

Archaeology, Culture and History: Concept and Their Contribution in Malaysia

Zuliskandar Ramli¹

¹Institute of the Malay World and Civilization (ATMA), The National University of Malaysia,
43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Archeology, history and culture are seen as capable of contributing to national development. The three things are linked because the three have a strong bond. In the opinion of the author, archaeology, history and culture are in harmony of each other. This is because archeology is part of history and cultural data, including the paleo-environment data (ecofact), which are the primary data in archaeological research. However, this view would conflict with those who adhere to the idea that 'archeology is anthropology or it is nothing. It is the faith of those who subscribe to the "New Archaeology" born in America.

The movement began in the late 1950's when American researchers began to move the entire discipline away from the study of artifacts to the study of people behavior. Work of Gordon Willey and Philip Phillips in 'Method and Theory in American Archaeology' stated that "American archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing (Whillwy and Phillips 1958: 2). The idea implied that the goals of archaeology were, in fact, the goals of anthropology, which were to answer questions about humans and human society. This was a critique of the former period in archaeology, the culture-historical phase in which archaeologists thought that any information which artifacts contained is about past people and their way of live once the items are included in the archaeological record. All they felt that could be done was to catalogue, describe and create timelines based on artifacts (Trigger, 1989).

In 1960's, scholars like Lewis Binford, David Clarke, David Leonard and others suggested that archaeology must be more scientific, with explicit theory and rigorous methodologies. Lewis Binford in his book *New Perspectives in Archaeology* published in 1968 stressed on: i) the need to use new technologies such as the computer for statistical and matrix analyses of data; ii) the concept of the ecosystem for the understanding of the economic and subsistence bases of prehistoric societies; iii) an evolutionary view of culture; iv) the use of models of cultures that could be viewed as systems; v) incorporation of an evolutionary approach to culture change; and vi) a close relationship between archaeology and anthropology. In Britain, David Clarke and David Leonard, in the book entitled *Analytical Archaeology*, also published in 1968 took on similar themes, emphasizing modeling.

Proponents of this new phase in archaeology claimed that with the rigorous use of the scientific method it was possible to get past the limits of the archaeological record and learn something about how the people who used the artifacts lived. Colin Renfrew, a proponent of the new processual archaeology, observed in 1987 that it focuses attention on "the underlying historical processes which are at the root of change". Archaeology, he noted "has learnt to speak with greater authority and accuracy about the ecology of past societies, their technology, their economic basis and their social organization. Now it is beginning to interest itself in the ideology of early communities: their religions, the way they expressed rank, status and group identity." (Renfrew 1987).

Pro-American views such as those arise because archaeology accepts the existence of the field of prehistoric archeology in human history. Archaeology accepts the concept of human ancientness. As a result, they reject the view of the Church that humans only appear on this world about 6,000 years ago as asserted by Bishop Ussher and Bishop Lightfoot (Glyn Daniel 1981) before the birth of the carbon dating techniques in 1940's. Prior to the 1850s, archaeology is considered as the field of history. The birth of pre-historic archaeology is a result of the acceptance of relative dating that is the Three Age System which was introduced by an archeologist named CJ Thomsen in Scandinavia (Glyn Daniel 1981) and the development in the science of new geology which is geology that was introduced by Charles Lyell that is not based on the catastrophism/fluvialist theory but based on the changes in the landform as a result of the earth's prolonged process (diluvialist) (Glyn Daniel, 1981) and human ancientness through the Theory of Evolution by Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species (1859) (Glyn Daniel, 1981). However, if archaeological history is examined, we will see that human prehistory does not belong to the of anthropology alone. In Europe, the area is known as the field of cultural anthropology.

Therefore, it is accurate if we were to accept the definition that archaeology is the method to reconstruct the life of past humans who lived during the prehistoric, proto-historic and historic period by using artifact, ecofact, and feature data through systematic and scientific research based on relative and absolute dating. History that is rebuilt must have the basis of 'truth' (the truth) and as far as possible shy away from the 'bias' or centric. Hence, the truth is based on data can be defended or supported. Therefore, archaeology and history is not in the interest of one party only or to attain a name for oneself (glamour or popularity) but similar to history, it is to look for the truth. Unfortunately, today there are those who shy away from looking for the truth and more of looking for a name for oneself (glamour). Consequently, it results in archaeology being made separate from history.

