Assessing the Epic Status of the Brunei Malay *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*: Place Names and Toponyms

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An unpublished and relatively unstudied epic, such as the Brunei Malay poem the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*, presents numerous problems and opportunities for a greater understanding of Brunei and Borneo history, or Malay literature, and Austronesian languages and cultures. A first question is: Is the text a true epic, in the Parry-Lord-Foley tradition? While direct evidence that the text is indeed a true epic is not available, a methodology has been developed which allows a conclusion to be drawn that it probably was a true epic, passed down from generation to generation orally. The text came under chirographic control (Sweeney 1987), probably at some time in the early to mid 20th century. A more vexing question is: How can the numerous versions of the text, all of which are different from each other, be managed in any serious study? One interesting feature of the text, in all the versions seen, is the linear order of the content, which represents a grand history of Brunei. Because the text is an epic poem, the highly structured nature of the verses aids greatly in constructing a collation of the different versions. The key feature to identifying the linear order of the different versions is the presence of around 500 different place names in the text. These place names are treated a “fixed point markers” which allow the identification of ‘cognate verses’ in the different versions of the text, and guide the construction of the collation. The place names are often combined with about 50 different “specifiers” to create an even larger number of toponyms, which vary in the different versions and appear to be kinds of poetic variation added in performance by different poets. The total number of toponyms (consisting of specifier(s) + place name) is at least 700. (An “unspecified” place name is treated as having a “zero” specifier.) Tophonyms in the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn* vary from the very well known ‘country of Java’ (*Nagri Jawa*) to the very obscure name of the eponymous hero’s ‘toilet ditch’ (*Parit Jamban*), known only to cognoscenti in Brunei. While the toponyms vary across the six versions of the text, the variation is commonly in which specific specifier is used with a place name. It is the recurrence of these place names across the different versions which allows the conclusion to be drawn that the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn* is a true oral epic.

INTRODUCTION

The unpublished and relatively unstudied Brunei Malay epic, the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*, has been known to the outside world since the mid-20th century. In an article published soon after the end of the Pacific war, Tom Harrisson quoted a dozen lines from an unpublished Brunei manuscript in the Sarawak Museum (1949:97-98). However, Harrisson did not mention the name of, or the title of the work represented by the particular manuscript. The text may have been available to H. R. Hughes-Hallett, an Assistant Resident in Brunei, who wrote what may be the first more or less systematic treatment of Brunei history, and published just before the onset of the war in the Pacific (1940). Hughes-Hallett, however, mentions only the other genre of historically oriented Brunei manuscripts, the *Salasilah* or *Tarsilah*, but not the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*. In 1970, both Abdul Latif and Donald E. Brown both mentioned the name of the *Sya’ir Awang*.

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The work is commonly known by the title *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*, but it is occasionally referred to by the name *Sya’ir Brunei*. 
Simawn in print (Abdul Latif 1970:39; Brown 1970:135). These may have been the first published references to the Sya’ir Awang Simawn by name. In what is probably the first modern indigenous treatment of Brunei history, there can be no doubt that the authors were well-aware of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn and its contents, but they also do not mention it by name (Yura Halim and Jamil Umar 1958). The works of Spenser St. John likewise do not mention the epic by name, but in one passage St. John refers to what could have been oral performances of the epic, in the 1850s when he was British Consul-General in Borneo, which he dismisses with the following: “I have occasionally listened to them, but not with much interest” ([1862] 1974 II:260, 1863 II:284-285; see Maxwell 1995:188).

THE Sya’ir Awang Simawn

Before proceeding to a discussion of place names and toponyms, it will be important first to provide an introduction to the Sya’ir Awang Simawn itself. Further, it is important to have some background on what is known of the text, how long it has been known of outside of Brunei, and the materials on which this essay is based so as to have some context of the text.

The Sya’ir Awang Simawn has no author; that is, it is an epic poetic text. The epic came under chirographic control, probably at some time in the late 19th or early 20th century. The data on which this essay is based derive from six different versions of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn. Each of the six versions is unique. That is, no version is an exact duplicate of any of the other versions. In spite of the fact that each version contains a unique number of verses, and a unique phrasing of the verses and the lines of the verses, there are nonetheless numerous convergences among the six versions in the order of content. That is, the way the story unfolds in the text, both in terms of the events and personages, is relatively uniform. The sya’ir rhyming pattern—of an a-a-a-a rhyme—is also a constant feature of all the versions. But each version differs from each of the other five in various ways. Particular episodes are absent from one or more versions. Particular episodes may be longer or shorter in one version than in other versions. Particular verses are absent from one or more versions. The particular wording of a verse may vary from one version to another. A particular personage may be absent from one or more versions. In

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2 Abdul Latif, a Bruneian then working at the Brunei Museum, and Brown, an American then doing his dissertation research in Brunei, knew each other and were very well acquainted at the time.

3 On chirography, see Sweeney 1987:30­31, 34­35, 45, 47, 50­51. Brunei came under the protected status of Great Britain in 1888, and received a permanently residing British Resident in 1906. Kratz has stated that “The Trengganu Stone inscription of the thirteenth century… is the first example of Malay written in the Arabic script …” (2001:66). Thus this date would seem to represent the earliest possible date of written jawi in the Southeast Asian area, but would long predate any possible occurrence in Brunei.

4 By ‘content’ is meant the information contained in the text. In other words, what the events and developments are that are presented and discussed in the text.

5 I have indicated elsewhere the reasons for supposing that the Brunei Malay Sya’ir Awang Simawn predates the commonly accepted origin of the Malay sya’ir in the work of Hamzah Fansuri of Barus in the late 16th century (Maxwell 1996:110-111 n. 32).

