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Persian Religious and Cultural Influences in Siam/Thailand and Maritime Southeast Asia in Historical Perspective: A Plea for a Concerted Interdisciplinary Approach

Preliminary Remarks

When the present contributor (originally an Iranologist) suggested some years ago to some colleagues that they consider more thoroughly the cultural interrelations between Southeast Asia and the Iranian world¹ he received almost no response. Those contacts were considered insignificant and marginal, compared for instance with those between the Malay-Indonesian archipelago and the Arabian Peninsula. In the view of the writer a similar situation exists with regard to scholars concerned with Southeast Asian studies, since they too lack in most of the cases the knowledge of the languages which provide access to Muslim historiography and scholarship, i.e. Persian and Arabic (and to a limited degree Ottoman-Turkish).

The following is rather intended to stimulate more *comprehensive and interdisciplinary research* which goes beyond the reputedly narrow limitations of Southeast Asian or Iranian Studies, respectively. It is intended to bring both 'groups' together for the sake of reconstructing the nature and amount of Persian religious and cultural influences in Southeast Asia. Particularly inspiring and beneficial for this purpose seem to be the approaches followed by Anthony

Reid with regard to Southeast Asia in the course of the 15th to 17th centuries² and Fernand Braudel with regard to the Mediterranean basin during the 16th century, respectively.³ Both focus on the integrative role played by the respective regions, despite existing elemental cultural and other diversities. Although the present paper only indicates future directions of research, some significant Persian cultural and/or religious influences shall be highlighted. Attention shall also be directed to a recent research project initiated by the writer.

Stimulating Interdisciplinary Approaches

In this context, it should be clear that a concerted effort is needed by scholars from various disciplines. The writer was encouraged in this regard at a conference on Southeast Asian Studies.⁴ During this conference he conceived an international and interdisciplinary research project "Persian Cultural Influences in Thailand and the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago". It aims to present—in a single volume—recent research on the interrelations between Southeast Asia and the Iranian world. This can be carried out by international scholars in various disciplines

and relevant fields of learning such as Islamic studies, Asian studies, Iranology, literature, history, and economics. The design of the research project is to promote *scholarly* work and go beyond the narrow boundaries of religious or ethnic/nationalist perspectives or sectarian interpretations of history.

The *geographical area* under investigation shall for the present be limited to the territories of Iran, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. Coastal areas of other states on the Indian Ocean rim such as Pakistan, India, Yemen and Myanmar, might be considered too, depending on participation in the project by scholars studying them. The *historical period* to be studied ranges from the 7th century CE (signifying the beginning of the Islamization of West Asia in general and the Iranian lands in particular) up to the present. A *preliminary research outline* is as follows:

- I. The Coming of Islam to Southeast Asia
- II. Traces of Persian Influence in the Literature and Languages of Southeast Asia
- III. Religious Life
- IV. Islamic Thought and Mysticism
- V. Political and Diplomatic Relations between Iran and the Southeast Asian Region
- VI. Economic and Trade Relations between Iran and Southeast Asia
- VII. Persian Cultural Influences in Southeast Asia through India
- VIII. Perspectives for Future Research

Suggestions on the outline by interested scholars are highly appreciated.⁵ Following is a discussion of significant cultural and other influences.

Selected Aspects of Religio-Cultural Encounters Between Southeast Asia and the Iranian World

In modern historiographical studies (whether carried out by Arab or 'Western' authors), early Muslim history had been mostly dealt with under epithets such as "*Arabic* culture", "*Arabic* civilization" or "*Arabic* seafaring in the Indian Ocean". The expression *Arabic*—rather than *Muslim* or *Iranian/Persian*, which further

distinguishes the religious or ethnic background of certain early historiographers, travellers and merchants etc., had been seen as the major characteristic since those three groups used, at least up to the 10th or 11th centuries CE, predominantly the Arabic language. This functioned as the carrier of the new Muslim civilization, regardless of their particular ethnic background.⁶

With the political fragmentation of the Middle East following that period, and in particular in the aftermath of the Turkic and Mongol onslaughts of the 10th to 13th centuries, the (New) Persian language increasingly replaced Arabic in Iran proper, Anatolia, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. New Persian served as the promoter of Muslim civilization and even as a *lingua franca*. The use of Arabic was no longer understood by the common people, and came only to be used in liturgy and theological studies. The "Islamizing" factor of Persian in what was to become Muslim India was imported. However, only disconnected studies of varying usefulness and competence have been carried out so far.

