif* ا, *bā'* ب, *jīm* ج and *dāl* د). The Malay *abjad* system however expands on the Arabic list because the Malay adaptation of the Arabic alphabet – Jawi – has a few additional letters. Accordingly, these have also been allocated values.

Ahli nujum

Or *ahli al-nujum*. Astrologer.

Amulet

See Talisman.

Angka kepala delapan ('Eight-headed cypher')

See Solomon's ring.

Angka sangga Siti Fatimah ('Fāṭima's life-preserving cypher')

A talismanic design composed of multiple loops formed by a single continuous line.

Angka Tiga ('Three Numbers')

A form of divination whereby the user would count off the days of the month across the numbers 1, 2, and 3 (which are usually placed within a triangle) to arrive at the prognostication. Also known as *Ketika Tiga* ('Three Times').

Astrology

Refers to "... the interpretation of the movements of the stars as a fulfilment of the will of the various godly powers so that men, by watching such movements, can determine the approach of fortune or misfortune..."¹ In Malay, astrology is known as *ilmu nujum*.

Augury

Refers to "the interpretation of signs in nature."² In Malay it tends to be referred to as *takbir* (from the Arabic *ta'bīr*, '(dream) interpretation'), and omens may be derived from natural events such as earthquakes (*gempa*), eclipses (*gerhana*) and lightning (*kilat* or *halilintar*). Another form of augury is the interpretation of involuntary movements or twitching of the body (*Gerak Segala Anggota*). There are also texts on the interpretation of dreams or oneiromancy (*Takbir Mimpi*), of which there are a few versions. Another Malay belief is that the appearance, behaviour or call of certain animals and birds foretells good luck or misfortune. Within the manuscripts the aforementioned texts are usually unillustrated, but there are some forms of augury that are accompanied by drawings. These include the omens that could be drawn from the patterns that are formed on clothes, as a result of having been gnawed by mice or rats, burnt by fire (*hangus api*) or caught in a tree.

Azimat

See Talisman.

Bibliomancy

Divination using books.

Bintang Celaka ('Star of Bad Luck')

A star for which it is important to know its location, as it affects the direction of travel and the outcome of human activities. It moves across the eight cardinal and intercardinal directions as well as residing in the sky or within the earth. In the northern region of the Malay peninsula, the location of the star is consulted to determine the best time to transfer the rice seedlings into the rice field. The locations of the star may be given in the form of a compass rose.

¹ Jeffers 1996, p. 147.

² Guiley 2006, s.v. "augury", p. 26.

Bintang Dua Belas ('The Twelve Stars')

- I. The twelve zodiacal signs, i.e. Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc.
- II. See Planetary hours.

Bintang Tujuh ('The Seven Stars')

- I. The seven classical planets i.e. the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Also known as *Raja Bintang* ('Kings of the Stars').
- II. The constellation of Pleiades.

Bomoh

See Magician.

Buduh

An artificial talismanic word, which is an acronym of the four corner cells of a 3×3 magic square if the numbers within this square are substituted with letters using the *abjad* system.

Calligraphic lion

A form of zoomorphic calligraphy, i.e. text that is written in the shape of animals. In Islamic Southeast Asia, calligraphic lions (although it is possible that some of the creatures depicted are meant to represent tigers rather than lions, for simplicity this book uses the term 'calligraphic lion' to cover both possibilities) are found across various media such as manuscript illumination, wood panels and textiles. Within the Malay magic and divination manuscripts the calligraphic lions are usually composed from part of the Qur'anic verse 61:13 which reads: "help from God and a speedy victory. So give the Glad Tidings to the Believers".

Charm

See Talisman.

Chinese twelve-year animal zodiac

A twelve-year cycle whereby each year is represented by an animal. In the Malay version of the twelve-year animal cycle, the Rabbit is replaced with the Mousedeer (*Pelanduk*), and the Pig with the Tortoise (*Kura*), while the Dragon and Snake

are referred to as Large Snake (*Ular Besar*) and Second Snake (*Ular Sani*) respectively.

Cincin Sulaiman ('Solomon's ring')

See Solomon's ring.

