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

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CHAPTER FIVE

FROM BLAMBANGAN TO BANYUWANGI: THE AMINISTRATIVE CHANGE AND POPULATION IN BLAMBANGAN

Introduction

After the fall of Bayu, the *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek*, Pieter Luzac, submitted a strategic consideration about Blambangan to the High Government in Batavia, in which he proposed a total reconstruction of the administration of the region, the selection of new Regent, the relocation of the capital city and the Dutch fortress, the restoration of law and order, and pursuing an programme of economic exploitation. Above all, weighing up the stormy atmosphere created by ethnic sentiment was a very urgent problem which had to be solved by the Company first if peace was to be restored in this region. This chapter elucidates how the Dutch authorities dealt with the problems of loyalty and disloyalty, organizing the local administration and leadership, the dearth of the population, and set up the economic exploitation in Blambangan after the end of the rebellion of the Pseudo-Wilis in 1773.

The Fate of Jaksanagara

Shortly after the Pseudo-Wilis rebellion, the Dutch authorities in Blambangan discovered some smouldering resentment nurtured by repression and ethnic sentiment (anti-Javanese and Balinese). Gradually pieces of the jigsaw fell into place and revealed that the wellspring of the rebellion of the Blambangan people under the leadership of the Pseudo-Wilis was a deeply felt aggrieved reaction to the Javanization imposed on them (the election of Kartanagara or Kartawijaya, a Javanese from Surabaya, as the First Regent of Blambangan and a few other *Mantri* of similar origin) and the yoke of repression foisted on them by the Second Regent Jaksanagara. In steps to deal with these grievances, First Regent Kartanagara was removed from power and, not long afterwards, Jaksanagara was dismissed as

well. Resident Schophoff confirmed that Jaksanagara could no longer maintain his position because he had completely forfeited the trust of both the Company and the people of Blambangan.¹ *Gezaghebber* Luzac forced him to leave Blambangan. Another pressing reason which precipitated his removal was his genealogical connection with the Balinese. In the first instance, Governor Van der Burgh suggested he move to Cengkal Sewu where many people of Balinese origin had settled, but Jaksanagara preferred to live in Pasuruan.² He requested fifty *cacah* of farmland in the village of Pejarakan in Pasuruan Regency. The Regent of Pasuruan, *Raden Tumenggung* Nitinagara, had no objection to the request, but Van Rijcke, the Commander-in-Chief of the Pasuruan garrison, refused to countenance this solicitation because Pejarakan was too far from Pasuruan for keeping an eye on him. Van Rijcke offered him an alternative in the village of Purwadesa, where 4 *jung* of rice-fields would be provided. This village was located only a quarter of an hour's journey from Pasuruan.³ In February 1773, Jaksanagara left Blambangan for Pasuruan, accompanied only by his two sons, Jagon Bing (stepson, Chinese?) and Suryajaya, and a few followers, Wayan, Lagi, Singatrana, Ricar, and Singamenggala.⁴ The majority of his family refused to accompany the former Regent and leave Blambangan.⁵ On the departure of Jaksanagara, the Dutch authorities in *Java's Oosthoek* promoted *Mas Alit* to be the new Regent of Blambangan with the name and title *Raden Tumenggung* Wiraguna.

¹ VOC 3389, Copy of letter from the Resident of Blambangan, Pieter Luzac to *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya, Van der Burgh, 11 January 1773, 104-105.

² VOC 3389, A missive written by Governor and Director of Java North-East Coast to Governor General Petrus Albertus van der Parra, 5 April 1773, 11.

³ VOC 3389, Copia of missive written by Governor and Director Java's North-East Coast to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 9 May 1773, 331; VOC 3389, Missive from the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 3 July 1773, 204.

⁴ VOC 3389, Copy of a letter from *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek*, Pieter Luzac, to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 20 February 1773, 127; VOC 3389, Copy of missive written by *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 31 March 1773, 217.

⁵ The wife of Jaksanagara gave the names of the family members in Blambangan, namely; *Mak* Isang the sister of Jaksanagara's wife, *Mas* Engkong his adopted daughter of Jaksanagara, *Sisin* adopted daughter, *Mas* Sebog the mother of the second wife of Jaksanagara, *Si* Sebog the daughter of *Mas* Sebog, *Cuki* the daughter of *Mak* Isang, *Sengkong* the daughter of *Mak* Isang. These persons decided to remain in Blambangan instead of joining Jaksanagara in Pasuruan. VOC 3418, Copy of a letter written by *Opferkoopman* and *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya Pieter Luzac to the Governor of Semarang, 5 February 1774, 121.

Problems of Local Leadership

On a Tuesday at the beginning of February 1774, at eight o'clock in the morning, the deafening sound of a 111 gun salute marked the end of the inauguration of *Mas Alit* as the new Regent of Blambangan under his new dignity, *Raden Tumenggung Wiraguna*. The inauguration took place in the *paseban* of the residency in Ulupampang.⁶ The *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek*, Pieter Luzac, and the new Regent stood side by side, facing the beautiful bay of Pampang with a glass of wine in their hands. Behind them clustered a few European officers, Resident Schophoff of Blambangan, the bookkeeper, Francois van Hoeve, and the *Gezaghebber's* translator Johannes Frederik Buze, all toasting the new appointed Regent. On the left and right sides of *paseban* a few European officers were standing and indigenous chiefs were seated on the ground as participation in the ceremony. Not far from them, a few inhabitants were to be seen near the *paseban*, gazing at the pomp and circumstance. A few European and indigenous soldiers stood vigilantly on guard at each corner of the residency and *paseban*. It was the end of a long process of election which had begun a year before, and for the new Regent it was also the end of a protracted official progress which had begun a fortnight earlier in Madura.⁷

In the first three years of its occupation, the Company had installed no fewer than six Regents in Blambangan, and five of them were later involved in the rebellion. *Mas Uno* and *Mas Anom* shifted their allegiance to Wilis in 1768. Then Sutanagara and Wasengsari were banished after their seditious scheming was discovered by the Company. Jaksanagara was suspected of supporting the rebellion of the Pseudo-Willis and of being guilty of various serious abuses during his administration. The only Regent who remained loyal to the Company was Kartanagara, not that it did him such good because he

⁶ The salute for Governor-General in Batavia was a 21 – gun salvo, for the Governor of Semarang 19, for the *Gezaghebber* of *Oosthoek* 17, for the prosperity of Java 11, for a newly elected Regent 11, for the Resident and the prosperity of people of Blambangan 11, and for the officials of the company and both the *Patih* 11, a 111 salvo in total. VOC 3418, The diary of J. F. Buze about the inauguration of the new Regent of Blambangan, *Tumenggung Wiraguna* in Blambangan, 18 January - 5 February 1774, 133.

