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Possible traces of early Malay settlement in South Sulawesi

Muhlis Hadrawi, Nuraidar Agus and Hasanuddin

ABSTRACT

Indigenous written sources and local tradition attribute the emergence of the Bugis kingdom of Suppa on the west coast of South Sulawesi (Indonesia) to events in the 15th century. A founding female figure emerged from the sea with her entourage and, together with a 'descended' male figure, established the various kingdoms in the Ajattappareng area. Details in the story and persistent memory suggest the presence of Malays from Melaka. Given the nature and purposes of Bugis historiography and ideology, together with generalised support from archaeology, it seems that this may represent a valid memory of actual events.

KEYWORDS

Bugis; *lontara'*; Malay; Melaka; Sulawesi; Suppa

Introduction

The presence of Malays in South Sulawesi has been much discussed from various perspectives. The most common focus has been on social and cultural aspects of their presence in the 17th and 18th centuries (Sutherland 2001; Cense 1978). The question of the earliest presence of the Malays in South Sulawesi, however, perhaps as early as the 15th century, deserves attention. This article identifies hints in local Sulawesi sources, both written and oral, which suggest such early settlement. The fact that it is possible to even raise this possibility is a measure of our increasing understanding of early Bugis society and the specific cultural features which underpin the creation of the sources.

Europeans only began to set foot in South Sulawesi in the middle of the 16th century so that information for earlier periods needs to be sought primarily in traditional sources, that is in Bugis manuscripts, known as *lontara'*. The relevant manuscripts, many of which have only recently become accessible, purport to record events which, because of genealogical relationships with later, datable information, can be placed in these early centuries.

This information from manuscripts can be complemented by oral sources and the results of archaeological survey in the relevant area. Almost 50 years ago, when Christian Pelras (1977: 252–253) compared the earliest European sources on the history of South Sulawesi with what he could discover from oral sources on the west coast of the area, he had difficulty obtaining the *lontara'* sources, though his oral materials, which we have been able to confirm, are very valuable. The substance of the traditional oral narratives which have been collected relates directly to the narratives in the *lontara'* manuscripts. This is not surprising. As Stephen Druce (2009: 74) has explained, the transformation

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of oral performance into the historical records of the Bugis kingdoms, written by palace scribes, occurred from the middle of the 17th century onwards. Because of this, the available Bugis *lontara'* texts are, in fact, comparable with oral traditions since the oral traditions have been used as a source for writing the local historical texts. The activity of writing Bugis manuscripts based on oral statements – though different in style from the narrative pattern of orality – continued until the beginning of the 20th century.

Druce (2009) also provides detailed archaeological material for the Ajattappareng region which he integrates with numerous *lontara'* sources. The archaeology is particularly useful since it reaches back to the 15th century and earlier. Druce's focus, however, is on the development of the various kingdoms and he does not look in detail at the specific question of the possible presence of Malays. As well as the identity and date of Malay arrivals in South Sulawesi, there are also the questions of their reception and integration into the local situation. There is a long history of interaction between Malays and the various kingdoms of South Sulawesi (Hadrawi 2018), though our attention here is specifically on Suppa.

The concept of 'Malay' is notoriously fluid and varies over time. For the relevant period of this enquiry, that is the 15th and 16th centuries, Anthony Milner (2008: 92) notes that

> The court writings of Melaka/Johor definitely give the impression of a developing 'Malay' style – mentioning 'Malay customs and ceremonial', 'Malay music', 'Malay dress' and 'Malay dance'. There is a suggestion in the Melaka-Johor writing of a 'Malay' civilizational pattern – a manner of behaviour and a body of custom which was capable of being communicated to others.

It is this 'civilizational pattern', including most obviously the Malay language, that we seek to identify here. There is a clear distinction between Malays in this sense and the local Bugis and Makasar peoples of South Sulawesi. As so often in research on early periods of history, firmly established results are hardly to be expected; all is possibility and degrees of probability. The varied sources for this period in South Sulawesi and the extent of recent research, however, make the attempt worthwhile.

Approach and sources[1]

The use of *lontara'* manuscripts as a source of information for the local history of South Sulawesi is well established. The Dutch scholar, Cense (1951: 43), says that Bugis and Makasar manuscripts display a style of narrative which is simple and realistic in dealing with historical materials. Further, if one compares them with what are taken to be historical narratives in other regions of Indonesia, it is easy to see that the Bugis and Makasar were somewhat more objective in recording the facts of their existence. As early as 1759, R. Blok was basing his general history of Sulawesi on *lontara'* sources, even if his account was not published until much later (Macknight et al. 2020: 27). Crawfurd (1820) also used *lontara'* sources. Various kinds of material can be found. Caldwell (1988) edited ten short Bugis texts in his discussion of the period

[1]Personal names of historical figures and words in Bugis are rendered in Bugis form, as in Wé Tépulingé. Place names, however, are given in their Indonesian form, which also serves as English, as in Suppa, rather than Suppa', or Sidenreng, rather than Sidénréng.

1300 to 1600, while Rahilah Omar (2003) analyses the late 18th-century diary of the Arumpone [ruler of Bone] La Tenritappu. Macknight et al. (2020) provide the text and translation of the Bugis chronicle of Bone which reaches back to the late 14th century and runs to the 17th century. Genealogies are a particularly common and useful element among the *lontara'* sources (Caldwell and Wellen 2016). While all such materials need to be critically assessed in relation to the purpose and context of their particular creation, the historian of South Sulawesi has a rich treasury of written sources.

There are, however, some special problems. Macknight (1993: 5–6) makes the important point that a Bugis manuscript codex is usually a miscellany containing several items; that is, versions of particular works. A wide variety of texts often occurs in a single codex and it can be very difficult to identify the various works represented. A simple title generally gives no indication of the materials to be found in a manuscript codex. Comparison of texts from one manuscript to another also demonstrates the complex processes of variation arising from the relaxed attitude of many scribes in copying a manuscript (Macknight and Caldwell 2001). To be used as a source, therefore, a *lontara'* manuscript requires significant philological investigation. This is a point famously made by Koos Noorduyn in his magisterial edition of an 18th-century chronicle from Wajo (Noorduyn 1955) and exemplified in other recent editions of works in Bugis (Hadrawi 2017; Macknight et al. 2020).

The primary written sources used for tracing possible early Malay contacts with South Sulawesi are three Bugis manuscripts designated MS A, MS B and MS C. Each of these is only one item in their respective codex which contains a variety of other materials. Each is a version of work of which, especially in the case of MS A, other versions are known. Although they deal with related matters and are consistent in their information, they are best regarded as three separate works. Taken together, and embedded in a much wider context of local historiography, they represent a strong tradition or memory of events. Each needs to be described before the relevant information can be discussed.

Manuscript A (MS A)

MS A is a short manuscript work which, in the version we have used, is found in a codex entitled 'Lontara' Sawitto-Suppa'. The codex was copied in 1981 by Haji Paewa in Pinrang, South Sulawesi and is accessible in the form of a photocopy in Muhammad Salim's widely distributed collection of photocopies. The probable original of the codex can be accessed as a microfilm in the Archives office in Makassar as ANRIM roll 14, item 27 (Paeni 2003: 85). A version of this work has also been transcribed and translated by Caldwell (1988: 149–155), where it is called the Royal Genealogy of Sidenreng. Caldwell gives details of the five versions of the work he located.