Compass diagram of eight animals

See *Yoni* calculation.

Compass rose

A diagram in the form of an eight-pointed star with points towards the eight cardinal and inter-cardinal directions. In PNM MS 1797 (probably Patani, nineteenth century; cat. 44) it is referred to as *Kitaran Mata Angin Dua Lapan* ('The Eight Cardinal Points').

Diagram

Diagrams are used to organise information, and encompass things like tables, charts, compasses and other forms of representative schemas.

Divination

An act that "attempts to predict future events (or gain information about things unseen) but not necessarily to alter them."³

Doa

See *Du'ā'*.

Du'ā' (Arabic)

Prayer formulas or supplications.

Edaran Jakni ("Rotation of the *Jakni*")

See *Jakni*.

Effigy

A model or image of a human being, animal or spirit that acts as a substitute in magical practices, referred to in Malay as *rupa*. In Malay magical practices, models of humans and animals serve as substitutes or scapegoats for the spirits, dough figures of humans are employed to recall the *semangat* of a

³ Savage-Smith 2004, p. xiii.

patient, while drawings of the spirits themselves are used as protection against them. Effigies may also be used for more evil purposes, either to hurt other people or employed in love magic.

Faal

Arabic: *fa'l* ('omens'). See Sortilege.

Faal Kalam Allah ('Divination by the Word of God')

A form of bibliomancy. Here the querent has to open the Qur'an at random, turn over another seven folios (*waraqā*) from the opened page, and then count seven lines (*saṭr*) downwards from the top of the page on the right. The first letter he sees is the key letter that is cross-referenced against the manuscript for the prognostication.

Faal Quran ('Divination by the Qur'an')

A form of bibliomancy. It involves the querent picking a question from a pre-determined list. Then by selecting a lot number at random from a grid of numbers, he would utilise a wheel diagram (which contains either Qur'anic verses or titles of the suras) to obtain the answer from a list of possible responses. Among the Malay manuscripts this procedure is found in two versions.

Faal using dice of *hā'* and *wāw*

A form of sortilege using a dice with the letters *hā'* ه and *wāw* و. It is thrown four times to generate a combination of four letters, each sequence being represented by an Islamic prophet or angel and predicts either a good or bad outcome.

Faal using wheel diagram and string

A form of sortilege using a wheel diagram, which consists of a round piece of paper which is divided into a number of sectors, each of which contains a prognostication with a piece of string attached to its edge. According to the instructions given in PNM MS 4084 (Terengganu, early twentieth century; cat. 83), the user chooses a sector at random by putting the paper onto his head and pulling at the string.

Fālnāma (Persian)

Texts on sortilege may be compiled in manuscripts and books, which are commonly known in English as Books of Fate or lot-books, in German as *Losbuch*, and in Persian as *fālnāma* ('Book of Omens').

Familiar spirit

A spirit that helps a magician in carrying out magical practices or activities.

Firasat

See Physiognomy.

Gerak Segala Anggota ('Movement of All Parts of the Body')

Interpretation of involuntary movements or twitching of the body. See Augury.

Geomancy

This technique involves the interpretation of sixteen geomantic figures, each of which is composed of four lines of one or two dots. This is produced by randomly generating sixteen rows of dots, and then counting the dots off in pairs for each line. A row with an odd number of dots is represented by one dot, and an even-numbered row by two dots. These are then grouped into four sets of geomantic figures (known as 'mothers'), and a further twelve figures are then generated from these initial four, producing a geomantic tableau which is interpreted in order to derive the prognostication. Among the Malay manuscripts there is an Arabic text with an interlinear Malay translation, with an Arabic title *Qur'a 'aẓīma fī 'ilm al-raml ta'līf al-Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq raḍīya Allāh ta'ālā 'anhu*, translated into Malay as *Bubung Undi yang Maha Besar dalam Ilmu Ramal iaitu Karangan Imam Ja'far Sadiq* ('The Great Lot Divination of Geomancy by Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, may God the Exalted be pleased with him'). According to this text, a geomantic figure is generated by grabbing a bunch of seeds (*biji*) or pebbles (*batu*) in one's hand, and then counting them off in pairs – this is done four times. However rather than generating further figures and looking at the tableau as a

whole, only one geomantic figure is needed in order to tell the fortune.

