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The Netherlands

Java's last frontier : the struggle for hegemony of Blambangan, c. 1763-1813

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Citation

Margana, S. (2007, December 13). *Java's last frontier : the struggle for hegemony of Blambangan, c. 1763-1813*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/12547>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

CHAPTER FOUR

PUPUTAN BAYU: THE REBELLION OF THE PSEUDO-WILIS IN BLAMBANGAN, 1771-1773

Introduction

With the capture of *Pangeran* Wilis in 1768, the rebellion against the VOC in Blambangan ended and peace could finally be restored. The Company banished all of the rebel leaders to the island of Banda, including the first two Regents installed by the VOC, *Mas* Uno and *Mas* Anom. However, the intractable problem of deep-seated ethnic and religious sentiments simmered on as potentially disruptive elements which might spark new political disturbances in Blambangan. The attention paid by the Company to the rebellion of *Pangeran* Wilis extended only to its origins from the political point of view. The disturbing factor was the intervention of the Balinese in Blambangan politics. Weighing up the significant role played by the Balinese in the rebellion, the Dutch administration surmised that the former would always be potential supporters of the Blambangan people in their resistance to further attempts by the Company to establish itself in this region. The religious factor and the primordial linkage between the Balinese and the Blambangan people were believed to be the key factors which guaranteed Balinese support. A large number of the Blambangan royal family were of Balinese origin, and in the eyes of the Balinese, Blambangan represented the last buffer against the expansion of Islam into the island of Bali. Anxious to prevent any pretext for intervention by the Balinese and any recrudescence of an anti-Dutch movement in Blambangan, the Company authorities in *Java's Oosthoek* devised the idea of encouraging the Islamizing of the Blambangan people. This policy was engineered to stifle ideological sentiment and attempt to eliminate primordial relationships between the two realms.

As might have been expected, this policy raised considerable obstacles to the introduction of law and order to the newly conquered region. The Islamization of Blambangan proved to be counter-productive for the maintenance of the peace. For more than two

centuries, the people of Blambangan had strongly opposed the twin spectres of Islamization and Javanese colonialism, the two bugbears aroused by recurrent endeavours made by Javanese-Muslim rulers of Mataram and their vassals to exert control over the region. Colonization campaigns by the Javanese kings had alienated the Blambangan people, draining them of any ethnic sentiment of being Javanese; professing to be Javanese by this time meant being both Muslim and colonized.

In 1768 Sutanagara was installed as the new Regent of Blambangan by the Company. Although Sutanagara accepted the appointment, he must have experienced profound difficulty in renouncing his faith, Hinduism, to which he was devoted, and no less pain in disavowing his genealogical relationships with the Balinese. If he were to comply with *Gezaghebber* Luzac's scheme, he had to convert himself and his people to Islam. This pressure deeply affected Sutanagara's good relationship with the Company which had been running smoothly since the outbreak of the rebellion of *Pangeran Wilis*. This impossible situation forced Sutanagara to take desperate action: he launched a rebellion against the Company. The Balinese once again were suspected of being the main supporters of this newly staged rebellion.

The colonial administration faced no significant problem in dealing with its former ally. Sutanagara's plan to mount an uprising was quickly discovered, and measures put in place to deal with it. Once again no real lesson was learned and grave error was committed when a few Javanese Muslims from Surabaya were posted to the administration in Blambangan. The appointment of these non-Blambangan people encouraged yet another vehement upsurge in anti-Javanese ethnic sentiment. The clash between this time-honoured sentiment and the economic extortion practised by the Dutch and the new *Regent* inevitably provoked another massive rebellion, inspired by the twin ideologies of nativism (localism) and revivalism. The rebellion was centred on Bayu, a mountainous area in the north-west of Blambangan. A man who called himself '*Pangeran Wilis*' or '*Susubunan Jagapati*' emerged as its leader. This was the biggest rebellion ever to occur under VOC rule at Blambangan. It took more than two years, 1771-1773 to quash the rebellion. This chapter examines the origins of the rebellion of *Susubunan Jagapati* who is called the *Gewaande Wilis* (the supposed-Wilis).

Setting: Blambangan as Religious Frontier

To acquire a better understanding of the ethnic and religious sentiment prevalent among the Blambangan people, it is essential to look back at the history of Blambangan in the sixteenth century when the people in this region were introduced to Islam and Christianity for the first time. This was an epoch which witnessed dramatic changes in Javanese political and cultural life. The Kingdom Majapahit finally collapsed in the 1530s. On the north coast of Java, Demak, the first Islamic kingdom in the island, was established in 1513. Ten years later of the former Majapahit territory was already Islamized at least nominally. Tuban and Kediri accepted Islam in 1527 and Surabaya three years later. With the fall of Majapahit, Blambangan was left as the only Hindu kingdom in Java. As the realm crumbled, most of the very devout Hindu community in former Majapahit territory moved to the east, to such areas as Pasuruhan, Panarukan, Blambangan, and Bali. In 1545, Demak failed in its efforts to Islamize Panarukan by exercising its military power, but its endeavours to Islamize Blambangan continued unabated. The *Babad Blambangan* describes how, during the reign of Santa Guna (around 1575), a young Arab Muslim, *Sayid Iskhak* or *Seh Walilanang*, arrived in Blambangan via Ampeldenta (Surabaya). His main goal was to convert the King of Blambangan. It so happened that the king's daughter, who was gravely ill, was healed by this *Seh Walilanang*. As a reward, the King granted the Muslim cleric his daughter as his wife. This was as far as he was prepared to go and he steadfastly refused to convert to Islam. Deeply disappointed *Seh Walilanang* left Blambangan and abandoned his wife who was pregnant. After his departure an epidemic raged throughout the kingdom. Just at that time, *Seh Walilanang's* wife gave birth to the baby, but the King set the baby adrift on the sea to save him from the scourge of the disease. Fortunately, the baby was rescued and fostered by *Nyai Gede Pinatih*, the rich widow of *Ki Samboja*, a Blambangan priest who had been expelled from this kingdom. Later, the baby was known as *Raden Paku* or *Sunan Giri*,¹ a holy man and one of the nine prominent *wali* or saints who are believed to have proselytized Islam in Java.

Two Central Javanese chronicles, the *Serat Kanda* and the *Babad Tanah Djawi* which describe the Islamization of Blambangan, infer that the arrival of *Seh Walilanang* took place much earlier, namely during

¹ Winarsih Arifin, *Babad Blambangan*, (Yogyakarta: Bentang Budaya, 1995).

the administration of *Menak* Dadaliputih who was said to be the son of Bhre Wirabumi.² This latter version also recounts that Seh Walilanang failed to induce the King to accept Islam, and that the King actually wanted to execute him. To save his life, *Seh* Walilanang fled from Blambangan leaving behind his wife who was pregnant. Once born, the baby was cast adrift because the King refused to foster a child whose father was a Muslim.

Presumably both accounts were written by Muslim writers (*pujangga*). It seems the word ‘epidemic’ or ‘disease’ was used symbolically. It is an analogy for the old faith of Blambangan, Hinduism. The disappearance of the epidemic after the arrival of Seh Walilanang was a sign that he had succeeded in Islamizing the people of Blambangan. In these versions the cleric persuades the King’s daughter to convert but he fails to make any impression at all on the King himself. The epidemic broke out again after his departure which can be interpreted to mean that the Blambangan people reverted to their old religion. The casting out of the baby is a symbol of the opposition to the Islamic element. Once again, symbolism is used by the writer of the *Babad Blambangan* to describe the recalcitrant reaction to Islamization.

Around the 1570s, after a few decades under Balinese control, Blambangan was reoccupied by the dynasty of Lembu Miruda. The name of the new ruler was Santa Guna or *Menak* Cablang. He was the son of *Menak* Cucu of Candi Bang, the brother of *Menak* Pentor. In 1575, Panarukan was conquered by Muslim people (probably from Surabaya), but was later recaptured by King Santaguna. In 1584, when Portuguese merchants arrived at Panarukan, they were allowed by Santaguna to buy slaves to be taken to Malaka. A Portuguese settlement was established in Panarukan and the Capucin order even established a church and monastery there, and four Portuguese missionaries arrived there five year later to run this religious establishment. The Crown Prince of Blambangan was converted to Christianity, but he caught *campak* (measles) and died. These Portuguese missionaries also succeeded in converting one Blambangan Hindu cleric, which aroused such antagonistic Hindu religious sentiment that one of the Portuguese priests was murdered.