To begin with the cultural interchanges between West Asia, Iran in particular, and Maritime Southeast Asia during the *pre-Islamic Sāsānid period*, are not well understood, despite research by several scholars about three decades ago.⁷ In particular the painstaking studies by Colless⁸ on the Nestorian and Armenian Christians in Southeast Asia during Iran's Sāsānid period, before the coming of Islam, have to be emphasized.

With regard to Persian cultural influences in the *Malay-Indonesian world since its Islamization* (regardless of whatever date we might prefer, a circumstance which seems unfortunately still to depend on the "religious/ideological standpoint" of those writing on it)⁹ the amount of available studies although larger, still lacks an overall survey. The existing corpus of secondary sources relevant to our subject seems to focus on actual or alleged 'Persian elements' in Malay language, literature and culture.¹⁰ Another feature which does not necessarily facilitate progress with respect to our topic is the prevalence of sectarian and at times even ethnic prejudice by some Malay authors: things "Persian" are sometimes

simplicistically and inaccurately seen as entirely “Shī‘ite” (thus not acceptable to a staunchly Sunni Malay), an erroneous conviction which reveals ignorance of the fact that Persian influences are detectible in the region much earlier than the time of the transformation of Iran into a kind of Twelver¹¹ Shī‘ite state which happened only under the rule of the Ṣafavid Shāh Ismā‘īl I (r. 1501–24) toward the beginning of the 16th century.

More encouraging steps, however, have been taken with regard to research on Muslim mysticism (*taṣawwuf*, ‘*irfān*) in Southeast Asia. There too, however, ‘Persian influences’ have so far only been dealt with as one of many subjects. Of particular relevance for our present purpose is Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī, perhaps the most eminent Malay Muslim mystical poet, who flourished during the second half of the 16th century and who was equally fluent and eloquent in the Malay, Arabic and Persian languages.¹² Ḥamzah’s significance to our present topic lies not so much in his position within Malay literature, but rather in the manner he referred to his place of “origin”—*Shahr-i Naw*. This could be his birthplace or a location where he went through a kind of intellectual and/or spiritual transformation: In one of his Malay poems Ḥamzah says:

Hamzah Shahr-i Nawī terlalu hapus,
Seperti kayu sekalian hangus;
Aṣalnya Laut tiada berharus,
Menjadi kāpūr didalam Barus.
(Ḥamzah of Shahr-i Naw is truly effaced,
Like wood, all burnt to cinders;
His origin is the Ocean without currents,
he became camphor in Barus [in Sumatra]).¹³

In another work, Ḥamzah applies a philosophical-mystical metaphor, “existence” (*wujūd*), for Ayutthaya:

... Mendapat wujūd ditanah Shahr Nawī,
(... He acquired his existence in the land of
Shahr Nawī)¹⁴.

It should be noted that the Persian expression *Shahr-i Naw* (i.e. literally ‘New City’) since the 14th century (thus for a long time before the “Shī‘ite transformation” of Iran under the

Ṣafavids) throughout Muslim geographical literature (Persian as well as Arabic) in fact referred to the new Siamese capital (since 1350) of Ayutthaya.¹⁵ Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, who has so far most comprehensively studied the works of Ḥamzah Faṣṣūrī, has brought forward convincing arguments in favour of Shahr-i Naw/Ayutthaya as Ḥamzah’s birthplace.¹⁶ The two references of Shahr-i Naw/Ayutthaya being Ḥamzah’s birthplace and this poet’s fluency in Persian shall serve here as a connecting link to the role played by the Ayutthaya kingdom as a haven for Persian culture. This circumstance reflects the traditional hospitality and tolerance of the Siamese rulers and their subjects towards foreign visitors and settlers in their country.