⁷ One day after his inauguration the Regent fell ill. The same happened to the bookkeeper, Van Hoeve, who passed away the day after. VOC 3418, The diary of J. F. Buze about the inauguration of the new Regent of Blambangan, *Tumenggung Wiraguna* in Blambangan, 18 January - 5 February 1774, 133.

was also removed after only a few months in power. In the wake of the Sutanagara affair in 1770, the disillusioned Company lost its faith in both the ability and the trustworthiness of the local chiefs to take on the responsibility of the administration in Blambangan. This was the reason Kartanagara and other members of the family of the Regent of Surabaya had been transferred to Blambangan to take up some of the administrative posts. It was forlorn hopes. The outbreak of the Pseudo-Wilis rebellion demonstrated the futility of this solution. The spirit of nativism (anti-Javanese) grew from strength to strength among the local inhabitants and eventually rose to a crescendo in the rebellion. It took a while, but finally awareness of this ingrained ethnic sentiment began to dawn on the Dutch authorities in the *Oosthoek*. This prompted the decision that in the election of the new Regent, the opinion of the local inhabitants should be taken into account. The inauguration of *Mas Alit* as the new Regent of Blambangan was a reflection of a more moderate, well-considered Company attitude in its handling of the Blambangan political succession and it was also a direct response to the seemingly entrenched ethnic conflict in the region.

Mas Alit was nominated as the new Regent of Blambangan by Resident Schopphoff in January 1773.⁸ The Resident argued that *Mas Alit* was the most suitable candidate to be the new Regent because he was a native of Blambangan. He was the scion of a respected family, which had never sought an alliance with the Balinese. His father was the former Chief *Mantri* of *Pangeran Pati*, or *Pangeran Adipati* Danuningrat, the last King of Blambangan who had been killed by the Balinese in Seseh. When he was six years old, he had been taken to Madura by the late *Panembahan* Madura, Cakradiningrat, who was married to *Mas Alit's* half-sister, *Raden Ayu* Dinigrat, the full sister of Danuningrat.⁹ Resident Schopphoff guaranteed that the nomination of

⁸ VOC 3389, Copy of letter from the Resident of Blambangan, Pieter Luzac to the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya, Van der Burgh, 11 January 1773, 105-106; VOC 3389, Copy of a copy letter written by the Resident of Ulupampang, Schopphoff to the *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek* Pieter Luzac, 5 February 1773.

⁹ The late Prince in Madura had visited Besuki in 1763 to meet *Gezaghebber* Breton to discuss *Danuningrat's* request for assistance from the Company to regain his throne from the Balinese. *Mas Alit* and *Raden Ayu* Dinigrat were among the hundreds followers taken to Besuki by *Pangeran Pati*. When Danuningrat's request was refused by Batavia, most of his family members remained in Java, dispersed to various places. Some of them went along with the Regent of Pasuruan, Nitidingrat, among them his son Sutajiwa; some were adopted by the Regent of Banger, and

Mas Alit would win the full support of all the *Mantri* and village chiefs in Blambangan. The Resident wrote:

I have summoned the attendance of all *Mantri* and *lurah* and introduced *Mas Alit* to them as Regent. They uniformly affirmed their heartfelt satisfaction and great joy at observing the absence of Jaksanagara. They also had no shadow of doubt that the election of *Mas Alit* would be very much to their liking because his father and the rest of his family had always enjoyed the greatest respect from the people of Blambangan.¹⁰

Gezaghebber Luzac fully endorsed this nomination, and endeavoured to convince Governor Van der Burgh that *Mas Alit* was an especially appropriate figure to be the new Regent of Blambangan. He wrote:

Mas Alit... at first sight he did not impress me with his normal physiognomy and very brown face. However I observed him to be diligent, intelligent and obedient. I should judge that he was then between seventeen and eighteen years old, in other respect he was reasonably well-built and behaved.¹¹

Because *Mas Alit* was still too young, only eighteen, Resident Schophoff nominated *Mantri* Carangandul and Bawalaksana as joint *Patih*, and his guardians. Both *Mantri* were of proven loyalty and the most experienced chiefs in Blambangan. Since the removal of Jaksanagara, both had been entrusted with running the administration of Blambangan. This nomination was supported by *Gezaghebber* Luzac, but after two months there was still no sign that it would also be

some others, including *Mas Alit* and *Raden Ayn*, accompanied the Panembahan of Madura to Madura. VOC 3389, Consideration on Blambangan given by the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya Pieter Luzac, 4 August 1773, 355.

¹⁰ Ik heb jongste alle Mantries en loeras bij mij laten komen en Maas Alit voorgesteld aan haar als Regent, hebbende eenpariglijk betuigd veel genoeg in die persoon te neemen met een senderlinge blijdschap over Jaxanagaras absentie te ontwaaren, twijffelden ook geensints of het gemeen sou alle seer wel in zijn schik zijn met de verkiesing van dien Maas Alit wijl zijn vader soo wel als verder familie altoos voor heen bij de Balemboangers in een groote agting was geweest. VOC 3389, Copy of a copy letter written by the Resident of Ulupampang, Schophoff to the *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek*, Pieter Luzac, 25 February 1773

¹¹ Maas Alit [...] inwelke gedaante, hij mij op het aboard juist niets groots aankondigde als gemeen van visionemie en hoog bruijn, egter merkte ik hem aen voor zijn als toen fungeerende staet en dienst ijverig oplettend en gehoorzaam, en sal na mijn gissing tusschen de seventien en agtien jaeren oud zijn, reedelijk anders gemaakt van gestalte lijf en leven. VOC 3389, 369, Consideration over Blambangan given by the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya Pieter Luzac, 4 August 1773.

