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Depati Amir and Chinese People's Resistance against Dutch Colonialism in Bangka, 1848–1851: An Archival Study

ABSTRACT: *Since many years ago, Bangka's tin had been recognized as one of prior commodities having been known by people outside Nusantara (Indonesian archipelago). Due to its high economic value, this natural resource had invited the other huge power from outside this island, intending to have control over it. In the 19th century, the map of political power in this island changed, along with the strengthening of colonial influence. Their political authority was connected to the maintaining of tin trenches. People were asked to obey the colonial provisions, as undergone by Chinese mining laborers. The difficulty suffered by the people and Bangka Chinese laborers had caused Depati Amir to struggle to resist against the imbalance. The battle was then continued by Depati Amir who tried to fight the colonial power in Bangka. One of the sources of Dutch power was their ability in developing administrative communication. Correspondences and report arrangement became the references to make the next fighting scheme. Later these reports were then used to be the primary references to reveal the activities of Depati Amir, Chinese laborers, and Dutch government in Bangka. This paper is based on the findings of a research some time ago, discussing about the struggle of Depati Amir and Chinese people against Dutch colonial government in the mid of 19th century. The findings showed that "the archive tells the story", that is by showing the contents of archives as a material to understand the story of Depati Amir and his cooperation with Chinese people in overthrowing the wall of Dutch colonialism.*

KEY WORDS: *Depati Amir; Chinese People; Dutch Colonialism; Resistance; Archive Tells the Story.*

INTRODUCTION

The island of Bangka has famous natural wealth that is tin. Its existence is like blessing for the people of this island (Suryadi, 2016). Since many years ago, Bangka's tin had been recognized as one of prior commodities having been known by people outside of *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago). Due to its high economic value, this natural resource

had invited the other huge power from outside this island, intending to have control over it.

Since 18th century, Palembang had become the only one power, admitted by the Bangka's people. This kingdom had an authority to maintain the tin mining. In the 19th century, the map of political power in this island changed, along with the strengthening of

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Dutch colonial influence (Ricklefs, 2008). Their political authority was connected to the maintaining of tin trenches.

People were asked to obey the Dutch colonial provisions, as undergone by Chinese mining laborers. The difficulty suffered by the people and Bangka Chinese laborers had caused Depati Amir to struggle to resist against the imbalance. The battle was then continued by Depati Amir, who tried to fight the Dutch colonial power in Bangka.

One of the sources of Dutch power was their ability in developing administrative communication. Correspondences and report arrangement became the references to make the next fighting scheme. In fact, the high intensity of those correspondences had led to the regularity of orders, advice, commands from the Dutch elite; and, therefore, they neatly arranged what steps should be done and should not be done. Later, these reports were then used to be the primary references to reveal the activities of Depati Amir, Chinese laborers, and Dutch government in Bangka.

This paper is based on the findings of a research some time ago, discussing about the struggle of Depati Amir and Chinese people against Dutch colonial government in the mid of 19th century. The research is supported by PUSLITPEN (*Pusat Penelitian dan Penerbitan* or the Center of Research and Publication) of UIN (*Universitas Islam Negeri* or State Islamic University) Syarif Hidayatullah in Jakarta, Indonesia, with the title of the research is "Scrambling to the Throne in Bangka Island: Depati Amir's Persona in Dutch Notes, an Archival Study". It can be said that this paper is the core of the findings of the research (Madjid, 2015).

On this occasion, I will explain about using the Dutch colonial archives as a maker of historical narrative (Foote, 1990; and Stoler, 2002). It is presented by showing "the archive tells the story" (Foucault, 1972; and Sjamsuddin, 2007), that is by showing the contents of archives as a material to understand the story of Depati Amir and his cooperation with Chinese people in overthrowing the wall of Dutch colonialism.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

About Depati Amir. Before going further, some readers will surely ask, who is Depati Amir? Why is his story so urgent to be discussed? And when seeing the title of this article, what is the relation between Depati Amir and Chinese people? These three questions will probably slide from the natural curiosity of the readers. This is reasonable, remembering that the name of Depati Amir has not been taken into account in the group of Indonesian national hero. His name is lowly heard, or even not at all.

Difficulties appear when noticing the provisions of "using the sources published within the last 10 (ten) years", which is required by the manager of this journal. As far as the author's search, the articles that explore the history of Bangka still very rarely exist. Just recently, some local writers have already started, such as Akhmad Elvian (2012), and have begun using colonial archives as a source (Elvian, 2012). This is because the studies of the history of Bangka are still locked in the locality, or in the discussion of Local History, such as the history of Rat Island (Bengkulu), Mentawai Island (West Sumatra), and Nias Island (North Sumatra).

When mentioning the story of Depati Amir, it is not complete if not explaining who his parents are. Depati Amir is the son of Depati Bahrin, a Bangka figure from previous generation who noticed a war to the Dutch. Depati Bahrin married Dari Dakim and blessed with many children, namely Amir, Hamzah (Cing), Sajidah (Dijah), Johara, Abdul Monas, Hasnah, and Penuh. Depati Barin then married for a second time with Atina Ali, who gave him three children, namely Depati Tepak, Depati Tempel, and Caya Jidin (Elvian, 2012:58).

Depati Bahrin's birth year ranged from 1770-1775. Depati Bahrin is the son of Depati Karim or Depati Anggur. Depati Karim is the son of Depati Tamilogo. Written and oral sources that describe the life history of Depati Tamilogo have not been found. When the Dutch was involved in the battle with Lingga kingdom, Depati Karim died and buried in Jeruk. Depati Bahrin, who was still a child

at the time, was invited by the Commander Raman to Lingga. There, he was looked after and raised as his own son. When he got older, he came to the Sultan of Palembang and soon he was appointed as Depati in Jeruk (Rahman Jr., 2012:1).

Depati Bahrin is a figure of leader, who was taken into account by the Dutch colonial government. Dr. Franz Epp, a German medical expert, met him during his duty in Bangka. He admired the position and charisma of Depati Bahrin, until he expressed his admiration. In his writing, Dr. Franz Epp could not hide his respect, on his courage to cut the head of A.P. Smissaert, the Dutch Resident in Bangka, on 14 December 1819, and considered it as a virility properly praised (Alfian *et al.* eds., 1984:49-50). Depati Bahrin appeared to be a knight, whose aura had defeated the Dutch military officials. However, Franz Epp (1852) was not interested to compliment the courage of Depati Amir as the successor of the struggle of Depati Barin, and simply referred to it as “a dangerous man” (Epp, 1852:74-75; and Erman, 2017:3).

The Dutch tried hard to limit any form of influence of Bahrin. They did various ways, including by reminding each other to the allies, to disappear Depati Bahrin's influence that had been grounded in some regions in Bangka. The invitation can be known from a correspondence of Bangka Resident, De Blij, as follows:¹

Afschrift Muntok, den 19 Januarij 1833, N:45, aan den Administrateur van Pangkalpinang.

Naar aanleiding van het voorkomen, de en Uw politie rapport over de maand December, heb ik het woolig geacht Uwegas opmerkraam te maken, dat Baharin geen zegt heeftom kampongs aan te leggen op lieden te doen verhuizen naar de Kampongs Lebok of Katayoe zoo als ook zyn zoon Amir, seolert hy zyne aanstelling heeft terug gezonden en zijn ontslag aangenomen is, geen gezag of bestuur meer mag intoefenen als een gevolg van dien moeten zij zich in een der bestaande Kampongs neder zetten en mel meer na bij, doch niet verder van Pangkalpinang, dan zij thans wonen; terwijl Kampong Lebok en Katayu meer van de groote weg ten

Pangkalpinang verweperd zyn dan Loekoe en Doerean Bras.