In the view of Anthony Reid,¹⁷ and indeed in accordance with many Muslims of Ayutthaya regarding the prevailing socio-religious climate, it would not be too far-fetched to assume that Ḥamzah in fact ‘converted’ in the Siamese capital to Twelver Shī‘ite Islam, a notion which is substantiated by the presence there of a large community of Muslims of that persuasion. Ḥamzah’s frequent references to utterances of the first Shī‘ite Imām ‘Alī in his works further indicate this.¹⁸ Furthermore, only at Shahr-i Naw/Ayutthaya could Ḥamzah have acquired his thorough knowledge of the Persian language and Persian mystical thought. In the words of Reid “[t]he greatest of the Muslim mystical poets of the Malay world, Hamzah Fansuri, appears to have learned his mysticism among the (mainly Shī‘ite) Muslims of the Siamese capital”.¹⁹

Persians and Persian Culture in *Shahr-i Naw*/Ayutthaya: Contours on and Perspectives of Future Research

Important for our topic then is the role played by the community of Shī‘ite Muslim Persian merchants in the Siamese kingdom during the reign of King Narai the Great (r. 1657–88). This gives further evidence to the traditional religious tolerance of the kings of Siam. An important document in this regard is *The Ship of Sulaymān* (*Safīnah-yi Sulaymānī*), a Persian travel-account authored by Muḥammad Rabī‘ b. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, the secretary of an embassy sent by Shāh Sulaymān I (r. 1666–94), the ruler of

Şafavid Iran, in the second half of the 1680s to the court of King Narai in response to an earlier Siamese embassy to Iran.²⁰ Already twenty years ago the Iranologist Jean Aubin described the role of Persians in the Ayutthaya-kingdom.²¹ Among scholars concerned with Southeast Asian studies it was predominantly Professor David K. Wyatt who directed the attention of a wider circle than those concerned with Iranian studies to the importance of *The Ship of Sulayman*. In the view of the writer it is therefore permissible to refer to Wyatt's elaborations here in some detail in view of the deplorable circumstance that the presence of Persians in Siam has been neglected by eminent scholars, such as Professor Hall,²² and other authors of standard histories of Southeast Asia in English. Professor Wyatt states:

The importance of *The Ship of Sulayman* to those interested in Thai history is considerable. Its evidence bears on three main themes: the foreign policy of King Narai, the Persian community in Siam, and the rise and fortunes of the Bunnag family in the seventeenth century.

The connection with Persia is treated only in passing in the conventional accounts of King Narai's reign, and much of the significance often is lost in general references to the "the Moors". *The Ship of Sulayman* expands upon, and renders more concrete, vague references in such accounts as that of Père de Bèze, which mentions Phaulkon's supervision of a mission at some unspecified date, which on the evidence of the Persian account must have taken place in 1682. Even cursory examination of the history of the Persian mission of 1685–87 suggests that it might be useful to consider Narai's foreign policy within an international framework much broader than the Thai-French-Dutch-English pattern within which it usually is viewed.²³

He continues:

[Ibn] Muhammad Ibrahim's frequent references to the Persian community in old Siam are a real eye-opener in many ways. He mentions the presence of Persians wherever he went in Siam, beginning with high public officials in the Tenasserim province, Phetburi, and Suphanburi, and including numerous merchants and officials

including the highest officials in the kingdom. [...] The significance of [Ibn] Muhammad Ibrahim's numerous references to the Iranian community in Siam is that they enable one to begin to see better, in ways not previously possible, some of the details of Ayudhya's social and economic structure, particularly as that structure incorporated immigrant communities. His account is the first we have had from within any Muslim community of Ayudhya, and is of assistance not least in enabling us to see how Dutch and English traders of the time were treated like other Asian traders.

