

BACKGROUND TO THE SRI VIJAYA STORY—PART I

Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese* (University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1961), pp. 338, maps.

O.W. Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce* (Cornell University, 1967), pp. 404, maps.

To discuss the early history of Southeast Asia without first identifying the relevant placenames with some degree of certainty is an exercise in futility. Try to imagine the confusion that would reign in discussions of European history if the location of Rome were a point of controversy. This is precisely the state of affairs in discussions of early Southeast Asian history. Sri Vijaya is a case in point. In 1918, Professor Georges Coedès advanced the hypothesis that southern Sumatra was the seat of an empire that lasted from the seventh to the thirteenth century. This hypothesis, since its inception, has become an article of faith among a number of scholars working in the field to the extent that unbelievers are scoffed at rather than argued with. But, like many articles of faith, this hypothesis plays havoc with reality, defying geography and meteorology, archaeology and written evidence, both internal and external. Those scholars, however, do not seem to be discouraged by these enormous inconsistencies. Instead, they are prompted to ever more dazzling feats of intellectual contortionism. With all due recognition of their skill, it seems to be time to call a halt and root out this orthodoxy.

The starting point for this paper is an examination of three books by two of the latest practitioners of Coedès' school of acrobatics: Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese*, and O.W. Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, and *The Fall of Sri Vijaya in Malay History*. The paper will go on to offer a corrective to Coedès' hypothesis, to argue that Chaiya and Nakorn Sri Thammaraj in peninsular Siam, rather than Palembang in Sumatra, were the centres of a medieval civilisation. This alternative hypothesis is based on equating Ptolemy's Aurea Khersonesus with the Thai Laem Thong (both names mean the Peninsula of Gold); and ranges from the 2nd century A.D. to Marco Polo at the end of the 13th. The main argument is based on the evidence of I-Ching, a 7th century Chinese monk who did his writing at a place he called *Foche*

(short for *Chele-foche*, which is thought to have referred to Sri Vijaya.) I-Ching's first-hand evidence can be supported by the science of meteorology (see section 3 below), while the Sri Vijaya inscriptions of South Sumatra of the same period are so controversial that they have been treated as subsidiary evidence. I-Ching's evidence, then, runs like a red thread through a rather rambling story that purports to lay the ghost of Professor Coedès' theory of a Sri Vijaya Empire in South Sumatra but at the same time to review certain aspects of Wheatley's and Wolters' books.

1. Langkasuka

Wheatley's *The Golden Khersonese* is divided into seven parts, of which the first four deal respectively with Chinese, Western, Indian and Arab records; Part V deals with Three Forgotten Kingdoms (Langkasuka, Takola and Kedah); Part VI, called the Isthmian Age, seems to be a lead-in to the last part on Malacca (Part VII). The book ends about 1500 A.D. with the arrival of the Europeans. I will first comment on two of the three kingdoms of Part IV (Langkasuka and Kedah), bringing in such sources from Chapters 3 and 4 of Part I to bear as may be relevant to the Sri Vijaya story. After that I will comment on the third Forgotten Kingdom, Takola Emporium, and on Ptolemy's two islands, Iabadiou and Sabadabai, which are not treated in Wheatley's book.

In an Appendix to Chapter 16 on pages 266-7 there is a list of names, with their sources, dates and locations, starting with the Chinese *Lang-ya-hsiu* and *Lang-ya-hsu* of the 7th century to the Langkasuka of the *Hikayat Marong Mahawamsa* of the late 18th century, *Alang-kah-suka* (Kedah folklore) and *Lakawn Suka* (Patani folklore) both of the early 20th century, all of which Wheatley equated with Langkasuka. If the names are put into chronological order and a line drawn at the Indian *Ilangasoka* of 1030, then the Chinese names in the first lot, starting with the *Lang-ya-hsiu* and *Lang-ya-hsu* already mentioned, all end with a sibilant sound; while those below the demarcation line, starting with *Ling-ya-ssu*-(chia) in 1225 and *Lang-ya-hsi-chio* in 1349, all end with a harsh *ka* sound. So the two sets of names did not refer to the same place: the first lot, with the sibilant ending, referred to Lakorn Chaisri,

while the second of course was Langkasuka. As the sources for these two names are different, I will deal with them separately.

Wheatley gives the Chinese evidence, as well as Arab, Indian, Javanese and Malay, but no Thai evidence. There is a long quotation, of both text and translation, from the *Hikayat Marong Mahawamsa* or *Kedah Annals* (pages 260-2), but Wheatley has left out the beginning of the story and only starts from the time Raja Marong Mahawamsa, the founder of Langkasuka, landed on the coast of Kedah. The first part, rather mythical in nature, serves to date the story, and presumably the reason Wheatley has left it out is because he is more concerned with determining whether Langkasuka was a west coast state (Kedah), or an east coast one (district of Patani) than in any fairy tale; and certainly Raja Marong is a fairy from out of the top drawer. I will start with the Thai evidence, most of which has not been translated. The story can be dated about 1200 A.D., which is older than the Chinese toponyms below the demarcation line ending with the harsh *ka* sound.

Curiously enough, the name Langkasuka does not appear in any Thai chronicle or legend, though Raja Marong, its traditional founder, does (in the *Chronicles of Nakorn Sri Thammaraj* and the *Chronicles of the Phra Dhatu Nakorn*); nor did the Portugese writers mention the name despite the fact that Tome Pires (1512-15) was writing a full century before the last Chinese mention in 1628 (as *Lang-hsi-chia* in the Wu-peichih Charts). Raja Marong Mahawamsa, or Raja Marong for short, was the emblem of one of the cities under the hegemony of Nakorn Sri Thammaraj. There were twelve such cities, known as the Twelve Naksat Cities. The full list of the cities with their emblems is :

<i>The Naksat Cities</i>	<i>Present locations</i>	<i>The Naksat Years</i>	
Muang Sai(buri)	Patani province	Chuad	Rat
Muang Tani	Patani	Chaloo	Ox
Muang Kelantan	Kelantan	Khan	Tiger
Muang Pahang	Pahang	Thoa	Rabbit
Muang Thrai(buri)	Kedah	Marong	Big Snake
Muang Patulung	Patalung	Maseng	Little Snake
Muang Trang	Trang	Mamia	Horse

<i>The Naksat Cities</i>	<i>Present locations</i>	<i>The Naksat Years</i>	
Muang Chumporn	Chumporn	Mamae	Goat
Muang Bantai Smoe	Krabi	Vog	Monkey
Muang Sa-u-lao	Ta Chana	Raga	Chicken
Muang Takua Talang	Bhuket	Chor	Dog
Muang Kra(buri)	Kraburi	Ghun	Pig

I might explain that *naksat* is the name of an animal which represents a year in the cycle of twelve and the Naksat Cities each used the animal of its year as the city's emblem. The fifth city in the list, Muang Thrai or Thraiburi, is Kedah and the emblem of this city is Marong, the year of the Big Snake, which is the same as the Raja Mahawamsa of the *Kedah Annals*. The story of Marong can be given roughly as follows.

In the time of the wise king Solomon, a prince of Rome was betrothed to a princess of China. The prince set out by sea on the long journey for his marriage, having in charge of the expedition one Rajah Marong Mahawamsa, another prince of the royal blood of Rome.

Near the island of Lanka (Ceylon), Garuda, the mythical bird that is the god Narai's transport and whose favourite food is snakes, had his abode. When Garuda heard of the Prince of Rome's trip and purpose, he decided to wreck the whole scheme. Also possibly he was very, very hungry, not having had a good meal of big snakes for a long time. So he kidnapped the Princess of China and hid her on a remote island. Then he attacked the convoy and there was a running sea and air battle in which Garuda rained down stones, boulders and possibly mountains, while Marong's anti-aircraft fire consisted of magic arrows. In the end the ships were sunk and Marong managed to get ashore at Kedah, where he later founded Langkasuka. At this point Wheatley starts his quotation from the *Kedah Annals* (pages 260-2).

Meanwhile the Prince of Rome was washed ashore at the island where the Princess of China was kept prisoner and she hid him from Garuda. The story finally came to a happy ending in the court of King Solomon, whom throughout Garuda had kept informed of his intentions and actions. Solomon's one and only comment was "It is the will of God."

The above version is based on a not very good translation of the *Hikayat Marong Mahawamsa*, so it may not be very accurate. At any rate, the whole story smacks of many religions, and I would say from Solomon's remark "It is the will of God," that the source is Islamic (for Solomon's remark, read "It is Allah's will.")

Of the Twelve Naksat Cities, most of the places in present-day Siam give no difficulty because they are provincial capitals. Of the others, Muang Sai is Saiburi, an Amphur or District on the border of Naratiwat province; while Muang Kra is Kraburi in Chumporn province, located on the portage between that province and Victoria Point. Ta Chana or Victory Harbour (of the Maharaja) is on the Bandon Bight. There is a tradition still told down there of a hill where the Javakaraja (the Arabs' Maharaja of Zabag) manufactured the anchors for his fleet. One chronicle gives Takua Talang (Bhuket Island or Junk Ceylon) as the next city in the list, while the other chronicle gives Takuapa, which is a district on the west coast in Pang-gna province. Of the three cities in present-day Malaya, Kedah and Kelantan give no difficulty, but Pahang obviously does not refer to the present location. The Naksat Cities were called *Muangs*, i.e. cities or towns, and were not districts or provinces. If Malay scholars can locate this lost city, then perhaps the history of Malaya will go back a couple of centuries before Malacca was founded. This would be a good half century before the Sri Intaratit Dynasty came to the throne of Sukhothai.

The Twelve Naksat Cities were a sort of outer shield surrounding the capital, Nakorn Sri Thammaraj (as well as Chaiya and Singora, which are not in the list), and they were connected by land so that help could be sent from one city to another in case of a surprise attack. Very possibly these cities came into existence after, or perhaps as a result of, the Chola raids in 1025, and disintegrated in about the middle of the 13th century when Chandrabanu was defeated in Ceylon. If Muang Pahang is still lost in the jungles, Malay scholars should look somewhere near the Panarikan Pass which connects the east and west coasts. (See Appendix 2 to Chapter 10 in Wheatley's book, pages 163-172). But I think more likely the city is under water, so what I suggest is that Malay scholars should leave their books for a while, put on some skin-diving

equipment and jump into some recently formed lake. They could easily find a whole city, or at least the remains of some chedi or vihara—but not a mosque, I am afraid, because the Twelve Naksat Cities were far older than the Muslim period.* But to take Langkasuka all the way back to the Chinese toponyms of the 7th century, as Wheatley has tried to do, is quite impossible. Let us now look into this problem, starting with a note on Wheatley's book.