6 There is an inconsistent roster of heroes involved in the founding of Brunei. There is a “standard” list of 14 saparadian ‘of one generation’, ‘siblings’ as well as ‘cousins’, in the English sense. (The Brunei kinship terminology is a Hawaiian-type system, whereas the English kinship terminology is an Eskimo-type system.) One standard source lists: Hawang Halak Batatar, Hawang Simawn, Patih Barbay (or Marbay), Patih Mambang, Patih Tuba, Patih Sangkuna, Patih Manggarun, Patih Malakay, Patih Pahit, Damang Sari, Patih Sindayung, Damang Libar Dawn, Hapu Awang, and Patih Layla Langkung (see, e.g., Mohd. Jamil 1990:38). Awang Jarambak, and his son, Si­Nuay, are also mentioned as close associates of these heroes. Another manuscript source mentions 22 founders of Brunei, not 14, omitting Patih Sangkuna, Damang Sari, Hapu Awang, and Si-Nuay from the list just mentioned, but including the following not mentioned by that list: Patih Bantay, Patih Bulu Mata Gajah, Datu Bumbun, Datu Digayuh, Harimaw Taring, Patih Kidir, Panglima Kujal, Puang, Tuan Sabtu, and Datu Sianggu/Siangku (Maxwell 2005).
other words, in spite of the consistent pattern of structure, there is considerable variation among the six versions, but the variation is always within the constant pattern of a linear order of structure of the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*.\(^7\)

THE SIX VERSIONS OF THE *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*

The six versions of the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn* utilized thus far were obtained, mainly in Brunei, during the years 1968-1970. It will be useful at this point to briefly describe the six versions. Version A is a tape recording of a chanted version of a *jawi* text (*jawi* is the Arabo-Persian writing system used to write Malay).\(^8\) Versions B-F are all typed romanized versions, most likely of other *jawi* texts. The romanized Version B-F contain numerous infelicities of romanization, due most probably to the lack of various kinds of knowledge of geography and Brunei ethnohistory, as well as incomplete knowledge of the lexicon of the Brunei dialect of Malay on the part of the romanizers. It should be possible to say more about the infelicities of romanization once Versions G and H, to be discussed presently, are romanized.

During a break in field work taken in 1969 in Singapore, I took the opportunity to transcribe phonemically the tape recording of Version A utilizing the phonemicization of Brunei Malay I had already developed.\(^9\) Over the years following field work in Brunei, 1968-1971, the other versions, B-F, were converted to the phonemicization based on the transcription of Version A.

It became apparent after the phonemic transcription of the tape recording of Version A had been completed and some cursory examination of Versions B-F had been made, that the place names mentioned in the text were very likely to be key to understanding how the six versions of the text were to be rationalized into a consistent pattern for further study. This conclusion was reached once it became clear that simply examining the first verses of the six versions and proceeding sequentially would yield few results. The initial verses of the six versions are simply too different to be able to assign comparability in any systematic way. The beginnings of each version can be easily seen when compared to the collation (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLATION VERSE #</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>[G]</th>
<th>H*</th>
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<td>#1961●</td>
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<td>#2434●</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>743</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2521</td>
<td>2434</td>
<td>2281</td>
<td>c.693</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3306</td>
<td></td>
<td>793</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2521</td>
<td>2434</td>
<td>2281</td>
<td>c.1922</td>
<td>c.693</td>
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<tr>
<td># verses</td>
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<td>793</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2521</td>
<td>2434</td>
<td>2281</td>
<td>c.693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The First (○) and Last (●) Verses of the Six Versions of the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*

*: Until Versions G and H have been fully romanized, it can only be assumed that they exhibit the same linear order of contents.

\(^7\) The main characteristic of the linear order of structure is a consistent chronology. The *Sya’ir Awang Simawn* is a great ethnohistory (or folk history—see Cunnison 1951, esp. pp. 1-10, 23-41; Sturtevant 1968) of Brunei.

\(^8\) The chanter, whom I did not meet, was male.

\(^9\) This phonemicization of Brunei Malay was first presented in Maxwell 1969.
Thus, the decision was made to concentrate exclusively on the occurrences of the place names in each of the six versions. By focusing on the place names—as they appeared in the text and the order in which they appeared—it became apparent that certain verses in one version of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn corresponded to similar or alike verses in another version. However, there was no apparent, consistent 1-to-n ordering of the corresponding verses between any two of the six versions. In order to comprehend the relationships between the different versions of the text, it was necessary to consider the constituent verses of the different versions individually rather than to seek a systematic relationship between large numbers of verses taken together.

The idea then developed of first just trying to correlate those verses in the different versions that exhibited the same place names. It soon became apparent that it should be possible to interrelate all six versions of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn (then at hand) by considering the place names to be “fixed points” in the text and by concentrating on trying to align each of the six versions of the text with each of the other five versions based on these “fixed points” (the place names). This approach was pursued allowing all the verses in the six versions to be aligned with respect to each other.