approved by the Dutch authorities in Semarang. Twice, *Gezaghebber* Luzac urged Governor Van der Burgh to give an immediate response to the nomination of *Mas* Alit, but the Governor was still in doubt.¹² His misgivings were not about *Mas* Alit himself, but about Carangandul who had been nominated *Patih*. There was a rumour circulating that Carangandul was of Balinese origin, and therefore his loyalty to the Company was called into question. After two months, the Governor finally replied that any decision about the nomination of *Mas* Alit as the Regent of Blambangan would rely on the outcome of a further investigation of both the *Mantri* who were candidates for *patih* of Blambangan, because the success of the youthful future Regent was dependent on them.¹³

In an effort to resolve this issue, Resident Schophoff set about gathering information, and was forced to admit that all the *Mantri* and *lurah*, with the exception of *Mantri* Bawalaksana and Jurukunci who were now working with the Company to cope with the current political situation in Blambangan, were of Balinese descent, although they had been born in Blambangan and had never been to Bali.¹⁴ Schophoff had to concede that Carangandul was indeed a Balinese but Blambangan born. He was the half-brother of *Mas* Wayan who was now living in Madura. From the former Regent Jaksanagara, Schophoff obtained the information that in the past Carangandul and the Balinese had joined *Pangeran* Wilis in the rebellion against Danuningrat. Jaksanagara also wondered why, when the Resident gave instructions to arrest Regent Sutanagara, Wasengsari and all the other Balinese *peranakan* in Blambangan, Carangandul had not been taken into custody as well. Jaksanagara chose to designate his offence as 'unaccounted crimes'. Beside this setback, Schophoff argued that so far Carangandul had shown exemplary loyalty to the Company. The Resident stated that he would arrest Carangandul personally should anybody be able to

¹² VOC 3389, Copy of apart letter from *Gezaghebber* Luzac to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, Surabaya 22 February 1773, 131; VOC 3389, Copy of apart letter written by *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac to to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 12 March 1772, 143.

¹³ VOC 3389, Copy of separate letter from the Governor of Java's North-East Coast to *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek*, Luzac, 24 March 1773; *See also* VOC 3389, General missive written by Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast to Governor-General Petrus Albertus van der Parra, 5 April 1773, 9.

¹⁴ Bawalaksana was of Blambangan origin and Jurukunci was a Javanese from Surabaya who was elected *patih* of the former regent, Jaksanagara.

produce evidence of his disloyalty. To counter this rumour, Carangandul himself came to the Resident Schophof and argued:

My Lord Resident, I have heard that the *Tumenggung* wants to sell me to you as a Balinese and that Company will no longer permit the Balinese to serve it in Blambangan, I beg that an investigation be made into which of the two of us, myself or the *Tumenggung*, is a native Balinese. If I am accounted a Balinese then all the *Mantri* and *lurah*, with the exception of *Mantri* Jurukunci and Bawalaksana, are Balinese as well, but now let us confront the *Tumenggung* with the question of who of us has remained most loyal to Company, the Balinese *peranakan* or the Blambangan people. Indeed all the genuine Blambangan *Mantri* and *lurah*, with the exception of Bawalaksana and Lalangpasir were rebellious, and all the *peranakan* Balinese have remained loyal. I believe that the *Tumenggung* has also forgotten that in the past he has always concealed from both Major Colmond and Commandant Biesheuvel that he himself is actually of Balinese origin.¹⁵

Alongside the fairly rampant anti-Javanese sentiment among the Blambangan people, there was also an undisguised animosity towards the Balinese. The resentment against both peoples had been generated by the colonization imposed by the Javanese (Mataram) and the Balinese (Gelgel and Mengwi). Of the two, the Balinese colonialism had had a deeper impact, especially as it had led to the formation of a new ethnic group, the Blambangan-Balinese *peranakan*. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century this new ethnic group had predominated in the ethnic composition in Blambangan. It would seem that because of their similarities in culture and religion, the Blambangan people could more readily accept the presence of the Balinese *peranakan* than they could tolerate the Javanese. Under such

¹⁵ Mijn heer Resident, ik hoor dat den Tommongong mij nu voor een Balier bij Uwe Edelle wil verkopen en dat er geen Baliërs meer bijde Compagnie in het Balemboangsche sullen gepermitteerd werden, kome ik ten dien einde bij Uw Edelle dit mag ondersogt worden, wie van ons beide ik of den Tommongong een geboore Balier is. Als ik een Balier sal weesen dat zijn het alle Mantries en loeras buiten de twee Mantries Joeroekontjie en Bawalaksana, maar laat ons de Tommongong eens vragen welke nu de getrouwste aan de Compagnie zijn gebleven de Balijsche (f 183) bastaarden of de Balemboangers daar immers de egte Balemboangersche Mantries en loeras alle rebellische zijn geweest buiten Bawalaksana en Lalang Passier, en voorts alle Balische bastaarden getrouw gebleven. Quam opgemelde *Mantrie* Tjarangandul alverder seggen: ik geloofd dat den Tommongong ook soo wel vergeten sal zijn of voor Uw Edelle altoos verborgen hebben soo wel als voor heen voor Majoor Colmond en commandant Biesheuvel, dat selfs een egte geboren Baliërs is. VOC 3389, Copy of a copy letter written by Resident Schophoff to the *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac, 14 March 1773, 179.

circumstances, Blambangan people were willing to countenance with the nomination of Carangandul as the *Patih* of Blambangan albeit somewhat begrudgingly. The crux of the problem now lay in Semarang; anti-Balinese sentiment was an apparently immutable part of Dutch policy in their handling of Blambangan political affairs, an attitude which had only grown more adamant since the rebellion of *Pangeran Wilis*. This is why the nomination of Carangandul raised so many objections in Governor Van der Burgh's mind. In June, six months after his first proposal had been submitted to the Governor, Resident Schopphoff once again tried to convince the latter of the soundness of this nomination.¹⁶ Still Semarang was not forthcoming with a reply. This pregnant silence forced the Resident of Blambangan and the *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek* to formulate a proposal about the succession in Blambangan more acceptable to Semarang.