2. Lakorn Chaisri

The first or Chinese part of *The Golden Khersonese* is divided into eight chapters, of which the first five, from earliest times to the Tang Period, comprise what one scholar has called a witch-hunt for names. Playing the Chinese word-game is another description of this process. The next chapter (6), which deals with the 13th century, is a lot better, though Wheatley's identifications of Chao-ju-kua's placenames cannot be accepted with full confidence (see map on page 64). The last two chapters seem as accurate as can be judged by one who knows neither the Chinese language nor the coasts of Malaya.

By the nature of the evidence the first two chapters must be a witch-hunt for names. In the second chapter, Wheatley has located some names in the Funan story (evidence of Kang-tai and Chu-ying in the middle of the 4th century), but the location of Funan itself is a highly controversial subject. Groeneveldt in 1880 located Funan in Siam (*Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malacca compiled from Chinese sources*). Then Professor Coedès moved it to Lower Cambodia. Coedès' theory, which might be called the French Colonial Period Theory, was not very good because Professor Jean Boisselier, in what might be called the Post Colonial Period Theory, moved Funan back to Siam again, though he says the capital later was in Cambodia. The Thai however locate Funan in the Isan or Northeastern Plateau of Siam, Prince Damrong putting it in the vicinity of the Dhatu Panom, and *Nai Mani Vallipotama* placing it further north in the Nong Harn district. Wheatley has followed Coedès, so some of the places he has located in the Malay Peninsula might well have been placed further north in the Central Plain

* On this topic, see also Mom Chao Chand, "Lang-Ya-Shu and Langkasuka: A Reinterpretation", *Nusantara*, (Kuala Lumpur), No. 2 July 1972, pp. 277-284.

of Siam if he had followed the Thai location of Funan. On the other hand, if he had followed Groeneveldt and Boisselier, he could never have located any of his placenames anywhere at all.

Wheatley has also treated the three middle chapters on the Tang Period as a witch-hunt, though if he had used some other material as well as written evidence, he could have located several other toponyms with more certainty. I will deal with the two chapters on the 7th century, namely Chapter 3 on Chang Chun's trip to *Chih-tu* in 607 A.D., and Chapter 4 on the evidence of Huanchang and I-Ching, leaving Fa-Hien of the 5th century to be considered later.

Wheatley has equated *Lang-ya-hsu* with Langkasuka, as we have seen, and he has accepted Coedès' identification of I-Ching's *Chele-foche* as being the Sri Vijaya of the South Sumatran inscriptions. This is what I mean by playing the Chinese word-game because it is contrary to the written evidence of the period. Not playing the Chinese word-game, however, is for Wheatley to write *Shih-li-fo-shih* for I-Ching's Sri Vijaya when other and older Sinologists give the name as *Chele-foche*. Those of us who know no Chinese must assume that all Sinologists are correct, and this is something that is sent to try us. The reader is requested to take it in the same light-hearted fashion.

I will start my comments by giving the identifications that I accept, at least two of which agree with Wheatley's, namely *Pan-Pan* on the Bandon Bight and *Chieh-ch'a* as Kedah. If any of the new identifications proposed can be accepted, then perhaps Sinologists, in particular Wheatley, might be able to extend them to cover other toponyms of the same period.

Shih-tzu-shih	Laem Singh, outside Chandaburi
Lang-ya-hsu	Nakorn Pathom (Lakorn Chaisri)
The Mountains of Lang-ya-hsu	Khao Sam Roi Yod, Prachuab Kirikhand Province
Chi-lung	Koh Rang Kai, Chumporn Province
Pan-Pan	on the Bandon Bight
Chele-foche	Chaiya (Sri Vijaya)
Ho-ling	Nakorn Sri Thammaraj (Tambralinga)
Chih-tu	in the Singora Inland Sea
Mo-lo-yu	Muara Takus, Central Sumatra
Chieh-ch'a	Kedah

Nakorn Pathom is a new name. The old name in the chronicles is Nakorn or Lakorn Chaisri. It was the chief city of a kingdom on the western side of the Central or Menam Chao Phya Plain. On the eastern side of the river was another kingdom with the chief city at Lawo (Lopburi). Four rivers flow through the Central Plain, including the Chao Phya. East of the main stream is the Bang Pakong, while west are the Ta Chin and Mae Glong. Even today the Chinese living in the Ta Chin-Mae Glong area call the district by some such sound as Lang-jia-jiu. Now for the Chinese evidence.

In 607 one Chang Chun was sent as an envoy to *Chih-tu*. *Chih-tu* was in the Singora Inland Sea, and its capital was called *Seng-chih* or Lion City or Singha-something, which does not sound unlike the present Singora. Singora of course is a new city, but the name might have been an old one which was moved to a new site. Chang Chun set sail when the Northeast Monsoon had set in, and reached *Lin-yi*. *Lin-yi*, or what the Thai called Chulani, was Champa, that is, present-day South Vietnam. From there, as translated by Wheatley (page 29);

“Then going southwards they reached *Shih-tzu-shih* (Lion Rock), whence there extended a chain of large and small islands. After two or three days' voyage they saw in the west the mountains of *Lang-ya-hsu*. Then, continuing southwards to *Chi-lung* (Fowl Cage Island), they reached the borders of *Chih-tu*.”

Lion Rock is Laem Singha outside the Chandaburi River. Fowl Cage Island is Koh Rang Kai (Chicken's Nest Island) off Patiew in Chumporn province. Another island in the same district that pairs with this one is called Koh Rang Pet (Ducks' Nest Island). Also in the same district start the Koh Rang Nok (Birds' Nest Islands) that run down the coast to Singora, one of which is called Koh Lang-ya-jiew. These are the same birds' nests that go into the Chinese soup of that name—very delicious indeed! So the mountains of *Lang-ya-hsu*, between Laem Singha and Koh Rang Kai, were Khao Sam Roi Yod (Three hundred peaks mountain), which run through Prachuab Kirikhan province all the way down south. The boundaries of Nakorn or Lakorn Chaisri, then, run from the Ta Chin-Mae Glong delta (Lang-jia-jiew) down to the birds' nest islands (Lang-ya-jiew), outside Chumporn province.

There is confirmation of the above from the Tang Histories, dating from 618 onwards. Wheatley's translation, page 48, is from the *Old Tang History*:

"The kingdom of *P'an-P'an* is situated to the southwest of *Lin-i* (Champa) on a bay of the sea. To the north it is separated from *Lin-i* by the Small Sea. One can reach it by boat from *Chiao-chou* (Tongking) in forty days, and it adjoins the kingdom of *Lang-ya-hsiu*."

Pan-Pan was on the Bandon Bight, first at Viengsra on the Tapi River, then it was moved to Pun Pin on the same river nearer the sea. One of the outlets of the Tapi is called Pak Pan Kuha (Pak = mouth, Kuha = cavern.) The geographical information in the *Old Tang History* is not as specific as in the New which Wheatley did not translate, so in his map on page 53, he has placed *Lang-ya-hsu* above *Pan-Pan*, that is, south of *Pan-Pan*, because for some curious reason that I cannot guess, many of his Chinese maps are printed upside down. The following translation from the *New Tang History*, Chuan 222, was made by Mr. Peter Bee of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London:

"*P'an-P'an* is on the bend of the Southern Sea (Gulf of Siam). To the North, it goes as far as the surrounding king's border (and) a small amount of sea connects it with *Lang-Su-Shih*. From the crossing of the mainland it takes forty days of sea-travel to arrive (at *P'an-P'an*). The king is called *Yang-su-Shih*."

I-Ching (671-95) too mentions *Lang-ya-hsu*, and also relevant is the evidence of another 7th century Chinese monk, Huan Chang (629-45):

"Southwards from this, and bordering the sea-coast is the kingdom *Shi-li-ch'a-ta-lo* (Srikshetra). Further to the south-east is the kingdom of *Lang-chia-shu*. Further east is the kingdom of *She-ho-po-ti*. In the extreme east is the kingdom of *Lin-i* (Champa)".

"Thence north-eastwards is the kingdom of *Shi-li-ch'a-ta-lo* (Srikshetra). Next, to the south-east, in a recess of the ocean, is the kingdom of *Chia-mo-lang-chia* (Kamalanka). Next, to the east is the kingdom of *To-lo-po-ti* (Dvaravati). Next, to the east is the kingdom of *I-shang-na-pu-lo* (Isanapura). Next to the east is the kingdom of *Mo-ho-chan-po* (Mahacampa), which is the same as *Lin-i*."

I-Ching's *She-ho-po-ti* and Huan Chang's *To-lo-po-ti* are thought to have been the same place and that place was Dvaravati. Dvaravati was then thought to have been located at Nakorn Pathom. But from the foregoing evidence Nakorn Pathom was Nakorn Chaisri, or the *Lang-chia-shu* of I-Ching. So *To-lo-po-ti* must be moved to the eastern side of the Menam Chao Phya Plain, and if this Chinese toponym was really Dvaravati, then its location was perhaps in the district of Ayodhia/Ayudhia, that is to say, it was an older name for Ayodhia as Ayodhia itself was an older name for Ayudhia.

In the same way Huan Chang's Kamalanka has been thought to have been the same as I-Ching's *Lang-chia-shu*, and in turn identified as Langkasuka. Wheatley writes on page 257.

"Clearly Kamalanka (suka ?) was situated in the same position relative to Sriksetra and Dvaravati as was I-ching's *Lang-chia-shu*, and presumably these places were identical."