De Resident van Banka,
De Blij

Which means:

A letter from Bangka Resident to the Administrator in Pangkalpinang, Muntok, January 19, 1833, No.45/copy.

With the emergence of the events and the existence of police reports throughout December 1832, it hereby needs your attention carefully, the honorable, that Bahrin does not have power to unite the village (*Kampung*). Whether he lives in *Kampung* Lebok or Ketayu as done by his son, Amir, since he has been returned from his appointment and received termination. It is not allowed (for Bahrin) to use something concerning with power and government. He must stay in an existing village, which is closer, but not far from Pangkalpinang, which he now occupies. *Kampung* Lebok and Ketayu are located on a major street near Pangkalpinang towards Loekoe and Durian Bras.
Bangka Resident,
De Blij

Depati Bahrin's existence, after resigning from the war against the Dutch, was still mysterious. His figure as if swept by the wind of time, especially when Depati Amir began to appear and the Dutch increasingly recognized him as the next dangerous rebel. It also happened when tracing the existence of his tomb. There is a difference of opinion among the family. According to A.A. Bakar (1969), and some people believing it, Depati Bahrin's tomb is located in Kampung Mandara (Menareh), precisely under the big durian tree. By the local people, the tomb is called the tomb of Akek Pok. Akek Pok himself was one of the Seven Commanders. Among others were Akek Sak, Akek Pok, Akek Kuah, Akek Mis, Akek Adung, Akek Ning, dan Akek Ijali (Bakar, 1969:26).

The other party thinks that his tomb is located in the middle area of oil palm plantations, precisely in Lubuk Bunter. When researcher visited Menareh, the durian tree did not exist, making it difficult to search his tomb according to the A.A. Bakar (1969). However, in my opinion, the location of the tomb is certainly not far from the establishment of a village. If Menareh was once believed to be a village, then perhaps his

¹See "A Letter from Bangka Resident to Pangkalpinang Administrator, in Muntok, Dated January 19, 1833, No.45/Copy; Bt. September 17, 1850/1 Geh". *An Archice* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

tomb still exists in one corner of the former township.

According to one of the descendants of Depati Bahrin, Haji Manan, the real tomb of Depati Bahrin is located in Lubuk Bunter. Some time ago, he visited Kupang. There, he saw the shape of Depati Amir's tomb, which uses coral reefs as its boundary. The tomb of Depati Bahrin in Lubuk Bunter also uses coral reefs. Therefore, this similarity makes him believe that the tomb in Lubuk Bunter is the real tomb of Depati Bahrin. The shape of Depati Bahrin's tomb in Lubuk Bunter is unlike the common tomb. The tombstones are five pieces, complicating the identification of the location of his remains. According to Haji Manan, the many tombstones were purposely built to complicate the Dutch colonial forces, who searched for the tomb of Depati Bahrin (interview with Haji Manan, 22/10/2015).

The charisma of Depati Bahrin frightened the Dutch. The Dutch's motivation is captured Bangka, which is regarded as value island (with tin and pepper) and the core of inter-insular sea routes (Ricklefs, 2008:161). Depati Bahrin had regarded as obstacle for their desire. Depati Bahrin was supported by his followers and sympathizers. There is no fear inside Depati Bahrin to face his colonial troops. In fact, his courage was able to capture the attention of his fellow brothers of leaders, to jointly combat the Dutch. It was seen from the intention of Depati Mindien, who planned to resign from his position as Depati, and then the Dutch thought that this action was the beginning of his wish to unite with the forces of Depati Amir. His story is told in a letter, as follows:²

Afschrift N.4, Pangkalpinang den 13 Januarij 1833, N.6. Aan den Resident van Banka.

Aan het slot van het politie rapport over de maand October, had ik de Eer urage mengele berigten, dat de Depattij Mindien volgens gerugten sjivedig het voetspoor van zyn schoon broeder Amir zouden volgen, aangaande siet verzoek om uit zijn betrekking als Ynl: Hoofd te worden onslagen. Deze gerugten

hebben zich thans bevetigd door dien Mindien hedenten mijnench is verschenen met het verlangen hij gaane zijn functie uitde neer leggen, voorgevende dan nu reeds zijt jaren de betrekking van Depattij te hebben waar genomen, en dat aan dezelve geene genoegzame inkomsten verbonden waren; verzoekende zijders ik aan Uwlog: zoude voorstellen om hem niet definitief uit gouvernements te ontslaan maar hem met eene andere port te begunstigen, dewelke een ruimer bestaan met verhooging van rang zoude opleveren; De Molieven waarop zijn verzoek gronden, ten oprigte het vragen van zijn ontslag mij niet aanemelijk voorkomende, vroeg ik van zich nader te verklaren, waarop hij onder eene peinzende houding ontwonden dat de bevolking van Marawang zan oudsher onder het gezag van zijn vader had gesorteerd, en hij als zoodanig door den voormalige commisaris speciaal was benoemd, dat echter eenige personen zich van zijne levelen hadden onttrokken en waarop elden waren verhuisd/ zonder mij de vooraan hiervan te kunnen opgeven:/als medelde de oudste van de nog overblijvende aan de Demang Pasirah hadden verzoch, het beuur van dit districh op te dragen aan de Mandoor Timbang, onder het voorwendsel van zijn bevelen moede te zijn, en niet langer aan de uitlekeur, op zoo als hij zich uitdrukt//printa njang trada patoot//wilde onderwerpen.

Dat bij aldien het districh Marawang even als voorheen onder zijn beheer mogh terugkomen, de redeneven volgen gewoonte hem worden toe gekend, en de bevolking tot gehoorzaamheid worden gebracht, als dan de betrekking als Depattij zal bljven waarnemen.

In hoevere dit laatste gezegde van Mindiem is aantenenen laat ik aan Uwelog rijper ondervinding over ik voor mij geloot dat tot in standhonding van de goede rust hijs als Ynl: Hoofd dient te worden ontslagen, en hem rijden niet te dulden van in de Kampong Ayer Nanka, in die omtreken zich op te houden, ter voorkoming zijn vervangen niet in het uit repenen zijnen pligten worden te leur gesteld, en hij door de bevolking met achting en onderscheiding worden behandeld, vermits het toch te veronderstellen is, dat zoo Mindien niet van Stanaplaat veranden, de nieuw benoemde zeer weinig invloed op de bevolking zal hebben, en bijvoorbeeld niet zal ophouden van zijn Dispotimus uit te vetenen, uit welk geurs rust verstorenden bewegingen moet ten gevolge hebben.

Ten einde dit alles te vermijden, en de reedzame desar volkeren niet langden door vaak genoemde Depattij en zijn schoonbroeder Amir worde onderdukt; zoo hen ik zzo vrij Uweog: voor te dragen om beiden hun langer verblijft in dit districh te ontzeggen, hun voorts eene woonplaats aan te wijzen naar zij van nabij in hun handelen handel worde gade geslagen.

²See "A Report from Pangkalpinang Administrator to Bangka Resident, in Pangkalpinang, Dated January 13, 1833, No.6 (4th copy); Bt. September 17, 1850, No.1". *An Archive* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

Ten Slotte vereene ik mij Uweog: kennis te geven, dat zodra de Demang Pasirah zal zijn geretourneerd, de verlangae gedetailleerde voordragt nopem de inlijving van Mundo Timor met Mundo Barat Uweog zal worden aangeboden.
De Administrateur van Pangkalpinang,
J. Duiters

Which means:

A report from Pangkalpinang Administrator to Bangka Resident, Pangkalpinang, 13 January 1833, No.6 (4th copy) confidential.