Hantu

Ghost or spirit.

Hemerology

Refers to "... the cultural practice of connecting the success or failure of actions with favourable or unfavourable days defined by the calendar..."⁴

Hikmat

See Magic.

Illumination

Decorative or ornamental elements used to beautify the manuscript and its contents.

Illustration

In this book illustrations comprise sketches, drawings and paintings of human beings, spirits, animals (both real and mythical), plants, buildings and various objects. In some manuscripts the illustrations are referred to by the terms *peta*⁵ or *gambar*.

Ilmu ('Knowledge')

In terms of Malay magical practices this usually refers to magical knowledge.

Ilmu nujum

Arabic: *ilm al-nujūm* ('the science of the stars'). See Astrology.

Image

In this book, this could refer to either:

- I. Any form of graphical representations such as illustrations, diagrams and talismanic designs.
- II. An effigy.

Incantation

Refers to: "A formula of words that are spoken or sung for a specific magical purpose."⁶

Invocation

Refers to: "An invitation to a spirit, deity, or entity to be present and use its powers to grant requests."⁷

Intertwining *nāga* diagram for ascertaining compatibility

A diagram of two intertwined figures of the *nāga* is used to determine the compatibility of a couple. In this diagram, the twelve circles on the creatures – two on the head, middle and tail of each *nāga* – are joined with lines onto four points. Each circle represents one year of age and one of the animals of the Chinese twelve-year zodiac, and thus the man would count from head to tail while the woman would count in the opposite direction. If both of them end up at the head of the same *nāga*, then the union will be happy, but if they land on the heads of different *nāga*, they will most likely separate. This diagram may take the form of a ship or not include illustrations at all, leaving just the lines joining the circles and points.

Jakni

Or *jaguni* or *chaguni*. A class of spirits that move around the cardinal points on a temporal basis which affect the direction of travel and the outcome of human activities. Wilkinson defines them as "Spirits or influences believed to govern periods of good or evil fortune."⁸ According to one text referred to as *Edaran Jakni* ('Rotation of the *Jakni*'), the *jakni* were sent by God to 'Alī and then given to all war champions (*hulubalang*). Here the text also identifies the Hindu gods of the *Ketika Lima* as being the vehicles (*kenaikan*) of the *jakni*, and each *jakni* faces a particular cardinal/intercardinal direction during one of five time periods of a day. In the passages of Blagden's 1895 notebook, the

⁴ Stuckrad 2012.

⁵ In modern Malay usage *peta* means 'map'.

⁶ Guiley 2006, s.v. "incantation", p. 144.

⁷ Guiley 2006, s.v. "invocation", p. 146.

⁸ Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "jaguni".

text describes the *jakni* as being “... *penghulu segala iblis, kepala segala seteru*” (“... the leader of all devils, the head of all enemies”).⁹

Jampi

Sanskrit: *japa*. Refers to “... a form of *mantera* used to cure illnesses that is usually recited over medicine, water, oil, etc.”¹⁰

Jin

See Jinni.

Jinni (plural jinn)

Malay: *Jin*. A class of spirits in Islamic cosmology, said to be made from fire. In Malay belief the term may be used to refer to spirits in general.¹¹

Ketika

Malay divinatory methods involving time. The term could have been derived from the Sanskrit *ghaṭikā* (a division of time denoting 24 minutes), or possibly from the name of the star cluster Pleiades (Sanskrit: *Kṛttikā*). It is also a generic term used to describe charts or calendars of auspicious/inauspicious days.

Ketika Angin ('Wind Times')

Weather charts that show good and bad days for travelling and sailing throughout the whole year, whereby tables or rows of texts or marked circles are laid out representing favourable and unfavourable days.