The codex is concerned as a whole with the history of the kingdoms of Sawitto and Suppa. The work we describe as MS A includes two main sections: firstly, a section about Wé Tépulingé who is described as the first queen of Suppa and, secondly, a section about the relations between the kingdoms of Sawitto and Suppa, together with their genealogical links with the kingdoms of Bacukiki, Soppeng, Sidenreng, Rappang, Nepo and Alitta. The contents of the codex as a whole make it an important source of primary data.

Manuscript B (MS B)

MS B is an item in a codex which can be accessed as a microfilm in the Archives office in Makassar as ANRIM roll 50, item 10 (Paeni 2003: 501–502). Some sections of the text have been transcribed and translated by Druce (2009: 311–318). The codex is entitled *Catatan Harian* (that is, *Diary*) but, as usual, contains a variety of items, including diaries. The item designated here as MS B covers several matters:

1. a story of the rulers and the history of the foundation of Suppa
2. marital relations
3. the genealogy of Suppa within those of the Ajattappareng confederation.

A final section gives a more detailed description of:

4. the arrival of Wé Tépulingé and the formation of the kingdom of Suppa
5. the marriage between Wé Tépulingé and the ruler of Bacukiki, La Bangéngé
6. the formation of the kingdom of Sawitto
7. the descendants of Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé.

The codex is an item in the regalia of the palace of Suppa and was written between 1839 and 1855.

An important section in MS B is the story about the *tomanurung* ('descended one'), La Bangéngé, who assumed power in Bacukiki. The foundation of Bacukiki implies the existence of the kingdom of Suppa which was founded by his wife, the *totompo* ('emergent one'), who later became the founder figure of the kingdom of Suppa. This section provides data on the political relationships of Suppa, Sawitto and Bacukiki. MS B also contains a passage in which the construction of the Suppa palace is narrated. The combination of information connected with the early history of the area is what gives MS B its importance as a source for this study.

Manuscript C (MS C)

MS C is the first item in a codex which can be accessed as a microfilm in the Archives office in Makassar as ANRIM roll 20, item 22 (Paeni 2003: 139). This substantial codex contains various historical and legal items, including material relating to Bone as well as the Ajattapparang area. The codex is a 20th-century copy belonging to the well known scholar Andi Palloge. This item, or indeed any of the items in the codex, do not appear to have been published before. As well as confirming information in the two other works, MS C is important as making an explicit connection between Wé Tépulingé and Melaka.

Discussion

In order to appreciate the information in the local written sources, the geographical context needs to be understood along with the results of recent archaeological research in the area. The territory of Suppa forms a small peninsula on the west coast of Sulawesi to the west of the modern city of Parepare. It is divided from Parepare by an inlet from

Makassar Strait and to cross directly from one side of the inlet to the other by prau takes only ten minutes. The Suppa peninsula is thus surrounded by water on the west, south and east. The appearance of the territory of Suppa protruding into the sea resembles a turtle floating on the sea (Figure 1).

The world of Suppa is dominated by the sea. It is open to the possibility of maritime activities, including providing a harbour for sea-going craft. The trading harbour of the pre-Islamic Bugis kingdom of Suppa was Lawaramparang at the mouth of the Marauleng river, a former course of the Saddang river. Another former course of the Saddang river runs west, giving direct access to the Makassar Strait. The mouth of the Marauleng river became a gateway for the coming and going of praus, not only from the west and south, but also from the north.

In fact, the position of Suppa made it a maritime trading zone before its emergence as the site of a kingdom in the middle of the 15th century. Druce (2009: 204–205) suggests,

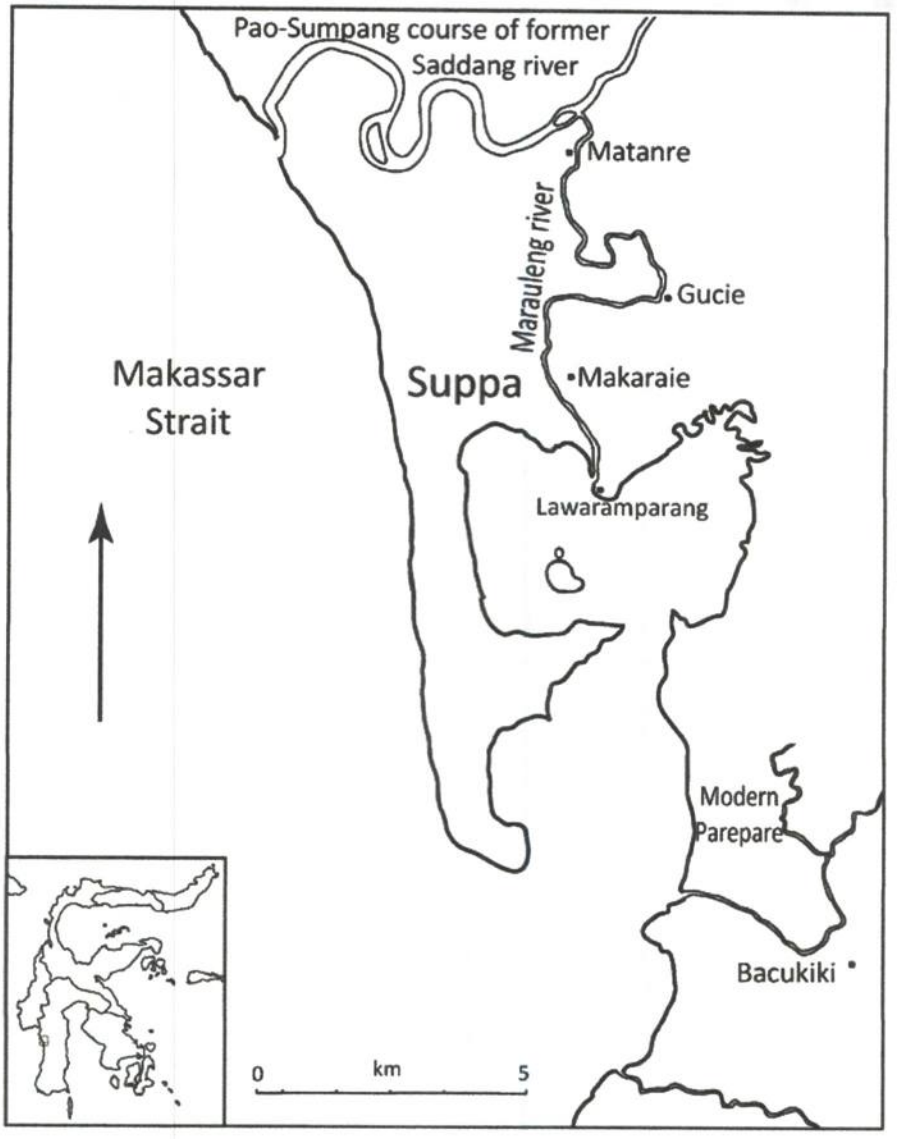

Figure 1. The territory of Suppa, South Sulawesi. Source: Authors.

based on the archaeological evidence from six sites relatively close to the centre of the Suppa, that coastal Suppa had come to serve as the main harbour for Ajattappareng area perhaps as early as the 13th century. One indication of this is that among all the sherds in the Ajattappareng surveys dated to the 13th century, 88% were found in central Suppa. By contrast, for sherds dating to the 14th century only 66% were found in the same area. Over time, Suppa developed, providing a port for the trade in agricultural products from neighbouring settlements, especially from the Ajattappareng area. There were probably also trade connections between Suppa and the agricultural kingdoms in the further interior, such as Sidenreng and Rappang, which formed an extensive rice production area (Figure 2). Makaraie, the former palace centre of Suppa with the grave of the Suppa ruler, as well as the sites of Matanre and Gucie, are shown on archaeological grounds to be the most important areas and centres of trade and governance for Suppa in former times.