In August, the *Gezaghebber* submitted a new comprehensive proposal which went beyond simply the problem of the succession and plunged into tackling the whole reorganization of administration, security, and economic exploitation of Blambangan. In this new proposal, *Gezaghebber* Luzac put forward a new name, that of *Mantri Jurukunci*, to replace Carangandul as *Patih* of Blambangan. *Mantri Jurukunci*, the *patih* of the former Regent Jaksanagara, was a Javanese from Surabaya. This new nomination was finally approved, but there had still one minor niggling problem left, namely the questioned of religion. The Governor adhered firmly to the previous policy which had been in operation since the election of the Regent Sutanagara in 1768: Islam would be the basis of the administration. In his response to this policy, *Gezaghebber* Luzac personally admitted that he did not know whether *Mas Alit* was still a Hindu or if he had converted to Islam. Although he had been adopted by the late Prince of Madura, this did not automatically guarantee that he had become a Muslim. He also admitted that Hinduism, or in the VOC archive *heidendom*, was still observed by the people of Blambangan although the Dutch had formally declared them to be Muslim in 1768. Sutanagara himself, the first Regent to have been persuaded to accept Islam by the Company, had eventually opposed the Islamization policy, and forced the inhabitants to follow in his footsteps. He then proceeded to reorganize the Hindu-Balinese religious ceremonies in Blambangan. Such a quagmire of misunderstandings explains why the Islamization in

¹⁶ VOC 3389, Copy apart missive written by Resident Hendrik Schopphoff of Blambangan to the *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek*, 30 June 1773, 397.

Blambangan was on an obstacle course. Although he was aware of the inchoateness of the situation, *Gezaghebber* Luzac insisted that there would be no change in policy and that Islam would be maintained as the State religion, and it was on its principles the inauguration of the Regent of Blambangan would be structured. In his consideration over Blambangan, *Gezaghebber* Luzac wrote:

I do not know whether he professes the Muhammadan faith, although he should have adopted this religion earlier so that the people would follow his example. Indeed militating against his conversion to this same religion, he does still persevere in his heathen belief by taking part in public processions pertaining to it, which should be completely expunged and then the Muhammadan religion can be disseminated among them by a well-known cleric on whose competence, zeal and good behaviour can be relied.¹⁷

After long negotiations, the Governor finally approved the whole proposal for the succession in Blambangan submitted by *Gezaghebber* Luzac. On 3 January, precisely one year after the submission of the first proposal, the *acte van verband* for the Regent Wiraguna, sealed in a segment of bamboo, was delivered to Surabaya from Semarang. The Governor instructed the *Gezaghebber* to pay particular attention to the inauguration of *Mas Alit* as the new Regent of Blambangan and hand the *acte van verband* over to the new Regent personally. The Governor also appealed the *Panembahan* of Madura to accompany the *Gezaghebber* to Blambangan.¹⁸ The latter was exhorted to emphasize the special privileges bestowed on to the new Regent and the people of Blambangan: they would be free of all obligations to deliver tribute to the Company during the first three years of the administration, commencing from the beginning of January 1774 until the end of December 1776. The Governor sent his translator, Johannes Frederik

¹⁷Dog of hij de Mohametaanse Godsdienst sig togedaan is mij onbekent, en welke godsdienst hij egter wel te voren dient aangenomen te hebben om dus die natie zijn voorbeeld te doen volgen, daar teegen strevige tot aanneeming van deselve en tot het hijdens bijgeloof nog blijvende volharden door openbaare prosesie daervan te doen, geheel en al dienen uitgeroijt te worden, en de Mohametaanse Godsdienst onder hun door welbekende priestert op wiens kundigheid ijver en goed gedrag, men sich verlaten kan voortgeplant worden. VOC 3389, Consideration over Blambangan given by the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya Pieter Luzac, 4 August 1773, 355.

¹⁸ VOC 3418, Copy of a missive written by Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast to *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac, 3 January 1774, 100.

Buze to join the election committee and translate the whole of the *acte van verband* into Javanese and promulgate it publicly to the people of Blambangan.¹⁹

Administrative Reorganization

The election of *Mas Alit* as the new Regent was one section in the implementation of a complete plan for the administrative reorganization in Blambangan submitted by *Gezaghebber* Luzac. He had also suggested the division of this regency into two parts: East and West Blambangan and the formation of new districts or sub-administrations. Mount Raung which stretched from Sentong (currently Bondowoso) to the Southern Ocean should be used as natural marker. The eastern part would fall under the administration of newly elected Regent Wiraguna, and the western part would be administered by Sumadirana, the former *Patih* of the Second Regent of Surabaya.²⁰ The *Gezaghebber* also proposed the relocation of the Dutch fortress from Ulupampang to a more salubrious location.

In the eastern part, three new districts were formed, namely: Grajagan; Ulupampang; and Ketapang-Bincak-Pakem. The formation of these three new districts was designed to reinforce the Company's defence strategy. Grajagan, which was located on the south coast of Blambangan, was a strategic place which had been used by the rebels as a secret port in which to shelter the Balinese warriors who came to Blambangan to support their rebellion. The *Gezaghebber* suggested that a watch post should be built on this site, and a unit composed of European and indigenous soldiers should be stationed there to prevent any clandestine communication between the Balinese and the rebels on the island of Nusa Barong and in Blambangan.

The same thinking lay behind the formation of Ulupampang into a separate district in which there were two main villages, Ulupampang and Punasem, both of which had access to the Bay of Ulupampang on which all the commercial activity in Blambangan was centred. Before

¹⁹ VOC 3418, Copy of a missive written by Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast to *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac, 17 January 1774, 101.

²⁰ VOC 3389, Copy of a letter written by *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 12 March 1772, 143; VOC 3389, Copy of letter written by Governor Van der Burgh to *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac, 24 March 1773, 41.

the war, Ulupampang was inhabited by a variety of ethnic groups, among them Buginese, Mandarese, Malays, and Chinese. All these diaspora settlements were destroyed during the war. Ulupampang was the first place to have been taken over by *Pangeran* Wilis during his rebellion. These two villages were still surrounded by forest, and during the war they had been abandoned by their inhabitants who had taken flight from an outbreak of a contagious disease. The Resident's house, which was constructed of stone, was located here. The Company had also built a hospital and ammunition store in the village of Punasem. In the future, Ulupampang Bay would still retain its function as trade port, and hence it was important to form a sub-administration unit in this district.