The core of the police reports during October 1832, with this I inform you that Depati Mindien – according to a rumor will follow the path of the son of his brother, Amir – requested to be released from his position as the ruler of the indigenous. This rumor has been confirmed by Mindien, who is now in my house. He would like to put his position pleasantly, and he reasoned that after five years of occupying a position as Depati, his income is not sufficient. Furthermore, I propose that you do not terminate him (Mindien) from governmental duty definitively, but he is reassigned to another place. This replacement is not followed by a promotion. The motif of the reason of his resignation, to me, is unacceptable. A question arises in my mind to explain about it further. Why does he act as such. Merawang people have been for a long time under the authority of his father, and they selected (their prospective rulers), and he (Mindien) was selected for it. By the past commissioners, he was also appointed. However, he has been ordered by several people to resign (which I do not know the reason to be explained).

Likewise, it also happened to the remaining predecessors. To Demang Pasirah, the ruler in the district, he was also invited to the wrong path. He was ordered by Mindien, to maintain obedience of mining foreman, with the reason if the power (the position of Demang Pasirah) is still existing (to him). This statement coincided with the information of the holding of general election, and on the other side (Demang Pasirah) still wanted to rule (*printa njang tiada pantas*).

Like the previous time, in the district of Merawang, it was re-applied administrative monitoring. Commonly, the rights of (Mindien) as Depati were continuously recognized and people kept obeying him as Depati, although his position was only as a temporary official.

To what extent are the last words of Mindien acceptable. Based on a mature experience, I believe that good peace can be maintained. If as a ruler of the indigenous he is terminated, and then the region no longer becomes part of Kampung Ayer Nangka, there is an assumption that Mindien, with the new appointment, does

not alter its capital. If this happens, he will get a little support from the people, and forever he will not able to use his authority from the position of Depati.

The last part of this review is the proposal for exile for the peace of the people. I propose to you, Amir and Mindien to be kept away from the region/ district where they occupy. Furthermore, a place to live is chosen for them. Finally I propose to unite West Mundo and East Mundo.
Pangkalpinang Administrator,
J. Duiters

The desire to put the position as *Depati* was one of the illogic desire. The position of *Depati* had high prestige and reputation in the eyes of Bangka people. *Depati* was not only as the leader of the *batin*, but also as the one who controlled the economy from tin mining which had enormous benefits and promised great wealth. However, it seemed that it was not the purpose of Depati Mindien, who was willing to resign.

Looking at the Depati Mindien's intention, surely he was previously regarded as a friend of the Dutch government. His position and charisma were considered important as a figure, who could maintain order and regularity of the life of the people of Bangka. For the Dutch, his resignation as *Depati* meant a threat of the emergence of big problem, especially because he was still the brother of Depati Bahrin and Depati Amir. The two names later became the colonial enemies.

It was acknowledged by Pangkalpinang Administrator, J. Duiters, that the news about the inclination of Depati Mindien in Depati Amir's forces was still unclear. Of course, Depati Mindien would not discuss the matter when visiting Depati Amir's house. Noticeably, there was great concern in the hearts of J. Duiters, that he would lose Depati Mindien, his coworker. J. Duiters immediately asked Bangka Resident to fail Depati Mindien's plan. J. Duiters proposed that if Depati Mindien insisted to resign, mutation would be subjected for him. The threat of exile penalty could be imposed, if he was not easily directed. It seemed that the Dutch government did not want to speculate, and take any kinds of possibility to resist the seeds of Depati Amir's rebellion.

The Beginning of Bangka War. The great influence of Depati Bahrin, later continued by Depati Amir, had made the Dutch carefully prepare supplies for war. The Dutch's suspicion of the possibility of Depati Mindien to join above is evident that Depati Amir's reputation was capable of attracting his brothers to support the movement. In a letter correspondence, it is explained about the number of troops needed to end the resistance of Depati Amir and his followers, as follows:³

Afschrift, Rommah Bakem den 26 Julij
1850, N.99, La.D. Aan den Majoor Militairen
Kommandant van het Eiland Banka, Muntok.

Ten einde UWEdgst: een algemeen overzicht
over de bestande Barissans zoude kunnen
hebben, zook heb ik de eer UWEdgst: ten dien
oprigte, het volgende te rapporteren.

De Barissans zijn op dit oogenblik sterk 93
man, waarvan 31 van Pangkalpinang, 31 door
Blinjoe en 31 door Soengijleat worden gezonden,
zijnde deze geheele Barissans gewapend met
36 gewaren van het gouvernement, welke in
une bruikbare toestand zijn, en met 10 slechte
gewaren van particulieren van alle kalibers, de
eenige zijn op inlandsche wijze bewapend.

Op de districten bevinden zich nog even
zoo vell Barissans ter beschikking der
administrateur.

Van Muntok echter zijn geen Barissans of
schoon man deze nog het best zoude kunnen
gebruiken, door het door meerendeels Maleijers
zijn en door de genoemde districten slecht zeer
weenig Maleijers, maar meest Bankanezen
gezonden werden, het geen eigenlijk niet meer
zijn dan koulies, welke men een geweer te
dragen geeft, en door het herhaald aflopen het
nadeel heeft: die van Pangkal Pinang worden
alle 15 dagen die van de twee andere districten
alle maanden afgelast: dat men hun zelf niet een
weinig gemeenzam met hun te doene diensten
kan maken.

Het zoude daroom van belang zijn, dat zoo
veel mogelijk niet dan maleijers tot Barissans
werden gebezigd, en slechts om de 3 maanden
afgelost, zonder dat men daarbij nog bijzondere
hoofden van de districten behaesda te zonden,
maar dezelve alleen onder de bevelen def Jaksa
plaatste.

De Barissans welke zich op de districten
bewinden, zuiden telken malen wanneer in den
omtrek zich de muitelingen bevinden, met een
gedeelte der in der nabij zijnde posten kunnen

uitrukken, hierdoor zoude eene eenigzins sterke
magt blijven bestaan, door dezelve nu belken
malen moeten veranippered worden.

Dagelijk worden dezelve door den Jaksa met
gedeeltens van dertig man, tot onderscheiden
diensten, hetzij tot opsporing der muitelingen
ter transporterung van vivres of zich daar te
begeven, waar men tijding krijgt, dat dezelve
benaadigd zijn geberigd, 15 Barissans bevinden
zich voordruizend te Kotta Waringin om deze
kampong te bewaken, en bevinden zich steeds
vul zieken ander hun, zoodat de beschikbare,
dikwerf zeer weinig en vermeerdering van hun
getal zeer noodig is.
Der Kapitein Kommandant der 4 kompagnie van
het 1^e Bataill. Infanterie,
(w.g.) Doorschodt

Which means:

A letter from Commander Company Battalion
I Infantry Captain Doorschodt to Commander
Military of Bangka Island in Muntok, at Bakem
House, July 26, 1850, No.99, La.D.

Finally, you, the honorable, will be able to have
an overall view of the condition of the troops, I
hereby report as follows.

The troops there consists of 93 people, 31
people sent from Pangkalpinang, 31 from Blinyu,
31 from Sungailiat, all armed forces with 36
rifles from the government in a state of ready for
use, and 10 privately owned weapons in various
calibers.

In various districts are still the same, and there
is information on the number of troops set by an
administrator or prosecutor.

But, from Muntok there are no troops,
although many people there can be used. There
are only a few Malay people, who most of
them were sent (from Muntok). Bangka people
have (quality) which is not more than just
porters, in which one person uses one weapon,
and repeatedly and alternaety guards. In
Pangkalpinang the guarding is within 15 days a
month, compared to the other two districts.

For this purpose, as many as possible the
troops should not use the Malay people.

The troops existing in the districts will be
ready as often as possible, if the rebels are
founded surrounding them. If there are some of
them near the posts, they should be expelled.