In 1587 Pasuruan, the most peripheral territory of western Blambangan, was conquered by Senapati of Mataram. In 1588 the son

² C. Lekkerkerker, ‘Blambangan’, *De Indische Gids*, vol. ii, (Amsterdam: De Bussy, 1923).

of Santaguna came to power after the abdication of his father. In 1596-1597, war broke out between Blambangan and Pasuruan. In his journals (2 April-1595 – 13 June 1597), a member of the first Dutch fleet to visit the archipelago, Frank der Does, writes he was informed by the Blambangan noblemen that the Regent of Pasuruan had requested the hand of the daughter of the King of Blambangan (at that time Thomas Cavendish was there). The latter complied with the request, but after the wedding night the Blambanganese princess was murdered by her own husband. This was the immediate cause of the outbreak of a war between the two parties between. In his journal, Van der Does emphasizes that the murder of the Blambangan princess had to do with her refusal to convert to Islam. This war was also recorded in the log of the voyage of the first Dutch fleet to the East Indies (1595-97).³ The log reports that the Dutch arrived at Blambangan on 17 January 1597, but that they could not obtain any provisions, because that place had been besieged by 8,000 men from Pasuruan for three months. When Blambangan called upon assistance of the Kings of Gelgel (Klungkung) Bali, Lombok, and Sumbawa, the request for military assistance elicited no response, so that the King had to repeat his appeal, this time promising to pay an annual tribute and to surrender autonomous power. The Dutch ship encountered the Balinese armies massed at Gilimanuk Bay, and Blambangan was blockaded from the sea. In Bali (Loloan, Jembrana, and Kuta, Badung) the Dutch also failed to find any provisions and fresh water, because all attention was directed towards the expedition of 20,000 troops to rescue Blambangan from the Muslim siege. During the war, the Portuguese establishment in Panarukan was destroyed and in 1599 all the Portuguese missionaries had to leave Blambangan.⁴ The war ended with the defeat of Blambangan by the Balinese, followed by the collapse of the kingdom in 1597.⁵ All the court families were put to the sword, and the Balinese, *Mas Kriyan*, assumed power in Blambangan.

³ Jarig Cornelis Mollema, *De eerste schipvaart der Hollanders naar Oost-Indië, 1595-1597*, ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1935).

⁴ About 2 kilometres from the town of Panarukan, a fortress was built in the village of Kuta Bedah (Ravaged Town) to commemorate this event.

⁵ Olivier van Noort, who visited Jaratan Gresik on 3 February 1601, also mentions the conquest of Blambangan. He writes that Blambangan had been conquered and the Hindus king and his whole family were assassinated. See J. K. J. De Jonge, *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag in Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol ii, ('s-Gravenhage, 1862-1909), 201. Other European travellers who visited Blambangan were Francis Drake in 1580 and Thomas Cavendish in 1588. Drake calls the king Radja Denan, whereas

Until the first half of the eighteenth century, Blambangan was neither Christianized nor Islamized although it was briefly conquered by Mataram between 1625 and 1636. Dutch envoys who visited Blambangan in 1691 and again in 1736, witnessed that the two mightiest Kings of Blambangan, Tawangalun and Danureja, were still Hindu. Pigeaud, who refers to their reports writes:

From the reports of contemporary Dutch visitors it can be said with some certainty that the bodies of Tawangalun, who had been the *Susubunan* and of *Pangeran* Danureja were cremated after their deaths in 1679 and 1736. Therefore it may be concluded that that these kings of the line of Tawangalun had not converted to Islam.⁶

The influence of Islam on the Blambangan royal family only began to emit faint signals during the reign of *Pangeran Adipati* Danuningrat or *Pangeran Pati* (1736-1764). Local and Dutch sources, both mention that Danuningrat, was still a Hindu. *Gezaghebber* Breton observed that when he met him in Pasuruan in 1763, the Blambangan King ate no beef as this was normally a dietary prohibition in Hinduism, but he did have a Muslim spiritual advisor.⁷ Perhaps, after he had lived a few weeks in Pasuruan and few months in Lumajang, he had been introduced more closely to Islamic doctrine because the rulers of both regencies were Muslim. There is one single shred of evidence which explicitly states that Danuningrat converted to Islam before his banishment to Bali. The historical artefacts found in Seseh (Bali) do suggest either that Danuningrat indeed converted to Islam or that the local Hindu people had regarded him as a Muslim. It is widely accepted that his tomb in Seseh is a Muslim grave because his body was buried and not cremated.

Cavendish reports the conquest of Blambangan and the condition of the Portuguese settlement. He also mentions that the king was 100 year old and had 100 wives.

⁶ Door berichten van Hollandsche tijdgenooten staat voldoende vast, dat de lichamen van den Tawangaloen, die Soenan was, en van *Pangeran* Danoeredjo, na hun dood onderscheidenlijk in 1679-1736, verbrand zijn. Men mag dus wel aannemen, dat deze Vorsten van het geslacht van Tawangaloen nog geen Moslims waren. Th. Pigeaud, 'Aantekeningen betreffende den Javaanschen Oosthoek', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal- Land en Volkekunde*, vol LXXII, (1932), 249.

⁷ Engelhard Coll. 19b, Consideration over Blambangan by Hendrik Breton, Surabaya 30 October 1763; See also Brandes, 'Verslag over een Babad Blambangan' *TBG* (1894), 325.

Clues to the influence of Islam among the Blambangan court elite can also be found in the local sources, as in the case of *Pangeran Wilis*, the half-brother of Danuningrat, it is clearly stated in the *Babad Blambangan* that, during his retreat in Pasisir Manis, Wilis was actively reading the Islamic-Javanese text, the *Suluk Sudarsih*. Pigeaud who scrutinized this chronicle offers a similar interpretation, saying that it was quite likely that Danuningrat and his brother, Wilis, had converted to Islam, or were seen to have done so by others. Pigeaud also believes that the banishment of Danuningrat was retribution for his efforts to make overtures to the Company, which was well known as the ally and protector of the Central Javanese Kings and as kindly disposed towards Islam.⁸

Sutanagara and the Islamization of Blambangan

After the banishment of Wilis, *Mas Uno*, and *Mas Anom* to Banda, there were no longer any prominent figures from the Blambangan royal families left who could exert a strong influence on the politics of the kingdom. The only person who could maintain a prominent political role was *Mas Wasengsari*, the son of *Mas Ayu Tawi* the older sister of the last King of Blambangan, Danuningrat. Wasengsari shared a genealogical relationship with the Islamic ruler of Probolinggo, which makes it plausible to assume that he may have displayed a more moderate attitude to Islam. His draw back was his weak character and his political behaviour was strongly influenced by Sutanagara. This situation was also the reason why the Company chose Sutanagara instead of Wasengsari as the new Regent of Blambangan. Although he did not share any genealogical relationship with the Blambangan ruling dynasty, Sutanagara was the only senior politician in Blambangan who had real power: shored up by a large number of followers, he had displayed a good knowledge of the political administration.

⁸ Het is dus wel waarschijnlijk, dat *Pangeran Danoeningrat* (*Pangeran Pati*), de laatste Adipati, en zijn broeder *Pangeran Wilis*, reeds Moslim waren, of daarvoor doorgingen. Misschien is hiermede in verband te brengen de verwijdering die er ontstaan is tusschen dezen Adipati en zijn Balineesche beschermheeren, en de aansluiting die hij zocht bij de Compagnie. Het is bekend dat de Compagnie in den *Oostboek*, als de bondgenoot en beschermster der Midden-Javaansche Vorsten, beschouwd werd als den Islam zeer goed gezind. Pigeaud, 'Aantekeningen', 252.

Only a few pieces of evidence from the Dutch sources reveal anything about the figure of Sutanagara. It said that he was the son of a senior member of the Blambangan bureaucratic elite who had served *Pangeran* Danureja who passed away in 1736. He was married to a Balinese princess, perhaps from the family of the Gusti Agong of Mengwi. There were at least four members of Balinese royal families who shared genealogical ties with Sutanagara, namely: *Gusti Bagus* Mariya; *Gusti Bagus* Lering; Tirtakusuma and *Gusti Bagus* Wayan. The first three noblemen were his uncles, and the last his half-brother.⁹ Sutanagara also served Danuningrat as *Patih*. During the rebellion of *Pangeran* Wilis, he played an important role in fighting against the rebels on the Dutch side. When an internal dispute triggered by the anti-Balinese party erupted at the court of Blambangan, he adopted an opportunistic position, establishing a strategic political alignment with Wasengsari. Sutanagara chose this political strategy to reach his goal of succeeding *Mas Anom* and *Mas Uno* as Regent of Blambangan. When he was finally appointed Regent, this did not make him completely happy because he had to sacrifice his religion. As a Balinese by origin, Sutanagara devoted his life to Hinduism. As the newly appointed Regent he was forced to convert to Islam.¹⁰

As mentioned above in passing, the idea of Islamizing Blambangan had been the brainchild of *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac, perhaps with support from the Madurese, Pasuruan, and Probolinggo rulers, but it was apparently without the agreement of the High Government in Batavia. Governor-General Van der Parra responded to this idea with some anxiety, wondering whether this daring policy might not set off serious trouble in the *Oosthoek*.