There are several sites on the western side of the Chao Phya River with archaeological remains going back to the 7th century, so there is no need to think that Kamalanka was the same as *Lang-chia-shu* (or, from now on, Nakorn Chaisri.) I myself would locate Kamalanka at the present U-thong, but this is not relevant to the present study. As for Nakorn Chaisri, I do not know who was the first scholar to equate this name with Langkasuka. If it was not Professor Coedès, then he certainly accepted it. This is against the written evidence, for the record is quite specific that Nakorn Chaisri was *west* of Dvaravati; whereas of course Langkasuka would be south, except that Langkasuka was at least five centuries after Nakorn Chaisri (at that time Nakorn Chaisri had disintegrated, as had U-thong.) I-Ching mentioned *Lang-chia* two or three more times, but there is no need to continue because the evidence all agree, so I will end this section on Nakorn Chaisri with a short quotation from Professor Coedès (*The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, pages 76-77).

"West of Dvaravati and southeast of Srikshetra, the great pilgrim Hsuan-tsang places the country of Kamalanka, which is "near a large bay" and is perhaps identical with the *Lang-chia-shu* (i.e. Langkasuka) of I-Ching. In any case it must be located on the Malay Peninsula."

3. I-Ching's Evidence

I-Ching was at a place he called *Foche* (short for *Chele-foche*) between 671 A.D. and about 694. He wrote two books, called in translation *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago*, and *Memoir on the Eminent Monks who sought the Law in the West during the Tang Dynasty*. The latter gives the biographies of some sixty Buddhist monks who went to India. Of these monks, thirty seven travelled by sea. The practice in those days was to set sail when the Northeast Monsoon set in, and to make a landfall on some place on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula. Of the 37 monks who travelled by sea, Roland Braddell cites 15 case histories in his *Notes on Ancient Times in Malaya*, of whom 9 arrived at *Foche* (Chaiya), including I-Ching himself; 6 arrived at *Ho-ling* (Nakorn Sri Thammaraj) and two at *Lang-chia* (this goes to show further that *Lang-chia* was Nakorn Chaisri off the main route, and not located at Langkasuka as was previously thought.) The experts have equated *Chele-foche* with Sri Vijaya, only unfortunately they, or more specifically Professor Coedès and the experts who have followed him, have located this Sri Vijaya in the environs of Palembang in South Sumatra, while *Ho-ling* they have located in Java. This is against the written evidence in both cases. I will deal with the two place-names together.

Two pieces of information from the *New Tang History* serve to locate both *Ho-ling* and *Chele-foche* above the equator. The first is that the products of *Ho-ling* included tortoise shell, gold and silver, rhinoceros horns and ivory. As Java has never been known to produce gold, we can say that wherever *Ho-ling* was located, it was *not* in Java.

The second piece of information is that at noon on the day of the summer solstice, a sundial 8' (sh'ih) in height casts a southern shadow 2'5" (fs'un) in length. This information is to be found in both the sections on *Ho-ling* and *Foche*, so we can say that wherever these two places were located, they were *not* below the equator.

Chinese astronomical evidence is not considered good evidence, so it is either ignored altogether or the facts manipulated to suit the experts' pet theories. In this particular case, the summer solstice of the record is changed to winter, and the southern shadow is changed to a

northern one to enable *Ho-ling* to be placed in Java and *Foche* in South Sumatra. The only factor the experts have not changed is the time factor, because they still accept midday and have not changed it to midnight.

But two scholars refused to accept all this monkey business. Sir Roland Braddell placed *Ho-ling* somewhere on the west coast of Borneo, but he accepted *Chele-foche* to have been in the environs of Palembang in South Sumatra, where it has generally been located.* J.L. Moens located *Ho-ling* at Kedah (*Sri Vijaya, Java en Kataha*), while *Chele-foche* he first located at Kelantan, then it was moved to Maura Takus on the Kampar river in Central Sumatra. Again this is based on Chinese astronomical information, Kedah and Maura Takus on the equator will come into the story when we get to I-Ching's evidence, and on this evidence *Ho-ling* could not have been at Kedah, or anywhere on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula for that matter.

I myself prefer to locate *Ho-ling* at Nakorn Sri Thammaraj, which at that time was called Tambralinga, while *Chele-foche*, if this was really Sri Vijaya, was Chaiya. Presumably the (supposedly ignorant) Chinese sailors called Tambralinga *Ho-ling*, while the Chinese who knew Sanskrit called the place *Po-ling*, and at a later period they called it Tan-ma-ling. Both Nakorn and Chaiya have produced many and varied archaeological remains going back to the 7th century and beyond.

Nakorn and Chaiya also produced an inscription each bearing these two old names. (Also there is a hill near Chaiya called Khao Sri Vijaya, and the name Chaiya itself is of course the shortened form of Sri Vijaya). The inscription from Nakorn is dated 1230 A.D. and bears the name Tambralinga, only unfortunately Coedès has stated that this inscription came from Chaiya. This is contrary to the records of the National Museum which says it came from Nakorn. The Chaiya or Sri Vijaya stele is dated 775 A.D. and came from Wat Hua Vieng in Chaiya. This is the inscription that Coedès says came from Wat Sema Muang, Nakorn Sri Thammaraj. Again this is against the Museum records,

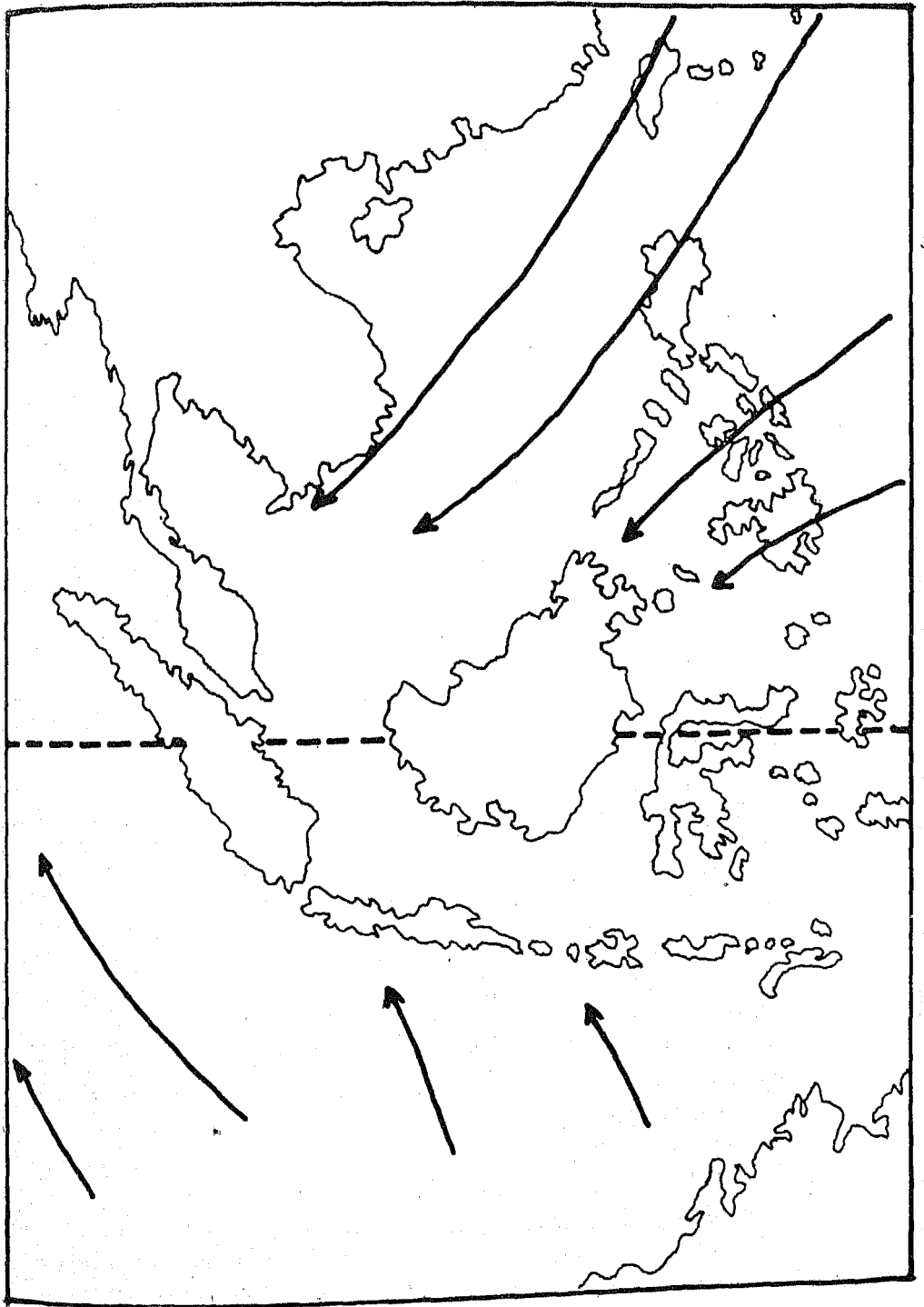
* Sir Roland Braddell, "Notes on Ancient Times in Malaya" *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*, (Singapore), Vol. XXIII, Part I, (1950), P.15 et passim.

which says it came from Vieng Sra, but the Chaiya people who prepared the stele for shipment to Bangkok maintained it came from Wat Hua Vieng in their district. But of this subject more later.

We now come to I-Ching's evidence and only the account of his own voyage is necessary to kill Professor Coedès' theory of the Sri Vijaya Empire. In fact this can be done in a couple of sentences because the theory is based on equating I-Ching's *Chele-foche* with the name Sri Vijaya, and then locating that Sri Vijaya in South Sumatra where several inscriptions of the same period have been found. Put another way, if I-Ching's *Foche* was not located in South Sumatra, then Coedès' theory will simply not hold water, even without knowing what the actual inscriptions say. (The South Sumatran Inscriptions will be dealt with later in Part II of this paper.)

While in Canton in 671, I-Ching arranged for a trip to the south in a *Po-ssu* (Persian) ship. The ship sailed in the 11th month (December) when "the east wind blew" and arrived at *Foche* in about twenty days. I-Ching's east wind is the Northeast Monsoon which blows from the direction of Japan towards the equator (Singapore). This same wind below the equator blows from the southeast, from the direction of Australia to the south coast of Java. Around the equator the winds are variable, and in this season the doldrums extend down south to the north coast of Java. On this evidence, as well as on the Chinese astronomical evidence already cited, I-Ching's *Foche* could never have been at Palembang in South Sumatra, or anywhere below the equator.