Everyday, the prosecutor divides tasks to each
troop consisting of 30 people with different
tasks. They went in search of rebels by using
food cart, with this way they can get news.

The 15 troops are always in Kota Waringin, to
guard the village, but (among them) many who
are sick, only a few who are healthy. Therefore,
the addition of the number is needed.

Captain Commander Military IV, from Battalion
Infantry I,
Doorschodt

³See "A Letter from Captain Company IV of Battalion
Infantry I to Major Military Commander in Bangka, at Bakem
House, Dated Juli 26, 1850, No.99". *An Archive* available in ANRI
(National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

The number of the troops above, of course, did not include the number of porters who met the needs of the troops and the government in Bangka. It was also excluded the number of traitors, including the leaders of the indigenous and their people who inclined to the Dutch colonial interests. If counted overall, of course, the number was larger. It is mentioned that the troops above got difficulty to arrest Depati Amir and his friends. Stopping Depati Amir's activities was not enough just with the capital of military forces stationed in Bangka alone. For that reason, Doorschodt asked its Military Commander to immediately send additional troops.

Then, due to the exhausting arrest of Depati Amir, as well as the limitations of the European people in tracing the rural areas of Bangka and for meeting all their needs, it is reported about the sending of porters from Java to do the tasks, as explained below:⁴

Geheim, Muntok, den 14 Augustus 1850, La H.
Aan: Den Majoor Militaire Kommandant van Banka.

Ik heb de Eer Gehad Uwele gestiengd bij mande de noodzakelijk Amir door door Militaire maatregelen te bedwingen, zoo hij blijft weigeren om toe te treden tot de hem gestalde voorwaarden. Uwele gesh: heeft die noodzakelijkheid beaamd, en na den hood djaksa te hebben geraad pleegd, is het ons gebleken dat dat de offensieve operatien zonden dienen aan te vangen uit Laijang Bakem en Klakka Besaar aande rivier Semoeboer, omdat troepen en vivres uit de Klabat baai te water kunnen worden over naar Laijang en Klakka gevoerd en zoo doen de met hrt minst mogelijk aantal koelies den meesten spoed kan worden betracht, vermist de lijnen die de Drie genoemde plaatsen vereeningen, het tereein insluiten naar Amir met zijne bende zich op houdh.

Ten einde ik dien geest voorstellen aan de Regering te kunnen doen, neem ik de vrij heid Uwelegest te verzoeken mij te willen opgeven hoe vele troepen en andre middelen tot volvoering van het bedoeldeplan van Java moeten worden aan gevraagd, daarbij in aanworking neemende dat het hoogst moejelijk zel wezen op Java koelies aantesteren en dat op Banka volgen opgave van den hoofd djaksa maarschijnlijk 200 a 300 koelies kunnen worden verkregen.

⁴See "A Letter from Inspector Hoesebroek to Major Military Commander of Bangka in Muntok, Dated on August 14, 1860, La.H.". *An Archive* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

De Inspecteur, Belast met eene zending naar get Eiland Banka,
(w.g.) Hoesebroek

This letter explains about:

To: Major Military Commander of Bangka.

Along with this I inform you that a military action to surround Amir, the rebel, must be taken. But he (Van Olden) kept refusing to approve it. Proved to us, that an offensive operation will be obtained from Layang Bakem and Kelaka Besar (in River Sumubur). Soldiers and foodstuffs can be delivered through Gulf Klabat to Layang and Kelaka. It is not possible that a number of porters can be obtained, while the pathway from the three regions has been united (Layang Bakem – Kelaka – Gulf Klabat), the places where Amin and his followers have been locked up (surrounded).

Finally, I propose to the government, the number of other soldiers and foodstuffs to carry out the plan of sending them from Java, remembering the extreme difficulty undergone by the porters from Java and those in Bangka. In accordance with the notice from the prosecutor, it seems that there are 200 until 300 porters that can be obtained.

From Inspector in Bangka,
(w.g.) Hoesebroek

The different commands might appear in the elite of the Dutch. If seeing the above script, Van Olden refused to approve the plan of the military leaders. This disagreement could happen, given that there were so many parties bearing the responsibility for the arrest of Depati Amir, in which among them there were various ideas that led to different intention in taking which decision considered the most effective one. The need for the porters also became an aspect mentioned above. The porters were used as helpers in the war. They were voluntary troops contributing in the field expedition.

Van Olden, the Resident of Bangka, said in his letter that in fact in the capital of Muntok, there were 200 to 300 porters and approximately 100 enchained people (prisoners) who could be employed to help military expedition. It is also mentioned by him that later the porters became hard to find, which was caused by their low income. The people who had been prepared to be used as porters then ran into the forest. Van Olden suggested that to create loyalty among

them, then the issue of wages had to be taken into account. In fact, the use of prisoners as porters were very harmful to themselves (the Dutch government), in which it might give them an opportunity to escape or join Depati Amir's forces.⁵

Van Olden was in fact a figure who did not so agree with help from the outside. The help was considered to tarnish his reputation as the Resident of Bangka, who was not able to solve the problem of Depati Amir. The reality in fact proved anything else. The Dutch's forces required greater assistance from outside of Bangka, because the military power in Bangka finally was not able to paralyze Depati Amir's forces.

Another source explains that the root of the dispute between Van Olden and the Dutch military officer, named Major Becking, was about the ways to arrest Depati Amir. As known, Van Olden was a civilian official, while Major Becking was a soldier. Both men had their own views about the right decision to solve the problem of Depati Amir. The dispute between them was widely known, reaching the desk of the central government in Batavia. Finally, the central government took a policy to replace Van Olden with a man with a military background as the Bangka Resident thereafter. The reason of this replacement was perhaps based on the assumption that the military certainly better knew the area they led, because they diligently performed regular security expeditions there.⁶

Military operations or military expeditions by visiting the places that were allegedly visited by Depati Amir and his troops were one of the reliable ways. Here is a correspondence notifying about an operation, as such:⁷

⁵See "A Letter from Bangka Resident to Inspector of Finance and State-Owned Assets Assigned in Bangka, Muntok, Dated on Agustus 15, 1850, No.L.J/Confidential; Bt. September 17, 1850, No.1 Geh". *An Archive* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

⁶As explained by Ali Usman, a guide of expedition to trace the trail of Depati Amir, on November 20-22, 2015.

⁷See "A Letter from the Captain Commander IV, Doorschodt, to Major Military Commander in Bangka Island, at Bakem House, Dated on July 24, 1850, La.B, No.96". *An Archive* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

Afscrift, Rommah Bakem, den 24 July 1850, La.B., No.96. Aan: Den Majoor militaire kommandant van het eiland Banka, Muntok.

Ik heb de eer Uweds het volgende te rapporteren.

Gisteren kwam een genewelke gevligt was, mij stellig warkeren dat heden nacht, de muitelingen Amir, Awan en een groot gedeelte hunnen benden, zich te Pako zuiden verzamelen ten gevolge van die mande ik dadelijk het plan, hen midelen in de nacht te wervallen, trok, daar, van eenige manschappen van, Nibong en Poeding Beraan naar hier een begaf mij met de 2: Luitenant Woerrlebben en 300 der officieren en manschappen benera 25 Barissans, des nacht in 1 lin op marsch.

Tot de Kampong Pajja Raija toe is deung zeer goed, van hier af begeren wij ons links af naar het warasfche gebegte middelen door het bosch, 2/3 der erg is diep maras, met hier en daar stikken hout van welke afglijdende men tot aan de huipen in den modder zakte.