As Regent of the whole country of Blambangan, and introduced to the people as such, but without him, by the strange whim of the said *Gezaghebber*, having been persuaded to embrace the Mohammedan faith much less to force either him or his associates to do so, he had to occupy himself with the expulsion of priests who we had charged to be left undisturbed in the observance of their religion.¹¹

⁹ ANRI, Residency Archive of Banyuwangi 6, Name list of *Pangeran*, *Gusti*, *Mas*, and the lower-ranking Blambangan court family who were descended from Gusti Agong Mengwi, Ulupampang 22 May 1771

¹⁰ 'Het heydendom verlatende, tot het Mahometanendom waren overgegaan'. De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, vol. xi: p. xvii

¹¹ Tot Regent van het geheele Balemboangse land aan en den volken als zoodanig voorgesteld worden, maar ook zonder hem, naar het wonderlijk sentiment van den Gezaghebber voormeld (Luzac) tot het Mahometaans geloof te persuaderen, veel

Another disappointment to Sutanagara was the refusal of the Company to release his family from custody. During the rebellion of Wilis, many of his family members of Balinese origin who fought on the side of *Pangeran* Wilis were taken hostage. These factors contributed to his jaundiced attitude towards the Company. In a secret meeting held in the house of his *Patih* Suratrana, he gave his reasons and expressed his eagerness to drive the Company out of Blambangan by force:

I am skilled enough to do so, and I cannot rest, neither enjoy food nor drink, before I have eradicated the Company because it has forcibly taken away so many of my family here, my resolve shall not fail even if I must suffer the same fate.¹²

A year after his appointment as Regent of Blambangan, he began to hatch a plan for the rebellion. First, he sabotaged the Company policy which aimed to introduce a new currency to *Java's Oosthoek*. He prevented the inhabitants from exchanging their *kepeng* for the new coins introduced by the Dutch by sending his men into the villages to collect all the *kepeng* owned by the inhabitants on the pretext these would be exchanged for the Dutch *doits*.¹³ He also regularly started to collect money and goods from the inhabitants on behalf of Resident Biesheuvel and relieved his *Patih*, Wasengsasi of his job of collecting *cacah* or *pachtpenningen*, transferring this task to his Second *Patih*, Suratrana. Sutanagara also kept all the tribute and *pachtpenningen* collected from the inhabitants for himself. According to the contract, these should have been divided equally with the Second Regent

min hem of zijn aanstaande onderhorigen daartoe te dwingen, nog zig met het verdrijven van priesters te bemoeien, welke menschen wij gelast hebben ongestoord in het oeffenen hunner godsdienst te laten. See Governor - General Petrus Albertus van der Parra and the Council of the Indies to the Gentlemen XVII, 31 December 1773. De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, vol. xi, 242

¹² Ik ben daar in wijs genoeg te doen, en ik kan niet rusten, nog met smaak eten of drinken, voordat ik de Compagnie uitgeroeit heb, wijl ze zoo veele van mijne familie van hier in gevangenis heeft weggevoert, zal ik in mijn voorneemen niet afluaten, al wist ik voor af 't zelfde lot te moeten ondergaan. See ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, The Confession of the district chief of Kota, Jagakrasa, as reported by the Committee of Investigation, 2 May 1771

¹³ ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, The confession of Suratrana, the former *Patih* of Blambangan, as reported by the Committee of Investigation, 2 May 1771

Wasengsari.¹⁴ He began to terrorize the Blambanganese converts to Islam by forcing them to re-establish Hindu-Balinese ceremonies, threatening them with capital punishment if they disobeyed. Clandestine communications with the Balinese were set up as well.¹⁵ In March 1771, Sutanagara received four Balinese envoys (among them Lemuspita and *Rangga* Mandala) sent by the Balinese King of Karangasem, *Gusti* Rapsari, the vassal of *Gusti* Agong of Mengwi. The envoys brought a message from their King stating that he would send 500 Balinese soldiers in forty vessels under the command of *Gusti* Carik Padang to assist the people of Blambangan to evict the Company from their territory. These warriors would depart from Patemon in the month of *Mulud* (Islamic-Javanese calendar), and were expected to land at Binkap, on the south coast of Blambangan.¹⁶ It seems the Balinese envoy also asked Sutanagara to release two Balinese prisoners who had been arrested in Blambangan few years earlier.¹⁷

After assurance by some Balinese rulers, who are called Sunagara's *bloedvrienden vorstjes* in the Dutch archives, Sutanagara began to observe the strength of the Company forces in Blambangan. *Mantri* Singayuda, who was in charge of keeping a watch on the Dutch redoubt, reported that at that time (1771) it was occupied by twenty-five personnel only. Weighing up the situation, Sutanagara was convinced that, with the military assistance pledged by the Balinese, he could easily force the Company out of Blambangan. To organize this manoeuvre Sutanagara arranged a meeting with his two *Patih*, Wasengsari and Suratrana, and with a number of *Mantri* (ministers) and few village chiefs from Blambangan. This gathering was held in the house of *Patih* Suratrana

¹⁴ ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, The Confession of the Second Regent of Blambangan, Wasengsari, as reported by the Committee of Investigation, 2 May 1771.

¹⁵ ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, The confession of Suratrana, the former *Patih* of Blambangan, as reported by the Committee of Investigation, 2 May 1771.

¹⁶ Suratrana was in charge of guarding four Balinese envoys on their way back to Bali. They spent one night on the coast in Banyualit and then moved farther on to Pakem, where a small vessel had been provided. In his confession, Wasengsari, the second Regent of Blambangan said that he witnessed the meeting between the Balinese envoys and Sutanagara, but he did not dare to report it the Company. Sutanagara had vowed to kill anybody who had the temerity to inform the Company. ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, The Confession of the Second Regent of Blambangan, Wasengsari, as reported by the Committee of Investigation, 2 May 1771.

¹⁷ ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, Singayuda confessed that on 3 January, he was instructed by Sutanagara to release two Balinese prisoners. The Confession of Singayuda, 30 April 1771.

in March 1771, precisely during the Grebeg festival, at which he delivered a strong clear message that the people of Blambangan should owe their loyalty to the Balinese ruler of Mengwi and him only, instead of the Company and the Javanese Kings. He instructed to be prepared with weapons and ammunition with which to drive the Company out of Blambangan.¹⁸ *Mantri* Singandaka was put in charge of bringing over all the inhabitants of the village of Wira to assist the Balinese in a joint fight against the Company. Jagakrasa was given the task of ridding Blambangan of all Europeans.¹⁹ The Balinese King of Mengwi, Gusti Agong endorsed this plan.²⁰

It seems that not all of the *Mantri* invited to the meeting held in the house of *Patih* Suratrana by Sutanagara agreed with him. Among the dissidents were *Mantri* Bawalaksana and Jurukunci. The conspiracy was eventually leaked, and the Dutch Resident took immediate action and seized the Regent and his adherents, including the Second Regent of Blambangan, Wasengsari. At the end of April 1771, a committee of investigation which consisted of *Vaandrig* Willem van Schaar, Cornelis Commers, and Jacob Wittevrangel, delivered the verdict that the two Regents of Blambangan, Sutanagara and Wasengsari, were guilty as charged, although both Regents had denied all the accusations against them.²¹ The Governor suggested Batavia banish Sutanagara and Wasengsari and their families to the most terrifying place which could be thought of as the Company slaves for the term of their natural

¹⁸ ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, Among the other member of the elite were *Mantri* Singapraya, Singalengkara, Singandaka, Singdrana, Titakusuma, Jayakusuma, Suramanggala, Singadana, Bawalaksana, Manongkusuma, Singamarto, Sanangtaka, Onggacipta, Combong, Naladiwongsa, Puspatrana, *Lurah* Seningada, Laembu Wriakasa, Ace Jayasinengkraya, Ramenadaya, Nala, Pasangsang, *Bapak* Lakar, Jaksawarna, Surawarna, Wiradita, Prawiralanda, *Jurukunci* Muda, ANRI, Banyuwangi 6 Report of the committee of the investigation Willem Van Schaar and Jacob Wittevrangel, 30 April 1771.

¹⁹ The confession of *Mantri* Singadaka, 23 April 1771.

²⁰ In his interrogation, Wasengsari said that the King of Mengwi had always trusted Sutanagara to seize control of Blambangan from the VOC. ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, the Confession of the second Regent of Blambangan, Wasengsari, as reported by the committee of investigation, 2 May 1771.

²¹ ANRI, Banyuwangi 6, Report of the Committee of the Investigation Willem van Schaar and Jacob Wittevrangel, 30 April 1771 VOC 3337, Minutes of the interrogation of the former Regent of Blambangan, Sutanagara, 11 June 1771, 51-52.

lives.²² They were finally banished to Edam Island in the Bay of Batavia. Besides the Blambangan ring-leaders, fifty-three Balinese warriors were captured in Blambangan (See Appendix 1) and later sent to Surabaya.²³

After only two years of occupation, the Dutch authorities in *Java's Oosthoek* had installed four Regents in Blambangan, *Mas Anom*, *Mas Uno*, *Sutanagara* and *Wasengsari*, and all four of them had turned coat and supported the rebel prince, *Wilis*, after only few months in office. Understandably, this experience made the Dutch rather reluctant to re-install chiefs drawn from the local people. Consequently, as successor to *Sutanagara* and *Wasengsari*, the Dutch authorities in Surabaya promoted new people who were not of Blambangan origin. They were members of the Javanese elite from the family of the Regent of Surabaya. Among those promoted to administer Blambangan were *Kartanagara*, who was appointed as First Regent of Blambangan, and *Raden Jayalaksana* who was appointed as Chief of Kota, the capital city of the area. Both were brothers of *Jayanagara*, the Regent of Surabaya. A few other members of the Surabaya elite were also promoted to be *Mantri* in Blambangan.²⁴ Initially, there had been no plan to appoint a Second Regent, but suddenly the Resident of Blambangan, *Biesheuvel*, pushed forward *Bapak Anti* or *Jaksanagara*, the former *Patih* of *Patih* *Suratrana*. It seems that *Biesheuvel* who really lived on close terms with the Blambangan people had a better understanding of them and realized that the Javanization of the Blambangan administration would have serious consequences for keeping law and order there. If only because the leader of Blambangan should know how to deal with the local inhabitants, a locally born man would be far and away best qualified to assume this task. The Blambangan people had always been notoriously reluctant to accept a leader from outside their own community.

Biesheuvel's proposal was not without risk, because *Jaksanagara's* political position during the period of trouble in Blambangan had never been clear and there were not sufficient rounds for his choice as

²² VOC 3337, The original missive under separate cover from Governor Johannes Vos to Batavia, 14 June 1771, 44.