So Professor Coedès' theory of the Sri Vijaya Empire, which he put forward as long ago as 1918, was not only unscientific, but also thoroughly illogical. Trading in I-Ching's time was probably coastal, with frequent stops for reloading and taking on of food and water. But there were also ocean-going vessels. I-Ching took passage in one such ship (a Persian one.) Is it likely that a ship fully loaded with valuable cargo from the Celestial Empire for the Mediterranean market would make a detour of several degrees below the equator to South Sumatra? The average voyage in Tang times from China to the Malay Peninsula took between 30 and 40 days, while I-Ching's own trip in 20 days was probably the fastest on record. The aim of such a ship (Persian) would



Map I

Windchart for November when I-Ching set sail from Canton for Chele-foche in 671 A.D.

be to slip round the Malacca Straits as quickly as possible and catch the same Northeast wind across the Ten Degree Channel to India or Ceylon. After passing Ceylon there would be no difficulty in getting home to one of the ports in the Middle East. The ship might make a short stop on the turn of the Peninsula (somewhere near the equator), and another on the west coast before crossing the Bay of Bengal, but the main aim would be not to miss the Northeast Monsoon, otherwise there might be a delay of a full year before the next monsoon season. All this can be seen clearly from I-Ching's own trip to India and back to China (Wheatley, page 42). The outward trip was delayed a year till the following Monsoon season because I-Ching stopped off at Sri Vijaya.

"In less than twenty days we reached (Shih-li)-Fo-shih (Sri Vijaya) where I spent six months learning the *Sabdatidya* (Sanskrit grammar). The king befriended me and sent me to the country of *Mo-lo-yu* (*Malayu*=Jambi), where I stayed for two months. Then I changed direction to go to *Chieh-ch'a* (Kedah). In the twelfth month I embarked on the king's ship and set sail for India. Sailing northwards from *Chieh-ch'a* for more than ten days, we came to the Kingdom of the Naked People (Nicobar Islands) . . . From here, sailing in a north-westerly direction for half a month, we came to *Tan-mo-li-ti* (Tamralipti)."

"(Tamralipti) is the place where we embark when returning to China. Sailing from here towards the south-east, in two months we come to *Chieh-ch'a*. By this time a ship from (*Shih-li*)-*Fo-shih* will have arrived, generally in the first or second month of the year . . . We stay in *Chieh-ch'a* until winter, and then embark on a ship for the south. After a month we come to the country of *Mo-lo-yu* which has now become *Fo-shih*. We generally arrive in the first or second month. We stay there till mid-summer, when we sail to the north and reach *Kuang-fu* (Kuang-tung) in about a month. The voyage is completed by the first half of the year."

Chieh-ch'a is generally accepted to have been Kedah, while *Mo-lo-yu* has been located at Jambi in South Sumatra (to the north of Palembang.) I think *Mo-lo-yu* was Maura Takus on the Kampar river in Central Sumatra. I-Ching's outward journey would then be to Chaiya, then on to Maura Takus on the equator, and "changing directions" on to Kedah on the west coast. The phrase in the second paragraph reading *Mo-lo-yu* has now become *Fo-shih*" is difficult to understand. This might mean

that *Mo-lo-yu* had now been conquered by Sri Vijaya, which would not be contrary to the text of one of the Sumatran inscriptions, except that it is difficult to see how a ship sailing from the equator could reach Canton in one month. Alternatively the sense might have been that from Kedah I-Ching went to Maura Takus and made the turn up to Chaiya without putting into port there. This would accord more with I-Ching's account of his own trip from *Foche* back to China.

I-Ching returned from India to *Foche* in 685, and there started to do his writing. In 689 he found he had run out of paper and ink, and money to hire scribes, so he wrote a letter for these things and took it to a ship that was moored in the *Foche* river. At that time the wind started to blow, so the ship raised its sails to the full, and I-Ching was conveyed back to China. "Even if I had wanted to stop the ship," he remarked, "there was no way of doing so." He arrived at Canton in about a month.

The evidence of the sudden wind and one month's sailing time would indicate that the ship sailed from Chaiya or somewhere on the east coast of the Peninsula, and not from the equator 8 degrees below Chaiya, where there would be variable winds to deal with, or from Palembang a couple of degrees below the equator. Moens however says that I-Ching spent ten years at the 'new Sri Vijaya' where he did his writing. This was on the equator, based on I-Ching's statement that '*Mo-lo-yu* has now become Sri Vijaya' and some astronomical evidence, namely that at the new Sri Vijaya, on the summer and winter solstices there was no shadow thrown at noon. The last sentence sounds impossible, but anyway Moens placed the new Sri Vijaya at Maura Takus. I do not know any Chinese so I cannot say whether I-Ching's spent ten years at Moen's new Sri Vijaya or at Chaiya as on his outward trip. Maura Takus was an important location in the Sri Vijaya story, and the excavations being carried out there, or about to be carried out by the University of Pennsylvania, should produce new evidence of importance.

4. Takola Emporium

Takola is in Aurea Khersonesus, or what the Thai call Laem Thong. This Thai name is old, but I cannot say how old it is, though it should certainly be older than when the Thai first heard of the Golden Khersonese

or of Ptolemy, which I presume, was only early in this century. Needless to say, the Thai thought Laem Thong was, and still is, in present day Siam. As a member of the land today called Sri Thailand, I too think Aurea Khersonesus was in Siam—in fact exactly where my compatriots, past and present, have placed Laem Thong.

To locate Aurea Khersonesus, it is only necessary to locate Takola, and this can be done even without Ptolemy's evidence. The first writer to mention the Golden Khersonese was Josephus in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, and the first man of whom there is any record to have actually sailed to the Khersonese was one Alexander the Sailor. Alexander's evidence was used by Marinus of Tyre in his handbook, and while both the evidence of Alexander and Marinus have been lost, Ptolemy, who was writing in approximately the middle of the 2nd century, quoted from Marinus' handbook in the first of the eight books that comprised his *Geography*. Alexander's evidence is very short and clear-cut. He stated that from Takola in Aurea Khersonesus one sailed for twenty days along a land that faced south (i.e. eastwards) and arrived at Zabai, where one made a turn, and in another twenty days or a little more, one got to Cattigara which was in Sinai.

Sinai was South China (North China being Seres), and Cattigara in Sinai was Canton, or a city before Zayton as Zayton itself was a city before Canton. Zabai was the southern tip of Chama (South Vietnam), probably where the Vo-Cahn inscription, dated not later than the 3rd century A.D., was found. The land that faced south referred to the coast of Siam and Cambodia, where at least one very ancient port was located. This was Oc-eo where archaeological finds including Mediterranean-type beads have been found. Ptolemy called this port Akrada.

The location of Takola has produced some of the dreariest arguments imaginable. General opinion today seems to locate the place at Takuapa or Trang on the west coast of the Peninsula. But I think on Alexander the Sailor's evidence, Takola should be placed on the *east* coast, because if the location had been on the other coast, then Alexander, in sailing due east, would have had to sail overland, which I doubt any self-respecting sailor would do. Then Ptolemy has a Cape beyond Takola, which he placed two of his degrees below Takola, and nearly

two degrees to the west. The only location that would fit this toponym is the Bay of Bhuket on the west coast. If Takola is located at Chaiya on the Bandon Bight, then the latitudes and longitudes would fit because Chaiya is to the east of Bhuket and actually two degrees north. This would indicate that there was, or rather that Alexander the Sailor and Ptolemy thought there was, a sea route through the Peninsula from the Bay of Bhuket on the west coast to Bandon Bight on the east coast that turned Malaya into an island. There are traditions of Malaya having once been an island.

The newspapers have recently been saying that the Government has ordered a feasibility survey for a "Kra Canal" to be cut through the Peninsula between Bhuket Bay and the Bight of Bandon. Unfortunately, as far as I know, no archaeologist has been attached to the survey. Chaiya on the Bandon Bight has produced some very old remains, and on the other side of the Peninsula in Bhuket Bay, Mediterranean-type beads have been found at Khao Javabrab in Krabi province. A few years ago Cambridge University excavated some kiln sites in Singora province and discovered a 'Ceramic Industry in the Sri Vijaya Period.' The finds from a site called Koh Moh are undergoing radio-carbon and thermoluminescence tests for their exact dating. An archaeologist attached to the feasibility survey mentioned above might be able to collect more examples of Sri Vijaya pottery before they disappear for good. This is a subject that has not been studied to any extent, and the survey could produce new evidence to change the present thinking on the Sri Vijaya story.

Meanwhile starting with the supposition that there was a sea route through the Peninsula, Ptolemy's placenames and co-ordinates of Aurea Khersonesus fit into a pattern that can be recognised on modern maps. But as Ptolemy's *Geography* has produced such extraordinary arguments over the ages, it would be as well to add a few words.

Ptolemy's *Geography* is divided into eight books, with 26 maps appended. The maps have all disappeared, and the oldest reconstruct is a Roman map dated 1477, or thirteen centuries after Ptolemy. Obviously not very much sense can be expected from such reconstructions. Of the eight books, the first, which contains Alexander the Sailor's

evidence on Takola, is a treatise on how the maps were made, while the last contains a list of 8000 placenames with their co-ordinates. These placenames were an appendix to the maps and not a list from which the maps were made. The reconstructions follow this list, and thus Ptolemy's two islands, called Iabadieu and Sabadabai, do not appear on any of the reconstructs I have seen (see frontispiece in *The Golden Khersonese*.)

We will leave Wheatley now, and I will end with a few words of appreciation. I think *The Golden Khersonese* is a very fine piece of work because it gives both texts and translations of the sources. But there are too many omissions, not the least important being the Thai sources. In the first or Chinese part, it would have been nice to have had I-Ching's evidence on *Chele-foche* in full, but unfortunately Wheatley accepted Professor Coedès' equation of I-Ching's *Chele-foche* with the Sri Vijaya of the South Sumatran inscriptions, and considered *Foche* outside the scope of his work. Coedès was a great epigraphist and the Thai are grateful to him for the pioneer work he did on the Sukhothai inscriptions, but his interpretation of these and other inscriptions is simply a disaster because western writers tend to follow him blindly, not only on the Sri Vijaya story but on several other stories as well.