Finally, Ketapang, Bincak, and Pakem were formed into one sub-administrative unit because they were connected to the Dutch military posts in Panarukan. Ketapang was favourably located on the eastern coast of Blambangan, and lay closest to the island of Bali. From this coast, they could see the western shore of Bali more clearly. The *Gezaghebber* also asserted that Ketapang was a suitable place for a rendezvous between the military from Panarukan and Blambangan. A small military post, at which some European and Indigenous soldiers were stationed, was constructed. Bincak and Pakem were still a wasteland, but both places had played a significance role as alternative ports used by the Balinese and Buginese to enter Blambangan. The *Gezaghebber* also suggested constructing a fort on the promontory of Pakem to spy on the movement of ships in the Bali Strait.²¹

In 1774, three local chiefs were elected for these new districts and awarded the rank of *Ngabehi*. *Mantri* Singagringsing was appointed chief of Grajagan, *Mantri* Karanggringsing chief of Ulupampang, and Karangandul, who had previously been promoted *patih* of Blambangan, was elected chief of Ketapang, Bincak, and Pakem. They were considered subaltern chiefs although they were directly subordinate to the Regent. This administrative formation was suggested by Governor Van der Burgh, who adopted it from a similar system applied in the districts of Terbaya and Gemulak in the Semarang Regency.²²

²¹ VOC 3389, Consideration over Blambangan given by the *Gezaghebber* of Surabaya, Pieter Luzac, 4 August 1773, 355.

²² VOC 3418, Copy of a missive written by *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac to Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 587.

Besides these three new chiefs, Bawalaksana was retained as chief of Kota, the old capital of Blambangan. Initially, Governor Van der Burgh did not agree with the decision of the *Gezaghebber* to retain Bawalaksana in this position, because the latter had been elected *Patih* of Blambangan. The Governor argued that as *Patih* Bawalaksana should always be close in touch to the Regent in order to run the administration effectively. The Governor entertained some doubts about whether Bawalaksana could pursue his task as *patih* properly if he had to live in Kota, which was far from Banyuwangi, the new town which it had been decided would be the new capital of Blambangan.²³ His objections were countered by Resident Schopphoff who argued that Kota was not too far from Bayuwangi, and hence it would not tax the mobility of Bawalaksana if he were to carry out his dual functions. Moreover, the Resident did not dare risk the consequences of the chieftaincy of Kota were to be assigned to another person because Bawalaksana and his family were very influential and his position as chief of Kota was in fact hereditary. All the previous chiefs of Kota had been members of Bawalaksana's family. Advisedly, the Resident was loath to deprive his family of this position, although it was within the Company's power to do so. To take such a step might elicit an inopportune reaction from Bawalaksana and his family, which in turn could damage the good relationship which had been established earlier.²⁴

In the western part, four new districts were formed, namely; Jember; Prajekan; Sentong; and Sabrang or Renes.²⁵ These new districts were administered by local chiefs who were granted the title of *Mantri*. In 1774, the new *Mantri* were elected: Sadita was entrusted to administer Jember; *Bapak* Unan the district of Prajekan; Sutarering Sentong (currently Bondowoso); and *Bapak* Roman Sabrang or Renes. The population in West Blambangan was poor, but the Committee of Investigation of the Administration Border discovered some valuable commodities in this region. Hence, the chiefs of these new districts

²³ VOC 3418, Copy of a missive written by the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast to the *Gezaghebber* of *Java's Oosthoek* Luzac, Semarang 11 March 1774, 152-159.

²⁴ VOC 3418, Copy of a missive written by *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac to Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 587.

²⁵ VOC 3389, Copy of a letter written by *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 12 March 1772, 143; VOC 3389, Copy of letter written by Governor J. R. van der Burgh to *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac, 24 March 1773, 41.

were not excused from deliveries as were the chiefs in the East Blambangan. Every year the chief of Sentong, *Mantri* Sutarering, was obliged to deliver 2 *koyan* of rice. The chief of Prajekan, Pak Unan, was to submit 1 *koyan* of rice, 1 *pikul* wax, and 1 *pikul* pepper, and the expectation for the chief of Sabrang was $\frac{1}{2}$ *pikul* of wax, and $\frac{1}{2}$ *pikul* of cotton yarn. The tributes were delivered to the VOC fort in Adiraga, Panarukan, and Lumajang. In 1774, in several districts in West Blambangan, among them Puger, Plindo, Batu Ulu, Dempok, Gitem including Lumajang, and the island of Nusa Barong, were united into one sub-administration under the aegis of the Regent of Banger. After 1775, Lumajang became separate regency. The same happened in Puger where a local chief, now bearing the title of *Tumenggung*, was appointed. The first *Tumenggung* of Puger was Prawiradiningrat, the son of the Regent of Pasuruan, Nitidiningrat. The tribute from Puger sent to the VOC posts in the villages of Pager, Bangle, Cireme, and Puger.²⁶

The decision to detach the western part of Blambangan and transform it into administrative unit was based partially on religious segregation. The *Gezaghebber* said that the western and eastern parts of Blambangan were quite potently distinguished by different cultural characteristics. Most of the inhabitant in West Blambangan had accepted Islam as their religion, while the inhabitants in the East Blambangan still adhered to *heidendom*. Under such a construction, the Dutch authorities in *Java's Oosthoek* had a freer hand to elect the local chiefs regardless of their religion and ethnicity. The *Gezaghebber* agued that in the election of the indigenous chiefs in West Blambangan, the Company should not take into consideration whether or not they were natives of Blambangan. The most important concern was that they should be men always loyal to the Company.