²³ VOC 3337, Copy of a letter from the First and Second Residents of Blambangan *Biesheuvel* and *Schophoff* to the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya *Pieter Luzac*, 23 May 1771, 47-50.

²⁴ VOC 3337, Original letter under separate cover from Governor J. R. van der Burgh to Batavia, 24 August 1771, 63-72.

candidate. The appointment of two Regents of two different origins, again had unexpected consequences for the Company. Not long after their inauguration by the *Gezaghebber* Luzac in July 1771, the Dutch authorities in *Java's Oosthoek* had to face the consequences of their decision. Only a month after the arrival of the new Regents, the people of Blambangan showed palpable signs of their disgruntlement, intimating they should have more appropriate figures to administer them. Soon the opposition of the local people to the appointment of the new Regents was manifested in the idea of revivalism.

The Return of the King

At the beginning of August 1771, the Dutch authorities in Blambangan were surprised by the return of Wilis, the *Pangeran* of Blambangan who had been banished to Banda three years earlier. Rumour said that the returned *Pangeran* had established a new *kraton* (palace) in Bayu and was calling himself 'Susubunan Jagapati'. He appealed the people of Blambangan to come to Bayu, promising them a better life, free of the Javanese and white people.²⁵ The people of Blambangan welcomed the returned King enthusiastically. Solong, a petty trader from Panarukan, witnessed how the entire population of his village deserted their houses and moved to Bayu, followed by inhabitants from other villages.

The First and Second Regents of Blambangan, Kartanagara (or Kartawijaya) and Jaksanagara, with a company of hundreds of warriors, marched to Bayu to bring the rebel to justice, but they met with strong resistance and were driven back to Blambangan. Kartanagara was seriously wounded and retreated to Kota.²⁶ A few days later, Resident Schophof sent soldiers to Bayu under the command Lieutenant Biesheuvel, but they failed to locate the rebel's

²⁵ *Babad Bayu*, in Winarsih Arifin, *Babad Blambangan*, (Yogyakarta: Bentang Budaya, 1995).

²⁶ Residents Biesheuvel and Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 2 August 1771, De Jonge, *De Opkomst*: 174. In the company of *Mantri* Mindaka, Bawalaksana, Singadirana, and the Chief of Kota, Jayalaksana, both Regents went to the house of the Chinese *Bandar*, the Chinese Captain in Blambangan, to borrow two *rantak*. VOC 3337, Report by the Second Regent Jaksanagara, 16 October 1771, 257. Kartanagara was shot in the leg and left shoulder. See, De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, Residents Biesheuvel and Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 2 August 1771, 175.

hiding place, and returned empty handed.²⁷ All they could do for that moment was to strive to prevent more inhabitants from moving to Bayu. One group of people was persuaded to come back to their village, but they were attacked by the rebels when they returned home. Many were killed and the rest ran away seeking refuge in the wilderness.²⁸

The following week, the Dutch, now reinforced with more soldiers and armed with more powerful weapons, tried to penetrate the rebel headquarters in Bayu, but they were also defeated. A number of firearms, *rantak*, and a considerable amount of ammunition were captured by the rebels. Many Company soldiers were killed or wounded, including the commander of the expedition, Lieutenant Imhoff. At his wit's end to deal the situation, Resident Schophoff requested the Dutch authorities in Surabaya to send at least one thousand Madurese and several hundred European soldiers from Surabaya.²⁹ A few months later, the requested military assistance from Madura and Surabaya. On 14 December, there was wide spread fighting in Susukan and Songgon which cost the life of Lieutenant Reigers and wounded the commander of the expedition, Lieutenant Heinrich.³⁰ After Lieutenant Reijgers' death, *Vaandrig* Van Schaar took over the military command and on 18 December marched to Songgon with 150 soldiers. Here, the Company troops were ambushed by Jagapati's warriors who were fewer in number and armed only with bamboos stakes and pikes. Once again, the Company troops suffered a severe defeat. *Vaandrig* Van Schaar and *Cornet* Tinne were killed and *Vaandrig* Ostrousky was seriously wounded. Only a few European soldiers were reportedly still alive. Hundreds of Madurese warriors were killed and the rest deserted. A large number of firearms and entire barrels of gun powders were captured by the enemy.³¹ Wikkerman (the later Resident of Banyuwangi) reported that at the moment, *Vaandrig* Van Schaar was trying to keep his gun dry by

²⁷ De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, Residents of Blambangan, Biesheuvel and Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac 4 August 1771, 176.

²⁸ De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, Resident Biesheuvel and Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 7 August 1771, 176.

²⁹ The battle left two Malays and thirteen Javanese soldiers killed, and 94 indigenous warriors wounded. De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, Resident Biesheuvel and Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 23 August 1771, 177-8.

³⁰ Heinrich died in Ulupampang three days after the battle during a major surgery.

³¹ VOC 3664, Resident Schophoff to the Chief of expedition Lieutenant Heinrich, 15 April 1772, 267-8.

covering it with a sail cloth and setting it aside, the rebels suddenly fell upon him and his men so that he could not seize his gun. Unable to defend himself, he ran away to save his life, but *Bapak* Udun, the boldest of the fighters, hunted him down with a pike in his hand. Van Schaar stumbled into a wide ditch and was finished off by Udun.³² Meanwhile, *Cornet* Tinne was killed by the *batur* of *Bapak* Udun. The body of *Vaandrig* Van Schaar was dragged to the rebel's camp. Led by the Buginese, Kraeng Dono, a magic ritual, a *duivelsch maal* (diabolical meal) was prepared. He disembowelled Van Schaar's body and devoured his intestines. At the end of the ceremony, the corpse of the unfortunate *Vaandrig* was beheaded and his head was carried around triumphantly.³³

After the Songgon incident, the Dutch had no option but to resort to self-defence. All the roads to Bayu were blocked to cut off the supply of foodstuffs to the rebels. The rice-fields and any harvests in vicinity of Bayu were destroyed. Jember was vigilantly guarded, and a special watch was kept on the southern coast of Java, at such place as Grajagan and Puger, in order to prevent the rebels crossing the Bali Strait. In Ulupampang, most of the wounded soldiers eventually perished, and many survivors fell ill. While waiting for the commencement of the dry season, the Dutch recruited more Madurese warriors.

The Death of the King

From Bayu the rebellion spread throughout Blambangan. In the western region, another movement gathered strength under the leadership of *Bekel* Gagabaneng, the village chief of Sentong, who claimed he was the commander of the Empress *Susubunan* Ratu of Mount Raung.³⁴ Puger and Jember came under rebel control. Trying to

³² Collectie Van Alphen end Engelhard 19b, J. C. van Wikkerman, 'Beschrijving van Bali en Banjoewangi', 149.

³³ VOC 3664, Resident Schopphoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 23 October 1772: 78-79, ditto 30 October 1772, 82. See also C. Lekkerkerker, 'Blambangan', *De Indische Gids*, vol. ii, (1923), 1056.

³⁴ The empress was Sayuwiwit, the daughter of Pangeran Wilis of Blambangan who is described in the Javanese sources as a female soldier. She was captured on Mount Raung by a Company patrol in January 1773, and *Vaandrig* Fischer awarded 100 *ronde matten* to the soldiers who had captured her. *Babad Tawangalun*, in Winarsih Arifin, *Babad Blambangan*: 114. See also Pigeaud, 'Aanteekeningen betreffende den

strangle this movement, Governor Burgh instructed the Dutch commanders of Jember and Panarukan, Steenberger and Reigers, to seize control of these places. From the south coast of Java, *Vaandrig* Fischer and his men were deployed to assist them.³⁵ Lieutenant Heinrich with 600 soldiers was also dispatched to the south coast of Java. In Purwa, he found fifty horses and a number of pikes, and burned down a village used by the rebels as a place to store food. The rebels put up a token resistance leaving one European soldier drowned and another wounded.³⁶ On 14 February, Heinrich pulled his soldiers back to Grajagan where another battle was fought. More than fifty buffalo carts and 200 houses in Purwa, Grajagan, and Jalimanik were burned. The rebels retreated across the river. A large quantity of foodstuffs, opium, cloths, and carpenter's tools was secured by the Company troops. This expedition put the rebels at serious disadvantage.

