

INDONESIAN TEXTILES

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TAMPAN PASISIR: PICTORIAL
DOCUMENTS OF AN ANCIENT
INDONESIAN COASTAL CULTURE

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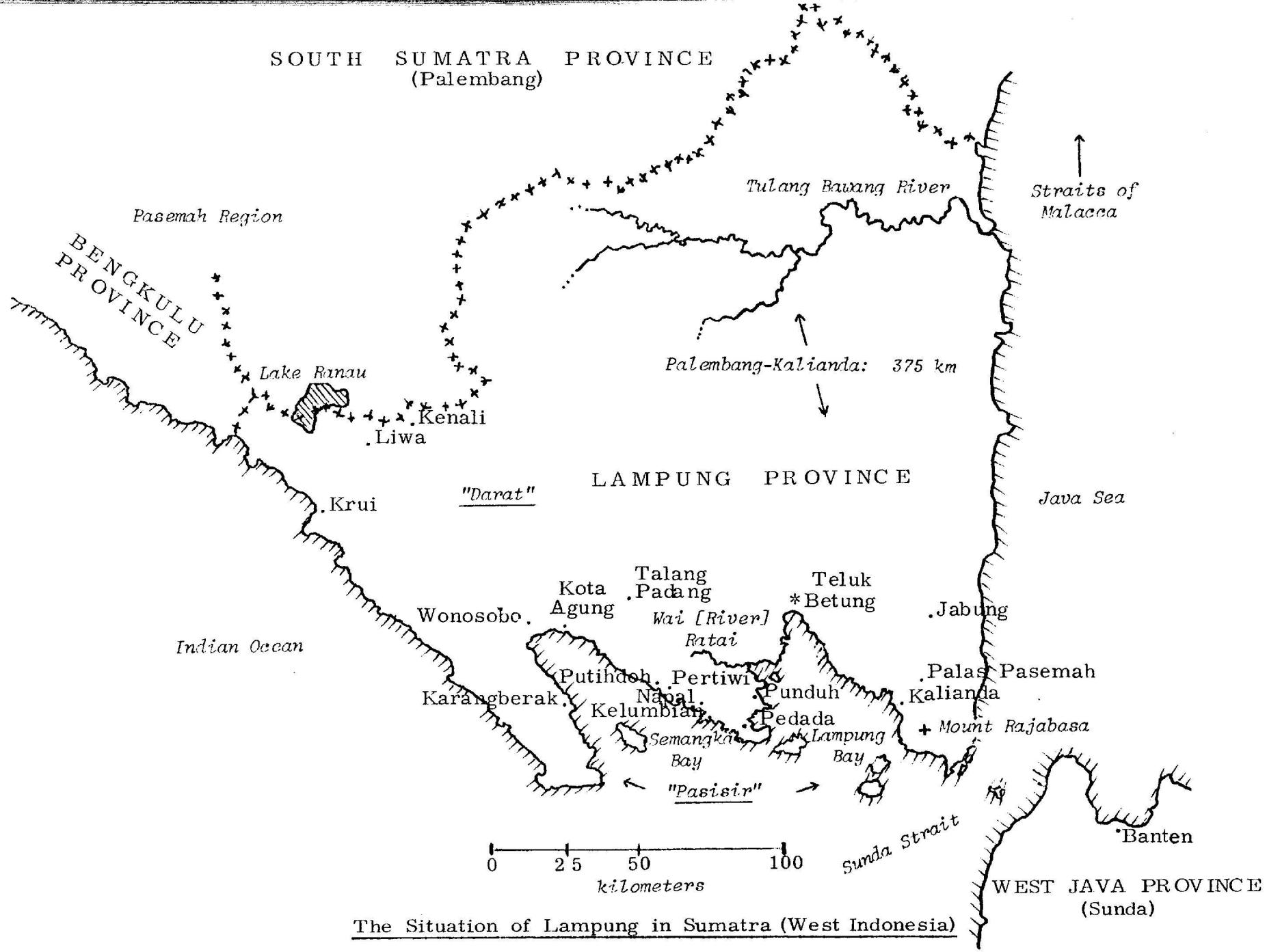
Tampan are ceremonial textiles that play a crucial role at transitional moments in the cultural life of the Lampung peoples in southern Sumatra. Roughly square in dimension, from 60 to 95 cm per side, they display colored designs described by supplementary wefts on an undyed plain-weave foundation.¹

While tampan were produced throughout the Lampung region, the authors' fieldwork indicates that specimens of superior aesthetic and technical quality were woven along the coasts of Lampung province, from Kalianda at the south-eastern extremity of the island, west- and north-ward to encompass the littoral of Lampung and Semangka Bays (see map).² This area is termed pasisir (Malay, coastal area), in contrast to the darat (inland) region formed by the mountains and upland plateaus of the interior. The dichotomy of pasisir vs. darat is a native Lampung convention, well-suited to our purposes because it describes geographical and perceived cultural differences between cosmopolitan Paminggir (cf. Malay, pinggir, edge, coast) clans of the southern seaboard, and insulated Abung and Pubian people of the midlands.

This paper has four main goals:

- 1) to introduce as a distinct cultural and artistic corpus a particular class of tampan previously mentioned only in passing, or treated under the broad rubric of Lampung weaving and "ship cloths," namely, the explicitly narrative, pictorial textiles produced in this coastal venue, which we call the pasisir-style;
- 2) to define the probable socio-historical milieu that generated pasisir-style imagery: a time when Lampung participated in the enterprising, sophisticated maritime confederacy known as Srivijaya (or its predecessor/successor states);
- 3) to identify important iconographic elements within these tampan; and
- 4) to propose the correlation of specific compositions with pertinent ritual occasions in Lampung social life.

The most fundamental impediment to research concerning ancient Lampung culture is that this culture has virtually disappeared. In pasisir districts particularly, material remains of the proto-historic period are scant and seldom understood; memory itself (a tenacious attribute in Indonesia) has here been erased by Moslem fundamentalism, which supplanted the pre-Islamic religion that inspired these extraordinary weavings. Darat districts submitted to Islam as late as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but there is evidence that this faith enjoys a 400 (or more)-year history in the southern pasisir -- almost as long as in Java.³ The sharp stylistic distinctions evident between tampan from darat and pasisir (first noted by Tillmann forty years



ago: 1938a/b, 1939a) signal divergent historical experiences and limit the application of darat information to *pasisir* weaving, despite shared roots, language, and customs.

Usage

Seminally important field data of Gittinger, acquired mainly in darat districts such as Liwa and Kenali, assemble what little concrete evidence we possess regarding tampan usage in former times (1972: 21-69; 1976: 210-220; 1979: 88-91). They suggest an enormous range of symbolic and functional purposes served, almost always in transitional contexts that may only mark personal changes, but involve and affect the total interrelationships of society: births, circumcisions, marriages, "political" gatherings, house-raisings, the creation of new social units (*suku*), deaths, etc. Ceremonial foods are exchanged in tampan bundles; brides sit upon them; they crown umbrellas and sacred spears; babies are presented to their grandparents blanketed by them; boys are circumcised while supported by tampan cushions; when corpses are washed before burial, tampan pillow their heads; they wrap the handles of funeral biers, or act as shoulder pads for the bearers; the ridge- and corner-poles of new houses are capped by tampan; requests for remedies are conveyed to medicine men (*dukun*) by tampan petitions; and so forth. Vestigial memories of lapsed functions are plentiful; that tampan endure at all, sole survivors, suggests the profound place they once held in Lampung life.

Most early interpretation of tampan iconography and social significance was influenced by Steinmann, who developed a cross-cultural, art historical theory about the "ship of the dead," in which souls of deceased persons voyaged to the country of their ancestors across the sea. The most striking aspect of this proposal is the absence of either corroborative or contradictory evidence from Lampung itself. The "ship of the dead" is only one among many possible themes depicted in *tampan pasisir*. The ship itself may perform a magical operation. For example, discussing the widespread Indonesian belief that rites-of-passage are inherently unstructured periods which expose to danger persons moving from one stable social position to another, van Dijk and de Jonge (1980:34-35) cite Douglas (1966) that the ship neutralizes any transitory threat of disorder and functions as a "lifeboat."

Historical Recognition of Lampung Textiles

William Marsden may have been the first European to notice tampan in use. Discussing Lampung in the 1770s, he remarked that rice was served to guests upon "tallam [brass salvers] being covered with a handsome crimson napkin, manufactured for that use" (Marsden 1811: 299). The most frequently reported function of tampan in recent years (aside from wrapping the Koran) is to cloak formal presentations of food.

Another century passed before these textiles were properly acknowledged. In view of Dutch activity in nearby Banten (western Java) since the close of the sixteenth century, and colonial occupation of Lampung in 1856, it is a considerable anomaly that tampan together with their important offspring, the long (2-4.5 meter) rectangular palepai, were the last significant types of Indonesian textile to attract the attention of scholars and connoisseurs, mainly after 1935.⁴ During the late colonial period, several hundred tampan were brokered at Batavia by traders who provided doubtful data concerning terminology, usage, and provenance. Most of these acquisitions were presumed to originate in the Krui/Lake Ranau region of northwestern Lampung, which led Steinmann to advance in several publications (1939-40, 1946) the erroneous but thereafter persistent notion that Krui was the center of tampan/palepai production.⁵

Dissimilarity of Inland and Coastal Tampan

Possibly as few as 100-200 tampan of the style we designate "pasisir" remained in Lampung in 1977 and these were found only in south-coastal districts. There they coexisted with several other far more numerous types, chief among them pieces of a crude and abstract character. These were ubiquitous throughout Lampung and are what we term the *darat* style. The latter are often reproduced (Fig. 1) (Steinmann 1937: pl. XXXVII, figs. 2, 3; Tillmann 1938a: 30-31; Steinmann 1946: frontispiece, 1889; Langewis and Wagner 1964: 83, 84, 91, 92; op't Land 1968-69: 101; Gittinger 1976: figs. 7, 8; etc.), and they exhibit a simple, frequently inarticulate iconography suggesting birds, trees or foliage, boats, animals such as horses or buffalo, or human images. Pure abstractions like a field of triangles, or patola-based designs, also appear. The repertoire of figural tampan *pasisir* (Fig. 5), on the other hand, comprehends all of these motives, but depicts them identifiably and locates them within a complex and integrated compositional milieu (full-page illustration in Gittinger 1979: 93; and Holmgren 1979: 30, color plate). Materials and technique of tampan *darat* are typically coarse and their size tends to be small. Ownership of the *darat* textiles reaches many levels of society, while *pasisir* pieces are possessed only by aristocrats (sebatin).

Characteristics of Coastal Tampan Styles

A consideration of south-coastal tampan weaving encounters, in addition to the widespread *darat* type and the regional style that we call *pasisir*, two other local styles. One arose at Kalianda and another in Semangka Bay; both are affiliated in some measure with *pasisir* pieces, but are found on limited stretches of the south coast.

Kalianda style

Most restricted in geographical dispersion, these tampan occur only in villages surrounding Mount Rajabasa behind the modern market town of Kalianda,

and in closeby kampung toward Teluk Betung. A single important figural composition developed at Kalianda: the squat red or blue ship with high arching multiple prows, bearing either confronting animals or a central house, together with people, animals, and trees (Fig. 2) (Tillmann 1939a: 19; Langewis and Wagner 1964: pl. VII, fig. 96; Palm 1965: 65; Gittinger 1972, pls. 29-32, 52-55; Fischer 1979: 8). Very rarely, the Kalianda ship conveys huge wayang-style anthropomorphs (Fig. 3) (Tillman 1939a: 18). Pattern arrangement is bilaterally symmetrical along the vertical axis. Crowded with designs, the background too is peppered with dots and medallions. (Taupe yarns in Fig. 2 have oxidized and largely disappeared, baring a fundamental design described in deep red.) Verisimilitude in the European sense is virtually absent, although the idea depicted becomes clear enough once its language is understood. Because these elaborate, polychrome tampan appear to be the iconographic progenitor of Lampung's most sophisticated long "ship cloths," the Kalianda palepai, Gittinger (1972: 106-110, 116) was persuaded that at least some *pasisir* compositions which occur throughout the south-coastal region (e.g. the elaborate ship of Fig. 5) owe their imagery to modification of Kalianda models. This notion however is difficult to support.