As a result, it became possible to construct a master collation of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn in which all of the verses of each of the six versions were aligned with their corresponding verses in the other five versions (Maxwell 1988). This master collation contains 3306 verses. No version (A-F) contains all of the 3306 verses of the collation.\footnote{The relationships among the six versions may be briefly summarized as follows: The first verse of Version A corresponds to verse 1 of the collation, the last verse of Version A is verse 793 which corresponds to verse 1655 of the collation; the first verse of Version B corresponds to verse 2301 of the collation, the last verse of Version B is verse 743 which corresponds to verse 3110 of the collation; the first verse of Version C corresponds of verse 1 of the collation, the last verse of Version C is verse 1961 which corresponds to verse 2399 of the collation; the first verse of Version D corresponds to verse 1 of the collation, the last verse of Version D is verse 2521 which corresponds to verse 3306 of the collation; the first verse of Version E corresponds to verse 283 of the collation, the last verse of Version E is verse 2434 which corresponds to verse 3306 of the collation; the first verse of Version F corresponds to verse 283 of the collation, the last verse of Version F is 2281 which corresponds to verse 3185 of the collation.}

It will be noticed that there are more verses in the master collation (3306 verses) than exist in any of the six versions (A: 793 verses; B: 743 verses; C: 1961 verses; D: 2521 verses; E: 2434 verses; E: 2434; F: 2281 verses), or the two jawi versions obtained recently (G: c. 1922 verses; H: c. 693 verses). As an illustrative example, how the different versions of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn are patterned, with respect to the master collation, can be easily seen by examining the alignment of the corresponding verses of Versions A and C-F with respect to the master collation verses 1584-1594 (see Table 2). (N.B. The first verse of Version B corresponds to verse 2301 of the collation, after Version A has ended.) How the texts of Versions A-F are apportioned with respect to the collation of these texts may be seen in Appendix I (cf. Appendix IV).
A Sample of the Collation of Verses in Different Versions of the *Sya'ir Awang Simawn*.

(While in Sarawak during the summer of 2005, I was fortunate to obtain xerox copies of two additional versions of the *Sya'ir Awang Simawn*. Both are *jawi* manuscripts. These have been designated Version G and Version H.\(^{11}\) It will take some time to romanize these *jawi* manuscripts and intercalate their verses of these versions with the master collation already developed. The master collation already developed thus constitutes a theory of the text of the *Sya'ir Awang Simawn*. It should be possible, with the results to be obtained from Version G and Version H to disprove the hypothesis which has been generated from Versions A-F. If the hypothesis is disproved, it will be necessary to reformulate the hypothesis already developed.\(^{12}\)

### STRUCTURING THE SIX VERSIONS OF THE *Sya'ir Awang Simawn*

The *Sya'ir Awang Simawn* is a seamless text. That is, there are no internal breaks or subdivisions; the text is comprised of a continuous stream of 4-line verses having an *a*-a-*a*-a rhyme. Consequently, a kind of content analysis of the text has been attempted to yield a division into XVI major Parts and 121 Episodes, based on the content of the text. No claim is made that this set of divisions is definitive. The results of this undertaking are included in Appendix II.\(^{13}\) The division of the text into XVI Parts exemplifies a view similar to the “lumping” approach known to anthropologists familiar with human paleontology; the division into 121 episodes exemplifies a view similar to the “splitting” approach to the same (see, e.g., Relethford 2003:46-50). By taking a dual track approach to segmenting the text, two things are accomplished. A general overview of the contents of the *Sya'ir Awang Simawn* emerges from the division into Parts, and a more detailed accounting of the contents emerges from the division into Episodes. It is not possible to conclude that a perfectly accurate synoptic view emerges from these divisions, however, it will only be possible to make such a conclusion after a number of additional textual

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\(^{11}\) Version G contains c. 1922 verses; Version H contains c. 693 verses. The first verse of Version G corresponds to verse 283 of the collation. The first verse of Version H corresponds to verse 2413 of the collation. Identifications of the last verses of Versions G and H must await completed romanizations of these texts.

\(^{12}\) This approach is adopted from the work of Karl R. Popper. “\(P^1 \rightarrow TT \rightarrow EE \rightarrow P^2\). That is, we start from some problem \(P^1\); proceed to a tentative solution or tentative theory \(TT\), which may be (partly or wholly) mistaken; in any case it will be subject to error-elimination, \(EE\), which may consist of critical discussion or experimental tests; at any rate, new problems \(P^2\) arise from our own creative activity; and these new problems are not in general intentionally created by us, they emerge autonomously from the field of new relationships which we cannot help bringing into existence with every action, however little we intend to do so” ([1968] 1979:119).

\(^{13}\) Two other attempts at a summary of the contents of two different versions of the *Sya'ir Awang Simawn* have been made by Kimball (1979:36-43) and Brown (1984:11-14).
versions can be examined in detail. It is hoped that the two additional versions mentioned above, G and H, will shed further light on these matters.

The different versions of the text examined in detail, A-F, exhibit considerable variation in which Episodes are included, and the length of particular Episodes included in cases in which different Versions contain some verses in a particular Episode. For example, even though Version A is one of the shorter Versions of the text, 5 Episodes totaling 147 verses, or nearly 4.5% of the total verses in the collation, (Episodes I.10, II.11, II.14, II.15, and II.30) occur only in Version A. At the other extreme, Versions B-F all contain some verses in 5 Episodes (Episodes V.72, VI.73, VII.74-76), Versions B, D-F (after Version C ends) all contain some verses in 33 Episodes (VII.77-83, VIII.84-86, IX.87-89, X.90, XI.91-93, XII.94-97, XIII.98-104, XIV.105-109), Versions D-F (after Version C ends) all contain some verses in 6 Episodes (XIV.109-113, XV.114), and Versions D-E contain some verses in 9 Episodes (XV.115-120, XVI.121-123) when both versions end. Based on the Versions of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn examined thus far, it is the earliest periods of Brunei history, covered by the text, that would appear to exhibit the greatest variability of content.