Onder deze omstandigheden, kwamen wij des morgen ten 4/2 uur in de grootste stilte, tot digt bij de Kampong Pako marelen manwacht in denzeleren, den we under was deze wrlaten, de Kampong bestond uit 12 nog al groote huizen, en eene loods welke tot karnne schijld gediend te hebben, Uwje schoten welen op een man welke onteligtte.

Des morgens om 6 uur lit in de Kampong tot op den grond afbranden in kurde na alles te hebben doen doorzoeken, langs den zelfden weg terug als wanner het mij ook, blek dat op alle hoog staande bonnen, een zeker doort van wachtkuizen bestond van waaruit het ligt mogelijk is, dat, onze komst eer en naraden is.

Dfm slitte geef in Uwwe kennis dat en gens skegeren van den kommandant van Layang, weer een twintig tal vlightelingen met hunne worinen em kinderen, door behulp van Barissans de hosfchen in den omtrek van daar hebben werluten, in zich te Layang onstigen. De Kapitein Kommandant 4^e Van Het Bataillon Infanterie, W.G. Doorschodt

This letter explains about:

To: Major Military Commander of Bangka in Muntok.

I report to you, the honorable, as follows:

Yesterday a man, not a fugitive, came to me, giving me explanation exactly that this evening, Amir, the rebel, and most of other rioters, will gather in Pako. Furthermore, I will immediately make a plan to suddenly attack them. I will depart with the strength of Lieutenant II Doerrleban, 50 subordinate officers and soldiers, including 25 garrison and leave in the night at 1.

Arriving in Kampung Paya Raya, the streets were very nice. From here, we turned left, to

the area of a mountain back to the forest. 2/3 percent of the streets were muddy (muddy land). Here and there were timbers transversely to the ground and the land was completely filled with mud.

In such circumstances, we arrived in the morning, i.e. at 4:30, in the quiet condition near Kampung Pako. The village looked empty. There were 12 big houses and a warehouse resembling barracks. In such condition, several gunshots were sounded, but not continuously.

In the morning, i.e. at 6, I was ordered in order that the village was burned until flat to the ground. Then, after all were done, the search was carried out by tracing along the previous way, i.e. from the direction we came.

Finally, I convey to you, the honorable, that the next writing is from the Commander of Layang who reported that there were dozens of people who had fled with their wives and children, and with the help of the troops (Dutch troops) they were called upon to return from the forest and allowed to settle in Layang.

From Captain Commander IV Battalion Infantry, W.G. Doorschodt

Chinese People's Assistance. Depati Amir's resistance would not take place in a planned way, one of them without the help of Chinese people in Bangka. Some of them who had helped had professions as merchants of tin; the others were mining laborers. They sympathized with Depati Amir's action and decided to fight together to bend the colonial power in Bangka. The evidence of cooperation among them is seen in the following archives.⁸

Ongeveer 3 i 4 maanden voor de mislukte poging om Amir te Pangkalpinang te amsteren (dus in Augustus ap September 1849) is Amir met Roman en Aim van Blinyu, Kingtjoan (vroeger mijn mandoor te Blinyoe), Boedjang Singkip, Akei Asam op Si Hassan, Oeibien, Biengoel, Tata, Daijo, Dassam (alle 7 van Pangkalpinang) de Chinees Ko. So. Sioe vroeger weger (tjinting in de mijn Singlio (Soengij Leat), Lanang Amo, Tjelingie, Lo Adjin, Iksam, Chinezen van Blinyoe, Moxin en Katak, Chinezen van Pangkalpinang, overeengekomen om zich tegen het gouvernement te verzetten, Ko. Sosioe heeft op zich genomen om de Chinesche vagebonden en gedrote mijn werkers uit het Soengij Leatsche tot Amir's partij over te halen. Lanang Amo, Tjoseng, en Lok Adjin hebben onderscheidene

blanke voor/om als pieken klewangs onz voor Amir vewaarokd. Moxin en Katak zouden de Chinesche vagabond van Pangkalpinang aan ervan/en de myn Seroe trochten over te helen om aan de ophand deel te nemen. Raman, Aim en Kingtjoan (Chinees die tot de Mahomedaansche godsdienst is overgegaan) hebben een botal vagebonden aangeworven, en in het Batinschap Maras verzameld. Laatst genoemde heeft voor Amir een kerpek met ampioen van Singapoera ingesmokkeld en twee Chinesche boosdoeners (Orang Ridan) van door medegebragt.

Ko. So. Sioe heeft Amir toen verzekerd van de hulp en medewerking der mijn Singlie en hem en hem toegezegd dat bij de verstrekkingen in de redouten te Soengij Leat en Batoerossak van zyst aan de mijnerd deze den Administeur in het garnizoen zouden aanvallen, wanner Amir en de zynen gelyktydig de forten van buitenbesprongen. Voorap achter wilde Amir geweren en kruid te Singapoera doen aankopen. Roman, Aim en Kingtjoan zouden zich daarmede belasten. De beide laatst genoemde en Ko. So. Sioe zijn in de maand September 1849 verdochten beschadige sluik amfiven van Singapoera van Singapoera te hebben nigevoerd het geen mee deelingen van Amir c.s. bevestigd, bij gebrek aan bewyzen heeft die zaak geene gevolgen gehad. Vak heeft te dier tyd de myn Singlie met de myn Depak oven myngronden eenen twist gehad, die ten nadeele van eerst genoemde door den Resident is uit geveren, waardoor wordt gehehelderd, hoe de doelhebbers van die voordeel gevende myn zich in deze zaak hebben kunnen menzen. Roman schynt te zyn gedreven door het verlangen en Batin van Maras te worden, eene betrekking die hij vreesde niet van ons bestum te zullen bekomen, hoewel zy daar toe later door den Resident is benoemd.

[...]

In Junij 1850 heeft Amir te Sekinir, besloten om te Singapoera gaweren en buskruid te moen kopen, door Awang, Aim, Bangkit en Raman, met eene Sompang ledang (vaartuig van 1 ½ koyang) van Kingtjoan, welk voertuig te loemoet in gereedheid werd gebragt – Daartoe zouden bijdragen. Amir 100 sp matten, de batin van Groengong 60 sp matten, af zoo veel meer opminder als voor den inkoop van 12 geweren verusd werd de batin van Ampang idem, Range namens den batin van Djeroek idem, de batin van Bakong idem, de jonge batin van Djempoerah idem, en de batin van Maras idem.

Dit voornemen is echter niet ten uit voor gelegd, omdat in de Klabat baai en in de manding der rivier Mendoe kruisloten werden gestalioneerd en omdat de administrateur van Blinjoe de styds last gaf al de vrouwen in de Klabat baai op te votten. Zekere Ogan vroeger batin in het district Jeboes, Manke, Bekel en

⁸See "Nota der Ontwerpen van Handhoudingen van Amir: Afchrift, B. 25 Maart 1851, No.13". *An Archive* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

nog zeven anderen uit dat distric, hebben zich destyds bij Amir gevoegd; zij gowen voor soempsons te bezetten, die wen ver dreegen als geweren. Zij hebben aan het plunderen van van vele mynen deelgenoemen. Tijdens de Haarnd Resident met Amir onderhandelde hebbed de Hadjie Aboe Bakar de demang Soeramengala, het Inlandsche kampong hoofd te Layang en meer anderen hem afgeraden zynd voorstellen op te volgen, en hem gezegd dat daarachter waarschylyk verraad Meulde. Awang heeft hem echter sterk aangezoolen voorstellen aan te nemen.