Kalianda is believed by modern Paminggir people to be, together with Krui on the northwest coast, one of the ancestral seats of their race, from which they spread to other coastal districts in proto-historical times. "Village history" contends that while Krui was the center of indigenous Lampung society, Kalianda -- a tightly knit, somewhat aloof community even in the present day -- was anciently settled from Java. The special style of Kalianda pictorial textiles deals expressly with one theme, perhaps borrowed from Java.

Semangka style

Georg Tillmann announced this style (1939b: 333, fig. 1) with its "circus horses" and claimed it arose at the southwestern tip of Semangka Bay. The authors' fieldwork finds it dispersed throughout the Semangka region, from Kelumbian in the southeast, through Kota Agung and Wonosobo, to Karangberak in the southwest. Few examples are published (Figs. 4, 12; and Gittinger 1979: 96). Two features are constant: confronting animals ("dancing" horses or lions) on the main deck, and a specific strong pattern on the fringe borders (Figs. 4, 12). Extreme stylization and fancy (e.g. the sea creatures of Fig. 4) as well as cursory, awkward characterizations suggest a relatively recent development, defined at a time when the customs to which its iconography refers were no longer in fashion. The palette is limited to reddish-brown, enlivened occasionally by turmeric-colored silk as a highlight. Details like curving prows, hull medallions, and selvedge-edge decorations that patently recall palepai borders (cf. Gittinger 1976: Fig. 4) together point to Kalianda roots.

Pasisir style

The variety and common characteristics of the *pasisir* style are surveyed in Figs. 5, 7-11, 13-20, 25 and 28. Distinctive features include: a delicate design on the fringe borders;⁶ a monochromatic central composition in deeply saturated blood red or chocolate color; indigo confined to narrow inner bands at the fringe end; and yarns finely spun. This style never employs varied colors within the main tableau in the manner of *Kalianda* and *darat* styles. On rare occasions, silk needlework is used to emphasize iconography or to execute curvilinear lines. *Pasisir* productions exclude the silk supplementary yarns, metal-wrapped threads, foil, or applied mirrors found on other styles.

Visually, *tampan* *pasisir* convey naturalism, in an evident attempt to reproduce reality. They are complex, carefully articulated and seemingly more thoroughly understood by their weavers because more recently conceptualized than *tampan* in the *darat* style (of which the iconographic motivations may reach back several thousand years). They eschew bilateral symmetry; where it occurs, technical conveniences afforded thereby (Gittinger 1972: 85-86) are subordinate to refined visual effect. They present a painterly tableau; often framed with stars, the scene is integral and orderly. There is usually a directional thrust, as if this were a mythic narration witnessed by the observer as it passes across the visual stage. The design repertoire is far wider than that of other coastal styles, and it explores two basic concerns: the theme of courtly life in a maritime setting; and apposed groups of "status" animals (lions, elephants, horses, peacocks, etc.) or of floral and abstract patterns.

Dating

Virtually all extant textiles from Lampung were produced during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. No textiles (or exceedingly few) of eighteenth-century vintage have survived, for the same reasons of climate and lapse of usage that have left throughout Indonesia no more than a handful of fabrics pre-dating 1800 A.D. Gittinger's suppositions (1972: 10-11, 132) regarding terminal dates for *tampan* and *palepai* weaving are universally supported by Lampung informants, none of whom can recall having seen such pieces made. Production apparently ceased around 1920 or earlier.

Lampung in History

A retrogressive historical summary of south Lampung's political and economic position with respect to neighboring territories follows. It conditions our view that the *pasisir* style evolved prior to the fourteenth century.

Little is known specifically about the character of *pasisir* culture prior to (even during) the twentieth century. Lampung offered scant enticement to Dutch settlers. Pepper, its major (post-fifteenth century) cash

crop, was funneled through an entrepôt at Banten, where fixed prices and exclusive purchasing rights were reserved to the Dutch East India Company (VOC). In the eighteenth century the VOC maintained two small "factories" (depots), one in north Lampung and another at "Lampong Samanca," perhaps Kota Agung or Wonosobo on Semangka Bay (Stavorinus 1798: I, 70). But forbidding geography, treacherous waters, an enervating climate, the rumored barbarity of interior peoples, and a suzerain claim by Banten to the entire Lampung region, sufficed to keep most Europeans away (Marsden 1811: 296-297).

Old documents issued by Banten's sultans, which confirm titles such as pangerang and specify the authority this office confers, are still treasured by coastal nobles and testify that Banten once exercised or validated power in Lampung pasisir. Banten-Lampung political affiliations certainly arose by the sixteenth century, as evidenced by the corvée of Semangka Bay militiamen requested for service under the sultan in 1596 (Gittinger 1972: 7). Lampungers are not mentioned among the host of sixteenth-century foreigners who visited or resided at this renowned Sundanese port (probably because they were already considered subjects of Banten), but the first Dutch visitors in 1596 were stunned to find a good part of the known world represented there. In addition to Portuguese they discovered "such a multitude of Javanese and other nations as Turks, Chinese, Bengali, Arabs, Persians, Gujarati, and others that one could hardly move"; a Constantinople merchant "who had earlier been to Venice and spoke fairly good Italian"; a Delhi-born clove dealer; even a Moroccan from Fez -- following perhaps the same international highway as the pious Haji and explorer Ibn Battuta, three centuries earlier (van Leur 1955: 3-4).

Recognizable references to Lampung before the sixteenth century are very few. Wolters quoting the Ming shih-lu mentions a tributary mission dispatched to China by the Sri Maharaja di-raja (King among kings) of Lampung in 1376, and alludes to fifteenth century Lampung missions "accompanied [by] those of other countries" (1970: 60; 215, note 100). During the thousand years between the third century A.D., and 1376 when Lampung is first mentioned by name, extreme historiographic confusion prevails in western Indonesia. It is certain only that numerous states, named but not precisely located, and known to us mainly because they left stone inscriptions or sent envoys to China, rose and fell in the area between Palembang and central Java. Certainly, the most powerful nation of this period was that known as Srivijaya. There is, however, considerable evidence that, beginning early in the Christian era, this was an area of important commercial activity, focused on foreign trade.

Srivijaya and the China Trade

China has from early times been a magnet to humanity because of her enormous political power, storied wealth, and huge profitable markets. "There is a saying in foreign countries that there are three abundances," K'ang T'ai wrote in the early third century A.D., "the abundance of precious things in [Rome], the abundance of horses among the Yueh-chih [Mongols of east Turkestan], and the abundance of men in China," (Wolters 1967:41).

Those precious Western things -- textiles, gems, colored glassware, frankincense, benzoin -- were highly acclaimed by the Chinese. It is Wolters' contention, in his magistral study Early Indonesian Commerce, that Indonesians were the primary carriers to China of this and other merchandise during the first millennium A.D., transhipping west Asian cargos acquired from Persian merchants at ports in India and Sri Lanka (1967: 150ff). Wolters argues persuasively that the might of Srivijaya (ca. 650-1392), situated on the east coast of Sumatra probably in the region of Palembang, was established upon two principles. These were 1) an ability to control mercantile activity (and suppress piracy) in the Malacca Straits, through the consent and in the common interest of vassal states on both sides of this lengthy Malay waterway, thereby compelling transit vessels to call at an entrepôt port; and 2) the gradual export substitution of native Indonesian (e.g. forest) products for exotica or materia medica from west Asia, Africa, and Europe which were prized by the Chinese. For any seaborne itinerary from China to India, the map of Southeast Asia proclaims that southern Sumatra, "whose coastal population never earned the intimidating reputation of the [war-like] people of northern Sumatra" (Wolters 1967: 242-243), lies upon a direct and unobstructed path from south China ports to the Straits of Malacca. No other Indonesian island enjoys this situation.

What sort of empire might Srivijaya have been? Was there, indeed, ever such a unitary "state" with a seven or eight hundred year history? Was it always ruled from one grand seat? Or did it move about, a more fragile coalition, maintaining one name but shifting both location and internal power alignments (as indeed the sharper outlines of fourteenth-fifteenth century history record)? That Palembang or any single spot on the east Sumatra lowlands could ever supply resources and infrastructure sufficient to support, with food and labor, an empire of enormous international repute, is a gnawing uncertainty. The character of regional confederation among Malay chiefs suits this polity better. Alliances within the confederation may have been matters of opportunity and convenience, determined by personalities and a luxury economy. "These states [were founded upon] trade in a limited variety of rather nonessential commodities, and they were therefore very vulnerable to market fluctuations. The limited agricultural base of these polities made their dependence on trade almost total" (Wiseman 1978: 20).

An hypothesis of this paper is that Lampung pasisir formed part of a Srivijayan confederacy (and perhaps of alliances which predate Srivijaya proper), and that Lampung thus came in contact with an international, maritime society. The recent publication of a Srivijayan inscription discovered at Palas Pasemah near Kalianda and dated ca. 682 A.D., provides critical support for this hypothesis (Boechari 1979). Virtually identical in text with several contemporaneous stone memorials found on traditional "Srivijayan" territory in east Sumatra, the inscription proves that Srivijaya's political authority projected to the southern tip of Sumatra before the end of the seventh century. It intimates that Lampung, hitherto ignored in ancient Indonesian studies, may actually have been a central power in this maritime union from its formative period.

In earlier centuries Lampung was probably represented in foreign affairs (e.g. at China's court) under the umbrella of Srivijaya. With the rise or resurgence of Javanese states as competitors for entrepôt trade from the tenth century onward, Lampung probably experienced pressures which challenged its Srivijaya allegiance in an atmosphere of intensified market competition. Javanese raids on Sumatra began as early as 1022; Majapahit subdued southern Sumatra (including Lampung?) in 1275 and shattered Srivijaya's residual strength with a conclusive campaign against the confederacy in 1392. Lampung's sailors and ships were sufficiently dependent upon China commerce to warrant sending its own tribute-cum-trade delegations to the Middle Kingdom as Srivijaya withered and collapsed. The arrival in a group of many ambassadors may indicate a lingering recognition that only cooperation could ensure effective control of the Malacca Straits. Mercantile disruption in west Indonesia, ensuing China's decision in the early fifteenth century to terminate foreign imports, exemplifies the structural vulnerability of Sumatran trading nations. After 1511, a hostile Portuguese establishment in Malacca compelled west Asian (mainly Muslim) traders to pass through the Straits of Sunda as an alternative access to Indonesian waters, thereby promoting a new entrepôt at Banten. In this historic realignment of west Indonesian power relationships, it behooved Banten to secure both shores of the seaway through which her trade windfall flowed. These events led finally to the Islamicization of Lampung pasisir; they separate the classical and modern eras in southern Sumatra.

Prosperity and dynamic views during the confederate period presented ideal conditions for a radical visual transformation and sophistication of ancient animist symbols, an enormous advance in cultural refinement. It is problematic to suggest a seminal date for development of pasisir imagery except with reference to Srivijaya/Majapahit history, but the expiration of direct long-distance trade (with China and the Indian subcontinent), and the advent of Islam under Banten auspices, do mark a terminus ad quem. We believe that sophisticated ship imagery began to evolve sometime during the early trade period (ca. third to fourteenth centuries), most likely at its peak between the seventh-eleventh centuries.