The second part of *The Golden Khersonese*, dealing with the western writers, is divided into two chapters. The first (Chapter 9) deals with the pre-Ptolemaic, evidence, where neither Alexander the Sailor nor Marinus of Tyre is mentioned. The second chapter deals with the Golden Khersonese itself, but here again Ptolemy's two islands, Iabadieu and Sabadabai, are omitted. Another chapter might have been included on the post-Ptolemaic evidence (Marco Polo, Friar Odoric, Nicolas di Conti etc.) The title of Wheatley's book, *The Golden Khersonese*, is derived from Ptolemy's Aurea Khersonesus, but he does not seem to think very much of Ptolemy's work. (His identifications on pages 151-7 of the Ptolemaic placenames and co-ordinates in Aurea Khersonesus are a complete farce.) If Wheatley had equated the Golden Khersonese with the Thai Laem Thong (a name he also failed to mention), then most of Ptolemy's placenames and co-ordinates could be located without much difficulty, including some other names like Samarade and Perimula which have been left out of the map on page 148. But in this way very few

of the Ptolemaic names, including the title of the book itself, would be in present-day Malaya, and this might not have been the object of Wheatley's treatise. What Wheatley should do is to revise his book, and with the material he already has in hand, he could easily produce a minor classic in this particular field. Students of Southeast Asian history would surely welcome identifications of placenames made without conjectures, because an anthology of wild surmises made by the masterminds of the past is not really of much use to anybody, particularly students who are starting to learn their job.

5. Javadvipa and Java

Ptolemy's Iabadiou island has generally been equated with the Indian Yavadvipa and Yamadvipa, and with the Javanese Javadvipa, all of which names were located outside India proper. Yavadvipa, along with Suvarnadvipa, the Island of Gold, appears in the Ramayana; Yamadvipa (thought to have been a gloss for Yavadvipa) in the Vayu Purana, as well as Malayadvipa, a name that will appear later in the story; and Javadvipa in a Central Javanese inscription dated 732 A.D. The Indian texts do not give any geographical evidence for the names, but the description of the locations are similar enough for all the placenames to be identified as the same locality. And that locality was not the present island of Java because Yavadvipa and Yamadvipa both produced gold, and gold was a commodity that Java has never been known to produce. The same applies to the Javadvipa of the Central Javanese inscription.

The lowest place in Ptolemy's Aurea Khersonesus was Sabana, 30° South latitude and 160° East longitude. I would be inclined to place Sabana at the present Kedah, where there was probably another passage or portage between the Perlis river to the Singora Inland sea. Both Nakorn Sri Thammaraj and Kedah Peak have traditions of having been islands.

Before going on to Ptolemy's two islands (Iabadiou and Sabadabai), I will say a few words about his latitudes and longitudes. In Ptolemy's time, those who did not think the world was flat thought it was far smaller than it actually is. It was only at the end of the 15th century when Columbus sailed across the Atlantic and arrived in the Americas, which

he thought was India that it was realised the world was much larger than was previously thought. This was confirmed by Megellan and Drake when they circumnavigated the globe. Wheatley says that the Ptolemaic degree is five-sixth of a true degree (page 153), and there was a displacement of 230 nautical miles. This may be correct for some latitudes, but I think those nearer the equator were shorter than those further north. Ptolemy's latitudes can be manipulated to a certain extent by studying the movements of the sun in the seasons, but his longitudes are hopeless beyond saying that one place was east or west of another place. Anyway, if Ptolemy's co-ordinates of his placenames are plotted and, bearing in mind the geographical knowledge of the time, a much better pattern emerges relative to present-day maps than Wheatley allows for—providing the Golden Khersonese is moved lock, stock and barrel further north than the present-day Malaya.

Ptolemy did not know very much about his two islands. He gives only two co-ordinates for Iabadieu and one for Sabadabai, but they are sufficient to locate the two places.

	<i>Longitudes</i>	<i>Latitudes</i>
Takola	160° East	4° 15' North
Cape beyond Takola	158° 20' East	2° 20' North
Sabana	160° East	3° South
Sabadabai	160° East	8° 30' South
Iabadieu, west	167° East	8° 30' South
Iabadieu, east	169° East	8° 10' South

If Takola is located at Chaiya and Sabana at Kedah, then Iabadieu island, lying southeast of the Khersonese, would fit in as Malaya Island. Sabadabai, lying due west of Iabadieu would then be Sumatra, or at least the northern part of Sumatra. If Iabadieu can be equated with the Indian Yavadvipa, then Sabadabai can probably be equated with the Indian Suvarnavipa, the Island of Gold. (Sumatra is called Pulau Mas in the Malay language, which also means the Island of Gold.) Needless to add, there are overlaps between the locations of the various names, especially between the south of the Golden Khersonese and the north of Javadvipa. This we shall see in the evidence that follows on the names Java and Javadvipa.

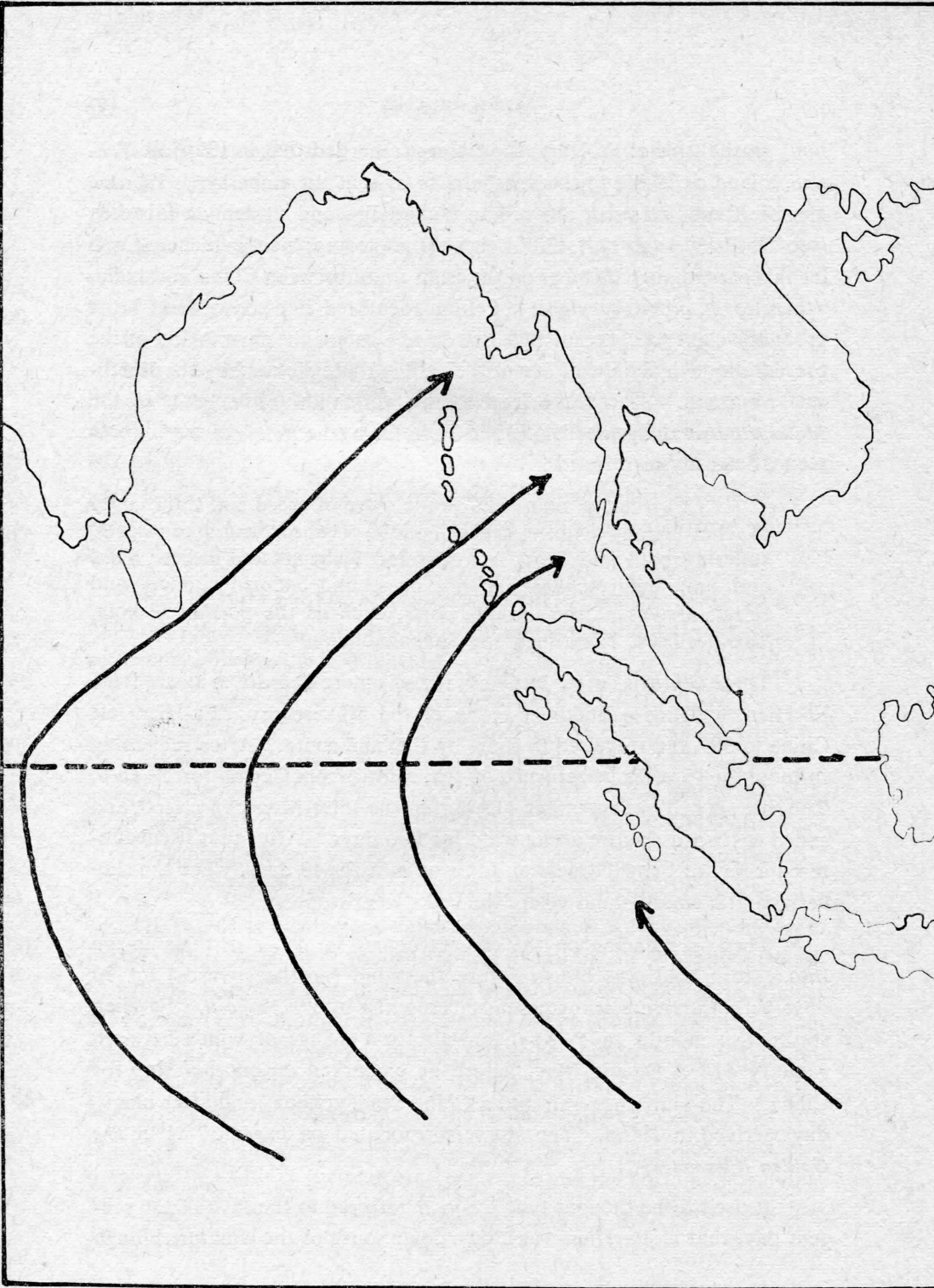
In the time of Ptolemy, the Chinese recorded that in 132 A.D. *Yeh-tiao*, a land or island in the southern seas, sent an embassy. *Yeh-tiao* has been equated with the Indian Yavadvipa and Ptolemy's Iabadiue (see Wheatley page 177), but as there is no geographical evidence, I will let this pass, though if it was on the main route between China and India, Wheatley is probably right. Pelliot identified it as Java, and he is probably right too, except that this Java was not the Java island of the present day, which is well out of the sailing route dictated by the North-east Monsoon. The name Java is also very old. It appears in the *Maha Nidessa* alongside Takola and Tamalinga (the *Holing* of the Chinese records already mentioned.)

“Further, a man who is the slave of greed and thinks only of what he may acquire, sets sail on the oceans in search of wealth, suffering cold and heat, is tormented by gnats and insects, wind and sun, small snakes and big ones, and enduring hunger and thirst, arrives at the various ports, such as the port of Takola, Taksila, Java, Tamalinga and Suvannabhumi.”