On 20 March, Jagapati attacked the Dutch camp at Kota with 1,500 fighters. Six hundred Balinese warriors sent by *Gusti Ngurah* Jembrana and a hundred soldiers from Sentong and Bayu were involved in this attack.³⁷ Despite his superior manpower, Jagapati failed to take Kota, and he lost five of his bravest fighters who were killed and five others were wounded. After the attack on Kota, Resident Schophoff launched a sea patrol in the Strait of Bali to prevent more Balinese warriors from reaching Blambangan.³⁸

After the battle in Grajagan, Heinrich marched the military expedition to the rebel headquarters in Bayu, but realized that the numbers of soldiers available was insufficient to attack Bayu, which reportedly had been reinforced with several hundred Balinese. He therefore requested more soldiers from the *Gezaghebber*. On 20 April, some 2,000 Madurese warriors under Captain Alap Alap arrived in Blambangan, followed by seventy other Madurese from Pamekasan

Java Oosthoek', *TNI*, vol LXXII, (1932), 258, VOC 3389, Fischer to *Gesaghebber* Luzac, 9 January 1773, 77

³⁵ VOC 3337, Governor Van der Burgh to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 30 October 1771, 235

³⁶ VOC 3364, Lieutenant Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 19 February 1772, 93-4

³⁷ VOC 3364, *Vaandrigs* Guttenberger, Jenigen, and Chatteavieux to Resident Schophoff, 20 March 1772, 144; *See also* VOC 3364, Governor Van der Burgh to Governor-General Van der Parra 1 April 1772, 100-103

³⁸ It was reported that twenty-nine people, mostly women and children, were arrested. VOC 3364, Report by *Matroos* Mattheijs Elbers, 1 April 1772, 145

and 112 Javanese from Besuki under Captain Wayan Buyung.³⁹ On 11 May, Lieutenant Heinrich set up a military camp in Songgon, near Bayu and prepared the troops.⁴⁰ The attack on Bayu was finally made five days later, but the Company troops were defeated. Heinrich, who was wounded in the battle, blamed the defeat on the Madurese who had cowardly deserted. He wrote: 'They (the Madurese) came to Blambangan with great tumult and shouting, but in the battle they were terrified.' Heinrich suggested sending the Madurese captain, Alap-Alap, home and substituting a braver leader.⁴¹ He estimated that the enemy had been reinforced by 7,000 troops, and called for more military assistance, at least 8,000 soldiers from Makassar and Malacca. His plea to Governor Van der Burgh fell on deaf ears. The governor argued that Heinrich's estimation of the strength of the rebels was exaggerated. Van der Burgh could only promise 150 Europeans, 5,000 indigenous warriors, and 100 *batur* that would be recruited from Madura, Sumenep, Pamekasan and a number of other regencies in *Java's Oosthoek*.⁴²

As the problem of military assistance could not be solved, the Dutch decided to try a persuasive approach to end the rebellion. Resident Schopphoff sent the *lurah* (village chief) of Lateng, Wayan, to admonish the local inhabitants to abandon their resistance and return to their villages. On 11 May, just before the last attack on Bayu, eight inhabitants from Blangkunang, mostly women and children, returned to their village. From these sick and hungry people the Dutch collected information about the current situation of the rebels in Bayu. Korok, one of the deserters, confessed that Jagapati had requested 1,000 fighting men from *Gusti Ngurah* Jembrana Bali. These people had arrived in Pakem but were later forced back by the Dutch patrol before they could land in Blambangan. He also reported that around 3,000 people had deserted from Bayu because no more food was to be found

³⁹ VOC 3364, 95

⁴⁰ The attack force consisted of 700 pikemen, 300 musketeers, 500 picked troops 59 *Lurah*, 25 *Mantri*, 400 *punakawan*, and 200 *batur*. They were added to 92 European soldiers, 244 Malay, and 436 indigenous soldiers. VOC 3364, Governor Van der Burgh to Governor-General Van der Parra, 20 April 1772, 193-194

⁴¹ From the outset there had been a conflict between the Chief of the Expedition, Lt. Heinrich, and the Madurese Captain Alap Alap. The conflict was triggered by the behaviour of Alap Alap who regarded himself as equal to the European soldier. VOC 3364, Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 19 May 1772, 329-31

⁴² VOC 3364, Lieutenant Heinrich to Governor Van der Burgh, 23 May 1772; VOC 3364, Governor J. R. van der Burgh to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 9 June 1772

there. Most of these were the villagers from Sentong and a few Balinese, of whom at least 400 were seriously ill.⁴³ Others confessed that they had retreated because they were afraid of the Dutch soldiers. Whereas all the inhabitants of Gambiran, Kradenan, Benculuk, Grajagan, and Purwa also returned to their former villages, the remaining people in Bayu lost their fighting spirit. Despite all these difficulties, ten people from the village of Banjar and fifteen Balinese traders had arrived in Bayu bringing rice and salt for the rebels.⁴⁴

Heinrich also obtained the significant information that, during the last attack on Bayu, the leader of the rebels, Jagapati, had been wounded and subsequently had died on 11 June.⁴⁵ This news was confirmed at the beginning of July by a Balinese who was captured during the attack on Kota. He testified that Jagapati's body had been secured by his adherents and buried in the vicinity of Bayu.⁴⁶ The Balinese explained that during the raid on Kota, Jagapati had requested all the Balinese to remain in the camp because he was determined to capture Kota with his own bravest fighters. This apparent slight gave the Balinese second thoughts about supporting Jagapati and after his death the Balinese decided to retreat.⁴⁷

Si Lakar, a Javanese cleric and the envoy of Jagapati who was arrested by Blambangan soldiers at the house of *Mantri* Singadirana, provided more information about the other chief rebels, Endo, Larat, Malem, and *Kyai* Rupa. At the third interrogation, in which he was tortured and threatened that his nose, ears, tongue, fingers, hands and his legs would be amputated, *Si Lakar* confessed that Endo and Larat had estimated that around 2,000 people were left in Bayu, two-thirds of them women and children. Trapped in Bayu, they were dying of exhaustion and starvation because all the food was finished. When Bayu was attacked by the Dutch, many people scattered in some small groups. The remainder of their weapons had been taken away by Endo⁴⁸

⁴³ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to Lieutenant Heinrich 15 April 1772, 267.

⁴⁴ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to Lieutenant Heinrich 11 May 1772, 331-3.

⁴⁵ VOC 3364, Lieutenant Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 12 June 1772, 375-376.

⁴⁶ VOC 3364, Lieutenant Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 1 July 1772, 523, Governor J. R. van der Burgh to Governor-General Van der Parra, 5 Julij 1772: 359-60; VOC 3364, Lieutenant Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 7 July 1772, 510-1.

⁴⁷ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to Lieutenant Heinrich, 15 April 1772, 267-70.

⁴⁸ In his previous interrogation, *Si Lakar* reported that Pseudo-Wilis was supported by thousands of men, and had five barrels of gunpowder and ammunition, five cannons, four mortars, and a large quantity of canon balls and firearms. Besides this

Even though the situation was so desperate, most of the chief rebels decided to remain and fight to the death. Spies reported that only 1,300 rebels now were left in Bayu, split up into four groups under Larat (300 people), Endo (400), *Kyai* Rupo (200), and Malem (300). It was reported that 100 inhabitants of Sentong and Jember had left Bayu as well.⁴⁹ It was predicted that if the three exit points to Bayu were blockaded, all the rebels would perish of starvation in a few days

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Epidemic and Famine

This inside knowledge about the desperate situation inside Bayu inspired the Dutch to plan to destroy the rebels without wasting ammunition. An operation to search for and destroy the rebels' food-stores around Bayu was launched. *Vaandrig* Jenigen led Madurese soldiers in burning down all the *lumbung* (paddy barns) and laying waste the rice-fields surrounding Bayu. Four women and children were detained in this operation. In the villages Kabat, Sejang, Pudian, and Tagenan, *Vaandrig* Kregel and his troops set a large storage of young maize alight and ruined the maize-fields there. Ten women and children were arrested during this operation. *Vaandrig* Guttenberger who had been sent to Gambiran faced a little resistance from the inhabitants. There was a skirmish in which two Madurese soldiers were wounded and three inhabitants were killed. He burned down all the houses used by the rebels as hiding places and arrested eighteen people.⁵¹ Lieutenant Heinrich with some Madurese troops destroyed the saltpan in Kapudian and set fire to many villages, among them Pomponan, Kabasposar, Pabakan, Cungking, and Panolangan and also destroyed the storages of paddy and maize. Twenty-two women and

the rebels had more guns, sixty small arms, carbines and ten pistols which they had captured during the battle at Songgon. They had also stocked up an abundance of rice and other foodstuff in the vicinity of Bayu. Three thousand of the bravest soldiers from Bali were expected to come to Bayu to support Pseudo-Wilis in the attack on Kota. Pseudo-Wilis had driven the Madurese soldiers out of their camp in Songgon which was now used as the military base from which to attack the capital city of Blambangan. He planned to build a new palace to the south of Blambangan. VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 28 January 1772, 39-41

⁴⁹ Ibid., 43.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 42

⁵¹ VOC 3364, Lieutenant Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 12 June 1772, 378-379.

children were captured in this operation. On the way to Ulupampang they met a party of starving people who had just left Bayu, where the rebels had forced them to fell trees and fortify the *benting*.⁵²

This burn and raze strategy undoubtedly weakened the rebels.⁵³ Starvation, disease, and death followed the trail of the Dutch troops as witnessed by Resident Schophoff:

A few days ago, one group of people, all of them undernourished, came out of Bayu and surrendered to the Company. They disclosed that among the deaths in the bolt-hole of Bayu were people who driven by hunger had taken their own lives, and their bodies remained unburied, causing an unbearable stench and disease. They killed each other for a little food. One of the hunger-sufferers confessed to me he had killed three people to obtain a few portions of maize to relieve his hunger. Scarcely a food crop is to be found throughout the entire land. *Vaandrig* Rood searched for sustenance around the villages and forests for four days, but no such foodstuff, as sago or banana trees could be found with exception of one big-rice field in the vicinity of Gomoro, and a small one in Waluh, which was later ravaged. People were to be found everywhere in the villages and in the wilderness. Those still on their feet had sought refuge in the forest; some of them were half-dead, others had died emaciated by hunger. Therefore many dead bodies were lying around.⁵⁴

Schophoff gave the people who were still in Bayu a guarantee that they would not be executed, if they left Bayu and surrendered to the Company. When he questioned all the deserters and prisoners about the number of the dead and survivors, the interrogation revealed that two-thirds of the inhabitants had managed to crawl away from Bayu, but most of them had died when they reached their own villages. The rebels had now deteriorated into a rabble, an unruly mob which would be forced to abandon their hiding place, or if they did not do so, they would no longer be in any state to fight. The most valiant chief, *Encik* Lok, had crawled away; Malem had been killed in a dispute by his own comrade, Endo, but there were still some fighters who willing to die on the battlefield.