Lampung and the Problem of Javanese Culture

Considerations of Indonesian "classical" culture invariably depend upon Javanese evidence. Sumatra contributes very few remains to an appreciation of this ancient civilization. It is however important to recognize that the same acculturating foreign influences impinged upon both Java and Sumatra, whose indigenous peoples originally must have conformed to similar, pan-Indonesian animist characteristics. It is reasonable to propose that the Javanese classical society which arose from this amalgamation of native and foreign elements differed little in character from the culture of coastal Sumatra or coastal Borneo and Malaya. The main difference is that Javanese culture survived, impoverished but intact, into the modern era. Sumatra failed to maintain continuity like Java because its wealth and very existence

rested, not upon territory, population, and rice surpluses (as Majapahit), but upon fleets and monopolistic control of trade, both repeatedly and at last irreparably crippled during the twelfth-sixteenth centuries.

Most observers discern in tampan *pasisir* what they presume must be "Javanese influence" upon Lampung. We hypothesize instead that ancient Javanese culture offers a legitimate reflection of an international (Srivijaya/Java) coastal society in which Lampung shared. *Pasisir*-style tampan are material evidence that support this theory for Lampung.

The Ship Remembered by Lampung Pasisir

Concepts akin to the "ship of state" are worldwide. What sort of ship would coastal Lampungers, at the height of their involvement in a considerable ocean-borne commerce, have envisaged to be the emblem of their progress, as individuals and as a society? We can see, in the reality of tampan, that this vessel was no longer the dug-out sampan with outriggers of Indonesian tribal life, nor an oared ceremonial cruiser with dragon prows such as those depicted on embroidered women's sarongs of Lampung *darat* (van der Hoop 1949: pl. CXLV and Steinmann 1939a: 254) -- but an enormous, majestic sailing ship.

When Affonso d'Albuquerque encountered a heavily armored *jung*⁷ of Pasai on his 1511 voyage of conquest to Malacca, he was stunned by the Sumatran ship's size and strength:

Seeing that the *junco* wanted to start fighting, the Governor [Albuquerque] got close to her with his whole fleet.... Because she was very tall..., our people did not dare board her and our firing did not hurt her at all, for she had four superimposed layers of planks, and our biggest cannon would not cross more than two.... The Governor ordered his [largest ship] to come alongside [it].... When she managed to board the *junco*, her aft castle barely reached [the *junco*'s] bridge.... (Manguin 1979b: 2-3, quoting a contemporaneous chronicler)

Considering the burden of the Portuguese warship, about 400 metric tons, this Pasai *jung* must have had grand dimensions, and its willingness to confront an entire fleet implies a large crew. Manguin estimates that an average burden was 400 to 700 metric tons, and that some medieval Indonesian vessels "might have reached 1000 tons" with a complement of 1000 crewmen (compare twentieth century Bugis ships, which bear between 35 and 150 tons) (1979b: 4). Neither were Southeast Asian ships of such magnitude a recent innovation, for first millennium Chinese writers frequently commented on the "large" ships (Wolters 1967: 154), and as early as the third century they speak of vessels "more than fifty meters in length [that] stand out of the water four to five meters... They carry from 600 to 700 persons [together] with 10,000 bushels of cargo" (interpreted variously as from 250 to 1000 tons) (Pelliot in Manguin 1979b: 12). Clearly, Indonesians commanded large, sophisticated ocean craft.

Whatever the sacral or social function of *pasisir* ship *tampan*, details of their depiction indicate that they are modelled upon actual ocean-going vessels with which Lampungers were once closely familiar (Fig. 5). The consistent lack of double outriggers, a liability to large ships in the heavy open seas beyond Indonesia (Manguin 1979a: personal communication), is one clue.⁸ Hulls depicted with overlapping diamonds probably describe the superimposed layers of planking fastened with wooden dowels and tenons that sheathed early Indonesian ships. Masts secure rectangular sails with jagged designs which may depict an irregular rattan plaiting technique utilized to reduce wind stress on seams.

A pair of external rudders affixed at either side of the stern and operated singly according to the ship's tack were an old Indonesian or south Asian innovation. Several reliefs at Borobudur in Central Java (ca. 780-835 A.D.) as well as a fresco at India's Ajanta caves (ca. 500-550 A.D.) display an external double-rudder apparatus.⁹ Early European mariners often remarked this unfamiliar device. Albuquerque's tough, two-day battle with the Pasai jung ended only when the fortunate Governor was able to rip off her rudders, rendering her helpless. *Pasisir* ship *tampan* (e.g. Fig. 5) often appear to exhibit this external steering system,¹⁰ which seems to have passed from use on large Indonesian vessels by the end of the sixteenth century (Manguin 1979a: personal communication).

Tampan *pasisir* share with Borobudur ships other hallmarks of the ancient shipwright. The box at the top of each mast represents a sheave or pulley block to which halyards usually lead;¹¹ above, it terminates in a three-dimensional "cushion-form" that supports a tassel. Two rock plummets hang from the bow to sound depth in these shoal-ridden waters; occasionally an anchor is displayed as well (Gittinger 1972: pl. 36; Textile Gallery 1975: no. 1).

The search by many observers to find a prototype for this magnificent *tampan* ship in some "advanced" foreign model, or to confirm a suspicion that the entire *tampan* scene-- framed and composed like a decorative art object-- was borrowed from another world or (perhaps painted) medium, has not borne credible fruit,¹² although a few component images (lions, birds such as the parrot, the elephant of Figs. 8-11 and 15, the "winged" human of Fig. 17, etc.) were clearly adopted from Indian patola. In view of the ocean-going native ship described, and mindful of the improbability that rituals such as *tampan* display would arise during the *pasisir* Islamic period (post-1550 A.D.), we must attempt to locate *tampan* imagery within the cradle of early coastal west Indonesia.

The foregoing analysis, drawing on many disparate historical sources, places us in the exposed position of arguing "Srivijayan" origins upon nineteenth century evidence. Can that contention be sustained? We look now at the characters who inhabit the ship, at the ceremonial accoutrement of their vessel, at the changes in iconography which time imposed, and finally, we examine the known corpus of *tampan* *pasisir* endeavoring to find their ceremonial place within the Srivijaya/Java/coastal west Indonesian culture that we recognize.

Passengers on the Pasisir Ship (Fig. 5)

Who are these strange inhabitants of the Lampung vessel? Where are they going, and for what purpose? Is it apt to infer from such apparent verisimilitudes as we have noted heretofore, that the image as a whole signifies real people enacting scenes from life?

Certainly the passengers in Fig. 5 are not merchants. Everything in the environment and equipment of these personages points to a stately, ceremonial occasion. Aside from several small figures -- probably anak prahu (sailors) or muda-muda (midshipmen) who climb in the rigging upper-right, and the juru sampan seated in a proa at lower left -- only one crew member, whose duties are charged with symbolic significance, is present: the mu'allim (pilot) or one of the juru batu (leadsmen, sounders), standing at the bow.¹³

Unlike pilot and crew, the male passengers wear keris (daggers); their relative sizes and statures denote gradations of importance. Throughout the *pasisir* genre, men of the aristocratic class are distinguished from women by any of several attributes: keris, dodot (a waistcloth wrapped to create a trailing bustle), distinctive peaked caps or feathers, and generally greater height. Although Gittinger observes that "after marriage [Lampung] women bind their hair in a knot close to the head" (1972: 160) and men once wore long hair in many parts of Indonesia, a long coiffure together with stooped posture seem to be conventions in *tampan* *pasisir* that categorize women.¹⁴ Pantaloons serve both sexes, but women alone wear straight skirts.

An eight-man gamelan orchestra plays on the lower deck. Many of their instruments are common to the modern Javanese ensemble: single or multiple metal gongs upon low benches; drums; large gongs suspended from the ceiling; and on the floor, open and closed cymbals with rounded centers that suggest the boss of this instrument. The musicians appear to wear feathered or else pointed caps.¹⁵ Pegs and hooks seem to hang from the ceiling, a characteristically Indonesian means of storage which protects tempting objects from rodents and other pests (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebbrata 1979: personal communication). On the upper deck, flanking the central house, eight keris-bearing men stand amid noble regalia: flags, umbrellas, and an artificial tree form.

The central "enclosure" commands focal attention. It may be a torana-type (Skt. "sacred gateway"), free-standing portal called lawang kori which persons of rank were once privileged to erect to commemorate their nobility, accomplishments, and/or wealth.¹⁶ Surmounted by eight pennants, bounded by large and small umbrellas which declare the high social status of the persons they protect, garlanded perhaps with a scroll of vines or flowers (or decorated with textiles: see photograph in Gittinger 1979: 36), this enclosure shelters three figures who stand on a raised dais. A small child-like being, wearing a headdress imitating horns, appears between two men.

Most intriguing of the passengers is a reclining figure in the rear compartment, lower deck left. Long hair, breasts, and full skirts establish the figure as a woman.

What event does the scene depict? What occasion might it serve? Answers are considerably complicated by the interpenetration of both "high culture" and local ethnic elements in *pasisir* iconography. Notwithstanding their elaborate polish, their "new clothes," *tampan* *pasisir* are unmistakably rooted in prehistoric tribal beliefs. The two strains may have coexisted amiably in Lampung -- as they certainly do in Java (e.g. Kennedy 1935: 723ff). Colonial scholars, hunting for living primitive societies that might illuminate customs already extinct in Lampung, searched especially among Borneo tribes. Steinmann in particular drew some compelling parallels, although it is no surprise that these apply most vividly to *darat* artwork, such as the women's embroidered sarongs once made in Lampung's interior regions. These scholars demonstrated the fundamental identity of the aboriginal, ethnic visual language in both regions, and some of their conclusions have direct, provocative application here.

The pilot, for example, in Fig. 5 wears a feather cap similar to those of *Ot Ngaju* priests (*basir*) in south Borneo (cf. Schärer 1963: pl. IX ill. 8, pl. XVIII; P. W[irz] 1932: 5). In the *Ngaju* context this headdress represents the Tree of Life, an extraordinarily complex symbol of the "total godhead," which encompasses in its boughs, trunk and roots emblems of the Upper- and Under-worlds, and from which new-born babes are dropped. The cap is worn by priests during the "sacred service" which occurs during life crisis ceremonies. This service reenacts a primeval sacred event, the divine contest between Upper- and Under-worlds in which each destroys the other, and out of an antagonistic ruin the cosmos and creation are reborn (Schärer 1963: 27-28). At the climax of this service a slave is killed, a shrub implanted in his body, sacrificial blood smeared on each member of the community, and they "begin a new life as newly created men in a new world" (Schärer 1963: 141; see also Gittinger 1979: 33-35). The *basir*, functioning as an incarnation of divinity, as the godhead, pilots man "out of darkness and into light, out of sickness into health, from death into life," etc.¹⁷ (Schärer 1963:137). The deities, like the actual human participants, are imagined as arriving at the sacred service in boats laden with valuable gifts for the feast (food, jars, gongs), sacrificial animals, and slaves.

The guests do not come alone, but bring their divine ancestors and their dead with them. Some of the participants wear masks. These represent the ancestors and the dead. They precede the other boats as they approach the village in ceremonial procession. The whole community of the living and the dead thus takes part in the sacred service, and animals and plants also appear in the shape of masks. (Schärer 1963:139)

As we shall see, many elements of scenes in *tampan* *pasisir* suggest relationships with rituals which Schärer in the 1930s discovered among the *Ot Ngaju*.