PLACE NAMES AND TOPONYMS

In the six Versions of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn, there are many place names and toponyms. By ‘place name’ is meant the linguistic label used to designate some particular point in the landscape. By ‘toponym’ is meant the linguistic label composed of a ‘specifier’ plus a place name (TOPONYM = SPECIFIER + PLACE_NAME). A specifier is one, of a limited number in a set of terms, which labels a characteristic feature of a landscape, seascape, or airscape, which—when combined with a place name—designates some particular spot in a landscape, seascape or airscape. A place name can be considered to be a toponym with a zero-specifier. Thus, all place names are toponyms, but the reverse is not true. Some examples of toponyms, utilizing the place name brunay (i.e.,<Brunei>) are:

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14 It is not possible to accurately estimate how many different textual versions of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn may exist. Harrisson mentioned an unpublished manuscript version in the Sarawak Museum (1949:97). Kimbl worked with one version, Brown with another. I have worked with six different versions, and collected two additional jawi versions in Sarawak. Mohd. Jamil lists a single copy in the holdings of the Brunei History Centre (1990:138). In their summary of manuscripts in Brunei, Harun Mat Piah and Ismail Hamid (1983) list one romanized version in the Brunei Museum (1983:115), and 6 different versions (of 460, 260, 144, 265, 94, and 112 pages) in the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Brunei (1983:121). My suspicion is that there are yet others in private hands in Borneo. Attitudes in Brunei have made it impossible to ascertain whether anyone is still alive who can still orally perform (tambang-manambang sayr) the Sya’ir Awang Simawn. Such a performance may have been what St. John witnessed in the 1850s and dismissed as “not with much interest” ([1862] 1974 II:260, 1863 II:284-285), as mentioned above.

15 The concept ‘point’ is variably interpreted. A ‘point’ may be a nearly geometric point, such as the top of a hill or mountain (puncak); an unbounded area, such as a field or plain (padang); a bounded area, such as a river (sungay), etc.

16 Some examples of specifiers are: sungay ‘river’, bukit ‘hill’, gunung ‘mountain’, kwala ‘mouth of a stream’.

17 The term ‘Brunei’ has various pronunciations in Brunei Malay, all of which are correct: [brūnay], [baruñay], [brūnay], [būnay], [baúnay], and [būnay]. The exact relationships between these alternates and whether they constitute simply different registers of speech or are subdialectal varieties in the Brunei dialect of Malay have not yet been worked out.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>specifier + place_name</th>
<th>‘meaning’</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ø + Barunay</td>
<td>‘Brunei’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bandar + Barunay</td>
<td>‘the city of Brunei’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kwala + Barunay</td>
<td>‘the mouth of the Brunei River’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nagri + Barunay</td>
<td>‘the country of Brunei’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pulaw + Barunay</td>
<td>‘the “island” of Brunei’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sungay + Barunay</td>
<td>‘the Brunei River’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Toponyms Utilizing the Place Name *Barunay*. 
CONCLUSIONS

What is the significance of such a vast number of the many place names and toponyms in the versions of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn so far examined? An answer to this question may be attempted by making the following three observations.

1. The Barunay—the cultural proprietors of the Sya’ir Awang Simawn—clearly had an enormous amount of geographical and toponymic knowledge during pre-European times. The Barunay are the dominant ethnic group in Brunei, and traditionally were composed of four classes: the Nobles (bangsa pangiran-pangiran), the Aristocrats (bangsa awang-awang), the Ordinary People (bangsa urang kabanyakan, or bangsa urang sagaway), and the Slaves (bangsa hulun-hulun). The only other native Malay-speaking group of Brunei are the Kadayan, who are not Barunay.

2. The Brunei Malay Sya’ir Awang Simawn represents a kind of ‘cultural encyclopedia’, in the sense of Havelock (1963), which contains an enormous amount of valuable cultural knowledge important to the early Barunay, and relevant to any treatment of Brunei culture.

3. The Sya’ir Awang Simawn represents a “Barunay-view” (or a “Barunay-centric” view) of Brunei history. Some of the events and personages in the text are widely known by other ethnic groups in the area, such as the Bisaya (see Bewsher 1958:239), the Kadayan (see Maxwell 1995:184-187), the Lun Bawang (see Maxwell 1995:186), and the Lun Dayeh (see Tepp [2005]:36).

18 The Barunay are the dominant ethnic group in Brunei, and traditionally were composed of four classes: the Nobles (bangsa pangiran-pangiran), the Aristocrats (bangsa awang-awang), the Ordinary People (bangsa urang kabanyakan, or bangsa urang sagaway), and the Slaves (bangsa hulun-hulun). The only other native Malay-speaking group of Brunei are the Kadayan, who are not Barunay.

19 ‘Pre-European times’ in Brunei can be conceptualized in at least two different ways. If the first well-documented and established European visit to Brunei—of Magellan’s expedition, chronicled by Antonio Pigafetta in 1521—is taken to be the chronological benchmark, then ‘pre-European times’ are those of the pre-early 16th century. If the establishment of sustained and more or less continuous European contact with Brunei—commencing with the establishment of British protection over Brunei in 1888, or the establishment of a British Residency in Brunei in 1906—is taken to be the chronological benchmark, then ‘pre-European times’ are those just before the early 20th century.

20 Havelock used the phrase ‘tribal encyclopedia’, and occasionally ‘social encyclopedia’ and ‘encyclopedia of ethics, politics, history and technology’ (1963:27, 31, 61-86, 92, 126, 152, 165, 173, 176, 209, 216, 244, 296), to refer to the works of Homer (the Iliad and the Odyssey), which were attacked by Plato (1963:49, 1-15). Havelock emphasizes Plato’s attack on poetry, in his Republic. Popper interprets Plato’s Republic as what can only be called a utopian tract (1962:169).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I. Origins and Beginnings of Brunei</th>
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(See APPENDIX II for a summary of Episodes missing from Versions A-F.)
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**END:** indicates Episode ending a Version
APPENDIX III—SUMMARY OF PARTS, VERSES AND EPISODES IN VERSIONS A-F.