An epidemic also claimed the lives of Dutch soldiers. The Dutch settlements in Ulupampang and Kota were afflicted by this wide-

⁵² VOC 3364, Lieutenant Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 7 July 1772: 510-1.

⁵³ VOC 3364, Governor J. R. Van der Burgh to Governor-General Van der Parra, 5 July 1772: 359-60.

⁵⁴ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 21 July 1772, 545-8. In his previous report Schophoff said that most of these people had only grass and leaves to eat. See VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 15 July 1772, 537-538.

spread contagion, but by January 1772 the critical situation had abated.⁵⁵ Governor Van der Burgh reported that nineteen of the forty-eight soldiers from Semarang were sick, while twenty-five soldiers in the Dutch settlement in Ulupampang were not fit for duty. The Governor also reported that he could send no more soldiers from Semarang because of the seventy-one infantry-men who were still left only fifty were in good health.⁵⁶

The Fall of Bayu

By 23 June, the 3,665 warriors and 1,283 *batur* from Madura and other places in East Java promised by the Governor Van der Burgh and *Gezaghebber* Luzac had all arrived in Blambangan, but the attack on Bayu was postponed until September.⁵⁷ This delay was prompted by the dire condition of Bayu which was still seriously affected by the spread of diseases. The Dutch were waiting until the conditions improved, so as to avoid more casualties among their soldiers.

At the beginning of October, Lieutenant Heinrich left Kota with his men to go to Songgon where a military camp was built. It was the most strategic place from which to approach and attack Bayu. It was in sight of the *benteng* of the enemy. Heinrich writes:

The *benteng* of Bayu was heavily fortified, with a strong palisade. [...] There was a deep trench full of traps behind the wall. The country side was entirely admirable: we could feed 1,000 people from their crops of paddy, maize, sweet potato and the like, and we can feed all troops here for a few days.⁵⁸

All the roads to Bayu were cut off and two military detachments were deployed on the left and right flanks of Mount Bayu: on the right flank 900 soldiers with two half-pounder cannons and four mortars, under the command of *Vaandrighs* Mierop and Dijkman, and on the left flank 500 men under *Vaandrighs* Gutenberger and Kregel occupied Sentong. Lieutenant Heinrich and *Vaandrigh* Jenigen were to move out

⁵⁵ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 28 January 1772, 44.

⁵⁶ VOC 3364, Governor Van der Burgh to Governor-General Van der Parra, First April 1772, 100-103.

⁵⁷ VOC 3364, Report by *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 23 June 1772, 435.

⁵⁸ De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, vol. xi, Lieutenant Heinrich to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 12 October 1772, 228-30.

of Songgon with 1,500 soldiers.⁵⁹ By 5 October the Dutch were approaching Bayu from three directions in a three-pronged movement, but the attack was not carried out until 11 October. The assault was very successful, as reported by Lieutenant Heinrich:

Only four of our people were wounded as we advanced on the *benteng*. [...] on the enemy side, forty were killed. The enemy fled to the mountain but we hunted them until late at night and have captured the *benteng* of Bayu. This morning, I again sent out a strong patrol to hunt down the enemy. They marched on from here and ranged over the mountains the whole day. I had allowed them to kill the captives and their heads were hung on the high trees as a dreadful warning.⁶⁰

The Origin of the Uprising

Examining the origins of the rebellion, it is important to review the opinion of De Jonge who wrote:

It is obvious now that the uprising was of Balinese origin and it was a sequel to the treacherous correspondence between the former Regent [Sutanagara] and the Balinese ruler. He [Jagapati] was guided by the Balinese and a cleric who had committed his body to the protection of the spirit of *Pangeran Wilis*. The uprising was an anti-Javanese movement. [...] The conduct of the new Javanese Regent unfortunately coincided with the appearance of the Company army, which had held the sword of Damocles above the head of the people.⁶¹

In his history of Blambangan, Lekkerkerker affirms that the rebellion was an upsurge of Blambangan nationality and hence anti-Javanese. The mainspring of the revolt was resentment against Kartanagara.⁶² However, whether the Balinese were the instigators is open to question. Undeniably, the Balinese played an important role in this war - the Dutch sources strongly confirm this, but as supporters rather than as instigators. As explicitly reported by Resident Schophoff, after the death of Jagapati the Balinese remained silent and made no further moves. Moreover, they returned to Bali and left their allies to be hunted down by the Dutch. The re-appearance of the

⁵⁹ Ibid., 228-30.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 228-30.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xxviii-xxix.

⁶² Lekkerkerker, 'Bambangan', 1057.

Balinese in the second rebellion was also at Jagapati's behest. He appealed to them to come to Blambangan since he could no longer stand firm against the series of attacks carried out by the Dutch and their allies.

A few months after the outbreak of the rebellion, Governor Van der Burgh in Semarang urged *Gezaghebber* Luzac to carry out an investigation to pinpoint the origins of the uprising. Luzac himself harboured suspicions about the Second Regent Jaksanagara, who was believed to be secretly collaborating with the rebels – in a conspiracy similar to the previous one plotted by the former Regent Sutanagara with the Balinese. The Governor ordered his dismissal and said he had to come to Semarang, but Biesheuvel denied this accusation. He claimed that the said Regent had remained faithful to the Company, and had done all in his power to bring the ordinary people back urging them to leave the forest and return to their villages. Biesheuvel was convinced that the idea of removing Jaksanagara from his position was quite wrong.⁶³ It seems his confidence was misplaced. Two months later, Biesheuvel was forced to reconsider the *Gezaghebber's* suspicions after the capture of Manikwadi. This detainee had seen that 400 of Jaksanagara's adherents had joined the rebels in Bayu. They included Lembugiri, his own chief, and his family.⁶⁴ Jaksanagara also assisted the rebels by sending them weapons and ammunition through his *Mantri*. Some Blambangan *Mantri*, among them Wiramanggala, Suramanggala, *Kraheng* Dono, Lembugiri, Singalengkara, Singamerta, Manikdono, and Donda Manggala, had also joined Agong Willis in Bayu.⁶⁵

The confession of Manikwadi added weight to the allegations against Jaksanagara. The Governor appointed Lieutenant Gondelag to carry out further investigations. His chief task was to discover to whom the responsibility for the buffalo business should be attributed and who had supplied guns and ammunition to the rebels.⁶⁶ If the

⁶³ VOC 3337, Governor Van der Burg to Batavia, 24 Augustus 1771, 63-72

⁶⁴ VOC 3337, Report by Manikwadi the village chief of Kalitan, 17 October 1771, 247-9.

⁶⁵ VOC 3337, Further report given by Manikwadi and *Si Laru*, 18 October 1771, 253-4

⁶⁶ VOC 3337, Governor J. R. van der Burgh to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 11 October 1771, 227-8

allegation were proved true, the Regent should be removed from his position and sent to Surabaya.⁶⁷

The Oppression

Two months after the outbreak of the rebellion, the Dutch discovered some important clues to the origins of the current uprising when they captured Manikwadi and *Si Laru*. Both men were responsible for collecting foodstuffs for the rebels in Bayu.⁶⁸ Manikwadi was seized by *Mantri* Karangandul as he was transporting foodstuffs to Bayu on horseback. *Si Laru*, *Patih* Jayalaksana's servant, was captured by the Company soldiers in Lateng.⁶⁹ In the interrogation, both detainees claimed that the uprising was a reaction by the people of Blambangan to the severe maltreatments to which they had been subjected by *Bapak* Anti, later known as Jaksanagara, the Second Regent of Blambangan. Later, Manikwadi explained that when Major Colmond was still in charge in Blambangan, the Regent of Blambangan,

⁶⁷ VOC 3337, Governor J. R. van der Burgh to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 19 October 1771, 231

⁶⁸ Explaining the capture of Manikwadi, *Mantri* Karangandul said that at that time he had been deployed by Lieutenant Imhoff to patrol around the village of Tomogoro, where the Dutch camp was established. He left Tomogoro with a few *Mantri*, Jayasinara of Bangil, Manonyuda of Surabaya, Lalangpasir, *Jurukunci* Sinindaka, Singadirana, and Onggagipta of Bambang. In the village of Trukan they discovered a group of people who were on their way to Bayu. These people had hung a sign on their necks and carried pikes ornamented with coconut fronds (a symbol of resistance). They were transporting rice, *kapas*, and *catoene garen* (cotton yarn), chickens, eggs, coconut oil and the like on back of their horses as well as hording buffaloes. Among them was the *Lurah* of Kalitan, Manikwadi. Karangandul and his people launched a surprise attack and captured Manikwadi but the others escaped. In Manikwadi's pocket, Karangandul discovered some Javanese *ola's* (letters written on palm leaf), signed by *Pangeran* Wilis, the King of Bayu. These disclosed the King of Bayu had appointed him to collect foodstuffs. VOC 3337, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 16 October 1771, 263-6.

⁶⁹ Actually, the Dutch were mistaken. *Si Laru* was the servant of Jayalaksana, the *patih* of the Second Regent of Blambangan, Jaksanagara. Jayalaksana had been sent to Bayu to fetch Jaksanagara's *gundik* but he was killed by the rebels in Bayu. After the death of Jayalaksana, *Si Laru* returned to his village, Lateng. He tried to bring his mother, who had taken refuge to the village of Banjar back to the village, but he was captured and sent to the Dutch Resident in Ulupampang, with two other villagers from the village of Paiton, Kartawongsa and *Bapak* Gubeng. VOC 3337, Report by Silaru, Kartawongsa and *Bapak* Gubeng, 251-2.