The tree-form mounted on the upper deck of Fig. 5 resembles a Bornean facsimile of the Tree of Life (Ngaju, sanggaran; from sanggar, kill; penyanggaran, killing place: Lumholtz 1920: 363). Here, as among the Ot Ngaju, birds are envisioned perched in the upper branches, surrogates for the chief deities of the Upper- and Under-worlds¹⁸ (Schärer 1963: 32-33, 24 [fig. 1]). On either end of the top deck, arching pennants appear. Javanese call them umbul-umbul (cf. Mal. umbul, spouting; Jav. kumbul, victory); they were a trapping of aristocratic processions on Sumatra and Java, and they fly from Borobudur ships (Krom 1927: II. 41). Two small children appear beneath the mainsail; they play a mysterious, omnipresent role in Lampung marriage processions (cf. Gittinger 1972: 38, 42).¹⁹ Between two large garuda (mythical eagles) a design appears which recalls our Fig. 6 (upper right, above the raised coffin). It may be the kayu ara (cf. Gittinger 1972: 48-49, 156-157), a lofty manmade facsimile of the holy banyan or fig tree (beringin), festooned in Lampung at marriage time with gifts (including textiles) for children to plunder: a re-creation of the ancient ravage of the Tree of Life.

Several rather tenuous alternatives afford interpretation for the child in the central enclosure, for example: that a girl was killed when a new geographical or social unit (marga) was established; that youths at marriage donned a head cloth called tanduk (animal horns) fashioned from tampan (Gittinger 1972: 160, 164 and note 1) or wore a gold siger shaped like buffalo horns (Palm 1965: 45-49, 73, 80); that a young male has attained the age of circumcision²⁰ and during the four festival ceremonies was dressed and behaved "just as if he were a groom" (Gittinger 1972: 55 and 1979: fig. 13).

There are certain roles for which the secluded woman is ineligible. She is not about to be incised because this occurs in early childhood (without, according to Gittinger, much ceremony (1972: 57)). Neither is she a sacrificial slave, since a private cabin would undoubtedly be the precinct only of noblewomen. Death does not suit her posture, while an attitude of "royal ease" is contradicted by it. Brides await their betrothed in deepest formality rather than painful recumbent poses. But her peculiar strained attitude -- head raised, mouth wide open, arms stretching for her abdomen -- suggests that she may be giving birth.

An assumption that the two focal characters (secluded woman and escorted child) bear to each other an implicit connection may unlock the significance of this textile. It is likely that this highly specific scene describes a symbolic passage memorialized in a particular ceremony, and, furthermore, that it depicts the main participants. Conceding that we here indulge considered speculation, the writers feel that this tampan celebrates the birth of a distinguished child. It is possible too that the textile's theme determined its ritual use.²¹ The cloth might swaddle this very newborn within a graphic illustration of the birth's significance to society: flags fly, musicians play, the family assembles, emblems of nobility are displayed, the infant itself is escorted by two elders, and a great ship bears the baby into its world. Life surrounds the scene: creatures fill the sea and birds mark the sky, each animal rendered with an observant eye.

A variant of this precise scene displays slight iconographic deviations, which tend to support our conjecture that the tableau pertains to the birth of a noble child. Illustrated in Textile Gallery 1975: fig. 1, this tampan substitutes for the child in the central house a burgeoning tree, suggesting associations with fertility. In place of two male caretakers who flank the child in our Fig. 5, we see a man wearing a keris, left, and another man wearing a short selempang (old Jav. for man's shawl, the modern selendang), right. In Java, short selempang signified men in the full wisdom of older age, acknowledged sages (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebarta and Wassing 1979: personal communications); here, the man may be a dukun (shaman, priest) or an elder of the lineage.

A textile in the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam 1772/724, illustrated by Gittinger 1972: pl. 36 [incorrectly labelled 1772/1547], depicts a unique variant: the secluded cabin is occupied by a large seated person wearing a dodot and confronted by a small female with long hair. A tree (not child) appears in the central house, alongside two men wearing shawls. There are many misunderstood elements in this latter tampan, and perhaps 1) idiosyncratic substitutions were made in ignorance of the original iconographic significance of the scene, or, 2) it may originally have been designed to serve a different occasion.

In addition to the above, there is a sub-group within the design "family" to which this scene belongs: its ships have larger proportions than those of the main group. It depicts an additional house or enclosure outside the ship structure, e.g. our Fig. 7. Gittinger notes that small houses dedicated to and occupied by the spirits of ancestors (rumah poyang) once stood on Lampung beaches, where sacrifices were offered at the outset of trading voyages (1972: 139-140). But it is impossible at present to reconcile the incongruous elements in such unique scenes. A compelling, integrated analysis of designs still lies, suggestively, just beyond our grasp: we lack early evidence and, most important, early field data.

Whatever the occasion illustrated in Fig. 5, it is clear that people of very high social standing are involved. The authors' field experience indicates that tampan pasisir are possessed exclusively by sebatin nobility (radin, batin, or pangerang rank) and thus it is hardly surprising that these tampan evoke cherished insignia of noble birth. Nor is the identification of the society and the ship casual or merely apt from a psychological standpoint. It is historically defined, and so powerful that it persists even in the radically altered circumstances of the modern period.

The Ship of State

The ship recurs as an important symbol throughout Indonesia's 13,000 islands. Houses often adopt the ship shape and so do coffins. Gittinger demonstrates that the social and functional organization of Lampung marriage processions mimics that of a ship (1972: 31-40), and we recognize some tampan features. Representatives of each patrilineal descent group (suku), of the total society, participate, some playing roles which identify them with the

stations of a ship. One suku is designated *juru batu* (pilot, sounder); its delegate leads the procession. Another suku, called *juru mudi* (helmsman), brings up the rear. Between them members of "large" and "small" suku carry upright batons, lances, swords, mats, and a platter with a single high foot holding betel (*sirih*); the two elders who flank the groom at the center of the procession carry one large and one small umbrella. Some of the participants are unmarried (i.e., children). The entire company advances in ship formation. At one time, phenomena such as this ship procession may have operated in many transitional, ceremonial contexts.

For example, we know that in the early nineteenth century the protocol of shorebound Malay courts was still determined by the recollection of a maritime epoch. At Perak, the chief courtiers retained titles which have striking associations:

the Laksamana, called "Raja di laut" (admiral) or "juru batu" (sounder of the depths);
 the Sri Adika Raja, called "Raja njong karang" (ruler of rocky points) or "juru mudi" (keeper of the rudder);
 the Panglima Bukit Gantang, "Dayong peminggung kanan" (he who wields the chief starboard paddle), and his counterpart,
 the Panglima Kinta, "Dayong peminggung kiri" (wielder of the main port paddle);
 the Datoh Sagor, "Pergalah" (poler of the boat);
 the Orang Kaya Besar, "Penghulu raja perampuan" or "Penghulu dalam" (custodian of the royal ladies or guardian of the inner apartments);
 even the Toh Rana Pahlawan, "Timba-ruang" (person who bails the boat if she leaks, i.e., the remover of danger [*pahlawan* = hero]).

(data of Maxwell 1884: 6-8; original orthography is retained)

It is obvious that tampan *pasisir* refer to an authentic and profound marine experience. It is clear too that this experience permeates the Lampung view of life; it literally structures their most meaningful moments.

Design Lineage in Tampan Families

We have chosen to examine in some detail the tampan Fig. 5 because the imagery of this elegant textile remains precise and thoroughly comprehensible. There are few, if any, misunderstood elements in the work of this nineteenth-century weaver. Clearly, she was an accomplished master of her apparatus, but she also benefited by an accurate prototype to copy. Many tampan, however, are now (i.e., in the nineteenth-century examples which survive for our scrutiny) so far from their roots, misunderstood, and confused with irrelevant iconography which served other purposes, that it is no longer possible to unveil any thematic identification for their "families." Too many elements disagree among the extant examples. How could this happen?

We may assume that nineteenth-century Lampung weavers, like their predecessors, copied older pieces belonging to a recognized and useful, even necessary, tradition. Individual "artistic impulse" was not a factor.

Society required particular compositions sanctioned by long usage for its ceremonies. Because accurate "transcription" or recapitulation of old designs was desirable in order that new tampan be as efficacious as their forerunners, it is probable that some system was employed, either direct copying from an old specimen placed before the weaver or from an heirloom pattern guide such as the pahudú of east Sumba (Bolland 1956: 54). Even if we suppose that tampan *pasisir* have been produced for a thousand years or more, we must recognize that at no time could any weaver avail herself of models more than about 100 years old for copying purposes. Inevitably, transcription errors crept accumulatively into successive generations of tampan, and compounded, particularly as the essence and meaning of root iconography became increasingly remote in time and custom. Thus, describing precisely the same scene, there are tampan of presumed age and high weaving quality that incorporate many more misunderstood iconographic elements than apparently recent, poorly executed pieces which had, however, the benefit of faithful prototypes or pattern guides to copy. The very diversity within these "design family" variations is itself an indication that their common source lies distant in history.²² Comparative analysis of "variations on a theme" (e.g. the transposition of child and burgeoning tree in the "birth" family, discussed above) clarifies the original meaning of images obscured by time.

Degeneration Sequences (Figs. 8-11)

The terms degeneration and sequence have a special significance here. By "degeneration" we mean more than simply the decline of an art form; we are concerned as well with the process by which this occurred, viz. the replication, generation after generation, of prescribed prototypical compositions. We envision a "family tree" with common roots but many branches. Thus, we now discuss four nineteenth-century tampan from one design family. We observe that they differ in their fidelity to the postulated prototype, and for convenience we rank them according to their degree of "degeneration" and term them a "sequence." We do not thereby mean, however, that they copy one another faultily, or that one is "later" than the other. We mean only that the extent to which their respective lineages have been corrupted is perceptible and instructive.

Degeneration is evident in all design families of tampan *pasisir*. We illustrate by example the Elephant group (Figs. 8-11), heretofore unpublished. Basic features are a two-masted ship with high galleries fore and aft, a poop cabin enclosing one person, splendidly outfitted passengers who interrelate in groups of two or three, and, of special interest, a colossal elephant.

According to Gittinger (1972: 170-171) as well as to Lampung informants, there is no tradition that elephants were ever domesticated in Lampung; but it strains credulity that this creature, vehicle of royalty throughout the Indianized world, never occupied a place in the ritual life of pre-Islamic Lampung, as tampan suggest they did. Van der Hoop observes that Kubu people living in mountains just north of Lampung "regard an elephant as sacred, on

the ground that this animal was the riding animal of their ancestors," and famous "megalithic" stone carvings in Pasemah depict elephants with riders (1932: 79; ills. 77-79, 89-95). Certainly the beast, which roams wild throughout southern Sumatra's hills, is no intrusive stranger. That Lampungers were familiar with Indian conventions is evidenced by the howdah on its back, the mahout with his clearly rendered goad, and even the chain which binds its front foot. That elephants were sometimes transported (usually to Coromandel in India) by sea is witnessed in early Sumatran records (e.g. Marsden 1811: 176; Schweitzer 1929: 196; Floris 1934: 12; Boxer 1967: 2).

Although tampan elephant images certainly copy an Indian model, probably ²³ patola, it is also plausible that Lampungers adopted, like the Acehnese (van der Hoop 1932: 81; Kennedy 1935: 25), the Indian concept of elephants as prestige transport, and embodied the idea in local custom. However it was, they suit this total tableau, which, like other narrative tampan *pasisir*, has no known or even remotely related counterpart in Indian or Chinese arts.