Part I. Origins and Beginnings of Brunei 527 verses (1-527) 10 Episodes
Part II. Brunei Conquests 726 verses (528-1253) 41 Episodes
Part III. Developments in Brunei 600 verses (1256-1855) 11 Episodes
Part IV. Juhur and Brunei 313 verses (1856-2248) 8 Episodes
Part V. Java and Brunei 61 verses (2249-2308) 2 Episodes
Part VI. Regulations Concerning Viziers 11 verses (2310-2320) 1 Episode
Part VII. China and Brunei 286 verses (2321-2606) 10 Episodes
Part VIII. The Spanish and Brunei 57 verses (2607-2663) 3 Episodes
Part IX. The Cockfight 130 verses (2664-2793) 3 Episodes
Part X. Sarip Mupakih Brings Islam to Brunei 10 verses (2794-2803) 1 Episode
Part XI. Brunei Offices and Statuses 72 verses (2804-2875) 3 Episodes
Part XII. The Adventures of Si-Nuay’s Son Awang Asmara 89 verses (2971-3070) 7 Episodes
Part XIII. The Adventures of Sultan Bulkiah 106 verses (3071-3179) 9 Episodes
Part XIV. The Adventures of Sultan Muda Jalilul-Alam 92 verses (3180-3271) 7 Episodes
Part XV. The Encounter with Sultan Mambang Pahlawan 35 verses (3272-3306) 3 Episodes

APPENDIX IV—SUMMARY OF THE EPISODE CONTENTS IN 6 VERSIONS OF THE Sya‘ir Awang Simawn

Part I. Origins and Beginnings of Brunei
1. Origins in the Sky and Introduction of Characters
2. Simawn, Damang Sari and Panglima Kucah Build Two Dugout Canoes with the Murut
3. Simawn and Damang Sari Race from Tamburung to Labuan
4. Simawn Acquires His Great Strength from Eating Fish
5. Discovery of Brunei by Patih Barbay and the Move from Sundar/Garang
6. Jarambak Travels to Hadang Which He “Presents” to Hawang Halak Batatar
7. Hawang Halak Batatar Orders Simawn to Fetch Jarambak, Whom He Orders to Live at Butir
8. Patih Barbay Suggests All Countries Should Be Asked to Submit to Hawang Halak Batatar
9. The Emissary Bangis Travels to Tutung to Enquire About That Territory Submitting to Hawang Halak Batatar
10. Simawn Becomes a Kite and Kills the Heron

Part II. Brunei Conquests
11. Simawn, Jarambak and Damang Sari Fight Bilantapura at Igan
12. Simawn, Jarambak and Damang Sari Conquer Basiang at Igan
13. Jarambak Plunders to Sambas to Tell Datu Hagas to Give Up Women
14. Jarambak Conquers Patinggi Kijang and Puntianak
15. Jarambak Defeats Kalana Bantu and Bilanta Warna in the Air
16. Jarambak Returns to Sambas
17. Jarambak Returns to Igan
18. Simawn and Jarambak Return to Brunei to Bring Hawang Halak Batatar the Good News of Victories
19. Datu Barambun and His Bajaw and Ilanun from Kinabatangan Set Out to Capture Simawn and Brunei; The Ilanun Are Thoroughly Defeated by the Brunei Heroes
20. After Patih Barbay Advises the Saba Countries Are Evil, Hawang Halak Batatar Calls All His Forces to Attack the Ilanun Countries
21. The Brunei Forces Depart and Defeat the Bugis Under Banir Lamiding
22. Damang Sari Attacks the Bugis at Banjar, Who Submit
23. Simawn Goes to Gurawan Where the Bugis Targar Submits
24. All the Countries Around Saba Have Submitted to Brunei Authority
25. Damang Sari Attacks Banjar
26. Simawn Attacks Ulay, Defeating the Bugis Under Dahing Darunay
27. Simawn Attacks Papan Under the Bugis Targar, Who Submit
28. Simawn, Jarambak and Damang Sari Attack the Country of Bulungan Where Husakandar Submits
29. Simawn and Jarambak Attack the Country of Sandungan Killing Hukacu and His Mangkasar Bugis Allies
30. The Spirit Bilanta Is Startled by Hu’s Death and Attacks Jarambak Who Kills Him
31. Simawn, Jarambak and Damang Sari Travel to Kuran to Obtain Tribute
32. Simawn and Jarambak Attack and Defeat the Ilanun of Tungku
33. The Forces Travel, Damang Sari Attacks Silam, Jarambak Gets Datu Gadang to Submit
34. Simawn Orders Datu Gadang to the Suluk of Manila to Announce He Will Attack If They Do Not Submit
35. Simawn, Jarambak and Damang Sari Arrive at Suluk Where Datu Kilan Submits to Hawang Halak Batatar
36. Simawn and Damang Sari Send Datu Gadang to Manila where the Bandar Submits to Hawang Halak Batatar
37. Datu Gadang Returns With Prestations to Pay Homage to Simawn;
   Damang Sari Orders Everything Take Back to Hawang Halak Batatar
38. Damang Sari Goes to Silam to Receive Tribute
39. Simawn and Damang Sari Go to Kuran and Defeat the Bugis
40. Jarambak and Damang Sari Fly to Pulaw Bugis and Defeat Raja Tawaju
41. Jarambak Attacks the Country of Lantay
42. Simawn Attacks the Country of Rantungan, Defeating the Kalangan Dusun Under Datu Hilah
43. Simawn, Jarambak and Damang Sari Conquer Kinabatangan
44. Returning to Brunei, Simawn Stops Off in Sabah to Collect Plunder From Defeated Territories
45. The Plunder Taken from Conquered Territories is Detailed
46. The Conquerors Assemble and Return to Brunei
47. Celebrations in Brunei for Simawn and the Victors, and the Plunder from Conquered Territories
48. Hawang Halak Batatar Tells the Heroes to Return to Their Homes with Their Plunder
49. Hawang Halak Batatar Tells Patih Barbay to Divide the Rest of the Plunder From the Devastated Territories
50. Hawang Halak Batatar is Disconsolate as the Conquered Territories Are So Devastated
   They Cannot Supply Him Tribute
51. After Three Years the Countries Recover and Tribute and Trade Flow in Abundance to Brunei