The calm, sheltered water of Lawaramparang became the best place for trading praus from various directions of the archipelago to dock. Its location alone suggests that trading praus from the Malay areas to the west may well have docked in Suppa. In 1544, a little further south, António de Paiva at Siang was told that Muslims had been coming from 'Ujung Tanah, Pahang and Patani ... for fifty years or more', that is since the 1490s (Baker 2005: 73). The information in the written sources relates to two themes: a particular example of the *totompo* tradition and the specific link with Melaka.

Wé Tépulingé in the totompo *tradition of Suppa*

MS A tells of a woman called Wé Tépulingé who comes with her entourage and brings her wealth to Suppa after beaching her prau at Lawaramparang. Wé Tépulingé

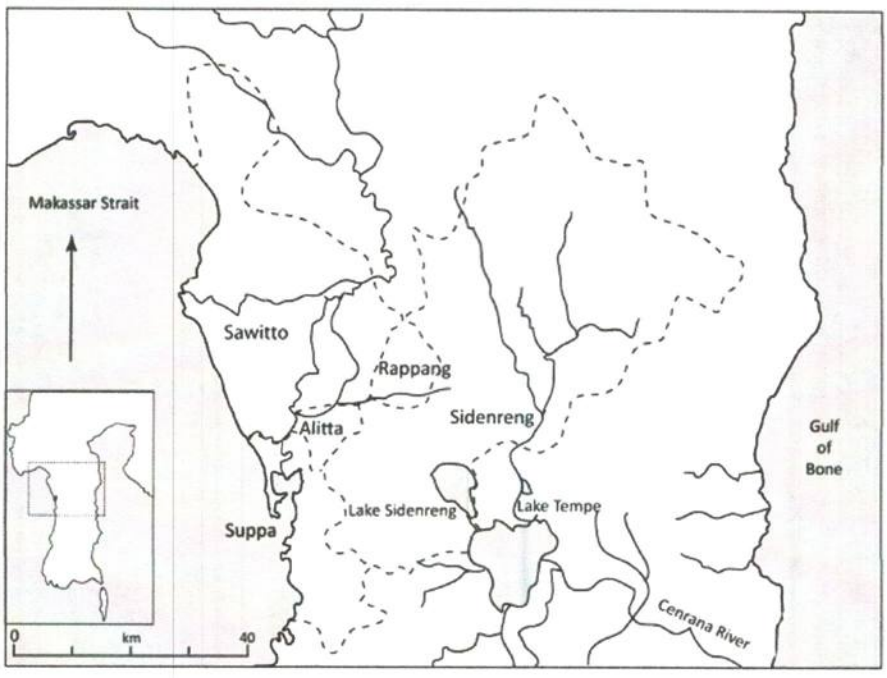

Figure 2. The kingdoms of Ajattapparang, South Sulawesi. Source: Authors.

is also given the title of Tompoé ri Lawaramparang ('She who emerged in Lawaramparang'). At the time of her first emergence, the royal figure is wearing a green garment, called, in Bugis, *waju lumu* (green blouse). Wé Tépulingé does not come by herself but is accompanied by her entourage. They carry rich possessions of various forms as there are cooking tools such as a gold cooking pot and a set of table ware. In fact, all the items and implements are made of gold. The arrival of Wé Tépulingé as *totompo* receives a positive response from the people and she is subsequently recognised as the queen of Suppa and Sawitto in a political contract with the village leaders called *matoa*.

The relevant section of MS A reads, in translation:

> The *tomanurung* ['descended one'] at Bacukiki was called La Bangéngé'. It was he who descended with seven palaces in Cempa. It was he who married with Tompoé ri Lawaramparang, she who arose with her mossy sarong, her golden cooking pot, her golden spoons, and her golden pans. She was entitled Lollong Sinrangeng, which means 'Coming complete with her implements'. She was called Wé Tépulingé and she reigned in the kingdom of Suppa.
>
> As a result of their marriage, there were afterwards born three children. One was called La Teddulloppo who inherited and reigned in Suppa. One was called Wé Pawawoi who reigned in Bacukiki. One more called La Botillangi assumed power in Tanete Langi to the north of Bacukiki. Wé Pawawoi took as husband the *tomanurung* ['descended one'] at Lowa who was called Sukkumpulawengngé and reigned in Sidenreng. Wé Pawawoi gave birth to a child called La Batara. La Batara afterwards left and married at Bulu Cenrana with a wife, Wé Cina. She gave birth to three children. One was called La Pasappoi who reigned in Sidenreng. One was called Wé Yabeng and one was called La Mariyase' who reigned in Bulu Cenrana.

Wé Tépulingé's arrival in Suppa is directly linked to her marriage with the king of Bacukiki called La Bangéngé. The three children of Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé as detailed in MS A are La Botillangi, La Teddulloppo and Wé Pawawoi. MS A and Figure 3 sets out the dispersal of children and grandchildren to various Bugis kingdoms especially in the Ajattappareng area and surrounds.

Wé Tépulingé is also said to have put together a range of government appointments with various responsibilities to assist with the governance of the kingdom of Suppa. These were:

1. Pangulu Anang (the head of the people's council);
2. Anré Guru (the senior scholar);
3. Pangulu Lompo (the kingdom's military leader);
4. Pabbicara (judge); and
5. Suléwatang (deputy with royal power).

The responsibilities for assisting the governance of Suppa were handed over to six brothers who had arrived with her. Yet another section of MS A adds that Wé Tépulingé cleared the way for setting up Sawitto as a kingdom and, later, Wé Tépulingé brought Suppa and Sawitto together as twin kingdoms under a single government.