Briefly, the scene (Figs. 8-11) describes several important personages, among whom the raja with dodot, large keris, and sheltering umbrella (upper deck center) is paramount. Another nobleman, perhaps an elder wearing short *selempang*, appears upon the poop deck. The raja faces a contraption, apparently suspended from the rigging; it may be a platter holding betel and a rattan mat. In Banten, female slaves furnished the sultan with "large size" golden tobacco and betel boxes, as well as a gold spittoon (Stavorinus 1798: I, 82). Gittinger quoting Helfrich (1889) says that a sirih box and mat were the "perquisites" of important rajas (1972: 67). The elephant and passengers are honored by an umbrella-bearing attendant. Innumerable arrows, pennants, umbrellas, and umbul-umbul deck the yards. This tampan design family seems to depict the progress of a nobleman in state, perhaps with his ministers or family.²⁴

Compared with the "birth" sequence, this family is visually free and informal. Life-like portraiture of flowing curvilinear quality competes for our attention with delightful minutia such as a sailor mounting the ropes. A tendency toward symmetry, constrained in less debased examples (Figs. 8-9), becomes pronounced as the sequence degenerates (Figs. 10-11). Although all the tampan in Figs. 8-11 appear, from non-iconographic standards (weaving quality, fine color and materials, beauty of the borders, wear, etc.), to be roughly contemporaneous in date of manufacture, their fidelity to the prototypical scene declines markedly, in approximately the enumerated order. All elements are increasingly simplified: the howdah, for example, finally disappears. Figures which once achieved sinuous grace become rigid and peremptory. Designs are multiplied and extracted from their proper circumstances, to float meaninglessly in the "sky." The background becomes cluttered with misunderstood patterns, which fill space pleasantly but do not contribute. In a sub-group, two elephants are conveyed by the ship (Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden: photofile no. 551-171); distortions ordained by this exaggeration of the design (e.g., lengthened decks that stretch beyond, and are unsupported by, the ship)

suggest that it is a gratuitous, late development. Just so, a combination of 1) accumulated copying errors and 2) extinction of the customs which are described, gradually corrupts tampan design-family traditions.

Tampan Design Families in Lampung Pasisir (Figs. 13-16, 19)

The authors identify approximately thirty-five *pasisir* design families in addition to the two described above; there may be more. Space permits us to mention only a very few in this forum. Iconographic details noted in the foregoing textiles recur throughout the genre.

One tampan family depicts a distinct marriage scene (Fig. 15). A nobleman sits beside his bride in a raised ceremonial enclosure surmounted by a flag. Nearby courtiers carry pennants, umbrellas, and on top of their heads, two big boxes. These undoubtedly contain the dowry (*jujur*; cf. Gittinger 1977: 28; 1979: 91) which, in the nineteenth century, involved the transfer of enormous wealth (jewelry, textiles, livestock, etc.).²⁵ Two elephants stand in the ship's hold, seeming symbols of the two descent groups joined by this union (and mounts for the bridal pair?).

Between these beasts is an important motif, simplified to the point that its significance may be tentatively revealed only by comparison among many examples (always between confronting animals). Is it an enclosure or house with its entrance closed to curtain a crucial part of the ceremony? Does it harbor a Tree of Life implanted in the sacrificial slave? A *Semangka* style tampan (Fig. 12 and inset detail) hints at this interpretation, displaying what appear to be hands and legs at the base of the Tree. Another cloth (Fig. 13 and inset detail) presents the possibility graphically: at center, between two standing men, lies a recumbent figure from whose body a flowering or fruiting shrub rises, topped by a bird. The design between two animals directly beneath this recumbent figure mirrors closely in shape and outline the vignette disclosed above. We shall explore this question further in the context of wayang. However, we note here one further possibility, prompted by a *palepai* presently in the Museum of Cultural History (University of California, Los Angeles) no. X78-444 (published by Textile Gallery 1975: no. 20), in which the hindquarters of two elephants are symmetrically apposed to form this motif. Van Dijk and de Jonge (1980: 40-41) remark that the legs of the prestigious *pepadon* tabouret are sometimes "formed as elephant legs"; they conclude that the elephant is "associated with wealth and respect and also with transition rites." Thus this device, which occurs on so many fine cloths, may represent the *pepadon* "throne" itself, as a token of the social class with which tampan *pasisir* are affiliated.

An antique (perhaps eighteenth century) tampan illustrates the marriage theme in its richest surviving form (Fig. 14; comparable version illustrated by Steinmann 1939a: 256). The bridal couple clasp hands²⁶ over a peculiar, focal object. Above them, two men loft what seem to be keris. Gittinger observes that during some south Lampung marriage ceremonies elders of the groom's suku draw heirloom keris past the ears of particular marriageable

maidens in the bride's suku, in symbolic allusion to the act of piercing them as a metaphor for possession and sexual intercourse. For Gittinger, the extraordinary depiction of raised keris is decisive to an identification of the marriage theme on this tampan (Gittinger 1979-80: personal communications). Distinctly hierarchical composition intimates the participation of Upperworld spirits; two tiers of ten or twelve celebrants may relate to the parties of dancers, "armed troops," and richly dressed attendants who accompany Kalianda marriage processions (Gittinger 1972: 38-39).²⁷

One of the most basic and beautiful of the tampan design families, represented by Fig. 19, apparently displays a type of pleasure barque. Within the central arch a raja confronts three ladies. There is but one sail, and square medallions along the hull suggest portholes (cf. the rowers whose faces stare out from one Borobudur ship, Krom 1927: II.41, and also our Fig. 25, where oarsmen are clearly rendered). Small dugouts (jukung) border the barque like escorts. This theme survives in many versions, but its overall significance is obscure.

In Fig. 20 technical flourishes direct attention to focal elements within the scene. Golden silk embroidery signals the importance of a mysterious chest that is guarded in a chamber upper right, and articulates the flags atop masts. Elegant latticework and maroon twining in fringe-edge bands enhance the uncommon size and impact of the tampan. Cannon (rentaka) are everywhere mounted on the decks.²⁸ The ship appears to convey an entire court or family, together with attendants and prestige animals: a buffalo, horse, caged bird, and peacocks. Numerous spouted jars conform with a style (kendi) seen on Majapahit reliefs of medieval Java (but unlike the squat water-vessels kundika of classical Borobudur). Sails and yards billow in the wind; birds are captured in flight. An undersea habitat bounded by waves and a seabed, and fowl above, suggests the tripartite upper-/human-/under-world scheme that organizes so many fine tampan pasisir.

Three- and Five-Tier Tampan Pasisir (Figs. 17-19, 23, 24)

This classification comprises numerous and varied tampan design families which were highly receptive to foreign influence and introduced new iconography. They are quite unlike the narrative textiles we have so far examined. Metre and courtly formality are distinguishing features.

Cultivated, complex floral bands frequently displayed as top and bottom borders (e.g. Figs. 17, 18) echo Indianized silk and gold brocades. Indian export textiles were long fundamental to the India-Indonesia trade, answered by Indonesian spices, resins, and gold.²⁹ Sumatran textiles are generally the most heavily Indianized weavings in the entire archipelago, and it is impossible to conceive of any other inspiration for such all-over floral designs as Fig. 21. Sometimes abstract patterns underwent reinterpretation to conform with local ritual concerns: thus, tendrils and curves became birds (Fig. 21 transformed into Fig. 22). But the choice of bird -- a sky/upperworld indicator in the narrative tableaux -- is instructive. Indigenous fowl like

the hornbill or rooster, authentic ritual birds often depicted in Indonesian textiles, are almost never venerated in tampan *pasisir*. The appearance instead of peacocks (a bird native to Java and India but not Sumatra; there might be confusion with the broad-tailed Sumatran pheasant), identified by topknot and fanned plumage (Fig. 23), suggests a high-culture (Indian) source.

An inclination to pure ornament and metricality which these multitier tampan display is most evident when Lampung weavers utilize motives they do not comprehend, e.g. the "endless knot" (Fig. 24), borrowed probably from Chinese ceramics, which circulated in Sumatra for two millenia.³⁰ But the appetite for disciplined repetition of design may issue from a different mentality, such as animates central Javanese batiks: conscious mantra-like evocation, a spirited world of infinite reiterate entities.

Wayang: Primal Theater (Figs. 25, 28)

We come finally to wayang, the Javanese shadow theater, a subject of utmost complexity, with highly conjectural but provocative bearing upon tampan. We touch first several aspects of this art, and then explore their junction in tampan *pasisir*.

Modern opinion leans toward the conclusion that the underlying ideas and structure of shadow theater are not rooted in Hindu-Buddhist culture despite Mahabharata/Ramayana themes, but rather in rituals of pre-Aryan tribal life shared by India and Indonesia (Holt 1967: 128-131). Rassers (1959: 95-215), who surveys the entire history of wayang enquiry, theorized that the screen on which shadows are cast is not in fact the focus and real stage of the drama, but rather a partition which once sealed off a secret men's house. It prevented the drama from being seen by what is now considered the "audience," and especially by women, to whom a screened performance is a concession. Rassers believed that the fundamental story threading through all wayang plays is the primal confrontation of two opposing clans or descent groups (phratries) who embody good/evil, sun/moon, and other polar antagonisms. He felt that wayang, in something like its present form with a transparent screen, is indeed very old, implying still greater antiquity for the exclusively male ritual that dramatized and re-enacted the primal events upon which this theater is based.

Rassers' interpretation of the gunungan (literally, mountains) or kayon (woods), a wayang apparatus placed in the middle of the screen to punctuate the performance as scenes open and close, suggests a potential tampan-wayang relationship.³¹ Contoured like holy Mount Meru, abode of the gods, gunungan appear to depict a house surmounted by a "tree of heaven [life]," bordered by two confronting animals, and overflowed by garuda. Compare Rassers' description of contemporary gunungan with the two Kalianda tampan published here (Figs. 2 and 3):

The Javanese kayon [may be compared to] a large isosceles triangle whose sides, not very far above the base, gradually bend inwards rather sharply and then bend slightly outwards again towards the base...

...the most striking part...is a massive tree exactly in the middle of the figure. The lower part of the trunk is concealed by a small building which appears to be a gateway with the doors closed...; on either side of this gateway an alarming giant stands with drawn sword. Level with the roof two garudas are depicted with outstretched wings and their open beaks facing each other. Then above the gateway the wide branches of the tree are visible, which, with a wealth of leaves and blossoms fill all the rest of the kayon right to the edges, and in which there are all kinds of animals -- monkeys, birds, insects, etc... (Rassers 1959: 169-170).

While Rassers' gunungan differs from Kalianda tampan in small details, there is remarkable general conformity in concept and, perhaps, in basic underlying purpose too. It recalls the hidden "killing place" where blood offering occurs in Figs. 12 and 13, and it suggests that hypothesized events which transpire in the aboriginal secret men's house are identical with those of the Ngaju "sacred service" and the Javanese wayang narrative: epic struggle, climax (in sacrifice), and then rebirth in social and cosmic unity.

Bearing in mind Rassers' theory that at base wayang tales harmonize antagonistic phratries or forces, we observe that most of the transitional events celebrated with tampan and palepai in Lampung life connote unity issuing from plurality, and that a dualistic scheme is apparent in many of these textiles. Kalianda weavings are particularly concerned with balance achieved through the symmetrical disposition of slightly varied but con-generic images (larger and smaller ships, gnarled and smooth trees). The intention is conceptual and social. Thus, for example, red double-ship palepai (e.g. Gittinger 1976: fig. 3; 1979: fig. 48) state this polarity; while the splendid red single-ship palepai (Fig. 26) resolve it, begetting from two strains (Trees of Life) a single social unit (the Ship). Probably these two palepai styles from one region performed different functions, or appeared in different acts of one drama.