Finally, material contained in *The Ship of Sulaiman* provides important information that goes a long way towards solving the mystery of the origins and early history of the Bunnag family, a noble family powerful in the affairs of the kingdom of Siam for more than three centuries.²⁴

Indeed remarkable is the conclusion arrived at by Professor Wyatt with regard to the overall significance of the Persian document in question within the framework of Thai history:

The Ship of Sulaiman deserves to be included among the most important primary sources for the history of Siam in the reign of King Narai. It is particularly welcome because it should serve to open up new avenues of inquiry that have previously been neglected.²⁵

In the view of the writer nothing can be added to the above statement. *The Ship of Sulaiman* is important as a document which exemplifies the independent and self-confident foreign-policy of King Narai vis-à-vis the interference by major European naval powers, a foreign-policy which perhaps can only be compared with a similar course of action pursued in the face of similar threats by King Chulalongkorn the Great (r. 1868–1910) of the present Chakri dynasty.

A touching example from *The Ship of Sulaiman* is the prayer of its (Shī'ite Muslim) author for the well-being of the Siamese king, which could serve as an illustration of the unshakable loyalty of resident predominantly Persian Shī'ite Muslims to their new homeland and their (non-Muslim, Buddhist) monarch. In the (for the Şafavid period characteristic) flowery

language of the secretary, Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm:

Good rulers, therefore, take a further step on the path toward world harmony. With ambassadors and delegations as their key they unlock the doors of world-wide friendship. Such was the intent of the Siamese king, possessor of the white elephant and the throne of solid gold. For he loves all Muslims and was overawed seeing that our king [i.e. the Ṣafavid Shāh Sulaymān], the brilliant luminary of world rule had risen into the Heavens of eternal sovereignty, our king who is the noble planet of good fortune, adornment of the throne of omnipotence and bearer of Chosroes' crown and the cap of Kayān. Thereupon the Siamese monarch hastened to open the accounts of friendship and affection, 'May Allah bless him and guide him into the fold of Islam'.²⁶

It appears that the relations between Ayutthaya's Shī'ite Muslim and Buddhist communities was marked by mutual respect and tolerance. This is further substantiated by the fact that since the first half of the 17th century various dignitaries in the resident Persian community, for instance Shaykh Aḥmad-i Qummī (1543–1631), i.e. from the famous Shī'ite shrine-city of Qumm in Central Iran, who arrived in 1602 at the Siamese capital,²⁷ served in the highest administrative positions of the kingdom. Political influence exercised by personalities originating from families of Persian descent, such as the Bunnags, continued even into the Bangkok period.²⁸ The contributions of the Persian community to their host-country stand out from the reserved tradition of Shī'ite Islam. As further evidence of the loyalty of the Persian community to the Siamese Crown and its subjects, despite their non-Thai ethnic background, is the strong cooperation of the Persian Shī'ites with Siam against the machinations of Phaulkon and his French allies. It seems that the rulers of Ayutthaya appreciated this attitude, since in the words of Anthony Reid,

[i]n the reign of the usurper Prasat Thong (1629–56) Shi'ite Muslims became to dominate the commercial offices of Siam. Prasat Thong's son Narai, according to a Persian writer [i.e. Ibn Muḥammad Ibrāhīm in his *The Ship of Sulaiman*],

as a boy "used to visit the Iranians regularly and he took great pleasure in their social manners and their food and drink." When Narai made his bid for the throne in 1657, the Persians aided him by using the cover of their annual Hasan-Husein [sic!] feast to approach the incumbent ruler and attack him with their firearms. Thereafter, Persian Shi'ites were among Narai's closest advisers, especially as commercial counterweights to the more dangerous European companies. Chief among them was a cultivated merchant, Aqa Muhammad Astarabadi, better known by his Siamese title, Okphra Sinnaowarat. He engineered the sending of a Thai embassy to Persia in 1668 and the splendid reception of subsequent Persian and Acehnese ambassadors to Siam, both of whom were said to be hoping that the king would embrace Islam. Astarabadi was encouraged to fill the standing army of the kingdom with Persian and Indian Shi'ite Muslims. Various governorships of key ports were placed in Muslim hands; by the late 1670s Tenasserim and Mergui were ruled by Persians, Phuket and nearby Bangkhli by Indians, and Bangkok by a Turk. In return for their services to the state, Muslims were exempted from *corvée*, which evidently stimulated conversions to Islam among the merchants of the trading ports. In 1686, after the peak of Muslim influence had passed, there were ten thousand such converts in Tenasserim alone, to judge from the yield of a special tax placed on them. At the same period in the Siamese capital was said that two thousand Shi'ites participated in their annual Hasan-Husein processions celebrating the battle of Karbyla [i.e. Karbalā'], still paid for by the king in gratitude for its role in his accession [...].²⁹