This story of the emergence of a female ruler from the sea, together with her prau, is an example of the widespread *totompo* or 'rising up' tradition. The figure who has 'risen up' is then paired with a figure who has 'descended' and together they provide the justification for the later status of their offspring. In the Bugis context, the most

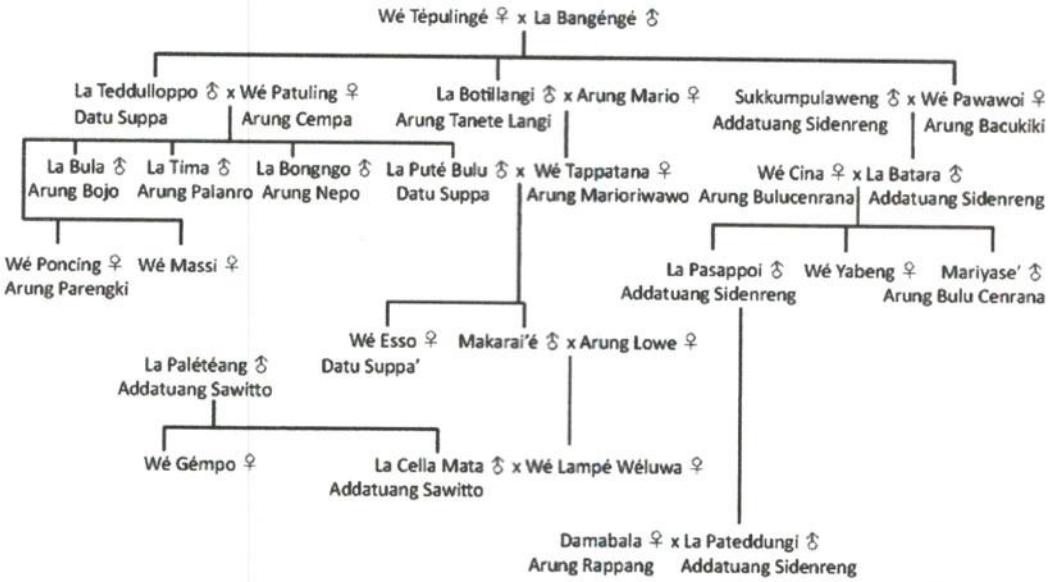

Figure 3. Lineage of the kings of Suppa (source: MS A). This structure corresponds to Druce (2009: 171).

obvious reference is the figure of Wé Nyili' Timo' in the early stages of the La Galigo cycle of stories. She rises up from the underworld to marry her cousin, Batara Guru, who has descended from the upper world (Pelras 1996: 86, 2006: 103). Looking more widely, there are some similarities with what Ras (1968: 81–99) in his survey of Malay sources has called 'the Malay myth of origin' involving, in its simplest form, a female figure emerging from the water of a local river in a mass of foam and marrying a male figure let down from heaven.

The genealogical material, which MS A traces through only four generations, can be expanded almost infinitely by reference to other sources and there is no reason to doubt its essential reliability (Caldwell and Wellen 2016). Counting back by generations from firmly datable individuals places Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé in the 15th century.

Wé Tépulingé and Melaka

The association of Wé Tépulingé with Melaka and thus with a Malay presence in Sulawesi takes the argument one step further. In the first half of the 15th century, Melaka established itself as the pre-eminent trading port in the western part of the archipelago and this was matched by its political power. By the mid 15th century, its rule extended over much of the Malay peninsula and the Sumatran coast across the Straits of Malacca. Its trading contacts stretched from India in the west to China in the north, while the east monsoon brought spices and other goods from all parts of the archipelago to the east.

Melaka's internal politics at the time provided many occasions on which a defeated party might have taken the decision to relocate or perhaps just the lure of trade itself was sufficient to suggest the advantage of following it to its source. Whatever the

particular reason, any Malays moving eastward in the 15th century are more likely to have been associated with Melaka rather than with its subject states. The lustre of Melaka's name would have enhanced the recognition of status.

The name 'Wé Tépulingé' itself suggests a very rich arrival. The name derives from the Bugis *tépu*, meaning 'complete', and *lingé*, meaning 'goods or possessions'. The phrase *tépu lingé* can be taken as meaning 'complete in [her] goods or abundant possessions' or just 'very rich'. These possessions were, of course, made of gold. The honorific Wé is appropriate for a noble woman. The name, Wé Tépulingé, came to replace her original name.

Both the manuscripts and oral sources provide the name Lamalaka for the palace in Suppa which was erected after Wé Tépulingé's installation as ruler. The story which concerns the naming of the palace Lamalaka is described in MS B:

> This is the work which makes clear the service of the Mandar people to Ajattappareng. The Mandar people were boat builders and house builders. As boat builders, they built the prau of Makarai called Soena Gading; the prau of Arung Parekki called Lapéwajo; and the prau of Palétéang Sawitto called Lapénikkeng. In the same way also, they built the palace or Langkanaé of Suppa called Lamalaka, they also built the palace or Salassé of Sawitto called Lamancapai, the palace or Saorajaé of Alitta called Labéama, the palace in Rappang, and the palace or Saolocié of Sidenreng.
>
> The reason the palace of Suppa was given the name Lamalaka was because the posts of the building were made from one large beam of wood which had drifted from Malaka. After that beam of wood landed at Ujulléro, it revealed itself in dreams to the people of Suppa. Then the people of Suppa came and took it using various tools. That beam of wood afterwards became the central post of the palace.

The reference to the wooden beams is significant because the name of the city of Melaka is traditionally derived from the *melaka* tree which determined the city's location. The connection between Melaka and a tree is also picked up in the traditional Bugis narrative cycle known as La Galigo in which a reference to a huge *melaka* tree under whose shelter noble children play and chat seems to be a metaphorical reference to the cultural and political power of the pre-eminent Malay state.

MS C adds more about Wé Tépulingé as an individual as well as confirming information in MSS A and B.

> Acknowledging heaven above and requesting pardon of the world below, this tells the names of the former rulers. Here also is told a spell to ward off thirst and a hungry stomach, a split mouth, a cracked tongue and a skull like the skin of an onion. Hail, Lord, may my belly not swell, may I not weaken in speaking the names of our ancestors.
>
> There was the *tomanurung* [Descended One) at Bacukiki who came down with his seven palaces, together with his weapons of war including cannon, they all came down. The personal name of the *tomanurung* at Bacukiki was La Bangéngé. He married the *tomanurung* at Lawaramparang in Suppa named Wé Tépulingé. She descended together with a golden litter, her golden cooking pot, golden spoon, golden vessels, golden ladle, golden tray along with its bowls. Then the palace at Suppa called Lamalaka was built for her.
>
> The reason the Suppa palace was given the name Lamalaka was because of the wood of the pole of the house had floated from Malaka and come to land at Ujulléro. That beam of wood steered itself. Then the people of Suppa came and took it. There were also rope, timber and chisel. The wood that was taken became the central post of the Suppa palace. Wé Tépulingé's country of origin was also said to have been Malaka.

> The one who took the *tomanurung* at Bacukiki as husband, Wé Tépulingé, the *tomanurung* at Lawamparang in Suppa, wore clothes which were all green, while the colour of the clothes of her husband, the *tomanurung* at Bacukiki, were all black.

MS C also confirms the close relationship between the three kingdoms of Suppa, Bacukiki and Sawitto by explaining how, after they were married, Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé established a settlement at Sawitto, and after that the three kingdoms were as close as twins. MS C goes on to set out how Wé Tépulingé gave rise to the ruling class throughout the Ajattappareng region.