Ketika Burung ('Times of the Bird')

A form of divination. According to PNM MS 2588 (Patani or Kelantan, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 64), the *Burung Malaikat* ('Angel Bird') moves across the universe in four parts (“*Ia mengedarkan alam dunia ini empat mazhab alam*”): on the first day of the month on its beak, the second day on its wing, the third day on its

feet, and the fourth day on its tail (it is unclear if there is a connection to the cardinal points). Like most other Malay divination tracts, here each *ketika* (time period) is linked to the outcomes of various human activities. For example, if the *ketika* is on the beak of the bird, business will be good but sailing or travelling will be bad. In the manuscripts this technique is usually accompanied by an illustration of a bird.

Ketika Lima ('Five Times')

This method is the most popular divinatory technique found. Here each day is divided into five time periods: morning (*pagi-pagi*), forenoon (*tengah naik*), noon (*tengah hari*), afternoon (*tengah turun*) and evening (*petang-petang*). The cycle begins on the first day of the month, and therefore occasionally an upward-facing crescent moon is placed on the top right hand corner of the table to indicate the start of a new month and the place to begin counting. The five time periods of the day are presided over by Hindu gods, who rotate their positions over a five-day cycle. They are: Maswara (a contraction of Maheśvara, 'Great Lord', a term usually associated with the god Śiva), Kala (Kāla), Sri (Śrī), Brahma (Brahmā) and Bisnu (Viṣṇu).

Ketika Tiga ('Three Times')

See *Angka Tiga*.

Ketika Tujuh ('Seven Times')

A Malay abbreviated form of the planetary hours system, whereby the day is divided into only seven time periods with one for each planet. Here hours 8 to 24 of the planetary hours system are discarded, leaving only the first seven hours of the day with their planets intact. These seven periods are then altered into morning (*pagi-pagi*), forenoon (*tengah naik*), just before noon (*hampir tengah hari*), noon (*tengah hari*), the time of the Zuhr prayer (*Zuhur*), the time of the 'Aṣr prayer (*Asar*) and evening (*petang-petang*). Each planet is either benefic or malefic, thus influencing human activities during the time period it presides over. Some texts also associate each planet with a prophet and a colour.

9 SOAS MS 297497 (probably Melaka, 1895; ex-cat.), fol. 12r.

10 My own translation of Haron 2007, p. 52.

11 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “jin”.

Kitab

Arabic: *kitāb* ('book'). In Malay it typically refers to "scripture generally or of religious or learned works" such as the Qur'an, devotional tracts and works on Islamic theology,¹² but also includes books and manuscripts on magic and divination.

Kitab Bintang Dua Belas ('Book on the Twelve Stars')

A Malay translation by Ahmad Abdul Kadir al-Falfalani of a work said to be by the great astrologer Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī (787–886). It seems to have been based on an Arabic text on astrology and geomancy entitled *Abū Ma'shar al-falakī al-kabūr, al-muḥaqqiq al-mudaqqiq al-yūnānī al-faylasūf al-shahīr* ('Abū Ma'shar the Great Astronomer, the Meticulous Greek Investigator and Famous Philosopher') which has been attributed (perhaps wrongly) to Abū Ma'shar.

Kitab tib

Arabic: *kitāb al-ṭibb* ('Medical books'). Typically the prescriptions found in Malay *kitab tib* are herbal remedies, but it must be noted that their preparation and usage may indeed involve magical rites. In addition some *kitab tib* also contain texts on magical rituals and divinatory techniques that are not related to medicine.

Langsuir

The vampire of a woman who died during childbirth.

Latin square

A grid containing symbols, numbers, letters or words whereby each row drops the first symbol of the preceding line and places it at the end of the sequence.

Lawḥ al-ḥayāt ('The Board of Life') and Lawḥ al-mamāt ('The Board of Death')

A diagram consisting of two tables or grids containing the numbers 1 to 30, with one grid of numbers

being called *Lawḥ al-ḥayāt* and the other *Lawḥ al-mamāt*. The numerical values of the letters forming a person's name are added to that of the day of the month (sometimes other components may be added such as the mother's name), and then 30 is subtracted continuously until a remainder is left. This remainder is then compared to the two grids of numbers in the diagram. In PNM MS 2487 (Malay peninsula or Sumatra, second half of the nineteenth century; cat. 60), this technique is used to determine the outcome of war – if the number falls under the *Lawḥ al-ḥayāt* then the person will live, but if it falls under the *Lawḥ al-mamāt* then the person will die.