The steady increase of the Shī'ite community in Siam, in the capital in particular, might have been the result of an influx of Shī'ites, especially Persians, from the strongly Persianized Shī'ite states of the southern Indian Deccan, as a direct result of the constant threats from the staunchly Sunnite Mughal empire, which in the 1680s would annex them.³⁰ With regard to Reid's above elaborations on the conditions of the Muslim communities in 16th and 17th century Ayutthaya the following observations, made by a French visitor in the 1680s during the Shī'ite 'Āshūrā' mourning-ceremonies, are indeed remarkable.

They provide an insight into the degree of tolerance which had been exercised by the Siamese rulers and the (overwhelmingly non-Muslim) Thai people, as well as the loyalty of the resident Shī'ite Muslim community:

[. . .] the Moors [the Shī'ite Muslims resident at the Siamese capital] made great Illuminations for eight days together, in Honour of their Prophet Mahomet [i.e. Muḥammad] and his Son [sic!] ³¹, whose Funerals they celebrated. They began to solemnize the Festival the Evening before about four of the Clock at Night, by a kind of Procession, wherein they were above two thousand Souls [!]. There they carried the Figure of the Tombs of those two Impostors, with many Symbols of a pretty neat Representation, amongst others, certain great Cages covered with painted Cloth, and carried by Men that marched and continually turned in cadence to the Sound of Drums and Timbrels. The quick and regular Motion of these huge Machines which we saw at a distance, without perceiving those that carried them, occasioned an agreeable Surprise.

At the Head of this great Confluence of People, some Grooms led three or four Horses in rich Trappings, and a great many People carrying several Lanthorns at the end of long Poles, lighted all the Procession and sung in divers Quires after a very odd manner. With the same Zeal they continued this Festival for several Nights together till five of the Clock in the Morning. It is hardly to be conceived how these Porters of Machines, that uncessantly turned, could perform that Exercise for fifteen or sixteen Hours together, nor how the Singers that raised their Voices as high as was possible for them, could sing so long. The rest of the Procession looked modest enough, some marched before the Singers, who surrounded Coffins carried upon eight Mens Shoulders, and the rest were mingled in the Croud with them. There were a great many Siamese Men and Women, Young and Old there, who have embraced the Mahometan Religion [i.e. Islam]. For since the Moors have got footing in the Kingdom, they have drawn over a great many People to their Religion, which is an Argument that they are not so addicted to their Superstitions [referring to Theravada Buddhism?], but that they

can forsake them, when our Missionaries have had have had Patience and Zeal enough to instruct them in our Mysteries. It is true, that Nation is a great Lover of Shows and splendid Ceremonies, and by that means it is that the Moors, who celebrate their Festivals with a great deal of Magnificence, have perverted many of them to the Sect of Mahomet.³²

Conclusion

These features of Persian cultural and other influences on the civilizations of Southeast Asia in general and Thailand in particular are merely intended to stimulate an interest among Southeast Asian scholars for this exciting subject. There are more significant and promising facets which are worth comprehensive investigation. With regard to family history in the context of Thai history, besides the already mentioned role of the Bunnags, the fortunes of the distinguished Namazie-family of Singapore, which is to the knowledge of the writer the only Persian family of Twelver Shī'ite origin in that country, are of special interest too.³³ Furthermore, in the context of the religious history of Southeast Asia the function of the Ismā'īlī, or so-called "Sevener"³⁴ Shī'ite" community³⁵ and the propaganda activities (*da'wah*) east of India between the 10th and 11th centuries as well as their interaction with international maritime trade in the eastern Indian Ocean could open new avenues. This is particularly so regarding the not sufficiently known issue of the coming of Islam to this region.