Amir is door die onderhandelingen in het denkbeeld gebracht, dat hij door onze regering als een zeer gewichtig perzoon werd beschouwd, en gaf toemmal te kennen dat wanneer hij de voorworden aanhem, hij de zaken geheel anders zoo regelend. Alle die hem gevolge wonen zouden aan het gezag der administrateurs onttrekken words, hij zoude met het plunderen van mynen onz weder voortgaan onz; Uit dit alles blijkt dan de gewezen Resident van Olden der regering een gewerdigtig aders heeft gegeven door haar voor te stellen, om met Amir te onder handelen.

Na door aanzang der militaire operation in de mand October 1850, heeft Amir met de Chinezen Bong Atjing hoofd doe myn Doerin Kodjing hoofd der myn Serve, Tinsfie, hoofd der myn Singlei bawa, Ko-so-sie (zie chinezen) in het huis van Bong Atjing eene conferentie gehouden. Zij zijn toen overeengekomen:

“Dat Amir gekomen de myn etablissementen”.

“Zou afbranden, na de myners gewarschuwd te hebben, op dat zij hunne”.

“Kastbaarte bezittingen voorop daareuz konden dragen”.

“Dat de muitelingen in elke vernielde myn een geschreft zouden aan”.

“Ter laten houdende dat zy alle mynen zouden verbanden tot dat Amir”.

“Zoon hem was teruggegeven”.

“Dat de mynwerkers daarna bij den Resident en de administrateurs”.

“Herk zouden aandringen op de teruggave van Amir's zoon, en op vergoeding van de geledene schade”.

“Dat ingeval dit geweigerd werd de myners niet meer zouden werken”.

“Bij geschikte gelegenheden de redouten in overlage met muitelingen”.

“Zouden afloopen en onze patroilles in den rug zouden vallen wonen de muitelingen die in front Maande hielden”.

Namens den luitenant der Chinezen van Soengyleat daartoe aangezocht heeft geweigerd zich daarin mengen, droh heeft ons van niets kennis gegeven. Eenige Maleijers waarvan de namen en verblyf, plaatsens ons zyn opgegeven, werden tot het aanknoopen van deze onderhoudelingen gebruikt.

Bon Atjong aannemen der mynen in het Mapoersche heeft aan de muitelingen kruid verstrekt, op dat zij zyne myne angemoud zouden laten, en aan Amir doen beloven, dat de Chinezen, door den Resident met moujelykheden hunnerzyds drugen, donzelve van zouden tachten te bewegen, om hem zynen zoon witte leveren.

Het deelhebbers in de myn Lap Toutrow (Blinjoe) eene der grootste van Banka hebben aan Amir kruid verstrekt.

Het afbranden van alle de mynen in het Tjingalkhe zou juist omstreeks den tyd hebben plaats gevonden, toen de luiten.

Dekker met eene patrouille en eenige barissans de muitelingen is overwallen en hen heeft uiteen gezaagd.

Zonder die toevallige, toch voor ons hangs gelukkige omstandigheid, zouden anstige verwickelingen zyn onderworden.

Which means:

Approximately 3 or 4 months after the fail effort to arrest Amir in Pangkalpinang (around August or September 1849), Amir, with Aim from Blinyu, King Tjoan (former mining foreman in Blinyu), Budjang Singkep, Akei Asan or Si Hasan, Oebien, Bengol, Tata, Dayo, Dasum (the all 7 were from Pangkalpinang), a Chinese Ko so sie (former hitman (*centeng*) in Singlo mining in River Liat), Lanang Amo, Tjilingie, Lo Adjien, Iksan a chinese from Blinyu, Mohsin and Katak, a Chinese from Pangkalpinang, came to beg to the government. Ko so sie was a Chinese Wanderer and an escape (former) worker of mining from River Liat and joined Amir's group, and Lanang Amo, Tjoseng and Lok Adjin kindly gave Amir many weapons ready for use such as spears, machete (*klewang*), etc. Mohsin and Katak, Chinese wanderers from Pangkalpinang, and in the mining of Seroe, tried to take part in the rebellion. Raman, Aim and King Tjoan (a Chinese converting to Islam), succeeded in searching the 60 members of wanderers (unemployment) in *batin* Maras's place, a place where they gathered. The last name mentioned brought a crate of opium from Singapore to Amir through bribery trading (illicit, illegal), with two Chinese criminals (Redan people).

Ko so sie told Amir, that he would help and assist when they would attack the administrators in the garrison. By the commander in the trenches of Singli mining in River Liat and Batu Rusah, Amir and *batin* at the same time would attack suddenly. But Amir wanted to go to Singapore first to buy weapons and gunpowder and those who would go were Raman, Aim, King tjoan. The last name of the riots, named King tjoan, and Ko so sie in September 1849, were allegedly fault due to smuggling opium from Singapore to be delivered to Amir and his

friends. At the same time, there was a quarrel between the Singli mining and Depak mining, with losses on Singli mining, which was then mediated by the resident, the problem can be discussed.

[...]

In June 1850, Amir who was in Sekinir, decided to buy weapons and gunpowder to Singapore. He was accompanied by Awang, Aim, Bangkit and Raman by canoe (*sampan bedang*) owned by King tjoan. The preparation started from Loemoet. For the purpose, Amir was helped with 100 Spanish money (Spanish matten), and *batin* from Groegang gave 60 Spanish money, roughly enough to buy 12 rifles. The others were *batin* from Ampang who gave similar help, and similarly *batin* from Jeruk, *batin* from Bakong, *batin* from Djampoerah and *batin* from Maras gave the same help.

However, the desire to obtain the goods could not be achieved, because in Gulf Klabat and in the estuary of River Mendu, the canoe was difficult to find a place to tather. Blinyu Administrator immediately arrested a perpetrator named Ogan, a former *batin* in the district of Jebus, Minke, Bekel and the other 7 people from the districts, just before visiting Amir. They took half of the weapons and carried out robbery in many minings. When the resident and Amir negotiated, Haji Abu Bakar, *demang* of Simamengala, the head of Kampung Layang and still many others, also went.

After the military operation had begun in October 1850, Amir with a Chinese named Bong Atjing, the head of Doerin Kotjeng mining, the head of Seroe mining, Tinsie, the head of Singlie bawah mining, and Ko so sie, held a meeting at the house of Bong Atjing, and they argued:

"That amir will burn the complex of the minings".

"After the miners are told about the danger".

"That the rebels damaged each mining, and left a writing that all the minings will be burned until the son of Amir is returned to him".

"That the workers of the mining later, to the resident and administrator, will be urged to return the son of Amir and compensation will be given for the past damage".

"Due to this refusal, the workers of mining will no longer work. On the occasion, the rebels negotiated to arrange the strength in the small trenches, and our patrol will collapse or die, if the rebel prepared themselves in front of the trenches".

On behalf of the Chinese Lieutenant from Merawang, on the occasion Tan Djiem gave certainty to Amir, that the lieutenant will help through 12 heads of mining.

A Chinese Lieutenant from River Liat refused to intervene, but did not tell us.

Bong Atjong, a contractor of mining in Mapur, gave the rebels gunpowder. He promised to Amir

that Chinese people try hard to urge the resident, to hand over the son of Amir.

The owners of mining of Lap Toutrow in Blinyu, who mostly came from Bangka, gave Amir gunpowder.

The burning of all minings in Tjingal were carried out at the same time, when Lieutenant Dikker was in patrol and several troops were attacked by the rebels.

The Chinese people's involvement in the physical revolution in Bangka, in fact, has become a unique study in the historical events in Indonesia. The discourse about the roles of Chinese people has not many recorded in the writing of the national history. Perhaps, this is the aftermath of marginalizing the rights of the Chinese people in the national and state discourse in the previous periods. It has been known that the Chinese people had experienced gloomy periods, when in the New Order era (1966-1998), they were forbidden to express their culture and traditions in public. This prohibition slowly reduced the Chineseness discourse in the unity of Indonesia, emerging a negative view that their descendants are not indigenous, and the history of their ancestors' involvement in physical struggle and in the struggle for independence has not been inserted in the writing of the history of Indonesia.