Part III. Developments in Brunei
52. In Praise of Hawang Halak Batatar’s Country
53. Jarambak’s Son Si-Nuay Captures the Pheasant
54. Si-Nuay Defeats Mambang Diwa in a Top Contest at Limaw Manis
55. Arrival of Radin Angsuka Diwa from Majapahit Wanting to Fight Cocks for the Country
56. Si-Nuay’s Cock Ayam Mutiara Defeats Radin Angsuka Diwa’s Cock Ayam Asmara
57. Radin Angsuka Diwa Returns to Jawa to Get the Craftsmen, Gold and Jewels for Hawang Halak Batatar;
   He Returns to Brunei to Pay His Losses
58. Building Hawang Halak Batatar’s Palace at Pirasung
59. Hawang Halak Batatar Calls for His Colonies to Send Him Women for His Palace
60. Jarambak Builds a House at Butir
61. Adventures of Si-Nuay Who Presents a Wondrous Bird to Hawang Halak Batatar;
   The Bird Tells Him of a Beautiful Princess in Juhur
62. Patih Payt Announces He Wants to Take a Wife; A Banteng is Captured for Brideprice; He Marries Si-Lampang

Part IV. Juhur and Brunei
63. Hawang Halak Batatar Announces He Wants to Marry the Juhur Princess, Dang Sari Alam;
   He Orders Jarambak, Simawn, Damang Sari and Damang Libar Dawn to Juhur to Fetch Her;
   They Travel to Juhur and Capture the Princess
64. The Princess’ Distraught Father Searches for Her; Her Pet Pingay Bird is Let Loose;
   It Flies to Brunei and Discovers the Princess is to Wed Hawang Halak Batatar Whose Praise She Sings;
   She Sends the Bird Back to Juhur to Bring the Good News; The Juhur People Travel to Brunei To Visit
65. The Brunei Notables Travel to Juhur; Mention of State Officers; Detailing of Brunei Regalia
66. Hawang Halak Batatar Returns to Brunei in the Jambalang Bulang; The Regalia from Juhur Are Installed
67. Preparations Are Made for Hawang Halak Batatar’s Puspa and the Heroes Are Made State Officers
68. The Puspa of Hawang Halak Batatar; Description of Vestments, Regalia and Events
69. Hawang Halak Batatar is Paid Homage, Taken in Procession and All Return Home
70. Hawang Halak Batatar and the Viziers Travel to Juhur, They Are Admonished to Behave Well and Return to Brunei; Damang Libar Dawn Announces He Wishes to Go to Java

Part V. Java and Brunei
71. The Juru Sahbandar, Damang Libar Daun, Goes to Java Where He Meets the Traders and the Ruler
72. He Stays in Java for Nine Years and Has Two Children, Palingam Cahaya (f) and Sultan Bulkiah (m);
   They Return to Brunei

Part VI. Regulations Concerning Viziers
73. The Viziers Take Concubines If They [The Concubines ?] Are Not from Garang
Part VII. China and Brunei

74. The Raja of China Sends His Sons, Ung Wangkang and Ung Sunting to Fetch the Naga’s Jewel from Mt. Kinabalu; They Return With It But Ung Wangkang Appropriates It

75. Ung Sunting Sails Away Secretly and His Parents Are Sad

76. Ung Sungen Arrives in Brunei and is Received by the Court

77. Trader Kutang Sails from China; He Meets Old Natadil and Discovers He Has Come to Brunei

78. Kutang Pays Respects to the Sultan and Meets Ung Sunting

79. Kutang Returns to China, Meets the King, Reports He Found Ung Sunting and that the Sultan of Brunei Invites Him to Brunei

80. The King Sails to Brunei Where He Meets the Sultan

81. The King Returns to China; Ung Wangkang Sails for Brunei

82. Pangiran Maharaja Lila Ung Sunting’s Wife Wants Fruit; The Sultan Orders Simawn and is Followers to Accompany Him To Labuan

83. Ung Wangkang Arrives and Meets Ung Sunting; They Fight; Ung Sunting Returns to Brunei

Part VIII. The Spanish and Brunei

84. Ung Wangkang Sails for Suluk and Meets Datu Buranday Who Enlists the Aid of the Spanish in Manila

85. The Raiders From the Philippines Arrive at Brunei and Are Defeated by Simawn and Jarambak; The Sultan Appropriates the Troublesome Jewel for His Crown