A notable difference in the accounts is that MS C describes Wé Tépulingé as a *tomanurung*, that is she, like her husband, 'descends' rather than 'rises up'. There are other Bugis parallels for both founding figures to be *tomanurung*, such as the well known example in Bone (Macknight et al. 2020) and this change may only represent the wider Bugis influence on the story.

A further indicator linking Melaka and its Malay culture with this part of Sulawesi is the respect given to the colour yellow. The first chapter of the *Undang-Undang Melaka*, a code dating back to the 15th century, proscribes the wearing of yellow clothing.

> Let it be known to you that you are not to wear, for example, (articles of) yellow colour, and even in the case of high dignitaries, the punishment (for this offence) is death, unless there is royal permission.

(Liaw 1976: 65)

Respect for the colour yellow remains until today a popular belief in Suppa. It is regarded as a 'sacred colour'. Wearing a yellow shirt, for example, would be deemed to contravene etiquette. This symbol of the ruler's power in Melaka is, of course, widespread in the lands of the Malay dispersal and is not limited to Suppa. It remains, none the less, an indicator of the movement of the Melaka Malay 'civilizational pattern' (Milner 2008: 92).

In the neighbouring kingdom of Sawitto, a popular myth links the colour yellow with the arrival of Wé Tépulingé. She is said to have arrived at Lawaramparang bearing a sacred yellow flag which she planted on the shore near the hill, Lamaddarau, in Suppa. Commoners, therefore, are prohibited from wearing yellow, especially near the shore. All these traditions support the linkage between Melaka and Sulawesi.

Conclusion

The archaeological evidence demonstrates connections between the west coast of South Sulawesi and the western parts of the archipelago in the 15th century and, indeed, for several centuries earlier. While all the details of its trade may elude us, Melaka was, in the 15th century, a major centre of trade from many quarters and enjoyed widespread renown within the archipelago and beyond. If Malay traders from Melaka did come to this area, then the harbour of Suppa and, in particular, the port of Lawaramparang, presented a safe and convenient landfall. After all, the Portuguese report Malay Muslims visiting Siang in the 1490s.

The social function of Bugis founder figures in establishing status is usually apparent, but their reality as historical figures is less so. Yet here is a case where widespread and

persistent tradition, both in oral sources and – insofar as this is distinct – in the *lontara'* sources, links the founder figure of Wé Tépulingé with Melaka in various ways. The name, Wé Tépulingé, and much of the associated detail of her entourage may be questioned, but the memory, shaped to Bugis understanding of the past, demands attention.

Another cultural context for viewing the story is that of the stranger-king (Henley and Caldwell 2008). Wé Tépulingé and her entourage come from outside, importing the lustre of a great trading state. That, however, is not enough. She has to join with the local founder figure of the Bacukiki *tomanurung* and together they and their descendants establish the political landscape of Ajattapparang. The story is situated within the Bugis political and social context. It is ironic that, in the 18th century, it was Bugis adventurers from South Sulawesi who established themselves in the Malay kingdoms of Sumatra, Riau and the Malay Peninsula (Wellen 2014).

The distinctive nature of Bugis historiography, quite unlike that elsewhere in Southeast Asia, combined with the detailed archaeological research in South Sulawesi, creates at least a strong possibility that we can discern here the traces of real events. The development of Suppa and the other Ajattappareng kingdoms undoubtedly depended on more than the arrival of an external figure, but that development in the 15th century may well have been fostered and shaped by contact with the great trading centre of Melaka, mediated through Malays settling in South Sulawesi.

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Possible traces of early Malay settlement in South Sulawesi

Muhlis Hadrawi, Nuraidar Agus and Hasanuddin

ABSTRACT

Indigenous written sources and local tradition attribute the emergence of the Bugis kingdom of Suppa on the west coast of South Sulawesi to events in the 15th century. A founding female figure emerged from the sea with her entourage and, together with a 'descended' male figure, established the various kingdoms in the Ajattapareng area. Details in the story and persistent memory suggest the presence of Malays from Melaka. Given the nature and purposes of Bugis historiography and ideology, together with generalised support from archaeology, it seems that this may represent a valid memory of actual events.

KEYWORDS

Bugis; *lontara'*; Malay; ~~Sulawesi; Bugis; Suppa;~~ Melaka; ~~*lontara*~~ ; Sulawesi; Suppa

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Introduction

The presence of Malays in South Sulawesi has been much discussed from various perspectives. The most common focus has been on social and cultural aspects of their presence in the 17th and 18th centuries (Sutherland 2001; Cense 1978). The question of the earliest presence of the Malays in South Sulawesi, however, perhaps as early as the 15th century, deserves attention. This ~~paper~~ article identifies hints in local Sulawesi sources, both written and oral, which suggest such early settlement. The fact that it is possible to even raise this possibility is a measure of our increasing understanding of

early Bugis society and the specific cultural features which underpin the creation of the sources.

Europeans only began to set foot in South Sulawesi in the middle of the 16th century so that information for earlier periods needs to be sought primarily in traditional sources, that is in Bugis manuscripts, known as *lontara'*. The relevant manuscripts, many of which have only recently become accessible, purport to record events which, because of genealogical relationships with later, datable information, can be placed in these early centuries.

This information from manuscripts can be complemented by oral sources and the results of archaeological survey in the relevant area. Almost 50 years ago, when Christian Pelras (1977: 252–253) compared the earliest European sources on the history of South Sulawesi with what he could discover from oral sources on the west coast of the area, he had difficulty obtaining the *lontara'* sources (Pelras 1977: 252–3), though his oral materials, which we have been able to confirm, are very valuable. The substance of the traditional oral narratives which have been collected relates directly to the narratives in the *lontara'* manuscripts. This is not surprising. As Stephen Druce (2009: 74) has explained, the transformation of oral performance into the historical records of the Bugis kingdoms, written by palace scribes, occurred from the middle of the 17th century onwards. Because of this, the available Bugis *lontara'* texts are, in fact, comparable with oral traditions since the oral traditions have been used as a source for writing the local historical texts. The activity of writing Bugis manuscripts based on oral statements – though different in style from the narrative pattern of orality – continued until the beginning of the 20th century.

Druce (2009) also provides detailed archaeological material for the Ajattappareng region which he integrates with numerous *lontara'* sources. The

archaeology is particularly useful since it reaches back to the 15th century and earlier. Druce's focus, however, is on the development of the various kingdoms and he does not look in detail at the specific question of the possible presence of Malays. As well as the identity and date of Malay arrivals in South Sulawesi, there are also the questions of their reception and integration into the local situation. There is a long history of interaction between Malays and the various kingdoms of South Sulawesi (Hadrawi 2018), though our attention here is specifically on Suppa.

The concept of 'Malay' is notoriously fluid and varies over time. For the relevant period of this enquiry, that is the 15th and 16th centuries, Anthony Milner (2008: 92) notes that

> The court writings of Melaka/Johor definitely give the impression of a developing 'Malay' style – mentioning 'Malay customs and ceremonial', 'Malay music', 'Malay dress' and 'Malay dance'. There is a suggestion in the Melaka-Johor writing of a 'Malay' civilizational pattern – a manner of behaviour and a body of custom which was capable of being communicated to others.