Three centuries after Ptolemy, there is more definite evidence from Fa-Hien, a Chinese Buddhist monk of the 5th century. Fa-Hien left China in 399 and travelled to India by the land route. After remaining in India for 15 years he returned by sea, sailing from Ceylon for *Ye-po-ti*. The ship set sail in September 413 during the Inter-Monsoon period, and sailed eastwards before a fair wind for two days. After that it encountered a Bay of Bengal Cyclone and was in it for 13 days, when the ship arrived at a small island where the leaks were stopped.

Then, proceeding on the correct course for *Ye-po-ti*, the ship ran into a storm and was blown before the wind (northeastwards) for 90 days before arriving at, or perhaps “crawling into”, *Ye-po-ti*. Fa-Hien stayed five months in *Ye-po-ti* to wait for a change of winds between January 414 A.D. and May, before he embarked on another ship for China. The ship then ran into a China Sea Typhoon, and after ninety days arrived in China. The story is recounted on pages 37-41 in *The Golden Kheronese*.

It used to be thought that *Ye-po-ti* referred to the Java of the present day, that is, Fa-Hien was blown down south of the equator through



Map II

Windchart for September when Fa-Hien set sail from Ceylon for Ye-po-ti in 413 A.D.

the Sunda Straits between Sumatra and Java. But in 1941 Mr. A. Grimes, a meteorologist then working at the Singapore Airport, showed that it was impossible for Fa-Hien to have been blown below the equator. Besides the prevailing wind in that season, which blows from the south and the west, the Bay of Bengal Cyclone and the China Sea Typhoon were phenomena that occurred only in the Northern Hemisphere. Grimes' theory is scientific, so it is generally accepted (by Sir Roland Braddell and Wheatley anyway), though Wolters would appear not to do so (see *Early Indonesian Commerce*, pages 35 and 176, and footnote 22, page 269). I certainly accept it, and I would go further by stating that the Sunda Straits were not, and are not, on the main sailing route between India and China. This can be seen clearly enough from I-Ching's evidence of the monks who went to India and back by sea. These monks set sail when the Northeast Monsoon blew, and made for a landfall at one of the ports on the east coast of the Peninsula (*Chele-foche* and *Ho-ling*). Then the ship would slip through the Malacca Straits to a port on the west coast (*Chieh-cha*), and then sail through the Ten Degree Channel to India or Ceylon. To go below the equator would mean missing the Monsoon and a delay of one whole season. The Sunda Straits was used at a much later period by ships rounding the Cape of Good Hope, and then mainly by steam ships. Even today ships plying between Europe and the Far East use the Malacca rather than the Sunda Straits.

To return to Fa-Hien, Braddell, Grimes and Wheatley locate *Ye-po-ti* on the west coast of Borneo. I think the east coast of the Peninsula would fit the facts better. Fa-Hien's ship, after having been battered for three months, would hardly have crawled down the Malacca Straits and then gone on to Borneo. It would most likely put into the nearest convenient port, and that port should be on the west coast of the Peninsula. We do not know what Fa-Hien did at *Ye-po-ti* during the five months he was there before he took another ship (from *Ye-po-ti*) for China. He might have changed coasts by boat, or he might have gone over one of the portages. The main point is that *Ye-po-ti* straddled both coasts, as did Ptolemy's Iabadiou where two co-ordinates are given for the island.

A decade after Fa-Hien, another 5th century monk named Gunavarman sailed from *She'po* direct to China. The Emperor Wen-ti (424-453) invited Gunavarman to go to China. At that time the monk was at *She'po* and the Emperor offered to send a ship to fetch him. But the monk took a merchant ship that was already going to China and, as the wind was favourable, the ship sailed non-stop to its destination. *She'po* is thought to refer to Java and has generally been located in the island of that name. This is impossible. *She'po* must have been on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula or the northwest coast of Borneo because it is not possible to sail from Java direct to China, or from anywhere below the equator. *The New Tang History* stated that *Ho-ling* is also called *She'po*, and as I have already identified *Ho-ling* as Tambralinga (Nakorn Sri Thammaraj), Gunavarman's *She'po* was therefore the same as Fa-Hien's *Ye-po-ti*. But the point is, if *She'po* was really Java, then Java was a generic name that could refer to several places. The same applies to Javadvipa. In the 13th century, Paragramabahu VI set up an inscription which referred to a Simhalarama (Ceylonese church) established by Samarottunga on the Ratubaka Plateau in Central Java. The text, as translated by Dr. Paranavitana, reads: "By King Samarottunga, the forehead ornament of the Sailendra family, has been caused to be constructed the Simhalarama, the ornament of Javadvipa (Java)." As for Java being a generic name, I am afraid it will not be easy to convince Sinologists of this because these experts do not take into consideration things like prevailing winds and sailing distances; but even so I will have to try because while the location of Java is not of great import in the story of Sri Vijaya, the correct location of the seat of the Javakaraja is, and this seat cannot be located unless Java is first accepted as a generic name.

Java as a Generic Name

At the end of the 13th century, Marco Polo, after spending more than half his life in China, returned to Europe by the sea-route. He set sail from Canton (Zayton as he called it, or Alexander the Sailor's Cattigara), in the usual period of the Northeast Monsoon for a landfall on the east coast of the Peninsula, probably at the island of Malaiur, which is mentioned in the text. Polo first got to Champa, which he

called Ziampa (Alexander's Zabai), then to Pentan island, where the water was very shallow, and then on to Malaiur. Polo mentioned three places, of which the third was Locac, 500 miles to the north; as well as four islands, which he called Java Major, Java Minor, Condur and Sondur. Sondur is the larger of the two latter islands. From his landfall, Marco Polo went further south to Samara in the island of Java Minor, where he waited five months for the change of winds. At this place "the Northern Star does not appear; nor do the northwest stars appear, neither much nor little." This would indicate that Samara was well down the Peninsula, but the evidence is not clear whether it was on the east or west coast. From here Marco Polo went up the Malacca Straits, and then through the Ten Degree Channel between the Nicobars (Necuveran) and Andamans (Angaman) to Ceylon (Seilan).

Of Marco Polo's three places, Malaiur was Nakorn Sri Thammaraj. "The City", says the text, "is very large and noble." Nakorn at that time was the largest and noblest city in the Peninsula. A century before, the Twelve Naksat Cities surrounding the capital extended to Muang Pahang, and Pahang was the name used to designate the whole of Southern Malaya. The contemporary Yuan History also mentioned Malaiur on the Peninsula, and this place should not be confused with the 7th century *Mo-lo-yu*, which was in Sumatra. The island of Penton was probably Bandon. Traditionally Nakorn was an island and Bandon would be the northern part of that island. Marco Polo would appear to have reached the east coast of the Peninsula at about Bandon, and then he sailed for 60 miles between two islands where the water was very shallow (Koh Samui and Koh Pangnan) and then another 30 miles to Malaiur. Locac, the third place mentioned, is a "continental province", 500 miles north of Pentan. This can be identified as Lopburi which the Chinese called Lokok. I don't think Marco Polo was at Locac, but he told of it before Pentan and Malaiur, directly after telling of the three islands which he never visited (Java Major, Condur and Sondur). This was to give his story more continuity. After Malaiur he told of the island of Java Minor, where he visited six localities, before crossing the Indian Ocean.

Of Marco Polo's four islands, three come immediately to mind, namely Borneo, Java and Sumatra. Java Major, "the largest island in

the world, having a compass of 3,000 miles", and lying 1,500 miles south-southeast of Champa, was obviously Borneo. 700 miles south-southwest of Java Major (Borneo) lie two islands called Sondur and Condur. Sondur, the larger island, was Sumatra while Condur was the present island of Java. The names Sondur and Condur sound very like Sunda, where the passage between them is called the Sunda Straits. This leaves Java Minor as Malaya Island, or what Ptolemy called Iabadiou and Fa-hien called *Ye-po-ti*.

These identifications are not what the experts think at all. Ramusio, who died in 1557, identified Java Minor as Borneo, and Java Major as the present Java. This is contrary to the directions given in the text, and Borneo, the proposed Java Minor, is a larger island than the present Java (Java Major). I do not think Marco Polo would have got the sizes of his islands wrong. More modern scholars (by three centuries) have moved Java Minor from Borneo to Sumatra, and here again Sumatra is a larger island than Java. There are many discrepancies in the Marco Polo story, but a new consideration of the facts based on the true sizes of the islands and the sailing directions would give an interpretation that fits a modern map better than any of the old theories.

Marco Polo passed through these islands in 1292 A.D. and died in 1324. The oldest map of a Ptolemy reconstruct still extant is dated 1477, or 153 years after Marco Polo's death and thirteen centuries after Ptolemy. None of the constructs that I have seen show the two islands, Iabadiou and Sabadabai.

There is new evidence on Marco Polo, consisting of three pages of texts and three maps where the two islands appear.* The maps bear no resemblance to Ptolemy maps, and I will deal with only one of them dated 1338 A.D., which is 14 years after Marco Polo's death. This map has some Chinese writing on the margin, and the names are Ptolemaic, viz. Cattigara, a port on the Yangtze River (Canton); Seres (North China); Sinai (South China) and India Gangem (c.f. India extra Gangem for Southeast Asia.)

* Larry Sternstein and John Black, "A Note on Three Polo Maps", in, *Felicitation Volumes of Southeast-Asian Studies*. presented to His Highness Prince Dhaninivat Kromamun Bidyalabh Bridhdyakorn. Honorary President The Siam Society under Royal Patronage. On the occasion of his eightieth birthday (The Siam Society, Bangkok, 7th November 1965), Vol. II, pp. 347-349. The three maps appear as Fig. 1., Fig. 2., and Fig. 3.

The map was not drawn by Marco Polo himself, but probably by one of his immediate family. Dr. Mote, a Sinologist, has pronounced the Chinese text to be 'blind copying', that is, it was written by someone who did not know the Chinese language, and while the characters can be read, no sense emerges. Two small islands appear below Malaya, aligned like Malaya and Sumatra in modern maps.