Another relic of ancient Java, the disused form of theater called wayang békér purwa, supports the Lampung-Java relationship from a stylistic and structural viewpoint. In this dramatic genre the wayang story is narrated by a dalang as he unrolls painted scrolls. It is arguably the oldest theatrical mode, and the few surviving examples (notably Leiden series 360 nos. 5254 - 5259 [Figs. 27 and 29]) offer a unique notion of the power and imagination of early Indonesian painted art. We are fortunate to have an incontestable description of a békér performance in ca. 1416 AD (Ma Huan 1970: 97) which proves that this wayang was already institutionalized during the middle of the Majapahit period in a form akin to that of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Like Lampung pictorial textiles, wayang beber present

complete tableaux (rather than autonomous puppets). Moreover, it is intriguing that palepai, unusual in size among Indonesian textiles, approximate closely the dimensions of beber paintings.

We encounter in tampan pasisir the depiction of people with clothing and physique typical of wayang beber. Comparing the beber paintings (Figs. 27 and 29) with tampan pasisir (Figs. 25 and 28), we note a similar delineation of eye, nose, chin, and hair ornaments, the peculiar hunched posture with neck jutting forward, skinny angular limbs, stylized profile head with protruding snout, and the swelling curve of the upper torso. Such details as shoulder- and waist-cloths, large keris sheaths, little arched feet, and arms crossing awkwardly before the body, all confirm a basic cultural connection between the painted and woven scenes. Many of these visual details are difficult to render in, and do not seem natural to, the supplementary weft technique, which lends itself rather to vertically- and horizontally-disposed designs; but such graceful, flowing lines do fit a painted precedent. Holt (1967: 127) reproduces one section of a Pacitan scroll, in which noses almost touch, like the "kissing" couples on the lower deck of tampan Fig. 25. A small fragment (Fig. 28) projects a much more faithful image of these couples, apparently men and women. We cannot conclude that they wear wayang masks (topeng); they may be spirits of unconventional (non-human) appearance. Known examples of these thematic families are too few to uphold speculation about subject matter.

However, the dark saturated colors of tampan pasisir against a light ground support an impression of puppets moving against a field illuminated from behind. The occurrence here and elsewhere of decks that rise one above the other, apparently unsupported architecturally, parallels the dalang's hierarchical arrangement of his puppets, godly and sacred figures above, baser beings below. In some instances, multiple decks (e.g. Fig. 20) contradict the boatlike character of the form and are more like houses: throughout Indonesia house and boat are similarly regarded, one being simply an inversion of the other (roof = hull); and both are shrines within which sacred ritual events occur.

Did Lampung people simply clothe their native ideas in the most refined (i.e., Javanese or Java/coastal west Indonesian) form which their cosmopolitan contacts offered to the eye? Or, is it probable that a popular theater once existed in Lampung,³² that storytellers on the "coastal circuit" brought to provincial people a theatrical format which they adapted to the mythic themes of Lampung? Is it, indeed, possible that tampan pasisir are in themselves a survival of an extinct Lampung dramatic art form, and that Kalianda tampan and palepai served as props on a more heavily "Javanized" version of the same ancient stage?

Conclusion

Tampan pasisir provide an uncommonly interesting tool with which to probe south Sumatra's past. They afford insights about the sacred concerns of the

people who made them. They suggest an historical experience not otherwise noted in primary sources. They demonstrate the revolutionary change in artistic vision that exposure to the "civilized" world could impose upon a narrow slice of Indonesian tribal society.

Relying heavily upon the conformation of early south Sumatran mercantile history, and the large cargo vessel recorded in tampan *pasisir*, we have concluded that these textiles were conceived in a stable, prolonged period of prosperous international trade enjoyed by Lampung's maritime districts, almost certainly during the Srivijaya/Majapahit era, but possibly as early as the third century A.D.

Visual organization of tampan *pasisir*, the "way of seeing," represents a qualitative leap forward vis-a-vis the *darat* style (Fig. 1). Their realism, located within actual defined space (e.g. sky, waterline, seabed), is almost unaccountable in the absence of some external cultural stimulus. *Pasisir* imagery is not inert and emblematic, like the megalithic frontality of tampan *darat* or of tribal ikats from other outer islands (Borneo, Celebes, Sumba, etc.), but rather kinetic and narrative. Their vision, like that of Balinese *geringsing* (cf. Buhler et al. 1975: abb. 32-41), bears an intriguing relation to classical Javanese sculptured reliefs (particularly at Borobudur). *Pasisir* textiles are ritual tableaux, never intended for wear; the coincidence of painterly qualities, and even of size (*palepai*), with the earliest extant Javanese pictures (*wayang beber*), place them much nearer to brushwork than to weaving. Although no painting whatsoever survives from Indonesia's pre-Islamic period, we know it existed (Krom 1927: II, 230; Holt 1967: 191). It seems likely that tampan *pasisir* draw us back stylistically to an ancient painted tradition. In this hypothesis, the storyteller -- exponent of society's basic myths -- is an attractive candidate for the role of high-culture missionary.

The content of tampan *pasisir* remains both local and ethnic, however fashionable its presentation. We note the fortunate irony that a foreign, almost photographic realism illuminates the ceremonial core of an indigenous society: rites of passage that even today require the use and participation of tampan. The auspicious, concordant symbolism of the textiles is expressed by iconographic harmonization/identification of peoples and symbols, as well as allusions to spiritual realms. The very word tampan expresses, in Malay, "appropriate, good, fitting" in the context of resolution; and several informants offered the Lampung vernacular meaning "to guide, to lead (*menampan*)," which, as we have learned, is precisely their ritual function.

But, like dim photos, tampan also withhold their share of secrets. We witness mainly the externals. We lack keys to release all the compact symbolism they incorporate. And we hold a suspicion that tampan *pasisir* shield a mystery they never meant to expose, an authentic melodrama of primordial man, understood and reenacted only by a (male) council of initiates. In a sense, the nineteenth century women who wove these tampan sat outside, like the modern wayang audience which sees, not the meticulously painted puppets in the dalang's hands, but only shadows.

The paradoxes exhaust us. We have spoken seldom of art; we felt no need. For when we let go of theories and possibilities, our eyes behold at the last -- absolute, quiet, and glowing in the profound blood-red that thrills and contents every connoisseur of Indonesian textiles -- a few gracefully proportioned, richly provisioned ships, bearing forth a noble civilization.

Notes

1. The authors are particularly indebted -- for generosity of information and counsel -- to Soedarmadji J. H. Damais (Jakarta); K.R.T. Hardjonagoro (Surakarta); Pierre-Yves Manguin (Jakarta); Alit Veldhuisen-Djajasoebarta (Rotterdam); and especially Mattiebelle Gittinger (Washington), whose work provides the main building blocks for an understanding of south Sumatran Textiles. For valuable assistance and permission to reproduce archival photographs and objects in the museum collections they curate, we are grateful to Dr. J.B. Avé, Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde (Leiden); Mevr. Rita Bolland, Tropenmuseum (Amsterdam); and Mr. Spruyt, Photodocumentation Department, Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (Amsterdam).
2. To these true *pasisir* regions must be added several inland districts toward which coastal people formerly migrated, e.g. Talang Padang from east Semangka Bay, or Jabung from Kalianda.
3. Islam probably reached Lampung during the sixteenth century via the Muslim sultanate of Banten, based on Java's west coast. Pires in 1515 reports that "according to what they say" Lampungers were still heathen (Pires 1944: 158). By 1600 Lampung had submitted to a measure of Banten control, and in Marsden's time (ca. 1775) "most of their villages" had built mosques (Marsden 1811: 301).
4. A few tampan entered the Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen (KBG, now Museum Pusat, Jakarta) and various European museum collections in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; Loebèr 1903: pl. VII published three tampan including a pair acquired by the British naturalist Henry O. Forbes, apparently during his Lampung tour of 1880. In the years 1936-41, the KBG obtained a few weavings of extraordinary quality; articles by Steinmann (1937, 1939a) and Tillmann (1938a/b, 1939a) provoked further interest, culminating in a brief dialogue between the two men (Tillmann/Steinmann 1939b) in which Tillmann

demonstrated some specific and, among his peers, unique knowledge of coastal provenances. Pre-war tampan collections in European museums (afterward augmented by accessions from ex-colonials) are small in size and uneven in quality. Although fresh material continued to trickle through the post-revolutionary Jakarta marketplace, tampan and especially palepai were understood to be of great rarity, and efforts to collect them in the field proved discouraging until the late 1970s when an astonishing quantity, probably in excess of five thousand pieces, emerged from Lampung under the swords of famine, cultural collapse, and feverish commercial interest.

5. The tampan shown in Fig. 5 was acquired in Piya village, Ratai River district (Wai Ratai), on the west coast of Lampung Bay. The KBG (Museum Pusat) register, under no. 23186 (identical with our Fig. 5 and illustrated in van der Hoop 1949: pl. CXLIV), states that their example was purchased from a "Raté" [Ratai] runner or dealer, but adds that it is "likely" to be a production of Lake Ranau district -- a clear instance of the strange Krui/Ranau bias which characterized early scholarship.
6. Javanese call this design untu walang, "grasshopper's teeth" (Damais 1978: personal communication). It occurs also in several courtly Indonesian contexts: see for example, undated Sumatran (Minangkabau) brass bowls in Bezemer n.d.: 114-116.
7. The Malay word *jung*, from which "junk, junco" are derived, became associated in later times with Chinese vessels only.
8. Outriggers do appear on all large Borobudur ships, which agrees with central Java's limited and local commercial relations in the late eighth century.
9. For Borobudur, see Krom 1927: I.a.115, and especially the unidentified scene I.b.53; for Ajanta, see Yazdani 1933: 45-46 and pl. XLII, depicting the storm-tossed sea voyage of Bhavila in the Purna Avadana.
10. Note alternatively that an "X-ray vision," which exposes the foundations of the masts in Fig. 5, as well as an enclosed compartment at the rear of that ship, may here reveal only a single axial stern rudder.
11. Sheaves occur also on Borobudur reliefs: Krom 1927: e.g. I.b.23; and van Erp 1923: 235 provides the identification: "[schijfblok,] operated to hoist and strike the sail."
12. Op't Land suggested that nineteenth century Nagasaki woodblock prints displaying seventeenth century (or earlier) vessels might have served as inspiration for one very particular and oft-copied ship depiction (op't Land 1968-69: 112-113 (afb. 6)); but the type cited (of the local Semangka style) merely represents, in the writers' opinion, one of the last "real-life" ship models to appear on the coast of pre-Islamic

Lampung. A nineteenth century date for the assumption of radically new styles seems far too late, and fatal, to op't Land's proposal.