Leo Suryadinata (2002) mentions that the government of the New Order was not willing to make the Chinese people important, both in the political, economic and other fields. Post-1966, there were almost no representation of Chinese who became a board member or officials in the institution of government. They more channeled their political and economic aspirations indirectly by cooperating with the government. From here, the term of *cukong* (financier) was born, that is a name subjected to the Chinese people who cooperate with the government in handling a project or program. A dispute between the elite of indigenous and Chinese people was based on economic factors. Hatred was then channeled into the public domain, so the Chinese people could be targeted anger when the shock of the country's economy occurred (Suryadinata, 2002:81-82).

In the climate of the country, which is more open and democratic, the historical discourse also needs to be rejuvenated. The new contents of the history of the Chinese people that may be previously considered having political contents and threatening the stability of the country, and that later have been revised concerning with its legal product,⁹ seem necessary to put forward. It is solely done as a proof that the ancestors of the Chinese in Indonesia, in this case in Bangka, in fact gave very valuable contribution in the struggle against colonialism. The cooperation between Depati Amir and the Chinese people could be used as a model of unity among ethnics in the pursuit of shared ideals and this is important as the collective memory of national unity, particularly with regard to the discussion of the role of the Chinese people in the stage of history.

When the Manchu dynasty ruled China from to its decay, people's tradition was divided into two forms. *First*, the tradition that existed in palace environment. Usually, some of customs had forbidden for grass root entities. For instance, the ordinances of reception the emperor. These manners had not allowed for all people which is lived outside the palace. *Second*, the tradition that existed in public that is lived outside the imperial area. The various examples can be seen like in public market or village. These two types of tradition influenced the characteristic of the next Chinese people (Barry & Lufrano eds., 2010:3).

Nevertheless, in several countries, especially outside the mainland of Tiongkok, which were inhabited by the Chinese people, there were some differences in tradition. The Chinese people living overseas chose to develop their own traditions based on their original culture that was mixed by the local custom. The Chinese in Bangka, for instance, accommodated local values to prevent the social tension with other ethnics, like Malay

⁹Regarding the amendment of policies on Chinese ethnic, see in the "Presidential Decree of the Republic of Indonesia on the Revocation of Presidential Instruction No.14 Year 1967 on Religion, Believe, and Custom". Available online at: <http://www.hukumonline.com/> [accessed in Jakarta, Indonesia: September 4, 2015].

people. This modality was important to the existence of the Chinese people in Bangka. Next, they started to explore tin and trade (Ibrahim, 2016:2).

I had an opportunity to visit some of the relics of China in the region of Kampung Gedong, Singli, and other places in Bangka on 22 October 2015. From their everyday life, it appeared that there the Chinese people are the indigenous of Bangka like the others. One of the Chinese tomb areas around Cengel has a headstone from the year of 1600s, which shows that the Chinese people had been for a long time existed in Bangka. The Chinese people there settled separately with the Malay people, although some are coexist. In Cengel and Kampung Gedong, for example, they live in one area of the township, and one house is rather far apart with another house. On the side of the road or besides their houses are generally built altars to worship the ancestors, as a means of worship.

Two days earlier, I visited the Tin Museum of Indonesia in Pangkalpinang. In one of the rooms, there is diorama about the involvement of Chinese people in tin mining since the colonial era. In addition to becoming laborers, some of them were already appointed as a foreman. This position is certainly related to their experience during working in tin mining. When mining, they blended with other Bangka people, digged and searched for tin sand under the direction of the Dutch foremen. They also introduced a new tool to collect tin sand in the period, namely *cangkol* (hoe) that was brought in the early 18th century. Since then, tin mining revolution happened, that is with larger-scale digging, or known as *pit* (wide field of tin mining).

In the other world, colonial's power attempted to eliminate people's unity, which is based on the multicultural group. For instance, in 1960 in Zanzibar, the British ruler divided the unity of the Arabs and African Swahili-Speakers. They thought that this effort would brake many liberation movements (Glassman, 2011:5). Unfortunattely, this work was not succesful in Bangka. Malay and Chinese had a huge commitment to fight against colonizer.

The Arrest of Depati Amir. The war in Bangka is one of the models of a guerrilla war in the phase (*babakan*) of the colonial history. The contestants of a war are usually two forces that have differences and preparation, and combat supplies. This dichotomy is often reduced in terms of the traditional style war against modern war. Bangka people fight with weapons that could be said to be inadequate when face to face with modern war strategy, like colonial forces.

With the spirit and cooperation, the fighters found a tough opponent when dealing with the enemy. The Dutch focused on their attacks not only by using sophisticated war equipment, but also by using the politics of divide and rule, by employing indigenous people to persuade Depati Amir to surrender. It is shown in the following script:¹⁰

Onderwerp: Nader rapport omtrent den stand van zaken op Banka, zijnde vervolg van dat van den 17 Januarij 1851 La A/19.

In mijn rapport van den 17 : La A/19, had ik de eer Uwe Hoogheid mede te deelen, dat Amir en Tjing door gebrek aan voedsel en den mende die zijn in de basschen hadden te verdieren tot onderwerping aan het gouvernement waren gedevangen. Uit het onderzoek door den Hoofddjaksa omtrent deze gebeurtenis gehouden is gebleken het volgende:

Sedert den 29 December 1850, bevond zich Amir nagenoeg zonder voedsel in het Mindau Baratsche en was hem van daar aan alle zijden den doortag daar patroilles en door barissan afgesloten. De laatsten vooral aangespoord door toegezegde belooning op de uitlevering van Amir en voor geneen tigen tegenstand meer bedicht zijnde, legden bij het apsparin van den hoofd muiteling eene groote valharding aan den dag.

Vier onzer spionnen hadden dan ook Amir welden gevonden, doch werden door dezen overgehaald, om hem langs verborgen paden door onze troepen en barissans heen te brengen. Amir gaf den spionnen daarvoor eene krid eenen gouden zing en zes gulden zilveren specie.

Evenwel bleek het, den spinnen en mogelijk te zijn, Amir voedsel te verschaffen en te doen ontsnappen; zij werden met Amir door een Detachement barissans aangevoerd door

zekeren Machmoed ontmoet en gaven daarop den krid van Amir over, onder vaargeven dat zij die ten ticken van Amir's onderwerping hadden ontvangen. Amir is vervolgens met tiwen gebonden naar Bakem gebracht, doch werd daar uit zijne banden ontslagen.

Ik heb daaraan den waard,⁴ Resident met den meesten aandrang de billijkheid betaagd, om uit aanwerking van de wijze waarop de zaagenaamde onderwerping, eigenlijk uitlevering van Amir geeft plaats gehad, de toegezegde belooning van 1000 Sp: maten te verdeden, onder degenen die daartoe het meest hebben bijgedragen. Deze hoofdamtenaar heeft dientengevolge last gegeven om uit te hebben. Aan ik der spionnen Angar en Swal, die zich in het vertrouwen van Amir hadden. Weten in te dringen 100 Sp maten te zamen, 200. Aan Hadjie Mohammad Seman, 100. den Batin Awal van Boekit, 100. den Batin van Mendoe Barat, 100. den Hoofd der Barissan Machmoed, 100. den Batin van Mendoe Timor, 25. 36 man van de Barissan, 375.

Sp: matt 1000

Een als alle muitelingen dien in onze handen vislen af tot ons over kwammen, zijn ook Amir en Tjing daar den hoofdjaksa met veel behandigheid ondervraagd.