Lot-casting

See Sortilege.

Love magic

Or erotic magic. Refers to "... any form of magic intended to manipulate the sexual behaviour of others."¹³

Lunar mansions

These are "the 27 or 28 divisions of the ecliptic circle (the course of the Sun through the heavens) marked out by the Moon in its monthly course."¹⁴

Magic

An act that "seeks to alter the course of events, usually by calling upon a superhuman force (most often God or one of his intercessors)..."¹⁵ In Malay, magic can be referred to as *hikmat* (Arabic: *ḥikma*, 'wisdom').

Magic square

A grid containing numbers that are "arranged in such a way that each column, and every row, and the two main diagonals would all give the same sum."¹⁶

¹² Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "kitab". These are also known as *kitab jawi* and *kitab kuning*.

¹³ Dickie 2000, p. 565.

¹⁴ Burnett 2004, p. 43.

¹⁵ Savage-Smith 2004, p. xiii.

¹⁶ Cammann 1969a, p. 181.

Magician

A person who practises magic. In Malay society the magician is “supposed to be in touch with the world of spirits and plays a part in exorcising illnesses, driving ill-luck out of a district by propitiating unseen powers, choosing lucky times for opening a new mine or planting a new crop, and performing the customary rites that took place on such occasions.”¹⁷ While ordinary magicians typically work alone, using basic spells in conjunction with specific rituals and materials, shamans would conduct ceremonies whereby they would control, communicate and engage with spirits – usually in the state of a trance in a séance – with the promise of sacrifice and offerings. In Malay society, both magicians and shamans are usually known as *bomoh* or *pawang*.

Mantera

Sanskrit: *mantra*. A generic term for oral magical incantations that covers “... any recitation in the form of a poem or rhyming prose that contains an element of magic, is used by certain people, especially the magician, for the purposes of good or otherwise.”¹⁸

Nāga

A deified serpent that is a major part of the beliefs of many cultures within South and Southeast Asia. Originating from the practice of serpent worship (ophiolatry), it appears prominently in both Hinduism and Buddhism. It is a chthonic or underworld creature, and is very strongly associated with rain and water as well as believed to be the guardian of treasure. In Malay it is spelt as *naga*.

Naga Hari (‘Day Nāga’, i.e. Daily Rotating Nāga)

A variant of the Rotating Nāga whereby the serpent moves across the cardinal directions on a daily basis.

Nakṣatra

The lunar mansions of Hindu astrology.

Omen

See Augury.

Oneiromancy

The interpretation of dreams. In Malay this is referred to as *Takbir Mimpi*.

Onomancy

Divination using the letters from a person’s name. Within the Islamic tradition (including Malay) this usually involves calculating the numerical values of these letters.

Pamor Keris (‘Damascene Patterns on a Keris’)

The interpretation of the damascene patterns (*pamor*) on the blade of a *keris* (a type of dagger), to ascertain if it is lucky or unlucky.

Pawang

See Magician.

Pelesit

A familiar spirit in the form of a grasshopper or cricket.

Penanggalan

A vampire birth spirit in the form of a woman with a head but without a body, only her entrails trailing underneath.

Pentagram

A five-pointed star, an ancient symbol already used by the Ancient Egyptians and Babylonians and employed in the West as a powerful magical tool. Within the Jewish tradition, the pentagram and the hexagram (a six-pointed star) are known as the ‘Shield of David’ (*Magen David*) while in Islam they are referred to as ‘Solomon’s seal’ (*khātam Sulaimān*). In the Islamic tradition, the pentagram or hexagram is the first of a group of seven symbols collectively known as the Seven Seals of Solomon. In Malay the pentagram is

17 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. “pawang”.

18 My own translation of Haron 2007, p. 52.

known as *tapak Sulaiman* (lit. 'Solomon's hand/footprint', i.e. Solomon's seal).

Peri Kucing ('On Cats')

A text on lucky and unlucky cats. Also see Physiognomy.