The history meant here are the events of the past. The past could be thousands of years old, a few months or even a few seconds ago. Reconstruction of history as asserted at the beginning of this paper is to find the truth. The data used must be data that really exist and not something which is made up. It will comprise of authentic and interpretable cultural data. The cultural data comprise of comprehensive Islamic religion is also social and historical data.

CONCEPT OF PREHISTORIC AND PROTO-HISTORIC PERIOD

Prehistory is actually one of the fields in history, namely the time before writing exists. Prehistoric people express their daily activities through cave paintings painted using hematite or charcoal. If we were to look at Malaysia, its prehistoric period is divided into four main stages based on the development of stone tool technology and the social-cultural evolution of the society. The age or period is divided into the Paleolithic Age, Hoabinhian or Mesolithic Age, Neolithic Age and the Metal Age. The Metal Age in Malaysia is divided into two that is according to the dating of metal tools found during archaeological research and excavation, namely the Bronze Age and Iron Age. There are those in the community who regard that this prehistoric period does not exist because it is considered as the propaganda of Western scholars. However, based on archaeological research in Malaysia, the remains or relics of the prehistoric community can prove their existence based on the discovery of the skull or human skeletons, stone tools, food waste, jewelry and also the various tools used.

These findings are further strengthened by the scientific analysis of the findings, particularly on the dating of the findings which used the chronometric dating approach. Based on this chronometric dating, the age of the oldest homo sapiens is the skull found in the Niah Caves, Sarawak, of which its age is about 40,000 years ago (Harrison 1959; Harrison 1967; Kennedy 1979). Meanwhile, based on the discovery of stone tools, it was found that there already existed settlements of prehistoric community in Malaysia since 200,000 to 100,000 years ago up to the Metal Age based on the discovery in Bukit Jawa, Lenggong, Perak (Siti Zuraina 1996), Temelong (Mokhtar, 1997a) and Lawin (Mokhtar 1997b). Hence, these community actually exists and their existence is proof that the Malay community has already settled in the Malay land since a long time ago. Evidence from research of the prehistoric people through archaeological approach has shown that the Malays were already present in the Sundaland since 200,000 years ago. Therefore, it is really important for us in Malaysia that these prehistoric evidences are included in the subject of history and taught from the primary school level so that our origins can be traced.

The Proto-historic era was an era in which writing had already existed such as Pallava, Pallava Grantha, Kawi, Ancient Cham, Ancient Khmer but in ancient languages such as Sanskrit, Pala, Old Malay, Old Javanese, Old Cham and Old Khmer. If we look at Indonesia, they use the term the classical period where during this period there existed a Malay kingdom; however, it practiced Buddhist or Hindu teachings. There is a big debate during this period in which the early scholars such as Nilakanta Sastri, Quaritch-Wales, Evans and his supporters suggest the existence of a colony from India that opened settlements in several areas in the Archipelago. If we were to look at Malaysia, one famous area is the Bujang Valley, Kedah.

Most scholars agree names like Kataha (Sanskrit), Kalagam, Kidaram, Kidara (Tamil), Chieh Che in Chinese records and Kalahbar in the Arab-Persian sources. Foreign records or Arab-Persian narrate as of religious pilgrims

particularly from China to the Archipelago. However, in the record nothing was mentioned of the presence of Indian colonies in the Old Kedah area as well as other areas in the Archipelago. Thus, the Colonization Theory put forth by Quaritch-Wales is weak and inaccurate, and so too is the Indianization process expounded by Coedes and Hall, which emphasizes on the huge role played by the Brahmans of India.