Because the bulk of the people in the western part of Blambangan had taken Muhammedan faith, and therefore had no savage characteristics or were immersed in the *heidendom* as is the case of the people in East Blambangan. I supposed that now they will not be particularly bothered

²⁶ In 1773 the total number of inhabitant in the western part of Blambangan was only 82 men, 77 women and 24 children. See, VOC 3445, Governor and Director of the Java's North-East Coast to Governor-General Petrus Albertus van der Parra, 45-52.

whether the chief is a Blambangan native or not, but will remember their fidelity to the Company.²⁷

Banyuwangi: The New Capital City of Blambangan

Another important event in the history of Blambangan was the relocation of the capital of the region from Kota to Banyuwangi. The choice of Banyuwangi as the new capital city of Blambangan has emerged as major issue in the recent debate on the history of the city. In 1998, the Local Government (*Pemerintah Daerah*) of Banyuwangi had approved 18 December as the date of the foundation of the city of Banyuwangi. This choice of date was prompted by a heroic event which took place in Bayu in 1771, when the people of Blambangan fought to the death, or in the local language staged a *puputan*, against the Company which had occupied this area since 1768. However, the date which was selected by the local historians to mark the foundation of the city was erroneous because this act of defiance had actually occurred three years later. Two possible explanations can be found for this. First, the date was intentionally chosen by the Government because politically it is imbued with a special meaning for the people of Blambangan. It marks an important event encapsulating the spirit of resistance to foreign occupation among them. Secondly, the local historians failed to find the exact date of the foundation of Banyuwangi. This latter explanation is quite understandable, because so far there no serious historical research had been carried out to reconstruct the history of Blambangan, particularly the history of the foundation of the city of Banyuwangi. To find out anything about the history Blambangan, most historians still refer to the work of Lekkerkerker.²⁸

In response to *Gezaghebber* Luzac's considerations on Blambangan political and administrative affairs, the High Government in Batavia

²⁷ Wyl het westelijke gedeelte van Balemboangan hiervoren genoemd meestal ten minsten voor het grootste gedeelte het Mohammedansche gelooff hebben aangenoomen, en soo woest van aard niet sijn of in het heidendom gedompeld als de Oostersche Balemboangers, vermeen ik te mogen stellen dat ook soo nauw niet luisteren sal of het hoofd een geboren Balemboangers is of niet, soo bij maar trouw voor de Compagnie. VOC 3389, Copy of a letter written by *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 12 March 1772, 143-147.

²⁸ C. Lekkerkerker, 'Blambangan', *De Indische Gids*, II (Amsterdam: De Bussy, 1923).

approved the plan of building two Dutch forts to replace the former Dutch fort in Ulupampang in other healthier locations. As explained by the *Gezaghebber*, this relocation was based on one main reason, Ulupampang was considered insalubrious. During the war, it had been severely afflicted by epidemic which left thousands of inhabitants, including the Europeans, dead. Resident Schophoff proposed two locations: Bayuwangi, which located few miles to the north of Ulupampang, and the Pakem promontory which is located on the east coast of Blambangan.

Banyuwangi was then an open, uninhabited area, surrounded by the wilderness. It was located on the banks of the River Buntu or Kali Buntu, only few kilometres from the Blambangan coast. Apparently *Gezaghebber* Luzac was keen to investigate the cultural background of the future site of the Dutch fort in Banyuwangi and with this in mind, he instructed the Resident to investigate and find out what the local people called it (etymologically) and its historical background, including its connection with Banyualit, the old name of the Dutch fort in Blambangan, which was located only five miles away.²⁹ Unfortunately, the Resident could not find much to say on the matter, so not much of a story can be found either in the VOC archive about Banyuwangi from a cultural or historical point of view. In seeking to explain the etymology of Banyuwangi, the local inhabitants have their own popular version as told in a famous narrative poem *Kidung Sri Tanjung*. Banyuwangi is composed of two words: *Banyu* means water and *Wangi* means scented. The etymology of Banyuwangi is said to be derived from the fragrant water which flowed out of the body of the wife of *Patih* Sidapaksa, whose name was *Demi* Sri Tanjung. She had committed suicide on the bank of the River Banyuwangi after being accused of killing her own son and having an illicit sexual affair with the King of Sindureja.³⁰

²⁹ VOC 3418, Copy of letter written by Gezaghebber of Surabaya Pieter Luzac to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, 26 February 1774, 143-146.

³⁰ One version from Banyuwangi goes something like this: Sidapaksha, a nobleman in the service of the King of Sindureja, married a woman of lower caste named Sri Tanjung. The union, however, was unacceptable to Sidapaksha's mother who felt that her son had married beneath him. In order to destroy the relationship, she arranged with the king to have Sidapaksha sent away on a long and difficult mission to Mount Ijen. His task was to search for a legendary flower, possession of which would grant eternal youth to its owner. Sidapaksha was to bring the flower back and present it to the queen. Sadly but dutifully the young man obeyed the king's command, knowing that he would probably be away for a long time and would thus

Pakem was chosen as the new location for the second Dutch fort because it was situated on the eastern tip of the island, a strategic place from which to spy on the movements of the Balinese, especially those from Mengwi and Jembrana. After the fall of Bayu, Gusti Mura of Jembrana had sheltered around 300 rebels in his territory. The Resident of Blambangan invited the King of Jembrana to come to Blambangan in peace to discuss what was to be done with the escapees. The Resident had promised them a pardon if Gusti Mura agreed to return them back to Blambangan. All to no avail as this request was refused by the King of Jembrana. In the confusion which reigned after the fall of Bayu, *Gezaghebber* Luzac was even more wary of the lurking threat posed by the Balinese.³¹