86. Lapit Returns to Sulu and Reports The Defeat by Simawn to the Ruler; Ung Wangkang is Saddened

Part IX. The Cockfight

87. Ratu Mambang Awilis Arrives in Brunei and Meets the Sultan to Seek a Cockfight

88. Ratu Mambang Awilis’ Cock is Defeated by Si-Nuay’s Cock and Falls into the Brunei River Becoming Lumut Lunting Rock

89. Because of His Exalted Ancestry, Ratu Mambang Awilis Marries the Pangiran Bandahara’s Daughter and Becomes Pangiran Kasuma Nagara

Part X. Sarip Mupakih Brings Islam to Brunei

90. Sarip Mupakih Comes to Brunei Bringing Islam

Part XI. Brunei Offices and Statuses

91. Detailing of High Offices, Regalia and Law

92. The Sultana Gives Birth; The Status of Nursemaids

93. When the Prince is Mature They Sail to Malaka to Marry Him Off, The Party Returns to Brunei

Part XII. The Adventures of Si-Nuay’s Son Awang Asmara

94. Si-Nuay’s Son, Awang Asmara, Meets the Sultan and Asks Permission to Travel; The Sultan Agrees

95. Awang Asmara Sails in the Ship Jambalang Bulang to Miriam Diwa Island to Find the Princess Gambar Hudara, Taken by Batara Kala and Guarded by a Tiger and an Ogre

96. Awang Asmara Flies on a Hamparan Mat to the Princess and Defeats the Tiger and the Ogre

97. Awang Asmara Delivers the Princess to Her Father at Kuala Makari; The Ruler Receives Him with Celebration; Awang Asmara Sails for Brunei with the Princess

Part XIII. The Adventures of Sultan Bulkiah

98. The Mature Sultan Bulkiah in Java Asks His Father, Juru Sahbandar Damang Libar Dawn, Permission to Go to Brunei with His Sister, Palingkam Caya, to Pay Homage

99. Sultan Bulkiah Sails and Meets Awang Asmara at Sea; After Introducing Themselves They Go to Silangur Island to Engage a Princess

100. Awang Asmara Meets Sultan Nasuran and Asks that Sultan Bulkiah Marry the Princess Layla Mancanay; They Marry

101. They Leave and Sail Around Brunei; A Strong Wind Blows Them to Sulu; They Meet Ung Sunting; The Sultan of Sulu and His Wife Assembly the People and They Sail for Brunei

102. Sultan Bulkiah, The Sultan of Sulu and Ung Sunting Pay Homage and Bring News to the Sultan of Brunei; They All Retire to the Palace

103. Awang Asmara is Entitled Pangiran Kasuma Ningrat and Celebrated; The Sultan of Sulu Leaves for Sulu

104. Sultan Bulkiah Moves to Gua Landing, Awang Asmara to Butir
Part XIV. The Adventures of Sultan Muda Jalilul-Alam

105. Sultan Muda Jalilul-Alam Asks His Father, Duli Sah-Alam, for Permission to Go to Juhur to Pay Homage;
   The Sultan Consults His Viziers Who Agree

106. They Sail for Nine Days in the Jambalan Bulang

107. The Ruler Sends His Bandahara to Investigate the Commotion;
   He Discovers the Brunei Party Are Relatives of the Ruler

108. The Bandahara Returns and Reports the News to the Ruler Who Orders the Party to Visit;
   The Brunei Party Brings News

109. After a Nine-Month Stay the Brunei Party Requests Permission to Return Home;
   The Ruler Gives Them the Si-Naga Kris from Majapahit; They Go Downstream with Ceremony

110. They Discover a Country Beneath the Sea; The Sultan Wants to Marry a Princess of the Undersea Country

111. Using a Talisman the Ship Dives Beneath the Sea; They Pay Homage to the Ruler; Many Rajas Have Wanted
   the Princess—Now Betrothed to Sultan Mambang Pahlawan—But Si-Raja Naga Has Killed Them

112. The Ruler Tells Them Whoever Kills the Naga May Marry His Daughter

113. The Sultan Prepares and Kills the Naga with the Flying Kris, Si-Naga

Part XV. The Encounter with Sultan Mambang Pahlawan

114. Sultan Mambang Pahlawan in Kanderaan Hears the Rejoicing;
   He Calls the Victorious Sultan and Announces He Will Descend to the World

115. Sultan Mambang Pahlawan Glides Down with His Followers and is Annoyed at Finding
   Sultan Jalilul-Alam is to Wed His Betrothed

116. The Two Parties Do Battle; The Barunays Collar Sultan Mambang Pahlawan Who is Ashamed and
   Asks Them to Kill Him

117. The Bandahara Asks the Ruler What is to Be Done;
   The Ruler Decides the Vanquisher of the Naga Will Have the Princess

118. Sultan Mambang Pahlawan Says His Father Was a Batara, The Patih Let Him Go; They Pay Respects to the
   Ruler; Sultan Mambang Pahlawan Says He Would Not Have Fought If He Had Known Who They Were;
   He Will Not Take Up the Engagement; He Flies Back to His Home in Kandraan and Pays Homage
   to His Parents

119. The Sultan Marries the Princess; After Nine Months The Prepare to Return to Brunei

120. They Sail and Land at Brunei; They Pay Respects to the Sultan, Bring News and Settle In

Part XVI. The Adventures of Sultan ‘Aripah

121. Sultan ‘Aripah of Malaka is at Sea; They Meet the Bilaran Sea Monster and Other Beasts;
   The Sultan’s Crown and Kris Fall into the Sea; Si-Tuah Submerges in a Cambul and Meets the
   Red-Crowned White Crocodile; He Snatches the Kris and Crocodile Chases Him