With regard to the general topic of the promotion of Iranian studies in Southeast Asia and it should be beyond doubt that Persian language and culture have a historical footing in the region. It is to be hoped that in the future the interest in studying Persian as a major linguistic tool in the historiography of Southeast Asia will be in accordance with the rank due it as the second language of Islamic civilization. This contribution by an Iranologist has merely aimed to direct attention to the disregarded but nevertheless significant Persian cultural and religious contribution to Southeast Asia and to provide tentative directions for future research.

Abbreviations

AIUN. *Annali del Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*.

AN. *Abr Nahrain*.

BAEO. *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas*.

CHSEA. *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*.

HdO. *Handbuch der Orientalistik*.

IQ. *Islamic Quarterly*.

JIMMA. *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*.

JMBRAS. *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*.

JSBRAS. *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*.

JSS. *Journal of the Siam Society*.

StIs. *Studia Islamica*.

Notes

¹ See also Muhammad Ismail Marcinkowski, "Selected Features of a Unique Persian Manual on Islamic Administration from Late—afavid Iran: Mīrzā Raḡī'ā's *Dastūr al-Mulūk*," *Al-Shajarah. Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization* (Kuala Lumpur) 5, no. 1 (October 2000), p. 86, and idem, *Mīrzā Raḡī'ā's Dastūr al-Mulūk: A Manual of Later Ṣafavid Administration. Annotated English Translation, Commentary on the Offices and Services, and Facsimile of the Unique Persian Manuscript* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, forthcoming in 2001), p. 410.

² Especially his *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680. Volume Two: Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993).

³ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, transl. S. Reynolds, 2 vols. (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1966).

⁴ The 16th Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA) in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia (27–31 July 2000), organized by the Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning, Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

⁵ The author welcomes constructive comments on the outlined research-project (e-mail address: mimarcinkowski@yahoo.com).

⁶ See G. R. Tibbets, "Early Muslim Traders in South-East Asia," *JMBRAS* 30, pt. 1 (1957): 1–45, idem, *A Study of the Arabic Texts Containing Material on South-East Asia* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill for the Royal Asiatic Society, 1979) (Oriental Translation Fund, New Series, vol. xlv).

⁷ Refer in particular to Brian E. Colless, "Persian Merchants and Missionaries in Medieval Malaya," *JMBRAS* 42, pt. 2 (1969), pp. 10–47, and especially idem, "The Traders of the Pearl. The Mercantile and Missionary Activities of Persian and Armenian Christians in South East-Asia," *AN* 9 (1969–70), pp. 17–38; 10 (1970–71), pp. 102–21; 11 (1970), pp. 1–21; 13 (1972–73), pp. 113–35; 14 (1973–74), pp. 1–16; 15 (1974–75), pp. 6–17; 18 (1978–79), pp. 1–18. See also G. R. Tibbets, "Pre-Islamic Arabia and South-East Asia," *JMBRAS* 29, pt. 3 (1955), pp. 182–208.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ For conflicting, at times polemical, views see Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1969), and G. W. J. Drewes, "New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia?," and Mohd. Taib Osman, "Islamization of the Malays: A Transformation of Culture," in: *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia*, ed. Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, and Yasmin Hussain (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990 pp. 7–19, and pp. 44–47 respectively; A.H. Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Problems of Perspective", in: *Southeast Asian History and Historiography: Essays Presented to D.G.E. Hall*, ed. C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1976), pp. 107–22.