Some scholars are of the opinion that the temples in Bujang Valley were built by traders who came from India (Jacq-Hergoualc'h 1992; Sullivan 1958; Wheatley 1964), but if we are to look at the architectural elements found in the temples of Bujang Valley and also in the Archipelago, it is tinged with elements or aspects of local construction, particularly the use of plinths (Lamb 1961 Mohd Supian; 2002 Nik Hassan Shuhaimi 1984). Van Leur (1955) rejected the notion that the temples in the Archipelago were built by traders and considered that most of the traders comprised of those in the lower social groups or of the low caste and its crew consisted of the African Negro race and slaves. They were not administrators in matters involving religious rites, consecrators who have incredible power and people who can spread the religion rationalistically as well as someone who is wise and bureaucratic. This value is only found in a Brahman. He is also of the view that the Brahmans have been invited by the local kingdom or the Malay rulers to learn more about the culture and religion of India. Mohd Supian (2002) highlights the simple elements of sculpture and some of them even have errors in the sculpturing which is of the local sculpturing style. The new local element which has been discussed by the author in this thesis is the discovery of *makara* and stone urns that very clearly shows the local influence. Comparison between the *makara* in the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Java show that it has characteristics of different style and shows local creativity. The use of stone urns at the entrance of the temple is also very significant to the culture of the Archipelago where it is necessary for the purpose of washing the feet when entering the temple.

Architecture and the visual arts in the Archipelago also show local identity and are not the same as those in India. Although the basic form is similar, local elements were applied in the construction of the temples in the Archipelago as the local architects were already skilled and had mastered the *śilpaśāstra* scripture (Bosch 1930). Other local elements included in the construction of the temples are the use of reliquary and *peripih* (stone box) and these elements are only found on the temples in the Archipelago (Lamb 1961 Soekmono 1974). In the case of Sungai Mas, reliquary made of pottery was found and in the central part of the temple which is in the trenches of the temple, reliquary made from earthenware were found and in the middle of the temple, which is the part of the temple's trench, was found stone tools made from mud stones believed to be used as an accompanying implement. Five pieces of stone tools were found piled at the bottommost part of the temple which is at the foundation of the temple. Apart from the Sungai Mas temple (Site 32/34), other sites where reliquary or *peripih* can be seen are at the findings of Candi Gunung Pendiati (Site 8), Candi Pengkalan Bujang (Site 19), Candi Bukit Pendiati (Site 17) and Candi Kampung Pendiati (site 16), Candi Pengkalan Bujang (site 23)

Koentjaraningrat (2002) divides culture into 7 elements which are religious belief system, social system and organization, language and systems of knowledge, art, livelihood system and the system of science and technology. In terms of beliefs, a change in the community of Old Kedah in particular and the Archipelago in general can be seen from the acceptance toward Buddhism in the early stages and then in some places, the influence of Hinduism was accepted but still tailored to their animistic beliefs. Acculturation occurred when the community in the Archipelago used the local elements such as the use or reliquary, *peripih* (stone box) and accompanying implements as discussed previously.

Social system also changed where previously tribal chiefs were the most powerful people in the community and when the acceptance of Buddhism-Hinduism occurred, the most powerful person was the king and when the influence of the king grew stronger until it became an empire, the most powerful was hence the Emperor. This we can infer from the dominance of the empire of Srivijaya where the king of another kingdom ruled the area under the auspices of the Srivijaya empire. The caste system was also used where there existed differences in status between the rulers and the commoners.

Languages and knowledge systems of the community in Old Kedah, especially of the upper-class were also found to change when the acculturation process occurred. The upper class group or elites had already begun to master the Sanskrit language with its characters which are the characters of Southern India, Pali and Pallava. In a wider context, namely in the context of the Malay region which included Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, Java and Borneo, the use of Old Malay in inscriptions was found to occur in the 7th century AD. This shows the occurrence of change in the knowledge system of the community in the Archipelago when Old Malay had begun to be used in the production of inscriptions replacing the Sanskrit language. Among the earliest inscriptions using the Old Malay language are the Kedukan Bukit Inscription (606 Saka/684M), Talang Tuwo Inscription (606 Saka/684M), Kota Kapur, Pulau Bangka Inscription (608 Saka/ 686M), Karang Brahi, Jambi Inscription (614 Saka/ 692M), Telaga Batu Inscription (abad ke-7 Masihi) and Palas Pesemah Inscription (abad ke-7 Masihi). Although all these inscriptions mentioned above were found in Sumatra, the Malay region's influence at that time surpassed the geo-political boundaries that exist today. The vocabulary of Old Malay is also influenced a lot by the Sanskrit language which shows that the influence of the Indian culture was absorbed into the lives of the Malay community at that time.