Physiognomy

This attempts "... to decode the inner character by developing a grammar of observable bodily features."¹⁹ Known in Malay as *firasat* (Arabic: *firāsa*). Within the Southeast Asian tradition including that of the Malays, physiognomy is not only limited to humans but also encompasses animals and objects which reveal if they are lucky (*bertuah*) or unlucky (*celaka*).

Pictorial *fālnāma*

A form of bibliomancy. This involves the use of an illustrated book whereby the user opens it randomly to find his fortune, with each augury being made up of an illustration on one page and the related prognostication on the opposite page.

Planetary hours

A form of divination whereby a day is divided into twenty-four hours, each of which is ruled by one of the seven planets, rotating over a cycle of seven days. The planets are given in the sequence of Saturn – Jupiter – Mars – Sun – Venus – Mercury – Moon, so for example the first hour of Saturday is ruled by Saturn, the second hour by Jupiter, the third by Mars, and so on. Since there are twenty-four hours and only seven planets, for the eighth hour the cycle begins with Saturn again. On the following day, the sequence would continue on from the twenty-fourth hour of the previous day. Within the Malay texts this is sometimes referred to as *Bintang Dua Belas* ('The Twelve Stars'; not to be confused with the twelve zodiacal signs which is also referred to in the same way).

Pustaha (Batak)

Manuscripts of the Batak of Sumatra that predominantly contain matters on magic and divination, typically in the form of folding-books made of tree-bark.

Pustaka

Sanskrit: *pustaka* ('book'). In Malay the term refers to books on divination and astrology. It could also refer to fortune that is read, as well as to a range of other meanings including magical power, sorcery and magical objects. In modern Malay usage the term *pustaka* is used to refer to books in general.

Rajah

Talismanic designs and inscriptions, which could be in the form of letters, numbers, words, geometric designs, drawings of spirits or any combination of these. They are written, drawn or inscribed onto materials such as paper, cloth, metal or leaves in order to create the necessary talisman. Also known as *wafak*.

Rajamuka (Javanese)

A divinatory counting-off method which involves the use of a circular or wheel diagram in which human figures are arranged in two concentric circles. The name of this diagram is not mentioned in the Malay manuscripts but it is known in Java as the *rajamuka* and as *kotika johor* among the Bugis and Makassarese, attributing its origins to the sultanate of Johor in the Malay peninsula. Elsewhere it is known by various other names: *pelangkahan* in Central Sumatra and *pidiran* or *pangkati* in Pasemah, Sumatra. In this diagram some of the human figures are depicted without heads – these represent the loser or the vanquished, while those that keep their heads are the victors. According to Skeat, the figures representing the user are those in the inner ring of the wheel, while the enemy's figures are in the outer ring. The user would count around the circle, and if the figure representing the user is headless then he will lose, but if the opposing figure is headless then the user will

¹⁹ Savage-Smith 2004, p. xli.

win.²⁰ Maass however reports the opposite: that the user's figures are those in the outer circle.²¹

Ramal

From the Arabic *'ilm al-raml* ('the science of the sands'), i.e. geomancy. However in traditional Malay literary works the term *ramal* is often conflated with astrology, while in current usage *ramal* is applied as a blanket term for 'divination' or 'prediction' in general.

Rasi

Or *raksi*. Sanskrit: *rāśi* (zodiacal signs). In Malay it refers to the compatibility of two people.

Rejang

A form of hemerology which assigns each day of the month (thirty days) to a living being (mostly animals) or object, each having either a good or bad influence.

Rijāl al-ghaib (Arabic)

These are "the «Hidden Beings» who control human destinies"²² who in the Sufi tradition are believed to be a class of saints (*walī*) that are invisible and wander across the globe every day. They affect the direction of travel and the outcome of human activities. Diagrams and tables showing their positions are found not only in the Malay manuscripts but also among the Bugis and Javanese as well as in many other parts of the wider Muslim world.