¹⁰ For instance, Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, "New Light on the Life of Ḥamzah Faḡṣūrī", *JMBRAS* 40, pt. 1 (July 1967), pp. 42–51; idem, *The Mysticism of Ḥamzah Faḡṣūrī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970); idem, *Concluding Postscript to the Origin of the Malay Sha'ir* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1971); Baroroh Baried, "Shi'a Elements in Malay Literature", in: *Profiles of Malay Culture. Historiography, Religion and Politics*, ed. Sartono Kartodirdjo (Jakarta: Ministry of Education and Culture, Directorate General of Culture, 1976), pp. 59–65; L.F. Brakel, "The Birth Place of Hamza Pansuri," *JMBRAS* 42, pt. 2 (1969), pp. 206–12; idem, "Persian Influence on Malay Literature," *AN* 9 (1969–1970), pp. 1–16; idem (ed.), *The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah. A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1975); idem (transl.), *The Story of Muhammad Hanafiyyah. A Medieval Muslim-Malay Romance* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1977); Sir Richard Winstedt, "Taju's-salatin," *JSBRAS* 81 (1920), pp. 37–38; idem, *A History of Classical Malay Literature*, revised, edited and introduced by Yusof A. Talib (Kuala Lumpur: MBRAS 1996, 2d impression, MBRAS-Reprint No.12), passim;

Muhammad Abdul Jabbar Beg, *Persian and Turkish Loan-Words in Malay* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1982).

Of more interest and competence, since it comes from the pen of a notable Iranologist, are the studies by Alessandro Bausani: see his "Note sulla struttura della *hikayat* classica malese", *AIUON*, n.s. 12 (1962), pp. 153–92 [English transl.: *Notes on the Structure of the Classical Malay Hikayat*, transl. Lode Brakel, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Working Paper no. 16 {not accessible to me}]; idem, "Note sui vocaboli persiani in malese-indonesiano," *AIUON*, n.s. 14, no. 1 (1964), pp. 1–32; idem, "Note su una antologia inedita di versi mistici persiani con versione interlineare malese," *AIUON*, n.s. 18 (1968), pp. 39–66; idem, "Un manoscritto persiano-malese di grammatica araba del xvi secolo," *AIUON*, n.s. 19 (1969), pp. 69–98; idem, "Is Classical Malay a 'Muslim Language'," *BAEO* 11 (1975), pp. 111–21.

¹¹ Twelver-Orthodox followers of 12 imams descended from the Prophet Muhammad's family.

¹² On him see Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), p. 5; idem, "New Light on the Life of Hamzah Fansūrī," *JMBRAS* 40, pt. 1 (July 1967), pp. 42–51; idem, *Concluding Postscript to the Origin of the Malay Sha'ir* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1971); G. W. J. Drewes and Lode Brakel (eds.), *The Poems of Hamzah Fansuri* (Dordrecht: Foris for Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde, 1986).

¹³ Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, p. 5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁵ Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680. Volume Two: Expansion and Crisis*, p. 190.

¹⁶ Refer to Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, "Note on the Opening of Relations Between China and Malacca, 1403–05," *JMBRAS* 38, pt. 1 (1965), pp. 260–64; idem, "New Light on the Life of Hamzah Fansūrī," *JMBRAS* 40, pt. 1 (July 1967), pp. 42–51; idem, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, chapter 1 passim. For a differing view, see L.F. Brakel, "The Birth Place of Hamza Fansuri," *JMBRAS* 42, pt. 2 (1969), pp. 206–12.

¹⁷ Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680. Volume Two: Expansion and Crisis*, p. 190.

¹⁸ For textual examples refer to Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī*, p. 365.

¹⁹ Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680. Volume Two: Expansion and Crisis*, p. 190. See also Drewes and Brakel (eds.), *The Poems of Hamzah Fansuri*, pp. 4–7.

²⁰ English translation: [Muhammad Rabī'] b.

Muhammad Ibrāhīm, *The Ship of Sulayman*, transl. John O'Kane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

²¹ Jean Aubin, "Les Persans au Siam sous le regne de Narai (1656–1688)," *Mare Luso-Indicum* 4 (1980), pp. 95–126.

²² D.G.E. Hall, *A History of Southeast Asia* (Houndsmills and London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1994, 4th edition), pp. 380–97. Exceptions are to be found in Barbara Watson Andaya, "Political Development between the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in: *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, vol. 1, pt. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, paperback edition), p. 79, and more importantly, Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680. Volume Two: Expansion and Crisis*, p. 190.