The arts of the Old Kedah Malay community can be seen from the production of religious sculptures that have style or way of doing that is different like those found in the sculptures in India. The example that can be looked at is the production of the *makara* object that was found in Sungai Mas (Site 32/34). The motifs and elements that are on the *makara* shows that the community then had high artistic flair and it highlighted the local arts or 'local genius'. If we were to make comparison with other *makaras* found in Sumatra, Java and Champa, it clearly shows the local artistic style where the motifs and elements are different. The role played by these these *makara* objects hist sculptures or the

Bodhisatwa sculptures in which if we were to look at the style of clothing, it shows the local style of attire especially the Avalokitesvaran sculpture.

The livelihood system of the Old Kedah Malay community was found to thrive when this acculturation process took place. It is already known that the Malay at the time were great in international voyages and trading was one of the main sources of livelihood. Once in the past, there only existed supply ports but starting from the 7th century AD many entrepôts existed in the Archipelago.

The process of acculturation and knowledge transformation of the Malay community of Old Kedah can be showcased and evidenced in this research based on primary sources where these primary sources are obtained as a result of the latest archaeological excavation and scientific research that specializes in the composition of ancient bricks of temples in the Bujang Valley. The Colonization theory presented by Quaritch-Wales is rejected and the Indigenization Theory of Indian Culture presented by Nik Hassan Shuhaimi Nik Abdul Rahman is more relevant if we are to debate about the Bujang Valley, Kedah or the Malay Kingdom of Old Kedah. With respect to the temples being built by traders from India that is put forth by Jacq-Hergoualc'h (1992), Sullivan (1958), Wheatley (1964) and Nasha (2007), it is a very weak statement and we need to look at the huge role played by sailors, travelers, traders and Malay or indigenous authorities who appear to have been involved in international trade since the centuries before AD. This is based on the fact that the Malays had already successfully sailed up to Madagascar since the early centuries AD, based on genetic and linguistic research (Zuliskandar 2011). It is clear that the ones who were actively involved in sailing are the Malay race and the ones who intensified the international trade between India and China since the 2nd century AD is also the Malay race who acted as the mediator. The Old Kedah community also evolved from the prehistoric society living in Guar Kepah since 5000 years ago.

CONTRIBUTION OF ARCHAEOLOGY, HISTORY AND CULTURE

The contribution of archeology, history and culture is in spiritual and physical form. In spiritual terms, the areas or fields develop the identity among those who study history in school and through non-formal education, such as through the mass media. The people are exposed to what is the prehistoric and proto-historic period and Malaysian history. Through the knowledge, they become aware of the fact that they have roots and realize that their country went through a long history. Evidence of the existence of the prehistoric community can be found in Gua Niah (Sarawak), Gua Mulu (Sarawak), Gua Tengkorak (Sabah), Tingkayu (Sabah), Gua Madai (Sabah), Gunung Senyum (Pahang), Gua Cha and Gua Peraling (Kelantan) and many others. This means that in most states of Malaysia there is evidence linked to the discovery of prehistoric people who were the ancestors of the Malays.

Sometimes, there exist uncomfortable or unpleasant situations to those who adhere to the concept of truth. This is because sometimes archaeologists without being aware think that Homo erectus are the ancestors to the Homo sapiens; for example, there are those who link the discovery in Bukit Bunuh, Lenggong with Homo sapiens whereas the evidence has connection with Homo erectus. Scientists so far have not found the "missing link" between the two species. Moreover, those who believe in the existence of God, The Creator do not adhere to the Darwinism or the Theory of Evolution because they believe that ancestors of humans were Adam and Eve and created by Allah. Every creature is born through creation and not through an evolutionary process. However, Islam does not oppose the concept of human ancientness such as the belief of Bishop Ussher and Bishop Lightfoot who believe the new man is only 6,000 years old.

It is important to build identity through the support of archeology, history and culture. But we must realize that there are those who are trying to strengthen the faith of those who hold fast to religion by debating the truth of the Theory of Evolution by saying things such as Islamic scholars like Ibn Khaldun had thought about the creation of man through evolution. Various other ways are used by those who do not believe in the Creator and His creation. If we are not careful, we will also go astray by their views. Furthermore, many of the Malaysian scientists are being led by those who have no religion and based everything on science and not the will of God. They do not know who Charles Darwin is and who Wallace is, and consider them as a hero without question. They too, without question accept the fact that Ibn Khaldun believes in the concept of human and plant evolution.