13. Malay terms for these crew members are those found on a Portuguese manifest of a voyage to Pegu in an Indonesian *jung* in 1512-13. (Thomaz 1966: 32-35, 194-195).
14. The observer must discriminate with care between men's shawls (selempang) and women's long hair: the visual treatment differs only by a clear space between head and shoulder when depicting shawls. Men's headcloths are occasionally apparent, described by dots surrounding the top of the head. In life today, important (older) men are frequently graced by these shawls and headcloths (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebarta 1979: personal communication), while women seldom if ever wear them.
15. Raffles was delighted by a Sundanese gamelan performance in which the instruments, "and the parties themselves, are generally decorated with common feathers, and the performers, in their appearance and action, are frequently as grotesque and wild as can be imagined" (Raffles 1817: I, 472).
16. Lawang kori (triumphal arches) are associated with the famous pepadon institution, a set of distinctions (thrones, chariots, portals) that celebrated the merit of individuals, mainly chiefs. A lawang kori, decorated with abstract medallions similar in appearance to those depicted on the enclosures of Figs. 5, 7, 19, etc., still stood in 1978 at Putihdoh village on Semangka Bay's eastern coast.
17. This passage describes a ritual founded in aboriginal pan-Indonesian belief, and widely observed: blood sacrifice to the earth (bumi) to ensure fertility and well-being. The importance of such fundamental rites tends to persist in the collective Indonesian "mind" whatever the subsequent impact of imported religions. Indian Hinduism, itself an elaborate animistic practice, mingled harmoniously with Indonesian ideas as it gained popularity in southeast Asia; and we discover a typical conflation of Hindu-Buddhist/local ethnic notions in, for example, the reverence of every Javanese for his village's sacred tree, the banyan or pohon bodi (under which Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon) that towers before a prince's palace (*kraton*), or this "Tree of Life" which roots in a cleansing communal sacrifice and arises at the renewal of the world. It is, therefore, impossible to determine precisely the origin and meaning of such symbolism as tree imagery in Lampung.
18. Steinmann 1946: 1976 publishes a photograph of participants in a Borneo mortuary feast that associates the several themes mentioned here: gamelan orchestra, "soul ship," Tree of Life. Similar elements occur in our Fig. 6 and in Schärer 1963: ill. 25.
19. Two children are often present when slametan, the ceremonial food distributions which are Java's fundamental all-purpose religious rite,

are held. K.R.T. Hardjonagoro interprets these children from a Javanese perspective, as representatives of the old Hindu-Buddhist gods. When Islam triumphed in Java, the priyayi (Indianized elite) classes moved their temples and idols indoors. Those temples are now recognized in the krobongan, an "inner room" of special sanctity where, among other uses, newlyweds spend their nuptial night. Krobongan house the (old) gods; and in Java, the gods are small. At either side of this sacred, often enclosed and ornately carved "room" are a pair of diminutive sculpted and painted images called loro blonyo ("couple smeared with rice paste"), actually Batari Sri (the goddess of rice) and her consort Batara Sedana [= Kubera]. Anciently, aristocratic marriages featured a blood offering (of children) to Siva and the earth. (Hardjonagoro 1979; personal communication).

20. Although circumcision is specifically Semitic, we note here that Islamic custom readily might have replaced pagan practices like superincision.
21. Gittinger could not acquire information regarding the use of tampan "at the actual time of birth," but considered it "probable" (1972: 53).
22. In practice, these variations render virtually impossible the development of a chronology among surviving tampan pasisir. Design evolution, the main instrument of relative dating, is here wholly unreliable; we are dealing with a tradition ideologically moribund and functionally declining for hundreds of years.
23. Evidence that patola are the model for this tampan elephant may be deduced from utterly idiosyncratic details shared by both textiles: e.g. an octagonal "star" above the driver's goad, or two flowers between the animal's front legs (cf. Bühler and Fischer 1979: I, fig. 100; II, pls. XIII, XIV, 37, 38). Similarly, the "angelic" woman of Fig. 17 exhibits a wide skirt and flying scarf like the patola dancing girl reproduced by Bühler and Fischer 1979: I, 80. Both the elephant and dancing girl preserved by tampan appear to be earlier versions of these images than survive in patola: note for example the tampan dancer's carefully delineated face, plait of hair, and scarf -- all undefined in extant Indian textiles.
24. Bühler and Fischer 1979: I, 281 report that on Java, elephant patolu were reserved to the exclusive use of the "most noble princely house" in Surakarta, i.e., that of the King of Java.
25. Gittinger (1978-79: personal communication) suggests that the boxes originally held heads as well. At one time a bride sat enthroned with each foot supported by a severed head (cf. Downs 1955: 67); heads were once probably required in most transitional contexts.
26. Compare Marsden 1811: 265: "the rites of marriage... consist simply in joining the hands of the parties."

27. Variations on the marriage theme are reproduced in our Fig. 16; Langewis and Wagner 1964: pl. 93; Textile Gallery 1975: no. 4 [UCLA X78-436]; Gittinger 1972: pls. 105 [Amsterdam 2125/25] and 110 [Rotterdam 58388]; and op't Land 1968-69: 109.
28. At the moment of first contact, Malays were "just as well acquainted with the use of big guns as European seafarers"; three thousand artillery pieces surrendered at Malacca in 1511 to the invading Portuguese (van Leur 1955: 159).
29. Dutch records document that huge quantities of Gujarati, Coromandel, and Bengali cloth were furnished yearly to markets in Sumatra and elsewhere (e.g. van Leur 1955: 126-133), catering to the very particular pattern, size, and quality specifications of Indonesian consumers (Floris 1934:71). Later, European merchants simply insinuated themselves within a commerce which long antedated their own arrival.
30. Han Dynasty ceramic fragments, of ca. first century A.D. have been recovered from Lampung gravesites (van Orsoy de Flines 1949: 6).
31. Gittinger 1972: 192-196 and 1974: 14-15 was struck by similar ideas, mainly related to east Javanese architecture, that tend to enforce an exclusively religious interpretation of Kalianda textiles.
32. We know, for example, that wayang was performed in "provincial" but Hinduized parts of Lombok, adjacent to Bali; and Majapahit conventions were observed at various Outer Island courts, such as Makassar (Celebes) and Kota Waringin (Borneo).



Figure 1. Tampan darat; Punduh, west Lampung Bay; 48 x 53 cm. Unless otherwise indicated, all textiles illustrated are the property of the authors.



Figure 4. Tampan Semangka; Putihdoh, east Semangka Bay; 83 x 72 cm.



Figure 2. Tampan Kalianda; Kalianda, east Lampung Bay; 93 x 84 cm.

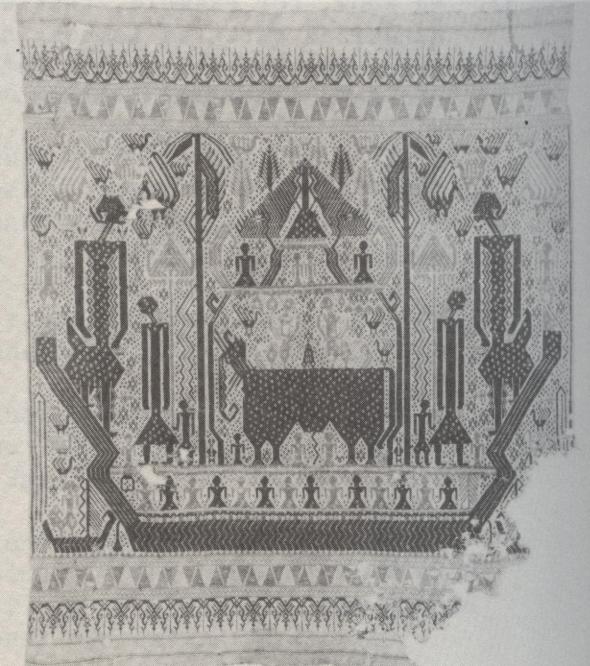


Figure 3. Tampan Kalianda; Kalianda, east Lampung Bay; 91 x 79 cm.



Figure 5. Tampan pasisir; Kampung Piya, Wai Ratai, west Lampung Bay; 78 x 71 cm.

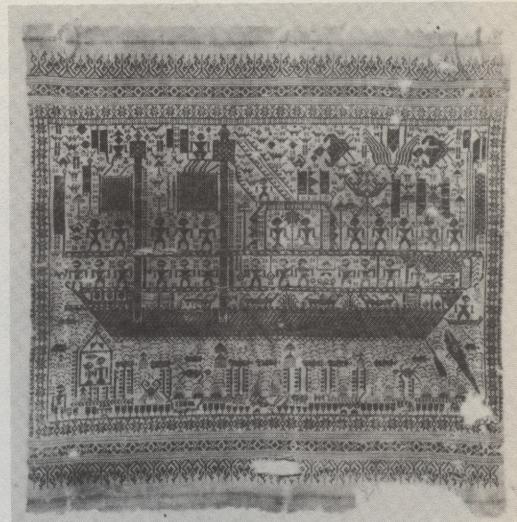


Figure 7. Tampan pasisir; provenance unknown; 77 x 74 cm.

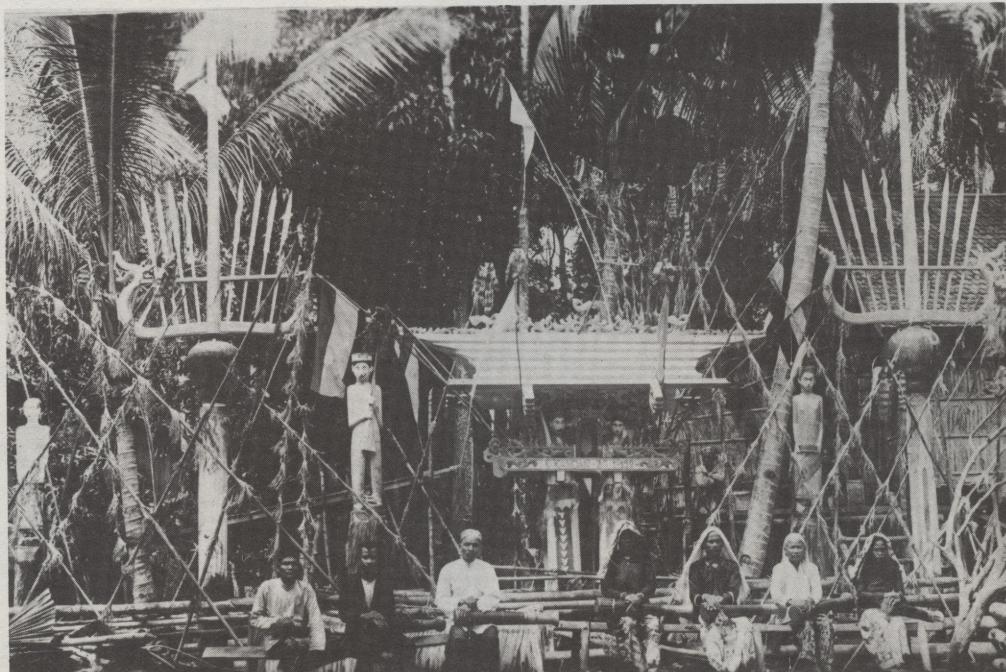


Figure 6. Mortuary Feast, south Borneo. Photodocumentation Department, Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, Amsterdam, negative no. 393.1(911) N.6

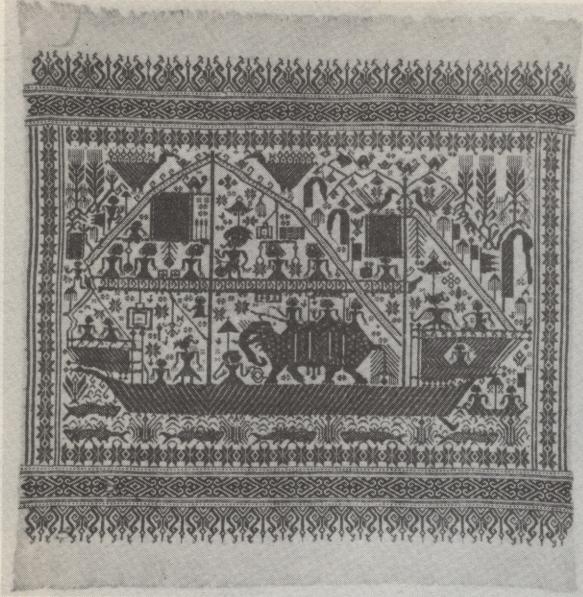


Figure 8. Tampan pasisir; Putihdoh, east Semangka Bay; 69 x 67 cm.