Hunne opgaven en verhalen, die wat de hoofdzaken betreft voereen Ramen met de verklaringen van hunne voornamste aanhangers, in het bijzonder met die van den Mandoor Hassan, hebben doen zien, dat de militierij van Amir, van veel grooter belangrijkheid is geweest, dan men aanvankelijk vermoed had, in dat wanner niet in tijds tot strenge maatregelen was overgegaan het berstuur van Bangka nag jaren lang met eenstige moeijelikheden zou hebben te Kampen gehad. De hierbij gevoegde nata van ontwerpen en verstandhoudingen van Amir welke resimé dier verhaaren overtuigen.

Het aantal personen, welke aan den opstaand hebben deel genomen, is te groot om allen te straffen. Ook is ens dit uithoofde van den indruk, die door de militaire operation op de bevolking is te weeg gebregt, overbadig voorgekemen daar echter vele der gecompromitterde pusmen en het vervolg, voor de reist van Banka gevaarlijk zouden kinnen zijn, en het naadig is daar eenige voorbeelden van strengheid voor het vervolg de reist te verzekeren, hebben de Wd Resident en Ik, en overleg met den hoofdjaksa, de personen gedesigneerd, welke van Banka moeten worden verwijderd, en die, welke het verblijf in de binnen landen moet worden ontzegd en in het vervolg te Mentok onder het aag der politie moeten wanen. Ook is de wijze, die arrestatien te bewerken, bepraken, doch de uitverking uitgesteld, tot na de onderwerping van Awang,

¹⁰See "Behoort Bij Missive van het Militaire Departement, dd 12 Februarij 1851, No.4, Afschrift Militair Kommandement Banka, L:A/24, Bt. March 25, 1851, No.13". *An Archive* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

Boedjang Singkip en hunne volgelingen, af wel nadat het gebleken is, dat dezen zich van Banka hebben verwijderd, af wij de overtinging hebben dat zij buiten staat zijn gesteld, kwaad te doen [...].

Which means:

Subject: The following report is about an event in Bangka, the continuation from January 17, 1851, No. La A/19.

In my report dated January 17, 1851 no. La A/19, to You, we informed you that Amir and Tjing were lack of food shortages and suffered in the forest, until they were forced to surrender to the government. From an investigation by the chief prosecutor on this event, it is proven as follows:

Since December 29, 1850, Amir has been found nearly having no food in the Forest West Mendu and all the ways directly heading there have been closed by the patrol and the troops (Dutch). Finally, there was an appeal that whoever was able to hand over Amir, a prize would be given, and it was very allowed with deep fear, in searching and finding the leader of the rebels. It was carried out with high patience on that day.

Our four spies immediately found Amir, then persuaded him to pass a secret pathway that was guarded by the troops and the soldiers. At the time, Amir handed over a *keris* (traditional Indonesia blade), a gold ring and 6 *gulden* Spanish money to the spies. The spies did not bring food for Amir who fled. Then, the leader of the troops, Mahmud, met with Amir. Instantly Amir handed over his *keris* to Mahmud as a proof of his submission.

Furthermore, Amir was tied with a rope and brought to Bakem House. After arriving there, the rope used to tie was removed. Therefore, I urged the Resident after seeing the event of the real Amir's submission. A prize of 1000 *gulden* Spanish money was approved to be divided to those who had helped. The prize was paid by the officials of the government.

- To each spy, Angar and Sawal, who had been entrusted to meet Amir, was given a prize for each amounting to 100 *gulden* Spanish money, and the total is 200.

- To Haji Mohammad Seman, 100.

- To *Batin* Awal from Bukit, 100.

- To *Batin* of West Mundu, 100.

- To the troops of Mohamad, 100.

- To *Batin* of East Mundu, 25.

- To 36 troops, 375.

1000

Soon, all rebels will be in our hands, and likewise the chief of prosecutor will give Amir and Tjing time to question and answer.

According to the chief of prosecutor, their explanation and story are the same as the explanation from the main followers especially Mandor Hassan, that the rebel Amir has a huge interest and if not punctual (in the arrest), the government of Bangka will always be in years in a very difficult condition for struggling.

A number of people taking part in the rebellion will be imprisoned. And for the sake of peace in Bangka, the Resident and I will negotiate with the chief of prosecutor. The people appointed for it (the prisoners) must be expelled from Bangka, and if kept staying in the country, they must be moved to Muntok under the police supervision [...].

In the correspondence above, the Dutch did not hesitate to reward the willingness of the indigenous people, who had worked for them. Arresting Depati Amir was a priority that could not be ruled out. Lateness to catch him meant adding prolonged suffering for the existence of the Dutch government there. For the Dutch, any ways could be taken, provided that the adverse action of Depati Amir and his followers could be stopped. They used the help of some other Bangka figures to pass their intentions. When knowing that the position of Depati Amir had been besieged, then the option to use Bangka leaders to persuade Depati Amir seemed reliable, so that the arrest could run without significant resistance.

In fact, it was not difficult for the Dutch to kill Depati Amir when already pressed. However, this option was ruled out, solely to display the image of a clean colonial government from the practice of political disappearances of the enemy's life arbitrarily. Dutch elite seemed to have considered that Depati Amir's influence in Bangka was still very strong. If Depati Amir died due to the rifle, then it potentially flamed the bigger scale of the fire of rebellion throughout Bangka. The government was not prepared to confront the continued resistance. This then made them decide to persuade Depati Amir to give up nicely.

In the end, the punishment of exile or *internment* was imposed to Depati Amir. Based on paragraphs 1 and 2 *Besluit* (decree), on 4 February 1851, No.3, it was decided that Depati Amir and his family, among

others: his mother Dakim, his wife Imur, his sisters Ipa and Sena, brother-in-law Gindip, his adopted son Baidin, and her maid Mia, were dispatched by train "Argo" to Surabaya. This group then went by the ship "Banda" anchored towards Timor (Kupang).¹¹ The punishment was hard for Depati Amir, because he had to leave his hometown.

CONCLUSION

The heroic story of Depati Amir is in fact merely a thin insertion of the history book of Indonesia. Almost the same with some other heroes in the *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago), he chose to live as a man branded as a rebel, rioter, and fugitive in the eyes of the Dutch colonial government. In some colonial notes above, it appears the dark name of Depati Amir, as if he was the causative factor of insecurity in Bangka. The images of Dutch colonial archives always bury those opposing to the government, becoming a criminal who must be arrested.

The Chinese people are one of integral element in the war in Bangka. Their activities show that this nation has a good memory of togetherness of its citizens. This is also an inscription of remembrance that the struggle to repel the Dutch colonial was not only carried out by a class of people, but it is also the result of cooperation of all circles across ethnicity. The tin digging, on the one hand, caused dispute among nations, but on the other hand, it managed to create harmony between Malays and Chinese immigrants.

The resistance against the Dutch is one red record in the Indonesian history. There are so many misunderstandings, various perspectives, and claims of truth based on the findings of the written and oral sources. However, one thing can be said that the period was an important phase in measuring the extent of the unity of the people in *Nusantara* in struggling for the ideals of liberty. If it was not until the establishment of the state, at least there were ripples of resistance on the order of *rust en orde* that for indigenous people was regarded as the

open path to establish the glories of the Dutch under the suffering of the people of *Nusantara*, one of which was visible in Bangka.¹²

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¹¹See "Besluit (Decree), February 4, 1851, No.3, Paragraph 1 and 2". *An Archive* available in ANRI (National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia) in Jakarta.

¹²**Statement:** I, hereby, declare that this article is my original academic work, it is not product of plagiarism, due to all sources used and cited in the analysis are showed clearly and available in the References. This article is also not submitted, reviewed, and published yet in other scholarly journals.

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