Rotating Nāga

A common divinatory technique whereby the *nāga* serpent is believed to rotate 90 degrees every three months over the four cardinal points. The location of its body parts at a particular time is used to determine whether it will be auspicious or otherwise to undertake certain actions, particularly in house-building and warfare. There are a

number of variants within the Malay tradition, but in the majority of cases (around two-thirds of the manuscripts consulted) the rotation of the *nāga* is as follows: the cycle begins with the first three months of the year – Muḥarram, Ṣafar and Rabī' 1 – during which the *nāga*'s head (*kepala*) faces west, its tail (*ekor*) is in the east, its belly (*perut*) towards the south and its back (*belakang*) towards the north. It then rotates in an anticlockwise direction, completing a full circle within the year. In the manuscripts this technique is usually accompanied with an illustration of the *nāga*.

Saat Lima ('Five Moments')

Similar to the *Ketika Lima* but here the watches comprise the Islamic prophets Ibrahim (Ibrāhīm), Yūsuf (Yūsuf) and Ahmad (Aḥmad, i.e. Muḥammad), and two angels: Jibrail (Jibrā'īl) the Messenger and Izrail ('Izrā'īl) the Angel of Death. These figures are also associated with colours (for example Yūsuf is yellow) and the concerns are alike, such as whether it is a good time to see the king, the reality of good and bad news, finding missing goods, the outcome of battle, etc.

Sakti

Sanskrit: *śakti*. Magical power that is possessed, in contrast to *hikmat* and *sihir* which refer to the magical act itself, although sometimes the distinction between them is not so obvious.

Sastera

Sanskrit: *śāstra* ('authoritative treatise'). In Malay the term refers to books on divination and astrology. In traditional Malay literary texts it does not appear as often as *pustaka*, and there is some ambiguity in the use of this term between astrological tables and books per se. In modern Malay usage the term *sastera* is used to refer to literature in general.

Seluruh Fatimah ('Fāṭima's talisman for facilitating childbirth')

A talismanic design for facilitating childbirth, consisting of a 3 × 3 grid that contains Arabic letters or

20 Skeat 1900, p. 560.

21 Maass 1910, vol. 1, pp. 499–500.

22 Wilkinson 1932a, s.v. "rijal".

combinations of letters. According to a text found in a number of Malay manuscripts, the angel Jibrā'īl gave this talisman to Fāṭima (Muḥammad's daughter) when she was giving birth to her sons Ḥasan and Ḥusain. It is to be drawn on a piece of paper and tied with white thread on the right arm of the woman giving birth.

Semangat

This refers to "an impersonal force vital to the well-being of men and things."²³ It is found in everything, i.e. not only in living beings such as humans and animals, but also in inanimate objects such as rocks, metals and even constructed structures such as houses.

Serapah

A form of oral magical incantation which is "used to rid of spirits such as jinn, ghosts, Satan, and also to shoo away wild animals using curses..."²⁴ Also known as *singelar*.

Seven Seals of Solomon

A group of seven symbols found in the Islamic tradition. The form and sequence of the symbols may vary but they are typically as follows (from right to left): a pentagram or hexagram, three vertical lines topped by a horizontal line, the letter *ل*, the 'ladder', four vertical lines, the letter *س* and the letter *ي* (with its tail going above itself). These seven symbols are believed to represent the Most Exalted Name of God, and they are also associated with the prophets, the seven days and the seven planets.

Shaman

See Magician.

Sihir

Arabic: *siḥr*. Within Malay usage it mostly denotes sorcery. There is also a sense that *sihir* is used to denote magic performed by non-Muslims.

Solomon's ring

A talismanic design composed of two overlapping squares, one diagonal to the other, with eight looped corners. Referred to in Malay as *cincin Sulaiman* ('Solomon's ring') or *angka kepala delapan* ('eight-headed cypher').

Sortilege

The casting of lots or sortilege works on the principle of "the interpretation of results produced by chance,"²⁵ and in Malay such methods are usually termed *faal* (Arabic: *fa'l*, 'omens').

Spell

Refers to: "A spoken or written magical formula."²⁶

Spread-eagled squatting posture

A way of depicting an anthropomorphic figure, whereby it is shown in a frontal view, with both legs apart and bent inwards at the knees. Both arms are raised upwards as if in invocation and are bent at the elbows.

Surat

Something that is written. *Surat* could also mean a letter or epistle.