Through archaeological, historical and cultural education, humans will realize that their origin is from one gene which is split into different skin color and facial features. Physical anthropologists divide beings into four main groups in the world, namely Caucasoid, Negroid, Mongoloid, and Native American. This division may be too general. DNA research today shows the human 'races' originated from one gene. It indirectly rejects evolution. We at the Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation (ATMA), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, stress on the existence of another main race which is the Malay+Polynesia race that evolved in Tanah Sunda (Sundaland or Sundaic region) and spread to Madagascar until the Pacific Islands. This theory was once proposed by a scholar from German named Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840) who put forth the concept of Malay and classified as the brown race.

In 1775, a doctoral dissertation titled *De generis humani varietate nativa* (On the Natural Varieties of Mankind), Blumenbach outlined four main human races by skin color, namely Caucasian (white), Negroid (black), Native American (red), and Mongolian (yellow). By 1795, Blumenbach added another race called 'Malay' which he considered a subcategory of both the Ethiopian and Mongoloid races (Graves 2001). The Malay race belonged to those of a "brown color: from olive and a clear mahogany to the darkest clove or chestnut brown." Blumenbach expanded the term "Malay" to include the native inhabitants of the Marianas, the Philippines, the Maldives, Sumatra, Java, China, as well as Pacific Island like the Tahitians. He

ing link, showing the

transition between the "primary" race, the Caucasians, and the "degenerate" race, the Negroids. Blumenbach writes:

"Malay variety. Tawny-coloured; hair black, soft, curly, thick and plentiful; head moderately narrowed; forehead slightly swelling; nose full, rather wide, as it were diffuse, end thick; mouth large, upper jaw somewhat prominent with parts of the face when seen in profile, sufficiently prominent and distinct from each other. This last variety includes the islanders of the Pacific Ocean, together with the inhabitants of the Mariannas, the Philippine, the Molucca and the Sunda Islands, and of the Malayan peninsula. I wish to call it the Malay, because the majority of the men of this variety, especially those who inhabit the Indian islands close to the Malacca peninsula, as well as the Sandwich, the Society, and the Friendly Islanders, and also the Malambi of Madagascar down to the inhabitants of Easter Island, use the Malay idiom" (Graves 2001)

Blumenbach's statement indirectly supports the existence of another human race, namely the Malay race or Malay-Polynesian. Malay-Polynesian race evolved from the Malay Sundaland. Hence, the Malay overlordship in the Archipelago cannot be denied by any party. The statement which said that the Malays were also immigrants is an incorrect statement. This is because prior to the formation of geopolitics after the colonial era of the Western powers, the Malay-Polynesian race was free to move wherever they wanted to go and it did not pose much of a problem because their language is almost similar that is under the Austronesian family. Multi-disciplinary research shows that the Malay world had spread from Madagascar in the west to Taiwan in the north, to Australia in the South and Polynesia in the east similar to the Indians who have their own world or continent, as well as the Chinese, and hence the Malays too have their own world or continent.

Another thing to keep in mind is that in order to reconstruct archeology, history and culture, humans need to use a multidisciplinary approach involving archaeological data, geologic data, DNA data and ethno-linguistic data. Global temperature change approach, namely the rise and fall of the sea level, is used by FL Dunn for the Southeast Asia region (1975). Today, through DNA and fluctuating sea level data, scientific archeology can put forth the Out of Africa theory, probably from northern Africa or if estimated the Prophet Adam was sent down in Sri Lanka and then met up with Eve in Mecca, and hence the movement of early humans was from the Middle East.

As a result of research, archaeology, history and culture can also be tourism product. The best example is Melaka. Although Melaka does not have prehistoric or proto-history heritage, Melaka has successfully developed and built dozens of museums such as the Baba and Nyonya Museum, Portuguese Boat (Flor de la mar) Museum and many others. It also owns architecture from the era of the Dutch era (Stadhuis) and British and there is also the heritage of the Portuguese

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y the bank of Melaka
. Similarly, the islands

of Penang with its diversity of cultural heritage and architecture can attract tourists to the state.