The construction of both forts was begun in August 1774 under the supervision of Baas d'Exter, a *timmerman* (carpenter) from Surabaya, who had won a reputation for his building skills in several Dutch settlements in Java. Although the people had been freed from paying tribute for three years, they were still obliged to provide stone and wood. Resident Schophoff proposed using *lari* wood as the main material in the construction of the fort because it was widely available

be unable to witness the birth of his first child. Not long after Sidapaksha's departure, Sri Tanjung gave birth to a baby boy. Seeing an opportunity to fulfil the second part of her plan the wicked mother-in-law, stole the child while Sri Tanjung was bathing and cast the infant into the river which flowed nearby. Then, when Sidapaksha returned after in absence of some months, having successfully fulfilled his mission, she informed him that Sri Tanjung herself had murdered his son. Furious, Sidapaksha immediately confronted his wife and demanded an explanation, threatening to kill her. Sri Tanjung, by now already weak and sick with grief, simply asked her husband to carry her to the river, where she would prove her innocence. Uncertain about who to believe, Sidapaksha eventually agreed to his wife's request and took her to the river bank, from where she threw herself into the water and drowned. Then, a few moments later, as Sidapaksha sat in anguish on the bank, two pure white, sweet-smelling flowers floated by and told him the true story, after which they vanished, leaving only their fragrance; hence the name *banyu* (water), *wangi* (sweet smelling). Concerning the *Kidung Sri Tanjung* and the legend of the formation of Banyuwangi. See Ben Arps (*et.al*), 'Yusup, Sri Tanjung and fragrant water : the spread of a popular Islamic poem in Banyuwangi, East Java', in V. J. H. Houben (*et. al*), *Looking in Odd Mirror: The Java Sea* (Leiden: Vakgroep Talen en Culturen van Zuidoost-Azië en Oceanië. Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden, 1992)

³¹ VOC 3418, A consideration about Blambangan written by *Gezaghebber* of the *Oosthoek*, Pieter Luzac in response to the missive sent by the High Government in Batavia, to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, Johannes Robert van der Burgh dated 13 December 1773, Ulupampang, 6 February 1774, 123.

in Blambangan, being especially abundant on Gunung Ikan. Governor Van der Burgh did not agree and suggested using *jati* (teak) instead of *lari*, because it was more durable. Two hundred *batur* were employed in the building of both forts. The Governor suggested not employing either the Madurese or the local people because they had already made a major contribution by supplying *batur* and soldiers during the war. In fact, setting local people to work was really out of the question because Blambangan was still very sparsely populated. The Governor instructed the burden of providing the *batur* be shared by such other regencies as Pasuruan, Bangil, Banger, Malang, and Besuki. All these regencies should also provide the food needed by the *batur*. Apparently this instruction was not fulfilled by the Regents of the said regencies for no obvious reason. Finally the *batur* were actually provided by such other regencies as Gresik (40 *batur*), Sedayu (25 *batur*), Lamongan (15 *batur*), Pamekasan (20 *batur*), and Surabaya (50 *batur*).³² The construction of the Banyuwangi fort was finished in two months, in October 1774 to be precise, as expected by *Gezaghebber* Luzac. The fort in Pakem was a different story. This work was delayed five months because the state of health of the chief of carpenter, Baas d'Exter, who died shortly after the fort in Pakem was completed at the end of March 1775.

At the same time as the plan to relocate the Dutch fort from Ulupampang to Banyuwangi, *Gezaghebber* Luzac suggested the Regent's residence also be moved. Regent Wiraguna was allowed to choose the site of his future residence, on condition that it should not be too far from the new Dutch fort in Banyuwangi. The *Gezaghebber* also promised to allocate a few European and indigenous troops to guard the new residency. Resident Schophoff proposed some possible sites for the new residence, namely Benculuk, Kota, Ulupampang, and Pakisiran, but *Gezaghebber* Luzac considered omitting the first mentioned, because it was situated at too great a distance from the new Dutch fortress in Banyuwangi. Eventually, Wiraguna did not select any of these sites because he preferred to live in the vicinity of the Company *logie*. In short, he wanted to have his residence in Banyuwangi as well. Eventually, the *Gezaghebber* approved the Regent's

³² VOC 3418, Copy missive written by the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast to the *Gezaghebber* of Java's *Oosthoek* Luzac, Semarang 11 March 1774, 152-159

request and his residence was also built in the town.³³ The Regent's house and the Dutch fortress were built in the same location, opposite to each other, on the bank of the River Kali Buntu. In front of the Regent's house stood two big cannons, facing south and north-east respectively. On 20 October 1774, late in the evening Resident Schopphoff, Regent Wiraguna, and all the Dutch and indigenous officers took their leave of Ulupampang, and formally occupied the new fort and the Regent's house in Banyuwangi the day after. Now, the new capital city Banyuwangi was formally occupied and began to fulfil its destined function on the 21 October 1774.³⁴



The Remnant of the Court of Blambangan (Pic. 2003)

³³ VOC 3418, Copy of a missive written by Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast to the *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac, 17 January 1774, 101. See also, VOC 3418, A Consideration about Blambangan written by *Gezaghebber* of *Oosthoek*, Pieter Luzac in response to the missive sent by the High Government in Batavia, to the Governor and Director of Java's North-East Coast, Johannes Robert van der Burg dated 13 December 1773, Ulupampang, 6 February 1774, 123; VOC 3418, The Honourable and Complete Consideration on Blambangan affairs sent by *Gezaghebber* Luzac to Batavia and Semarang, 599.

³⁴ VOC 3445, Copy of a letter written by Resident Hendrik Schopphoff of Banyuwangi to *Gezaghebber* Pieter Luzac of Surabaya, 26 November 1774, 206.

The Population

The newly selected Regent of Blambangan, Wiraguna, was exempted from the obligation to deliver any tribute to the Company for the first three years of his administration. The reason behind this policy was not altruism but the severe depopulation of Blambangan caused by the debilitating series of wars and epidemics. Generally speaking, the problem of population in Java in the eighteenth century has been a very significant issue in the historiography of the island. Recent studies on demographic history in pre-colonial Java reach a more or less similar conclusion. Reid states that the protracted series of Javanese succession wars which ended in the middle of the eighteenth century caused the sharp reduction in the population in Java.³⁵ This opinion coincides with Ricklefs's conclusion that the Giyanti Treaty of 1755 brought more possibilities for recovery from the population collapse, especially in central and on the north-east coast of Java.³⁶ Both conclusions revise the previous judgements delivered by Raffles and Hageman that the demographic decline in Java continued up to 1811. Raffles blames this collapse on the devastating system introduced by the Dutch. In his famous *History of Java* he writes:

From that moment, the provinces subjected to its authority, ceased to improve. Such were the effects of her desolating system that the population of the province of Banyuwangie, which in 1750 is said to have amounted to upwards of 80,000 souls, was in 1811 reduced to 8,000.³⁷

Discussing to the collapse of the population in East Java Hageman makes an even more severe appraisal. In his *handleiding* he writes:

First, the Commander of Pasuruan, Van Rijck, took possession of Blambangan, and the southern part was conquered by only four soldiers and one drummer who rode in a buffalo-cart, to the sound of a beaten drum, and the enemies were repulsed. But shortly afterwards, infuriated by

³⁵ Anthony Reid, 'Low Population Growth and Its Causes in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia', in Norman G. Owen, *Death Disease in Southeast Asia: Exploration in Social, Medical and Demographic History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 33-47.