Sutanagara was obliged to provide four *koyang* of rice which had to be distributed to labourers employed by the Company for the construction of fortresses, roads, and bridges. Each sack of rice was sold to a worker for 500 *kepeng*. Sutanagara delegated Jaksanagara to distribute this rice for the price fixed by Colmond. The workers felt exploited as this was very expensive. Colmond also obliged the Regent of Blambangan to collect one hundred buffaloes for the Company. The buffalos were sent to the *pachthuismeester* in Surabaya.⁷⁰ The animals were to be purchased from the inhabitants for 2 Spanish Real or 1,000 *kepeng* each and Jaksanagara was in charge of forwarding the money to the buffalo's owners, but they never received anything.⁷¹ When *Gezaghebber* Luzac visited Blambangan in May 1771, some *Mantri* and *Lurah* requested Jaksanagara to help them find some opium, because the supply of this drug in Blambangan had run out. Jaksanagara went to the Resident Biesheuvel and bought eight *kati* from the latter for 250 *kepeng*. Jaksanagara thereupon distributed the opium to the *Mantri* and *Lurah* for 7/8 Spanish Real or 350 *kepeng* for each $\frac{3}{4}$ *kati*, netting himself a nice little profit. When in July 1771, Luzac left for Surabaya, Jaksanagara was also requested by some *Mantri* to lend them 16 Spanish Real. Subsequently, the *Mantri* lent the money to families in their territory, 250 *duiten* each. These people should repay later with silver coins to the value of 1 or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Spanish Real for 125 *duiten*, they saw as a burden. Manikwadi was also convinced that the people of Blambangan had fled away to the mountains and solicited help from the 'revenant Prince' (Wilis) because Jaksanagara had exploited them.

Personal Dispute

Who was this Pseudo-Wilis or Jagapati? The identity of the chief rebel was finally discovered with the capture of Manikwadi. His real name was *Mas Rempeg*, a young man of seventeen from the village of Pakis. In local sources he is called *Pangeran Pakis*, or the Prince of Pakis. The Javanese sources reveal that *Mas Rempeg* was a descendant of Tawangalun, the greatest king of Blambangan. More precisely, he was the son of *Mas Bagus Dalem Wiraguna II*, who was the grandson of

⁷⁰ VOC 3337, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 16 October 1771, 262-6.

⁷¹ VOC 3337, Report by Manikwadi, the village chief of Kalitan, 17 October 1771, 241-6.

Tawangalun. The Dutch archive gives different names, but it is clearly mentioned that Rempeg was the son of *Mas Ayu* Dawia who married *Mas Bagus* Wali, one of the *Mantri* of *Pangeran* Pati. The latter was the son of *Mas Sutra* the chief *Mantri* and nephew of *Pangeran* Pati's father, Danureja. Perhaps, *Mas Bagus* Wali and *Mas Bagus* Sutra were the youth names of *Mas Bagus Dalem* Wiraguna II and *Mas Dalem* Wiraguna I as given by the Javanese sources (See Appendix, the family tree of Tawangalun). Before leaving for Bayu, Rempeg worked as a *punakawan* (bodyguard) to *Bapak* Samila. The latter was the full-brother of *Bapak* Anti who was later known as Jaksanagara, the Second Regent of Blambangan. Rempeg was accused of having an affair with Jaksanagara's *gundik* (concubines). Persecuted by Jaksanagara who was consumed by jealousy, Rempeg was in despair and fled to Bayu, where he was fostered by a *tapa* (a religious teacher) named Manikrupa, who was later to become his spiritual advisor. Under the direction of this priest, Rempeg presented himself as a new leader who would liberate the people of Blambangan from both the Company and such Javanese tyrants as Kartanagara and Jaksanagara. With the help of the people, he would take revenge on Jaksanagara who had been hounding him.

A similar story was told by two *mantri* of Blambangan, Singadirana and Bawalaksana, who were sent to Bayu to retrieve Jaksanagara's *gundik*. Both *mantri* explained that in the middle of September 1771, five concubines of Regent Jaksanagara and ten of the former Regent Sutanagara, were missing. *Mantri* Jayalaksana who was sent to find the missing *gundik* was killed, but his mission was not completely in vain. He discovered that these *gundik* were in Bayu with the chief of rebels, Rempeg. Immediately, *Mantri* Bawalaksana and Singadirana were sent to Bayu to retrieve them and take the opportunity to investigate the condition of the rebels in Bayu. There, they encountered a young man named Rempeg who had left the house of his master, *Bapak* Samila, a year before. On that occasion Rempeg said, 'If you have come here to find those women, they are with me now, and no one can take them away from me because they have now become my wives.'⁷² A description of the personality of Rempeg was given also by *Si* Lakar, a Javanese cleric who was captured in the house of *Mantri* Singadirana in January 1772. *Si* Lakar was the man who had been ordered by Rempeg to bring all the wives of *Mantri* Singadirana to Bayu.⁷³

⁷² VOC 3337, As reported by Resident Schopff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 16 October 1771, 264-6.

⁷³ VOC 3364, Resident Schopff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 28 January 1772, 38.

Such Javanese sources, as the *Babad Bayu* and the *Babad Tawangalun* give a more compelling picture claiming that Rempeg wished to have forty *gundik*,⁷⁴ and that the death of Jagapati or the Pseudo-Wilis was actually a kind of curse incurred by his sin of having had sexual intercourse with Sayuwit (in the Dutch sources called *Susuhunan Ratu* or Empress), the holy woman who was believed to be possessed by the spirit of the daughter of *Pangeran Wilis*. This incest was unwitting as Rempeg was not aware that the spirit *Pangeran Wilis* was inhabiting his body and that the spirit of the daughter of *Pangeran Wilis* possessed that of his sexual partner.⁷⁵ This last narrative also explains why Rempeg was killed in the battle so quickly. He had had a supernatural sanction imposed on him. The spirits of Sayuwit and Wilis left their bodies, withdrawing their protection in battle. The crisis in the personal relationship between Rempeg and Jaksanagara was probably a strong contributory factor to the rebellion, if indeed it was not the main one.

The Ideology of Rebellion

In Bayu, Rempeg claimed he was *Pangeran Wilis*, saying in a conversation with the two envoys of Jaksanagara, Bawalaksana and Singadirana; 'You don't know exactly who I am. Actually, I am Agong Wilis, and what are you going to do with those two chickens in your hands?' Singadirana answered, 'We bring you these chickens as a gift'. 'Yes good,' said Rempeg, 'but if you ask me to buy them I don't have any *picis*.' Rempeg then insisted that both *Mantri* should believe that the spirit of *Pangeran Wilis* possessed his body, and that they should return to Bayu again, bringing all the people of Blambangan.⁷⁶

A similar story was told also by *Si Lakar* in his first interrogation. He said that in Bayu he had met *Pangeran Wilis* and *Pangeran Pati*, who had been murdered in Bali in 1764. He also claimed that the two former Regents of Blambangan, *Tumenggung Sutanegara* and *Wasingsari* - who had been banished to the Edam Island - were in Bayu as well. They had flown there through the air, and Agong Wilis had given himself the title *Susuhunan Jagapati*. He no longer ate or drank, but

⁷⁴ *Babad Bayu*, in Winarsih, *Babad Blambangan*, 154.

⁷⁵ *Babad Tawangalun*, in Winarsih, *Babad Blambangan*, 95.

⁷⁶ VOC 3337, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 16 October 1771, 264-6.

survived on a spiritual diet. Rempeg and all other the chiefs and the common people were now merely the slaves of *Pangeran Wilis*.⁷⁷

The idea of revivalism, the return of Wilis and other Blambangan rebel leaders, was implemented by a shamanistic ritual, in which the spirit of a dead person possessed the body of someone else as a medium through which to act. This practice was well known in Blambangan as it was indeed in Java, Bali, Lombok, and Sulawesi, and it still continues today. Pigeaud argues that Rempeg was not really *kasurupan* (possessed) by the spirit of Wilis, but merely asserted that he was *Pangeran Wilis*.⁷⁸ Pigeaud's interpretation is not without foundation, as can be seen again in the confession of Singadirana and Lakar. On 23 January, when *Si Lakar* was interrogated for the third time and still gave the same answer as before, the Resident lost patience. *Si Lakar* was tied to a tree which was swarming with big red ants, and he immediately poured out another confession. He said that his King, Wilis or Rempeg, *Bapak Larat*, Endo, and Rupa had forced him to tell the story he had recounted anytime he should happen to meet Blambangan people. He had been promised two pieces of gold by Rempeg to spy on them all. He also confessed that he was the *punakawan* (servant) of Rempeg who was still in Bayu and had been given the title of *Susubunan*. Later, he repudiated his previous statement that *Pangeran Wilis*, *Pangeran Pati*, *Tumenggung Sutanagara*, and Wasengsari were in Bayu.⁷⁹

The death of Rempeg or the Pseudo-Wilis did not exterminate the spirit of resistance among a few of the chief rebels. At the fall of Bayu, dyed-in-the wool dissidents including Larat, Endo, Wilanda, Simprong, Lamus and other fanatical followers of Wilis succeeded in escaping. Scattered into a few groups, they moved constantly from one place to another. Occasionally quarrels broke out among them, but they still managed to keep their spirit of opposition alive. Five years after the rebellion of the Pseudo-Wilis, a group of escapees who tried to re-organize their resistance was discovered in Blambangan. This happened just a few months after the appointment of the new Resident of Blambangan, Pieter Mierop, the successor to Lieutenant George Otto Dijkman who died in December 1779.⁸⁰ Again the idea

⁷⁷ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 28 January 1772, 38.