On 7 July 2008, Melaka and George Town have been given World Heritage Site status by UNESCO. Melaka and George Town are remarkable examples of historic colonial towns on the Straits of Malacca that demonstrate a succession of historical and cultural influences arising from their former function as trading ports linking East and West. These are the most complete surviving historic city centers on the Straits of Malacca with a multi-cultural living heritage originating from the trade routes from Great Britain and Europe through the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and the Malay Archipelago to China. Both towns bear testimony to a living multi-cultural heritage and tradition of Asia, where the many religions and cultures met and coexisted. They reflect the coming together of cultural elements from the Malay Archipelago, India, and China with those of Europe, creating unique architecture, culture and townscape.

Other states that have archeological and historical heritage sites and rich in culture should increase efforts to highlight these tourism products. States that are rich in archaeological heritage and natural heritage such as Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Perak, Selangor, Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Sabah and Sarawak must strive to develop archaeological and historical heritage sites for the development of tourism products. There are several mountain complex in Pahang such as Gunung Senyum, Kota Gelanggi and many others including Lake Chini that can be highlighted as tourism product. In Kelantan, there are Gua Musang, Gua Cha, Gua Chawas and many others that can be developed as tourism product. The state with the most archaeological heritage and natural heritage is Sarawak, and among the heritage are Gua Niah, Gua Mulu and Gua Santubung. On December 2, 2000, the Mulu National Park, Sarawak and Kinabalu National Park, Sabah were declared as world heritage site for the category of natural heritage by UNESCO. This recognition has inevitably attracted both local and foreign tourists to enjoy the natural beauty offered by both these sites. This indirectly will provide economic returns to the state government in general and the local community in particular.

In the endeavor of tourism product development, several issues must be addressed. Firstly, the products to be developed must have potential and development should involve the local community. Secondly, there is a need for having adequate finances. Finance must involve the government and the investors. The government provides the product while the investors provide the infrastructure. Infrastructure includes accommodation, eateries, transportation and activities including rest areas. In addition, the product must have the allure of sustainability. This is because it needs to evolve over time as long as it is alive or sustainable. Hence, the care or management of a product must be implemented efficiently. Efficiency must be owned by those in power. It is often the case in Malaysia where the people or parties responsible for a heritage site deny responsibility for a product when things do not work out right. Indeed, their irresponsible attitude should not exist.

Among the governors of historical and cultural heritage sites, the state government should manage them efficiently and bring

profitable returns to the state that owns it. It requires a lot of investment but the profit is also substantial. Therefore, the investment is not lost and remains throughout the ages. Most states have many archeological, historical and cultural products that can be developed. What is needed are initiatives and the boldness to invest as implemented by Melaka.

Apart from taking advantage of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage to build national identity and develop the economy, the three things can also be applied in the creation of publishing products. There are many aspects that can be produced. Moreover, the publishing products can also be created through various media such as the print media, video, photography and many others. Additionally, each aspect can be split up. Among them are archaeology, history, and culture. Furthermore, each aspect can be divided into specific topics. For example, archaeology can be divided into prehistoric heritage for one location and so too with history and culture. Hence, many publishing products can be created. For the video media, we can also divide it into various aspects. As an example, culture can be divided into tangible culture and intangible culture. Each aspect can be divided into different types of culture.

CONCLUSION

The contribution of archaeology, history and culture is tremendous in the development of a nation and country. What is expressed in my presentation is general and not exhaustive. Nevertheless, these three things, namely archaeology, history and culture go hand in hand and are in harmony with each other. This is because archaeology is also history, and the data used to reconstruct history is from cultural heritage. As said by Glyn Daniel, "Archaeology is that branch of the study of history which deals with the material remains of man's past..." (1981).

Given the importance of the role of archeology, history and culture in the country and nation's development activities, hence data interpretation of these three things must take into account previous studies. It should be emphasized here that the evaluation of past studies is compulsory. This matter is raised because many interpretations have been made without taking into account the views of previous researchers. It does not matter if a person agrees or disagrees, the views of previous researchers must be given attention. Additionally, the interpretation of history cannot be made arbitrarily as expressed by Roeloftz Meilink who said that the interpretation cannot be made from the decks of the ship.

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