Without beating about the bush, I think the maker of this map had a Chinese map in front of him, as well as a Ptolemy map (not a Ptolemaic construct). If Marco Polo had brought back a Chinese map, it would have been similar to a Yuan Dynasty map, such as the Yu-ti-t'u' (World Map, 1311-20 A.D.) drawn by Chu szu-Fen (1275-1335 or 40), though this map was actually completed after Marco Polo left China. But this Yuan map was possibly based on the Fo-teu tung-chi (1269-71), edited by Chih-P'an, a Buddhist monk of the Southern Sung Period. The map maker might have thought the names Marco Polo used would be strange to his readers, so he substituted Ptolemaic placenames instead. (Another map, very similar to this one, had "Polo" names, such as Zipangu for Japan.) So the two islands on the map were Malaya Island and Sumatra, or Ptolemy's Iabadieu and Sabadabai, or Marco Polo's Java Minor and Sondur.

The point of all this is that Java was a generic name. It covered Borneo (Java Major), Malaya (Java Minor and Javadvipa), possibly Sumatra and certainly Java, if for no other reason that it does now. Ibn Batuta, a few decades later, had Java and mul-Java, which would seem to support this theory. Unfortunately I do not know when the name Java was first used for the present island. In the time of Marco Polo, Kublai Khan sent an expedition to Java (in the Singasari and Majapahit period), but I cannot remember what the island was called in the Chinese text.

One step beyond the problem of Java is the problem of the Javakaraja, the king of Javaka, whom the Arab records call Maharaja of Zabag, or just Maharaja. The Ceylon chronicles called Chandra Banu, a name that also appears in the Tambralinga inscription of Nakorn Sri Thammaraj dated 1230, a king of the Javaka. There is argument about where the Maharaja or Javakaraja had his seat, because the Arab records

are external evidence. Of the internal evidence, the name Maharaja appears in the Wat Hua Vieng inscription of Chaiya dated 775, and the Thai chronicles have one Phya Jivaka of Nakorn Sri Thammaraj. Phya Jivaka of course was the same as Jivakaraja, or Javakaraja, or the Maharaja of Zabag of the Arab records. He came on the scene early in the 10th century A.D.

6. Wolters' first book on Sri Vijaya

Professor Wolters' two books are: (1) *Early Indonesian Commerce* (subtitled) *A Study of the Origins of Sri Vijaya*, and (2) *The Fall of Sri Vijaya* (subtitled) *in Malay History*. Both books have two themes, as suggested by their titles and subtitles.

When I undertook to write a 'heterodox view' of the Sri Vijaya story so that scholars could reassess the facts of the case, I thought Wolters' two books would be a good starting point. So while I was waiting for the books to be sent, I sketched in a very broad background, thereby using up all the space that the Hon. Editor of this journal could spare me. But when Wolters' books came to hand, I found they had nothing to do with the Sri Vijaya story. The Sri Vijaya story started in 671 A.D. when I-Ching set sail from China and arrived at a place he called *Foche*, and ended 600 years later when Chandra Banu of Nakorn Sri Thammaraj invaded Lanka in 1270 or 71, and was slain on the field. Wolters' first book, subtitled *A Study of the Origins of Sri Vijaya*, deals with the centuries before and including the 7th, while the second book deals with the founder of Singapore and Malacca a full century after Chandra Banu's death.

A Study of the Origins of Srivijaya

Presumably soon after the ancients learnt how to sail cross-wind, people from China set sail on the Northeast Monsoon and made a landfall at some port on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula; and other people set sail from the west coast of the same Peninsula through the Ten Degree Channel to some port in North India (such as Tamralipti), or in South India (Negapatam), or in Ceylon. When the monsoon changed, people from India and Ceylon set sail to the west coast of the Peninsula; and

other people set sail from the east coast for China. This rhythm of the monsoon, as some writers have called it, had been operative long before historic times, in fact probably long before proto-historic times too.

The main reason for all this journeying was trade, though there were also envoys who went to China to pay tribute to the emperor (another form of trade), as well as Chinese monks who went to India on pilgrimages. The travellers included Chinese and Indians, Greeks and Persians (or Arabs), as well as indigenous people who lived by the sea and could sail a boat. Of these peoples, the Indians left the most formidable imprint on these lands, culturally speaking. The reason was because the journeys were dangerous and the travellers had to pray to their favourite gods for protection against untold dangers, particularly pirates. These gods might have been Avalokesvara, Kuan Yin or the Golden Calf, depending on what ethnic group adored which god. The Indian traders and sailors however did not like to say their own prayers so they brought with them their own shamans (technically called Brahmans) to do their praying for them. Portable Indian images have been found scattered over wide areas of Southeast Asia. In those days vandalism in the form of collecting ancient art for private museums had not come into fashion, so presumably the shamans brought by the traders in turn brought their portable gods because, speaking for myself, I would much prefer my shaman to pray to a physical god that I can see rather than to some abstract gods that no doubt the shamans prayed to in their private shrines. Then, when trading centres were set up and kings came into existence, these same shamans, or perhaps their descendants, became court soothsayers and officiated at ceremonial functions. In this way Indian culture in the form of religions and art, languages and writing, was transplanted to Southeast Asia. Such, or something like it, is the view that Indians themselves have told me, though I understand it is not necessarily accurate and that other scholars hold other views.

I do not know how old the earliest records of these journeys are, but the Chinese recorded that *Yeh-tieu*, a state in the Southern Seas, sent tribute in 132 A.D. *Yeh-tieu* might or might not have been on the Peninsula, but if this toponym referred to Javadvipa, then it probably was. In the same period Alexander the Greek Sailor sailed from Takola

in the Golden Khersonese and arrived at Cattigara in South China in about 40 days.

Three centuries later Fa-Hien sailed from Ceylon for *Ye-po-ti*, and from *Ye-po-ti* to China. Fa-Hien had a stormy trip and the whole journey took him the better part of a year, but he had with him Kuan Yin, the Hearer of Prayers, and in this way arrived safely at his destination without encountering any pirates, "to meet whom is death". The ships on both legs of the journey were large vessels that carried two hundred persons. On the second leg, which took 75 days instead of 50, there were Chinese merchants returning home, as well as Brahmans. A few years later another monk named Gunavarman, who had a smoother trip than Fa-Hien, sailed from *She-po* and reached China non-stop. The number of days the trip took is not stated.

The 7th century produced many records, starting with Chang Chun's trip to *Chih-tu* in 607 and culminating in I-Ching's non-stop trips to *Foche* and back. The outward trip, made in a Persian ship, took 20 days, while the return trip took 30. I-Ching gave a very sympathetic account of *Foche*, and he said that the king had his own ships. All this evidence goes to show that there were Greeks and Persians, Indians and Chinese, as well as the natives of Peninsular Southeast Asia engaged in this traffic.

The northwest coast of Borneo (above the equator) and the northeast coast of Sumatra (also above the equator) probably entered into this scheme of the rhythm of the monsoons, though more likely in a subsidiary manner because they were not quite on the main sailing route. The east coast of Borneo and the west coast of Sumatra, as well as the southwest coast of Borneo and the southeast coast of Sumatra below the equator, would not have come into this scheme because they were off the monsoon track, and to go to them could mean a delay of a whole season. My concept of these places is that they are isolated coasts, swampy with but little cultivable land to support any substantial population. So if any Chinese went there, they were probably pirates rather than envoys and merchants. Pirates played an important role in the Sri Vijaya story, from Fa-Hien's fear of them in the fifth century till the fifteenth century a thousand years later. With lairs in South Sumatra

these pirates could raid the main traderoutes above the equator, and when they became too much of a nuisance, as they did at the end of the 7th century, the king of Sri Vijaya attacked them with 20,000 men and took their strongholds in Palembang, Jambi and Bangka, where he put up 'imprecation stones' to keep them in order. The South Sumatran inscriptions containing these imprecations will be dealt with in the second part of this paper.

Professor Wolters' *Early Indonesian Commerce*, like Professor Wheatley's *The Golden Khersonese*, was a doctoral thesis submitted to the University of London. There are other similarities, as well as variations. Wheatley located places in the peninsula from earliest times to 1500 A.D., while Wolters located places in Western Indonesia from earliest times up to and including the 7th century. Wheatley used all sorts of sources including Chinese, while Wolters used mainly Chinese sources. Wolters' three penultimate chapters deal with the locations of Chinese placenames in the 3rd century, the 5th and 6th centuries, and the 7th century. I have said previously that the first five chapters of Wheatley's first part on the Chinese evidence, from earliest times to the Tang Period in the 7th century and after, were a witch-hunt for names. Wolters, whole book, which purports to deal with the origins of Sri Vijaya, is a witch-hunt for an empire.

Wolters locates the three related Chinese toponyms of the 7th century, *She-po*, *Ho-ling* and *Chele-foche*, in Java and South Sumatra below the equator, and he calls them Western Indonesia. Actually this theory is quite logical, but it is unscientific. A Chinese record stated that *Ho-ling* was also called *She-po* and on its west was *To-po-teng*; another that the King of *Ho-ling* lived in *She-po*; still another that *Ho-ling* was four days' sailing distance to the east of *Foche*. If *Chele-foche* (Sri Vijaya) is equated with the contemporary South Sumatran inscriptions where the name Sri Vijaya appears, then *Ho-ling*, four days' distant to the east of Sumatra, would be in Java, and as *Ho-ling* was the same as *She-po*, so *She-po* must have meant Java too. Then *To-po-teng* to the west of *She-po* must have been back in Sumatra, though nobody has quite succeeded in dealing with this toponym. This is what I mean by saying that the theory is quite logical because the Chinese records, being

external evidence, must be equated with some internal evidence, in this case the South Sumatran inscriptions. On the other hand, if I-Ching's *Foche*, based on the evidence of the prevailing winds, is placed above the equator, then *Ho-ling*, *She-po* and *To-po-teng* must have been above the equator too. And if we locate *Foche* and *Ho-ling* at Chaiya and Nakorn Sri Thammaraj, then to go from Chaiya to Nakorn it is necessary to sail *due east* before turning down south, and the journey takes four days. As for *To-po-teng* to the west of *Ho-ling*, this would be Trang, the old name of which was Tuptieng. Using I-Ching's first-hand, on-the-spot evidence as basis, no doubt many other toponyms could be located with more certainty than previously.