Tajul Muluk ('The Royal Crown')

The full title of this work is *Tāj al-mulk al-muraṣṣa' bi anwā' al-durar wa-l-jawāhir al-manzūmāt*, 'The Royal Crown Inlaid with Many Kinds of Pearls and Jewels Set in a Pattern'. It was composed sometime between 1888 and 1891 by a member of the 'ulama' from Aceh by the name of Syeikh Ismail ibn Abdul Mutalib al-Asyi, a student of a well-known Patani religious scholar Syeikh Ahmad al-Fatani. It is a compendium of a number of topics such as the Islamic calendrical system, divination (including sortilege, dream interpretation, physiognomy), medicine and house-building. It was first printed in Cairo in 1309 AH / 1891 AD and since then has been published many times, becoming

23 Mohd. Taib 1989, p. 79.

24 My own translation of Haron 2007, p. 52.

25 Savage-Smith 2004, p. xxxiii.

26 Guiley 2006, s.v. "spell", p. 298.

perhaps the most famous Malay work on magic and divination.

Takbir

See Augury.

Takbir Mimpi

See Oneiromancy.

Talisman

Amulets, charms and talismans are objects that confer a benefit to its user or wearer, via some sort of magic, and are used for a variety of functions such as protection, healing and sorcery. In Malay these are generally called *azimat* or *jimat* (Arabic: *‘azīma*, ‘spell’ or ‘incantation’), although a protective amulet may also be known as a *tangkal*.

Talismanic design

In this book the term ‘talismanic designs’ is used to refer to texts or geometric symbols such as pentagrams that are employed for talismanic purposes. Also see *Rajah*.

Tangkal

See Talisman.

Tapak Sulaiman (lit. ‘Solomon’s hand/footprint’, i.e. Solomon’s seal)

See Pentagram.

Verse square

A grid whereby the cells contain words that are arranged in such a way that “in each consecutive row one word is dropped on the right side and a new one added on the left side, so that an entire verse from the Qur’an is worked into the square, and can be read in its entirety by reading across the top row and down the left-hand column of the square.”²⁷

Wafak

See *Rajah*.

Were-tigers

People who could transform themselves into tigers (*harimau jadi-jadian*), with magicians and shamans among those who are often said to possess this power.

Yoni calculation

A mathematical formula in the South Asian house-building tradition, used to determine whether the measurements of a building are of the correct proportion, in terms of whether it is auspicious or inauspicious. This is calculated by multiplying the width or area by 3, and dividing the result by 8. The remainder number is then linked to one of the cardinal directions and to an animal or object which is either auspicious or inauspicious: the Standard/Flag, Cloud, Lion, Dog, Bull, Donkey, Elephant and Crow. In Malay architecture a similar sequence of animals is also used to determine the auspiciousness of a new house, although here the Flag is replaced with the *Nāga* serpent. In the South Indian vernacular tradition an alternative group of animals for the *yonī* calculation is found: Eagle, Cat, Lion, Dog, Snake, Rat, Elephant and Rabbit. When these animals are placed around the eight cardinal points, they are arranged in such a way that those that are naturally antagonistic are placed opposite each other. In Malay magic and divination manuscripts similar groups of animals are found arranged around the compass rose, but the Dog and Rabbit are replaced by the Cow and Tiger, and they are often provided as a set of seven compasses, one for each of the seven days of the week. There are other sets of eight animals in the Malay manuscripts which provide further combinations and have different operational procedures.

²⁷ Savage-Smith 1997d, p. 107.

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Index

The following titles in personal names have been inverted: Bilal, Datuk, Dr., Encik, Haji, Imam, Lebai, Mas, Pawang, Puan, Radin, Raja, Sheikh, Si, Sultan, Tengku, Tok, Tuan, Tuanku, Uda.

The following however have not been inverted: Mek, Nik, Said, Wan.

The following generic names have been inverted: Bukit, Istana, Kampung, Masjid/Mosque, Maṭba'a, Sungai; but not Tanjung.

Watermarks are listed together, with the years first, then alphabetically.

Page numbers in bold refer to figures.

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