Figure 9. Tampan pasisir; Kampung Wai Urang, Wai Ratai, west Lampung Bay; 82 x 72 cm.



Figure 10. Tampan pasisir; Putihdoh, east Semangka Bay; 85 x 73 cm.

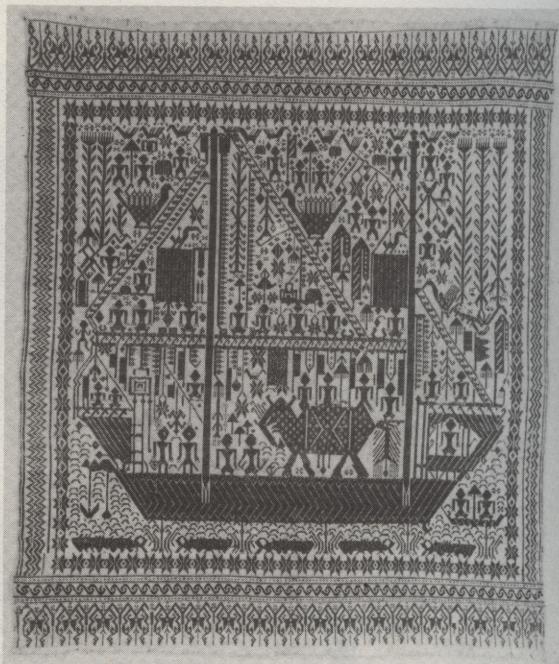


Figure 11. Tampan pasisir; Putihdoh, east Semangka Bay; 77 x 65 cm.



Figure 12. Tampan Semangka; Kampung Tanjung Jati, Pertiwi, east Semangka Bay; 78 x 71 cm. (Includes enlarged inset.)



Figure 13. Tampan pasisir; Putihdoh, east Semangka Bay; 75 x 70 cm. (Includes enlarged inset.)

Figure 14. Tampan pasisir; Napal, east Semangka Bay; 77' x 70 cm.

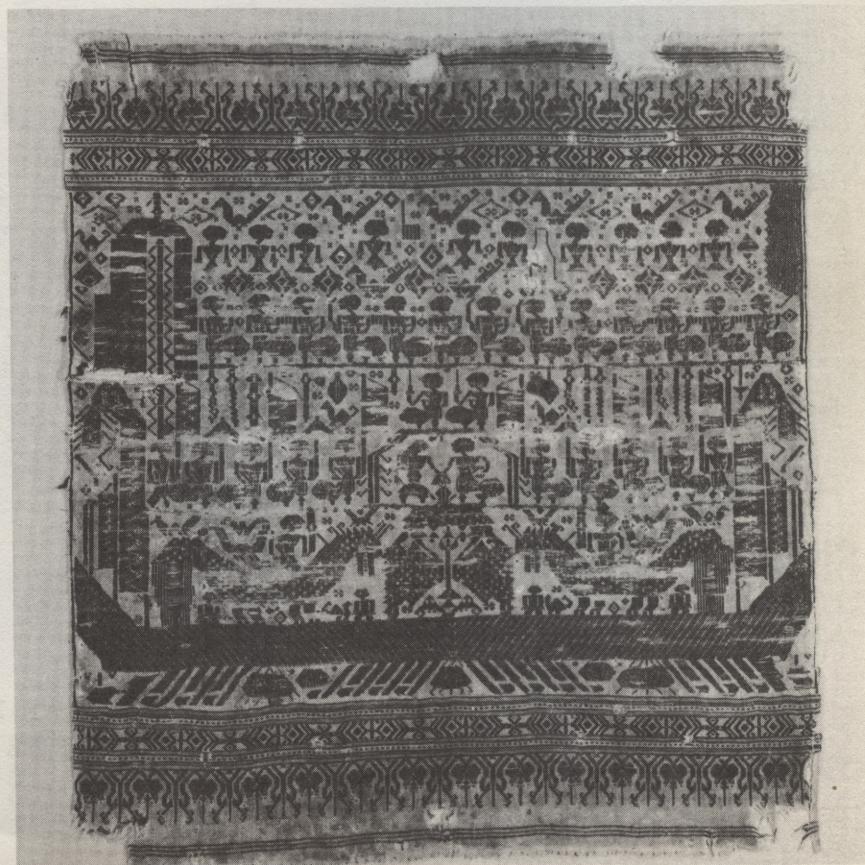




Figure 15. Tampan pasisir; Kampung Hanauberak, Wai Ratai, west Lampung Bay; 80 x 78 cm.



Figure 16. Tampan pasisir; provenance unknown; 85 x 70 cm.



Figure 17. Tampan pasisir; Pedada, west Lampung Bay; 70 x 67 cm.

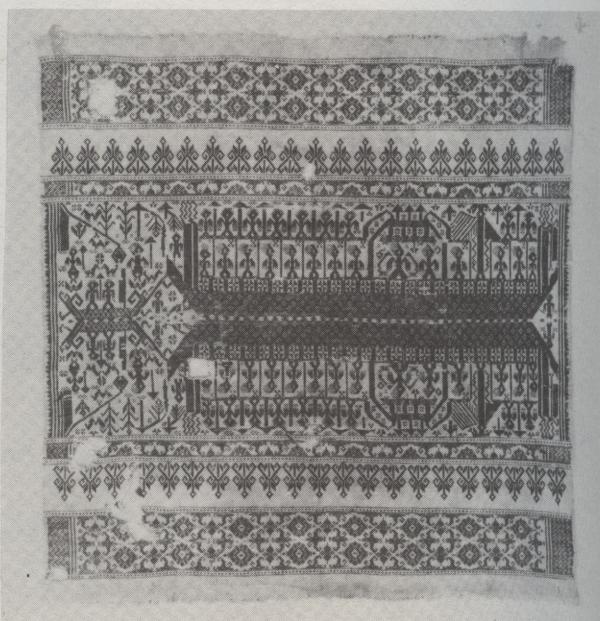


Figure 18. Tampan pasisir; Punduh, west Lampung Bay; 73 x 71 cm.

Figure 19. Tampan
pasisir; provenance un-
known; 72 x 70 cm.



Figure 20. Tampan
pasisir; Kampung
Hanauberak, Wai Ratai,
west Lampung Bay;
91 x 79 cm.



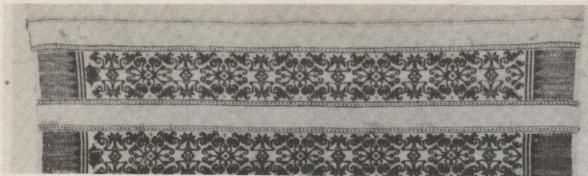


Figure 21. Detail of tampan pasisir; provenance unknown; 73 cm wide.

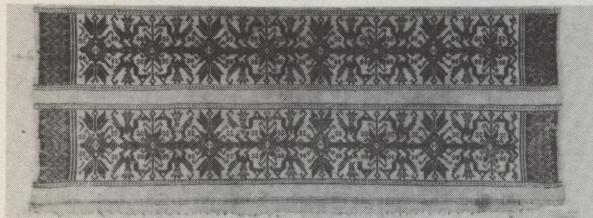


Figure 22. Detail of tampan pasisir; provenance unknown; 68 cm wide.

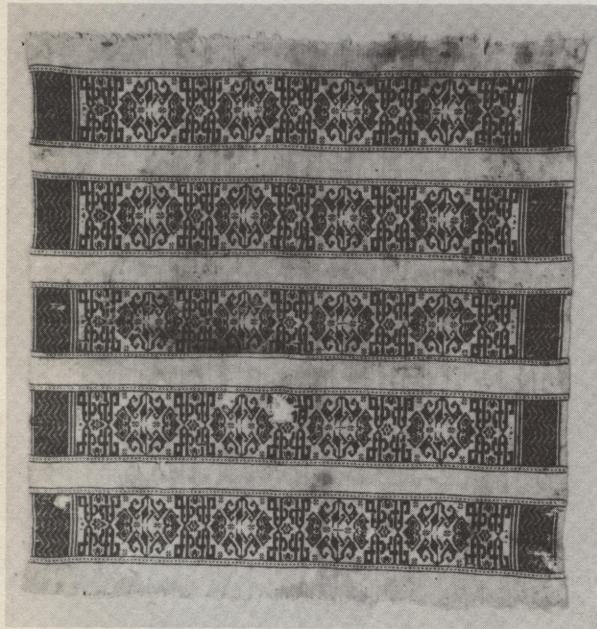


Figure 24. Tampan pasisir; Napal, east Semangka Bay; 72 x 70 cm.

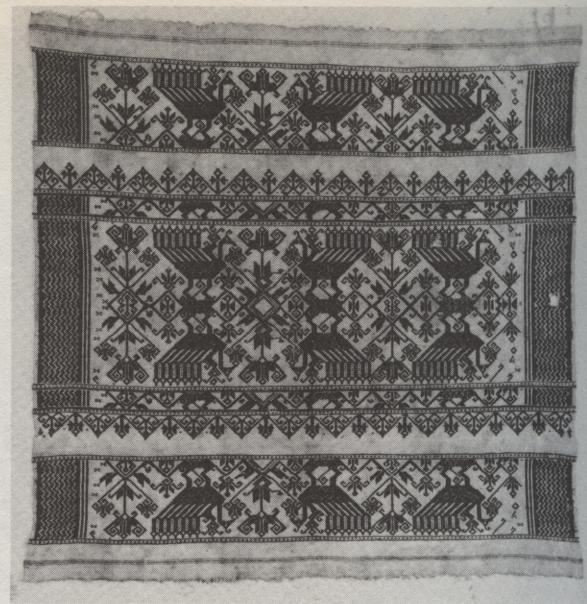


Figure 23. Tampan pasisir; provenance unknown; 72 x 72 cm.



Figure 25. Tampan pasisir; Putihdoh, east Semangka Bay; 72 x 67 cm.



Figure 26. Palepai Kalianda; provenance unknown; 224 x 56 cm.



Figure 27. Wayang beber purwa; Java; Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden, series 360 no. 5255; size of partially unrolled scroll: 69 x 135 cm (height of painted area: 44 cm).

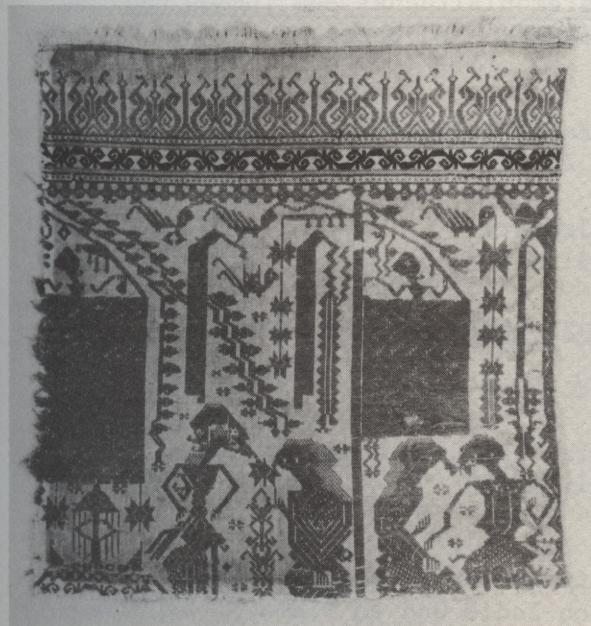


Figure 28. Fragment of tampan pasisir; Putihdoh, east Semangka Bay; 38 x 36 cm.



Figure 29. Detail of Figure 27.

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