²³ David K. Wyatt, "A Persian Mission to Siam in the Reign of King Narai", p. 92. On Père de Bèze see E. W. Hutchinson (trans.), *1688 Revolution in Siam. The Memoir of Father de Bèze* (Bangkok: White Lotus Co. Ltd./Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1990, 2nd impression); on Phaulkon refer to George E. Sioris, Phaulkon. *The Greeks First Counsellor at the Court of Siam: An Appraisal* (Bangkok: The Siam Society, 1998; for an overview of the development of Franco-Siamese relations during the 17th century see Michael Smithies, *A Resounding Failure. Martin and the French in Siam 1672–1693* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press, 1998).

²⁴ David K. Wyatt, "A Persian Mission to Siam in the Reign of King Narai", pp. 92–93.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

²⁶ [Muhammad Rabī'] b. Mušammad Ibrāhīm, *The Ship of Sulayman*, transl. John O'Kane, p. 19.

²⁷ David K. Wyatt, "Family Politics in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Siam," in: idem, *Studies in Thai History. Collected Articles* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press, 1999, 2nd reprint), p. 96.

²⁸ Idem, "Family Politics in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Siam," pp. 96–105, and idem, "Family Politics in Nineteenth-Century Thailand," in: idem, *Studies in Thai History. Collected Articles* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press, 1999, 2nd reprint), pp. 106–30. See also Omar Farouk, "The Muslims of Thailand: A Survey," in: Andrew D. W. Forbes (ed.), *The Muslims of Thailand, 2 vols*, vol. 1 "Historical and Cultural Studies" (Gaya, Bihar/India: Centre for South East Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 7 and 27, notes 75 and 76, and Kukrit Pramoj, *Khwāmpenmā khōng Itsalām nai prathēt Thai [The Origin of Islam in Thailand]* (Bangkok: Mittr Siam Press, B.E. 2514) [not accessible to the author].

²⁹ Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680. Volume Two: Expansion and Crisis*, pp. 190–91.

³⁰ On the political conditions in southern India refer to H.K. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Ltd., 1974), Sayyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A Socio-Intellectual History of the Isnā'Asharī Shī'īs in India*, 2 vols. (Canberra: Ma'rifat Publishing House, 1986), vol. 1, pp. 247–341, John Norman Hollister, *The Shi'a of India* (New Delhi: Oriental Reprint, 1979), pp. 101–25. Refer also to a so far neglected although excellent bibliographical study which contains numerous references to historiographical material which might shed further light on the condition of the Persian communities of southern India prior to their emigration to Siam: T.N. Devare, *A Short History of Persian Literature at the Bahmani, the Adilshahi and the Qutbshahi Courts (Deccan)* (Poona: Nowrosjee Wadia, 1961).

³¹ The Prophet Muḥammad had no surviving son; perhaps referring to his cousin and son-in-law 'Alī, the First Shī'ite Imām, most probably, however, to 'Alī's sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.

³² Guy Tachard, *A Relation of the Voyage to Siam*,

Performed by six Jesuits, sent by the French King, to the Indies and China, in the Year, 1685 (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 1999, *Itineraria Asiatica*. Thailand, vol. II, first published in 1688, 3rd reprint), pp. 214–15.

³³ See Low Yit Leng. "Taking Root. The Namazie Family," in: *Singapore Tatler*, vol. 18, no. 206 (November 1999): 134–37. Dr. Marcinkowski would like to express his gratitude to the members of the Namazie-Family (in particular to Madam Farideh and Madam Manijeh Namazie) for their hospitality and assistance during his visits to them in Singapore in July 2000.

³⁴ Sevener- another group which disagrees with the Twelver because (according to them) Ismil, the 7th imam, was a drunk and was thus disowned by the Twelver. Sevener claims the choice for the legitimate imam was God's choice.

³⁵ For the most comprehensive study on the Ismā'īlīs refer to Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs. Their History and Doctrines* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, first paperback edition).