It is this 'civilizational pattern', including most obviously the Malay language, that we seek to identify here. There is a clear distinction between Malays in this sense and the local Bugis and Makasar peoples of South Sulawesi.

As so often in research on early periods of history, firmly established results are hardly to be expected; all is possibility and degrees of probability. The varied sources for this period in South Sulawesi and the extent of recent research, however, make the attempt worthwhile.

Approach and sources[1]

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The use of *lontara'* manuscripts as a source of information for the local history of South Sulawesi is well established. The Dutch scholar, Cense (1951: 43), says that Bugis and Makasar manuscripts display a style of narrative which is simple and realistic in dealing with historical materials. Further, if one compares them with what are taken to be historical narratives in other regions of Indonesia, it is easy to see that the Bugis and Makasar were somewhat more objective in recording the facts of their existence. As early as 1759, Blok was basing his general history of Sulawesi on *lontara'* sources, even if his account was not published until much later (Macknight~~. Paeni and Hadrawi~~ et al. 2020: 27). Crawfurd (1820) also used *lontara'* sources. Various kinds of material can be found. Caldwell (1988) edited ten short Bugis texts in his discussion of the period 1300 to 1600, while Rahilah Omar (2003) analyses the late 18th-century diary of the Arumpone [ruler of Bone] La Tenritappu. Macknight~~. Paeni and Hadrawi~~ et al. (2020)

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provide the text and translation of the Bugis chronicle of Bone which reaches back to the late 14th century and runs to the 17th century. Genealogies are a particularly common and useful element among the *lontara'* sources (Caldwell and Wellen 2016). While all such materials need to be critically assessed in relation to the purpose and context of their particular creation, the historian of South Sulawesi has a rich treasury of written sources.

There are, however, some special problems. Macknight (1993: 5–6) makes the important point that a Bugis manuscript codex is usually a miscellany containing several

[1] Personal names of historical figures and words in Bugis are rendered in Bugis form, as in Wé Tépulingé. Place names, however, are given in their Indonesian form, which also serves as English, as in Suppa, rather than Suppa', or Sidenreng, rather than Sidénréng.

items; that is, versions of particular works. A wide variety of texts often occurs in a single codex and it can be very difficult to identify the various works represented. A simple title generally gives no indication of the materials to be found in a manuscript codex. Comparison of texts from one manuscript to another also demonstrates the complex processes of variation arising from the relaxed attitude of many scribes in copying a manuscript (Macknight and Caldwell 2001).

To be used as a source, therefore, a *lontara'* manuscript requires significant philological investigation. This is a point famously made by Koos Noorduyn in his magisterial edition of an ~~18th~~ 18th-century chronicle from Wajo (Noorduyn 1955) and exemplified in other recent editions of works in Bugis (Hadrawi 2017; Macknight ~~, Paeni and Hadrawi~~et al. 2020).

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The primary written sources used for tracing possible early Malay contacts with South Sulawesi are three Bugis manuscripts designated MmS A, MmS B and MmS C. Each of these is only one item in their respective codex which contains a variety of other materials. Each is a version of work of which, especially in the case of MS~~ms~~ A, other versions are known. Although they deal with related matters and are consistent in their information, they are best regarded as three separate works. Taken together, and embedded in a much wider context of local historiography, they represent a strong tradition or memory of events.

Each needs to be described before the relevant information can be discussed.

Manuscript A (MS A)

MS~~Ms~~ A is a short manuscript work which, in the version we have used, is found in a codex entitled 'Lontara' Sawitto-Suppa'. The codex was copied in 1981 by Haji Paewa in Pinrang, South Sulawesi and is accessible in the form of a photocopy in Muhammad

Salim's widely distributed collection of photocopies. The probable original of the codex can be accessed as a microfilm in the Archives office in Makassar as ANRIM roll 14, item 27 (Paeni 2003: 85). A version of this work has also been transcribed and translated by Caldwell (1988: 149–155), where it is called the Royal Genealogy of Sidenreng. Caldwell gives details of the five versions of the work he located.

The codex is concerned as a whole with the history of the kingdoms of Sawitto and Suppa. The work we describe as MS~~ms~~ A includes two main sections: firstly, a section about Wé Tépulingé who is described as the first queen of Suppa and, secondly, a section about the relations between the kingdoms of Sawitto and Suppa, together with their genealogical links with the kingdoms of Bacukiki, Soppeng, Sidenreng, Rappang, Nepo and Alitta. The contents of the codex as a whole make it an important source of primary data.

Manuscript B (MS B)

MS B is an item in a codex which can be accessed as a microfilm in the Archives office in Makassar as ANRIM roll 50, item 10 (Paeni 2003: 501–502). Some sections of the text have been transcribed and translated by Druce (2009: 311–318). The codex is entitled *Catatan Harian* (that is, *Diary*) but, as usual, contains a variety of items, including diaries. The item designated here as MS B covers several matters:

1. a story of the rulers and the history of the foundation of Suppa
2. marital relations
3. the genealogy of Suppa within those of the Ajatappareng confederation.

A final section gives a more detailed description of:

4. the arrival of Wé Tépulingé and the formation of the kingdom of Suppa
5. the marriage between Wé Tépulingé and the ruler of Bacukiki, La Bangéngé

6. the formation of the kingdom of Sawitto
7. the descendants of Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé.

The codex is an item in the regalia of the palace of Suppa and was written between 1839 and 1855.

An important section in MS B is the story about the *tomanurung* ('descended one'), La Bangéngé, who assumed power in Bacukiki. The foundation of Bacukiki implies the existence of the kingdom of Suppa which was founded by his wife, the *totompo* ('emergent one'), who later became the founder figure of the kingdom of Suppa. This section provides data on the political relationships of Suppa, Sawitto and Bacukiki. MS B also contains a passage in which the construction of the Suppa palace is narrated. The combination of information connected with the early history of the area is what gives MS B its importance as a source for this study.

Manuscript C (MS C)

MS C is the first item in a codex which can be accessed as a microfilm in the Archives office in Makassar as ANRIM roll 20, item 22 (Paeni 2003: 139). This substantial codex contains various historical and legal items, including material relating to Bone as well as the Ajattaparang area. The codex is a 20th-century copy belonging to the well known scholar Andi Palloge. This item, or indeed any of the items in the codex, do not appear to have been published before. As well as confirming information in the two other works, MS C is important as making an explicit connection between Wé Tépulingé and Melaka.

Discussion

In order to appreciate the information in the local written sources, the geographical context needs to be understood along with the results of recent archaeological research in the area.

The territory of Suppa forms a small peninsula on the west coast of Sulawesi to the west of the modern city of Parepare. It is divided from Parepare by an inlet from Makassar Strait and to cross directly from one side of the inlet to the other by prau takes only ten minutes. The Suppa peninsula is thus surrounded by water on the west, south and east. The appearance of the territory of Suppa protruding into the sea resembles a turtle floating on the sea (Figure 1).

The world of Suppa is dominated by the sea. It is open to the possibility of maritime activities, including providing a harbour for sea-going craft. The trading harbour of the pre-Islamic Bugis kingdom of Suppa was Lawaramparang at the mouth of the Marauleng river, a former course of the Saddang river. Another former course of the Saddang river runs west, giving direct access to the Makassar Strait. The mouth of the Marauleng river became a gateway for the coming and going of praus, not only from the west and south, but also from the north.