122. After Surfacing They Sail Back to Malaka; They Pay Homage to the Sultan’s Parents;
   The Crown Guarded by the White Crocodile at Barantay Straits is the Talisman of Kings;
   A New One is Made from a Model

123. All Pay Respects to the Sultan of Brunei; Sultan Jalilul-‘Alam Goes to Malaka and Juhur to Pay Homage;
   That’s The Way It Is With the Sultan Ruling
APPENDIX V—PART II, Brunei Conquests, EPISODE 44, Returning to Brunei, Simawn Stops Off in Sabah to Collect Plunder From Defeated Territories, in 4 Versions of the *Sya’ir Awang Simawn*

(A short Episode was chosen, to illustrate the use of place names in the text, in a number of versions. Notes are at the end of Appendix V.0)

**Version C**

Collation 1116 = C821

Simawn mulih, dangan rampasannya,  
Suluk Marudu, disinggahinya;  
Datu manghantarakan, sakaliannya,  
{sakalian} anak, dan buahnya.

Collation 1117 = C822

Tampasuk Tawaran, pahi laylah,  
habis Sulaman, tiada mambantah;  
Buatan Manggatal, mambari sudah,  
handak kamari, mambari parsambah.

Collation 1118 = C824

Sakalian nagri, disinggahinya,  
sakali tiada, lagi tinggalnya;  
barang malawan, habis dibuhunya,  
barang panalut, dirampasinya.

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**Version D**

Collation 1116 = D649

Simawn mulih, dangan marampasannya,  
Suluk Marudu, disinggahinya;  
Datu mangantarakan; sakaliannya,  
{sakalian} anak-buahnya.

Collation 1117 = D650

Tampasuk Tawaran, Mahitan Labah,  
habis Sulaman, tiada mambantah;  
Putatan Manggatal, mambari sudah,  
handak kamari, mambari parsambah.

Collation 1118 = D651

Sakalian nagri, disinggahinya,  
sakali tiada, lagi tinggalnya;  
barang malawan, habis dibuhunya,  
barang panakut, dirampasinya.
Version E

Collation 1116 = E451
Simawn mulih, dangan rampasannya,
Sugud Marudud, disinggahinya;
Datu manghantarkan, sakaliannya,
sarta sagala, anak-buahnya.

Simawn traveled home with his/the booty,
Sugut [and] Marudu were stopped of at by him;
[The] Datu sent along to him everything,
with everything, the dependants.

Collation 1117 = E452
Tampasuk Tawaran, Pahitan layah-layah,
Habay Sulaman, tiada mambantah;
Manggatal Puntian, mambari sudah,
hadap kamari, mambari parsambah.

Tampasuk, Tawaran, [and] Pahitan swaying,
Abai [and] Sulaman, there was no one opposing;
Manggatal [and] Puntian already delivered [i.e., the booty],
to here paying obeisance, bringing prestations.

Collation 1118 = E453
Sakalian nagri, disinggahinya,
sakali tiada, lagi tinggalnya;
barang malawan, habis dibunuhnya,
barang panakut, dirampasinya.

All the countries were stopped off at by him,
there was not even one, still left behind;
whoever opposed were completely killed by him,
whoever [the] fraidy-cat, was plundered by him.

Version F

Collation 1116 = F451
Simawn mulih, dangan rampasannya,
Sugud Marudud, disinggahinya;
Datu manghantarkan, sakaliannya,
sarta juga, anak-buahnya.

Simawn traveled home with his/the booty,
Sugut [and] Marudu were stopped off at by him;
[The] Datu sent along to him everything,
with also, the dependants.

Collation 1117 = F452
Tampasuk turun, dikakas sudah,
Habay Sulayman, tiada mambantah;
Putatan Manggatal, mengakun kalah,
harap kamari, mambari parsambah.

Tampasuk
Abai and Sulaman, there was no one opposing;
Putatan [and] Manggatal acknowledged [they] lost,
to here hoping, bringing prestations.

Collation 1118 = F453
Sekalian nagri, disinggahinya,
sakali tiada, lagi tinggalnya;
barang malawan, habis dibunuhnya,
barang panakut, dirampasinya.

All the countries were stopped off at by him,
there was not even one, still left behind;
whoever opposed were completely killed,
whoever the fraidy-cat, was plundered by him.

Notes: (Geographical identifications are verified in Harrisson 1966; Rutter 1922, [1929] 1983; Sabah 1964.)

Habay
Abai is a short river debouching into the South China Sea opposite Usukan Island on the northwest coast of Sabah.

Mangatal
Mangatal is a settlement a few miles northeast of Kota Kinabalu in Sabah.

Marudu
Marudu is the bay in Sabah debouching northward towards the island of Balambangan.

Putatan
Putatan is a settlement on a river of the same name located on the northwest coast of Sabah.

Sugud/t
Sugut is a river in northeastern Sabah debouching into the Sulu Sea just north of Labuk Bay.

Sulaman
Sulaman is a “Lake” (i.e., a bay nearly enclosed by land) on the northwest coast of Sabah about 1/3 the distance south between Kota Belud and Kota Kinabalu.

Suluk
Suluk is the Brunei Malay name for the Tau Sug and the

Tampasuk
Tampasuk is the name of the lower reaches of the Kadamaian River debouching into the South China Sea just to the north of Kota Belud in northwestern Sabah.

Tawaran
Tuaran is a settlement on a river of the same name located on the northwest coast of Sabah.
REFERENCES


Yura Halim and Jamil Umar. ([1958]). Sejarah Berunai. [Kuala Belait: The Brunei Press].
The preceding document was presented at the Tenth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics (10-ICAL). To properly reference this work, please use the following format:


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