Professor Wolters' arguments on the 7th century evidence are set out in his chapter 13. This chapter is called "The favoured coast of early Indonesian commerce," though Wolters admits the coast was swampy. But it became 'favoured' because the Malays were good sailors. I wonder how he knows this, and in any case were the other people who lived by the sea not good sailors too? The reader is invited to the whole of this key chapter. I will quote just one short paragraph from the chapter (page 219), and I will number the sentences and comment on the paragraph sentence by sentence. This comment is on Wolters' methods and not on his conclusions.

"(1) No reason has been found for disagreeing with Pelliot's major conclusion in 1904, which was that the Chinese knew only of the island of Java by the name of 'Java.' (2) Students in Indonesia need not be perplexed by the variety of views expressed on the meaning of *She-po*. (3) Any attempt to search for the *She-po* of these centuries elsewhere than in Java must be founded on new and convincing evidence, while the suggestion that *She-po* was sometimes used as the name of a kingdom on the Malay Peninsula must be regarded as extravagant. (4) The Arabs, and perhaps the inhabitants of mainland Southeast Asia, may have understood "Java" in a different sense, but not so, apparently, the Chinese who recorded details about the tributary kingdoms."

(1) I have no doubt that Pelliot was a great Sinologist. Southeast Asian studies require the use of many languages, of which Chinese is by far the most important, so any scholar who knows that language must surely be the object of envy amongst his colleagues in the same field.

But Pelliot's work was pioneer work, and in the half century since he wrote, so much new evidence has come forward that it might be asked why his conclusions should be accepted rather than those of, say, Gerini, who knew so many languages and had such a flair that he could run the gamut of Southeast Asian placenames without batting an eye. He also knew the topography of the places he was talking about. I thought I was the first to put forward the suggestion that Malaya was an island in historical times, but I found later that Gerini had come to this same conclusion years ahead of me, for he wrote in 1909: "I believe, therefore, that I am the first to proclaim, after careful consideration that the Malay Peninsula, or rather its southern portion, had been an island before assuming its present highly pronounced character." There is geological evidence that would seem to support this possibility.

(2) Considering the mass that has been written over the years on the subject of *She-po*, I think students in Indonesia, as well as students anywhere, should be perplexed by the problem. After traversing this jungle, perhaps by taking a short cut by reading Wolters chapter 13, the student should be able to come to his own conclusion. But before he starts on his journey, he should make one of three suppositions, namely that *She-po* was in Java (as Wolters thinks), that it was on the Malay Peninsula (as I think) or that Java was a generic name (as I also think). I am by no means the first man to suggest that the Chinese *She-po* was in the Malay Peninsula or that Java was a generic name, so the writing of my predecessors with this line of thought—presumably including Gerini, J.L. Moens and Sir Roland Braddell, the Three Greats of Southeast Asian studies—should also be studied to see exactly why their theories have not been accepted.

(3) I wonder what Wolters means by "new and convincing evidence"? Would a more scientific consideration of the existing data be considered new evidence? If so, locating *She-po* on the Peninsula cannot be regarded as extravagant.

(4) Leaving aside the inhabitants of mainland Southeast Asia, surely the Arabs and the Chinese, who were recording the same places, must have understood 'Java' in the same sense. Perhaps any difference in the understanding was not due to the facts of the case so much as

the interpretation of those facts. What Wolters is trying to do in this book is to piece together a story of Sri Vijaya without using the Arab records or the records of "mainland Southeast Asia" (central and northern Thai inscriptions and chronicles); and even without the South Indian and Sinhalese inscriptions. The Chinese word-game is a wonderful passtime, so Wolters has strong views on the location of Java, but he has no view on the Javakaraja at all. The Sri Vijaya story without the Javakaraja is rather like a whiskey and soda without the whiskey.

Early Indonesian Commerce

The second theme in Wolters' book is Trade. The six middle chapters (5 to 10) deal with what he calls the *po-ssu* trade. The location of products is not important. What is important is the correct location of placenames. I have said at the beginning that to write any kind of history of Southeast Asia without first correctly identifying some of the toponyms was an exercise in futility. I am not convinced that Wolters has identified the main locations with certainty, so the title of his book, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, is a misnomer. This is not a major problem because all he has to do is to change the title of the book to "Early Southeast Asian Commerce".

My general impression of the fauna and flora of Southeast Asia is that what one land produces can be duplicated by another. For instance, what Siam produces can be duplicated by Burma, the Shan States or Laos. Of course there are exceptions, such as the sea fishes that Siam and Burma produce cannot be duplicated by the Shan States or Laos. In the same way in the Archipelago, what is produced in Wolters' Western Indonesia could probably be duplicated in Malaya or any of the islands. In any case, if any product is not available, say some rare spice from the Moluccas, it would be transported to an entrepot on the main trade-route. In this respect negative evidence is more important than positive. For instance, Sumatra has two-horned rhinosceros but not the one-horned variety, whereas Malaya has both kinds. So when Marco Polo said that he saw in the island of Java Minor "great numbers of unicorns, hardly smaller than elephants in size and in no way like what we think and say in our countries, namely a beast that lets

itself be taken in the lap of a virgin" (meaning a one-horned rhinosceros), Marco Polo's Java Minor was *not* Sumatra because that island does not have any one-horned rhinosceros. It could only have been "Malaya Island".

Another point that I personally would like to know about is that while Wolters gives an extensive list of the exports from parts of South east Asia to the Middle East (*po-ssu* trade), what were the imports from the Middle East, particularly to his Western Indonesia. Mediterranean-type beads have been found in several localities, at Oc-eo in Indochina, at Nakorn Pathom, U-Thong and two or three other places in the Central Plain of Siam, at Khao Javabrab in the Bay of Bhuket, and on the north west coast of Borneo (on the equator); but I have not heard of any beads having been found anywhere in Java or Sumatra. Then again what did the ancients use for money? What we call 'Funan coins' have been found in the Mekhong Delta, in the Nakorn Panom district, in the Central Plain of Siam as far north as Tapan Hin and Sawankalok, and at Pagan in Burma; and 'Namo coins' have been found in the south, particularly at Nakorn Sri Thammaraj; but I have not heard of any ancient coins having been found in Malaysia or Indonesia. This is an interesting question that should be looked into, otherwise the problem of the *po-ssu* trade could never really become convincing.

Summary

Professor Coedès' theory of the Sri Vijaya Empire, with its capital at Palembang, is based on equating the evidence of I-Ching (671-695) and the South Sumatran inscriptions (683-686), one of which has the name Sri Vijaya. I-Ching set sail from Canton when the Northeast Monsoon set in and arrived at a place that he called *Foche* in South Sumatra. But on meteorological grounds, this toponym could never have been below the equator (see section 3 above.) The Thai locate *Foche* at Chaiya where an inscription bearing the name Sri Vijaya has also been found, though dated a century later. I-Ching did his writing at *Foche*, and what he wrote about the place cannot be applied to Palembang. That is all that is necessary to kill Coedès' Sri Vijaya theory, but I will also quote a few sentences from a long paragraph on page 293 of Wheatley's *The Golden Khersonese*:

"A simple relief map of central and southern Sumatra is apt to induce an erroneous impression of fertility, for at least a third of the eastern lowlands are forested swamp which defies even modern technological control. Offshore a chain of flat marshy islands are building seawards by accretion of marine sediments, while westwards rise the foothill of the Barisan Range. At the inner edge of the swamp belt, at a point where a line of low hills runs out towards the Musi River, was the city of *Sri Vijaya*

"Situated some seventy-five miles up the winding Palembang River and separated from the sea by leagues of marshland, at least three or four days' sailing from the Malacca Strait and almost as far from that of Sunda, the original settlement of *Sri Vijaya* was thus sundered from the great trade-routes of South-East Asia

"At this time we hear more of the intellectual eminence of the capital than of its commercial activities—because, of course, our informant is a religious scholar—but such a development could only have occurred in a milieu of economic prosperity. That *Sri Vijaya* was in direct communication with places as far distant as Canton and *Tamralipti* is attested by I-Ching."

The above sentences, shorn of Wheatley's explanations or what might even be called his excuses for locating I-Ching's *Chele-foche* (*Shih-lo-fo-shih*) in South Sumatra, serve to show that his *Shih-li-fo-shih* could never have been at Palembang. The capital of an empire must be located in a district that could grow enough food to feed a considerable population. Also *Sri Vijaya* was a sea-faring empire, and Palembang was too far off the regular trade-routes to have been the capital of such an empire. I am sure that if Wheatley had concentrated on the purely geographical aspects of the evidence as a geographer should, instead of following Coedès' unscientific perigrinations as he has done, he would have come to these same conclusions himself. But I do not consider pulling Professor Coedès' *Sri Vijaya* theory apart is of great importance in the overall history of Southeast Asia compared to locating the ancient toponyms correctly. Here Wheatley has produced another major geographical misconception. He says on page xviii of his book, "During the first fifteen hundred years of the historic period (from earliest historical times to the coming of the Europeans) this function (of the Peninsula being a causeway) fell largely into abeyance, and the Peninsula assumed

the role of a barrier." A better concept is to think of the Peninsula as a bridge between India and China rather than a barrier. If this is correct then we should expect to find more history (or perhaps I should follow Professor Coedès and say 'more Indianization') on this bridge than on its periphery. The rest of this paper aims to find a part of this early Indianized history in the Peninsula where the more important toponyms were located.

The second part begins with the Sri Vijaya inscriptions of South Sumatra in the 7th century and goes on to the Sailendra Period of the story in the 8th and 9th centuries. In this part another of Professor Coedès' glaring errors—namely his mixing up of two important inscriptions from Chaiya and Nakorn Sri Thammaraj—will be corrected at some length. A thesis is also submitted that there were two branches of the Sailendra family ruling in Central Java and the Malay Peninsula. Then Prof. de Casparis' theories that there were two contemporary dynasties in Central Java (*Prasasti Indonesia I*), and that there was a decline and fall of the Sailendras (Part II) will also be considered. This will then take us to the threshold of Dr. Paranavitana's *Ceylon and Malaysia* covering the 10th to the 13th centuries, and Professor Wolters' *The Fall of Sri Vijaya* covering the 14th, which will be dealt with in the third part of this paper.

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