⁷⁸ Pigeaud, 'Aantekeningen', 260-261.

⁷⁹ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 28 January 1772, 38.

⁸⁰ VOC 3556, Missive from the Governor of Java's Northeast Coast, J.R. Van der Burgh to Governor-General Reijnier de Klerk, 3 December 1779, 782-783.

of revivalism was essential. A man calling himself *Pangeran* Sukma Manguntapa (*Pangeran* = Prince, *Sukma* = Spirit, *Manguntapa* = living as an ascetic) tried to revive the glorious kingdom of Blambangan, and in doing so protested against Dutch hegemony in Blambangan. A village named Pasepan, located on Mount Dumbo, in the Gambiran district, was chosen as the place in which to organize the movement. The *Pangeran* had isolated himself for five years, living as an ascetic in order to acquire the requisite magical powers. He was surrounded by twenty-five families, who cleared the forest and grew food crops for their subsistence. Four *lumbung* (paddy barns) were built around their *pondok* (house). They vowed not to submit to the Company or to any other outsider power. To protect his existence from the Government and the Company, the *Pangeran* prevented his followers from seeking contact with others, especially neighbouring inhabitants. He tamed many tigers which were placed around their dwelling to thwart any of his followers who might have had ideas about leaving his territory. Their existence was finally discovered by two men who were sent by the Regent of Blambangan to seek for *Kayu Pelet* (a special wood usually used to make dagger sheaths). The Commander-in-Chief of Blambangan, Mierop, took immediate action, and sent some troops to Mount Dupa, after he had received confirmation from the Regent of Blambangan, Wiraguna, that the Prince was not a member of the Blambangan royal family.⁸¹ Mierop suspected that Endo and Wilanda, close allies of the Pseudo-Wilis, were among the rebels. Governor Siberg pointed out the alleged Balinese support behind this new movement.⁸²

Forty Javanese and twenty Malays soldiers under *Vaandrig* Moming and two *Mantri* of Blambangan, Singadirana and Lalang Pasir, were sent to Mounts Dupa and Lembu. In the village of Glaga they found the *pondok* with four *lumbung*, but no inhabitants. Moving on to Dupa, they arrested four men, three women and children but the chief rebel, *Pangeran* Sukma Manguntapa managed to escape with eleven followers. From the captives the Company obtained information about the identity of the self-proclaimed prince whose real name was Singa. He turned out to be a *batur* from Bayu, and also to have been the former

⁸¹ VOC 3602, Copy of a copy missive written by the Commander-in-Chief of Banyuwangi, Mierop, to the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya, Van der Nieport, 1 December 1780, VOC 3602: 17-18; *See also* Missive from Governor of the Java's North East Coast, Siberg to Governor-General Willem Arnold Alting, 15 March 1781, 4-8.

⁸² VOC 3602, Missive from Governor of the Java's North East Coast, Siberg, to Governor General Willem Arnold Alting, 15 March 1781, 4-8.

Punakawan of *Gusti* Rosani who was a *tapa* or hermit. When Bayu was taken by the Company, he had fled with Simprong and twenty-five other families. Later Simprong had quarrelled with Singa.⁸³

Two separate patrols were sent to Rajakusna and Dupa. From Raja Kusna it was reported that thirty rebels under the leadership of Ebok had concealed themselves in Pasepan, while Endo and Langus with fifty other followers were hiding in Selo Blas, near by Batu Ulu, in the western part of Blambangan. Acting upon this report, *Gezaghebber* Van der Nieport suggested Governor Siberg ask the Commander-in-Chief of Pasuruan, Adriaan van Rijke, to investigate the rumour about the escaped rebels lurking in Puger.⁸⁴

The patrol sent to Pasepan met with significant resistance from the rebels. They were attacked by fifteen men who wielded bloodied pikes. *Mantri* Ronggapati was felled first and the *Jaegers* Company replied by firing their muskets. One of the rebels was killed and the rest escaped. The patrol continued to Pasepan, where they found sixteen houses complete with *lumbung* and in the surroundings was found paddy *gogo*, which was estimated to be enough for around fifty households, and scattered about in the fields they came across twenty-two *pondok*. The patrol penetrated even farther but it found not a single inhabitant there. All the houses were burned as were the paddy-fields and *lumbung*. The *Patih* of Blambangan pinned a letter announcing a general pardon on a tree.⁸⁵ The movement of *Pangeran* Sukma Manguntapa ended prematurely. In February 1781, the chief rebel himself was

⁸³ VOC 3602, Copy of a copy missive written by the chief commander of Banyuwangi, Van Mierop, to the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya, Van der Nieport, 12 December 1780, 21-23. See VOC 3602, also Extract of the missive written by *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya, Van der Nieport, to the Governor and the Director of the Java's North East Coast, Surabaya 28 December 1780, 20.

⁸⁴ VOC 3602, Copy of separate missive written by *Gezaghebber* Van der Nieport to the *Gezaghebber* Siberg, Surabaya 17 January 1781, 26; VOC 3602, Extract of a missive written by Johannes Siberg to *Gezaghebber* Van der Nieport, Semarang, 26 January 1781, 27.

⁸⁵ VOC 3602, Copy of a copy of separate missive written by the Commander-in-Chief of Banyuwangi Mierop to the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya, Van der Nieport, 3 January 1781, 26-27. See also VOC 3602, Copy of a copy of a missive written by the chief commander of the expedition to Pässepan Corporal Casper Negele to the Commander-in-Chief of Banyuwangi, Pieter Mierop, 24 January 1781, 31-32; VOC 3602, Extract from the letter written by Lieutenant Mierop to the *Gezaghebber* Van der Nieport, Banyuwangi 1 February 1781, 34-35; VOC 3602, Extract from the letter written by Lieutenant Mierop to the *Gezaghebber* Van der Nieport, Banyuwangi, 1 February 1781, 35-37.

captured in the company of his brother, Rabin, and two other followers.⁸⁶ It transpired that the movement was still restricted to a limited territory and there was no indication that also contact had been made with the Balinese or any other party allied with other rebel leaders. There is no further information about the fate of Ebok and his thirty followers. Meanwhile, the Company troops in western Blambangan were still hunting down such other chief rebels, as Endo and Wilanda, who were supposedly concealed in Sela Blas, the south coast of Java. The rebellion of Sukma Manguntapa was not the last pocket of resistance to espouse the idea of revivalism, or to use magic-religious ideas covered by Lekkerkerker's term as 'politic-shaman'. In his article on the short history of Blambangan, Lekkerkerker mentioned that in 1782, a year after the capture of *Pangeran* Sukma Manguntapa, a second Pseudo-Wilis appeared in West Blambangan. This movement was orchestrated by an intellectual-actor of a higher rank, using female-shamans as his instruments.⁸⁷

Conclusion

Ethnic and religious sentiments were two of the significant issues which ignited the conflict and precipitated the rebellion of *Pangeran* Wilis in 1768. These forces were even more apparent in the last two rebellions led by Sutanagara and Rempeg. The movement inspired by anti-Javanese and anti-Islamic elements directed by both leaders was a direct response to the Dutch policy of assisting the Islamizing and Javanizing of Blambangan. The most prominent supporters of this resistance were members of the middle class which in Blambangan social stratification was occupied by such religious leaders as Hindus priests and teachers. This group possessed political and cultural privileges and occupied a significant role inside and outside the court, which opened up access to economic resources and wealth. When the kingdom was Islamized and downgraded to a mere Regency, a vassal of the company, the ground was cut from beneath the feet of these

⁸⁶ VOC 3602, Extract from the apart missive written by the Commander-in-chief of Banyuwangi, Mierop to the *Gezaghebber* Van der Nieport, 16 February 1781, 7-8. *See also* VOC 3602, Missive from the Governor of Java's North-East Coast to Governor-General Willem Arnold Alting, 28 April 1781, 5-6.

⁸⁷ Lekkerkerker, 'Blambangan', 1056-7. No references to this movement were found in the VOC Archive.

people.⁸⁸ In other words the changing status of the realm and the concurrent Islamization blocked their access to power and economic resources. It is no accident that several religious leaders, among them *Kyai* Rupa, Endo, Larat, Malem, and Rosani were the main actors behind the rebellion of the Pseudo-Wilis or *Susuhunan* Jagapati. Rempeg himself was actually only a symbolic figure or puppet used by these religious teachers to mobilize people. Rempeg's personality and his personal feud with the Regent of Blambangan, Jaksanagara, motivated him to join this political movement. Oppression and extortion perpetrated by the Dutch and by indigenous rulers were facts of life, and this explains the wide support given by the local inhabitants. The involvement of the Balinese was indeed unquestionable, but in the case of the rebellion of Rempeg, it was minor. Perhaps the failure of Sutanagara to stir up the rebellion had taught the Balinese a compelling lesson about being more careful in dealing with any future similar movement in Blambangan.

⁸⁸ An anthropological research based on the VOC Archive is sorely needed to uncover a more detailed picture of the political and cultural roles played by this class in Javanese Hindu society, especially in Blambangan in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.