In fact, the position of Suppa made it a maritime trading zone before its emergence as the site of a kingdom in the middle of the 15th century. Druce (2009: 204–205) suggests, based on the archaeological evidence from six sites relatively close to the centre of the Suppa, that coastal Suppa had come to serve as the main harbour for Ajattappareng area perhaps as early as the 13th century. One indication of this is that among all the sherds in the Ajattappareng surveys dated to the 13th century, 88% were found in central Suppa. By contrast, for sherds dating to the 14th century only 66% were found in the same area. Over time, Suppa developed, providing a port for the trade in agricultural products from neighbouring settlements, especially from the

Ajatappareng area. There were probably also trade connections between Suppa and the agricultural kingdoms in the further interior, such as Sidenreng and Rappang, which formed an extensive rice production area (~~figure~~ Figure 2). Makaraie, the former palace centre of Suppa with the grave of the Suppa ruler, as well as the sites of Matanre and Gucie, are shown on archaeological grounds to be the most important areas and centres of trade and governance for Suppa in former times.

The calm, sheltered water of Lawaramparang became the best place for trading praus from various directions of the archipelago to dock. Its location alone suggests that trading praus from the Malay areas to the west may well have docked in Suppa. In 1544, a little further south, António de Paiva at Siang was told that Muslims had been coming from 'Ujung Tanah, Pahang and Patani … for fifty years or more', that is since the 1490s (Baker 2005: 73).

The information in the written sources relates to two themes: a particular example of the *totompo* tradition and the specific link with Melaka.

Wé Tépulingé in the totompo tradition of Suppa

MS A tells of a woman called Wé Tépulingé who comes with her entourage and brings her wealth to Suppa after beaching her prau at Lawaramparang. Wé Tépulingé is also given the title of Tompoé ri Lawaramparang ('She who emerged in Lawaramparang'). At the time of her first emergence, the royal figure is wearing a green garment, called, in Bugis, *waju lumu* (green blouse). Wé Tépulingé does not come by herself but is accompanied by her entourage. They carry rich possessions of various forms as: there are cooking tools such as a gold cooking pot and a set of table ware. In fact, all the items and implements are made of gold. The arrival of Wé Tépulingé as *totompo*

receives a positive response from the people and she is subsequently recognised as the queen of Suppa and Sawitto in a political contract with the village leaders called *matoa*.

The relevant section of MS A reads, in translation:

> The *tomanurung* [‘descended one’] at Bacukiki was called La Bangéngé’. It was he who descended with seven palaces in Cempa. It was he who married with Tompoé ri Lawaramparang, she who arose with her mossy sarong, her golden cooking pot, her golden spoons, and her golden pans. She was entitled Lollong Sinrangeng, which means ‘Coming complete with her implements’. She was called Wé Tépulingé and she reigned in the kingdom of Suppa.
>
> As a result of their marriage, there were afterwards born three children. One was called La Teddulloppo who inherited and reigned in Suppa. One was called Wé Pawawoi who reigned in Bacukiki. One more called La Botillangi assumed power in Tanete Langi to the north of Bacukiki. Wé Pawawoi took as husband the *tomanurung* [‘descended one’] at Lowa who was called Sukkumpulawengngé and reigned in Sidenreng. Wé Pawawoi gave birth to a child called La Batara. La Batara afterwards left and married at Bulu Cenrana with a wife, Wé Cina. She gave birth to three children. One was called La Pasappoi who reigned in Sidenreng. One was called Wé Yabeng and one was called La Mariyase’ who reigned in Bulu Cenrana.

Wé Tépulingé’s arrival in Suppa is directly linked to her marriage with the king of Bacukiki called La Bangéngé. The three children of Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé as detailed in MS A are La Botillangi, La Teddulloppo and Wé Pawawoi. MS A and ~~figure~~ Figure 3 set out the dispersal of children and grandchildren to various Bugis kingdoms especially in the Ajatappareng area and surrounds.

Wé Tépulingé is also said to have put together a range of government appointments with various responsibilities to assist with the governance of the kingdom of Suppa. These were:

1. Pangulu Anang (the head of the people's council);
2. Anré Guru (the senior scholar);
3. Pangulu Lompo (the kingdom's military leader);
4. Pabbicara (judge); and
5. Suléwatang (~~Deputy~~ deputy with royal power).

The responsibilities for assisting the governance of Suppa were handed over to six brothers who had arrived with her. Yet another section of MS A adds that Wé Tépulingé cleared the way for setting up Sawitto as a kingdom and, later, Wé Tépulingé brought Suppa and Sawitto together as twin kingdoms under a single government.

This story of the emergence of a female ruler from the sea, together with her prau, is an example of the widespread *totompo* or 'rising up' tradition. The figure who has 'risen up' is then paired with a figure who has 'descended' and together they provide the justification for the later status of their offspring. In the Bugis context, the most obvious reference is the figure of Wé Nyili' Timo' in the early stages of the La Galigo cycle of stories. She rises up from the underworld to marry her cousin, Batara Guru, who has descended from the upper world (Pelras 2006: 103; ~~Pelras~~ 1996: 86). Looking more widely, there are some similarities with what Ras (1968: 81–99) in his survey of Malay sources has called 'the Malay myth of origin' involving, in its simplest form, a female figure emerging from the water of a local river in a mass of foam and marrying a male figure let down from heaven ~~(Ras 1968: 81–99)~~.

The genealogical material, which MS A traces through only four generations, can be expanded almost infinitely by reference to other sources and there is no reason to

doubt its essential reliability (Caldwell and Wellen 2016). Counting back by generations from firmly dateable individuals places Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé in the 15th century.

Wé Tépulingé and Melaka

The association of Wé Tépulingé with Melaka and thus with a Malay presence in Sulawesi takes the argument one step further.

In the first half of the 15th century, Melaka established itself as the pre-eminent trading port in the western part of the archipelago and this was matched by its political power. By the mid-15th century, its rule extended over much of the Malay peninsula and the Sumatran coast across the Straits of Malacca. Its trading contacts stretched from India in the west to China in the north, while the east monsoon brought spices and other goods from all parts of the archipelago to the east.

Melaka's internal politics at the time provided many occasions on which a defeated party might have taken the decision to relocate or perhaps just the lure of trade itself was sufficient to suggest the advantage of following it to its source. Whatever the particular reason, any Malays moving eastward in the 15th century are more likely to have been associated with Melaka rather than with its subject states. The lustre of Melaka's name would have enhanced the recognition of status.

The name 'Wé Tépulingé' itself suggests a very rich arrival. The name derives from the Bugis *tépu*, meaning 'complete', and *lingé*, meaning 'goods or possessions'. The phrase *tépu lingé* can be taken as meaning 'complete in [her] goods or abundant possessions' or just 'very rich'. These possessions were, of course, made of gold. The honorific Wé is appropriate for a noble woman. The name, Wé Tépulingé, came to replace her original name.

Both the manuscripts and oral sources provide the name Lamalaka for the palace in Suppa which was erected after Wé Tépulingé's installation as ruler. The story which concerns the naming of the palace Lamalaka is described in MS B:

> This is the work which makes clear the service of the Mandar people to Ajatappareng. The Mandar people were boat builders and house builders. As boat builders, they built the prau of Makarai called Soena Gading; the prau of Arung Parekki called Lapéwajo; and the prau of Palétéang Sawitto called Lapénikkeng. In the same way also, they built the palace or Langkanaé of Suppa called Lamalaka, they also built the palace or Salassé of Sawitto called Lamancapai, the palace or Saorajaé of Alitta called Labéama, the palace in Rappang, and the palace or Saolocié of Sidenreng.
>
> The reason the palace of Suppa was given the name Lamalaka was because the posts of the building were made from one large beam of wood which had drifted from Malaka. After that beam of wood landed at Ujulléro, it revealed itself in dreams to the people of Suppa. Then the people of Suppa came and took it using various tools. That beam of wood afterwards became the central post of the palace.

The reference to the wooden beams is significant because the name of the city of Melaka is traditionally derived from the *melaka* tree which determined the city's location. The connection between Melaka and a tree is also picked up in the traditional Bugis narrative cycle known as La Galigo in which a reference to a huge *melaka* tree under whose shelter noble children play and chat seems to be a metaphorical reference to the cultural and political power of the pre-eminent Malay state.

MS C adds more about Wé Tépulingé as an individual as well as confirming information in MSS A and ~~ms~~ B.

Acknowledging heaven above and requesting pardon of the world below, this tells the names of the former rulers. Here also is told a spell to ward off thirst and a hungry stomach, a split mouth, a cracked tongue and a skull like the skin of an onion. Hail, Lord, may my belly not swell, may I not weaken in speaking the names of our ancestors.

There was the *tomanurung* [(Descended One)) at Bacukiki who came down with his seven palaces, together with his weapons of war including cannon, they all came down. The personal name of the *tomanurung* at Bacukiki was La Bangéngé. He married the *tomanurung* at Lawaramparang in Suppa named Wé Tépulingé. She descended together with a golden litter, her golden cooking pot, golden spoon, golden vessels, golden ladle, golden tray along with its bowls. Then the palace at Suppa called Lamalaka was built for her.

The reason the Suppa palace was given the name Lamalaka was because of the wood of the pole of the house had floated from Malaka and come to land at Ujulléro. That beam of wood steered itself. Then the people of Suppa came and took it. There were also rope, timber and chisel. The wood that was taken became the central post of the Suppa palace. Wé Tépulingé's country of origin was also said to have been Malaka.

The one who took the *tomanurung* at Bacukiki as husband, Wé Tépulingé, the *tomanurung* at Lawamparang in Suppa, wore clothes which were all green, while the colour of the clothes of her husband, the *tomanurung* at Bacukiki, were all black.

MS C also confirms the close relationship between the three kingdoms of Suppa, Bacukiki and Sawitto by explaining how, after they were married, Wé Tépulingé and La Bangéngé established a settlement at Sawitto, and after that the three kingdoms were as close as twins. MS C goes on to set out how Wé Tépulingé gave rise to the ruling class throughout the Ajattapareng region.

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A notable difference in the accounts is that MS C describes Wé Tépulingé as a *tomanurung*, that is she, like her husband, 'descends' rather than 'rises up'. There are other Bugis parallels for both founding figures to be *tomanurung*, such as the well-known example in Bone (Macknight~~, Paeni and Hadrawi~~ et al. 2020) and this change may only represent the wider Bugis influence on the story.

A further indicator linking Melaka and its Malay culture with this part of Sulawesi is the respect given to the colour yellow. The first chapter of the *Undang-Undang Melaka*, a code dating back to the 15th century, proscribes the wearing of yellow clothing.

> Let it be known to you that you are not to wear, for example, (articles of) yellow colour, and even in the case of high dignitaries, the punishment (for this offence) is death, unless there is royal permission.
>
> (Liaw 1976: 65)

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Respect for the colour yellow remains until today a popular belief in Suppa. It is regarded as a 'sacred colour'. Wearing a yellow shirt, for example, would be deemed to contravene etiquette. This symbol of the ruler's power in Melaka is, of course, widespread in the lands of the Malay dispersal and is not limited to Suppa. It remains,

none the less, an indicator of the movement of the Melaka Malay 'civilizational pattern' (Milner 2008: 92).

In the neighbouring kingdom of Sawitto, a popular myth links the colour yellow with the arrival of Wé Tépulingé. She is said to have arrived at Lawaramparang bearing a sacred yellow flag which she planted on the shore near the hill, Lamaddarau, in Suppa. Commoners, therefore, are prohibited from wearing yellow, especially near the shore. All these traditions support the linkage between Melaka and Sulawesi.

Conclusion

~~What conclusions may be drawn from these materials?~~

The archaeological evidence demonstrates connections between the west coast of South Sulawesi and the western parts of the archipelago in the 15th century and, indeed, for several centuries earlier. While all the details of its trade may elude us, Melaka was, in the 15th century, a major centre of trade from many quarters and enjoyed widespread renown within the archipelago and beyond. If Malay traders from Melaka did come to this area, then the harbour of Suppa and, in particular, the port of Lawaramparang, presented a safe and convenient landfall. After all, the Portuguese report Malay Muslims visiting Siang in the 1490s.

The social function of Bugis founder figures in establishing status is usually apparent, but their reality as historical figures is less so. Yet here is a case where widespread and persistent tradition, both in oral sources and — insofar as this is distinct — in the *lontara'* sources, links the founder figure of Wé Tépulingé with Melaka in various ways. The name, Wé Tépulingé, and much of the associated detail of her entourage may be questioned, but the memory, shaped to Bugis understanding of the past, demands attention.

Another cultural context for viewing story is that of the stranger-king (Henley and Caldwell 2008). Wé Tépulingé and her entourage come from outside, importing the lustre of a great trading state. That, however, is not enough. She has to join with the local founder figure of the Bacukiki *tomanurung* and together they and their descendants establish the political landscape of Ajattaparang. The story is situated within the Bugis political and social context. It is ironic that, in the 18th century, it was Bugis adventurers from South Sulawesi who established themselves in the Malay kingdoms of Sumatra, Riau and the Malay Peninsula (Wellen 2014).

The distinctive nature of Bugis historiography, quite unlike that elsewhere in Southeast Asia, combined with the detailed archaeological research in South Sulawesi, creates at least a strong possibility that we can discern here the traces of real events. The development of Suppa and the other Ajattapareng kingdoms undoubtedly depended on more than the arrival of an external figure, but that development in the 15th century may well have been fostered and shaped by contact with the great trading centre of Melaka, mediated through Malays settling in South Sulawesi.

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Captions

Figure 1. The territory of Suppa, South Sulawesi. **Credit or source for map?** See comment in Fig file

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Figure 2. The kingdoms of Ajattaparang, South Sulawesi (Druce 2009: 26, figure 1.5).

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Figure 3. Lineage of the kings of Suppa (sSource: MS A). This structure corresponds to Druce (2009: 171).

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