³⁶ M. C. Ricklefs, 'Some Statistical Evidence on Social, Economic and Demographic History in the Later Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *MAS*, 20, 1, (1986), 1-32.

³⁷ Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java*, vol. II, (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), 63.

the Dutch the inhabitants murdered the occupiers. The [Dutch] soldiers were slaughtered in the rice-field. Then, the Government in Batavia declared [that] all the people of Banyuwangi were subjugated, and sent troops there who devastated the land after fifty years. Of the 100,000 inhabitants only one-twentieth remained. Commander Schophoff concluded the peace in 1777. He summoned some local chiefs to the number of hundred only aboard his ship and decapitated them. Thereafter, the Commander Rijck once again depopulated the whole south coast of Blambangan and devastated it. There was hardly one person to be found in that land, which was formerly densely populated and prosperous.³⁸

De Jonge argues that such data should be taken with a grain of salt because they came from a tradition which had been passed on by word of mouth and culminated in a commonly accepted image, which persisted insidiously in popular belief. Accepting it as such is simply uncritical and ignores the historical evidence. The major cause of the devastation of the population in eastern Java, he argues, was the local conflict which had flared up long before the Dutch occupation in the late eighteenth century. He also refers to the devastating series of attacks carried out by the Sunan of Mataram in 1639, 1648, and 1663. In the aftermath of those attacks, the Mataram soldiers had deported a large number of inhabitants from Blambangan to Central Java.³⁹

Unequivocally, epidemic disease also contributed to the population collapse in many parts of the globe, including Java.⁴⁰ The above-mentioned studies appear to have overlooked this fact. P. Boomgaard, who has done research on the changing patterns of death and disease in Java during the nineteenth century, admits that there is no a systematic information about the topic prior to 1820. He also states that between 1750 and 1820, Java did not experience any demographic catastrophe comparable to the Bengal famine of 1770, when one-third of the population perished. The only serious epidemic was in West and Central Java in 1750 and this flared up again in 1760. This may have

³⁸ De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, vol. xi, pp. i-ii.

³⁹ Ibid., p. ii.

⁴⁰ For instance, Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Francis Brooks, 'The Impact of Disease' in George Raudzens, (ed.), *Technology, Diseases and Colonial Conquests, Sixteenth Centuries: Essays Reappraising the Guns and Germs Theories* (Brill: Leiden-Boston-Koln, 2001), 127-166.

claimed 100-150,000 lives or 2-3 per cent of the population of the affected regions.⁴¹

In order to understand the extent of the devastating effects of the war and epidemic disease in this area, the first step is to determine as far as this is possible the approximate number of the population before the war. Unfortunately, the data available are not specific enough to extrapolate an accurate estimate of the population in that period. The only data which are in any way convincing were presented by Sutanagara, the former *Patih* of the last King of Blambangan. Not long before the rebellion of Prince Wilis in 1768, *Gezaghebber* Coop à Groen invited Sutanagara to Surabaya. The main goal of this invitation was to discuss the future of Blambangan after the fall of the kingdom. At this meeting, there was also a discussion about the installation of the new regents and the current demographic situation in Blambangan, a topic which arose in the determination of the taxation and deliveries which would have to be borne by the new regents. During the meeting Sutanagara was questioned about the number of villages in Blambangan. He explained that, according the list he had before the war, the number of inhabited villages in the whole Blambangan was 229. The biggest districts, such as Kota, were occupied by between 200 and 300 families; after the war the number of the inhabitants and that of the inhabited villages were both sharply reduced. In the whole of Blambangan there were only 120 or 130 inhabited villages and the biggest village was occupied by between thirty or forty families only. In some villages just one family still clung on. He gave some examples stating that Grajagan, the biggest district in Blambangan, was occupied by only eighty people, whereas the village of Tabanan, which used to be densely populated, was now empty; the entire population who were mostly Balinese had fled to the forest. Around eighty Balinese and forty Javanese from this village were still hiding in there.⁴²

The population data in Blambangan after the second rebellion - under *Susubunan* Jagapati or the Pseudo-Wilis 1772 - is more detailed because one year after the end of the rebellion the Dutch organized a committee whose duty was to present a recommendation on the reconstruction of the political and economic administration in Blambangan, and this included surveying the population. This

⁴¹ Peter Boomgaard, 'Morbidity and Mortality in Java 1820-1880: Changing Patterns of Disease and Death', in Norman G. Owen, *Death Disease in Southeast Asia*, 48-69.

⁴² VOC 3248, The conference between Sutanagara, and *Gezaghebber* Coop à Groen, 1768, 72-5.

committee consisted of twelve people - four Dutch administrators, Adriaan van Rijck, Guttenberger, J. A. Steenbergen, Samuel Faber, and eight indigenous rulers, namely Jurukunci and Singadirana, both *Patih* of Blambangan and the chiefs of the four main districts in West Blambangan; Jember; Sentong; Prajegan; and Sabrang, namely Sadito, Roman, Sutoring, and Unan. This committee assumed its duties in August 1773. The members made a tour throughout the length and breadth of Blambangan, planting markers at the administrative borders and surveying the population to determine the sorts and amounts of deliveries. In September 1773, after one-and-half months' work, the committee presented its report to the Governor. It established that, prior to September 1773, there were forty-nine inhabited villages in West Blambangan: twenty-three villages in District Jember; two villages in District Prajegan, eight villages in District Sentong; and sixteen villages in District Sabrang. The total number of the inhabitants of these four districts amounted to 579 souls. The most densely populated village that of Sabrang, was occupied by sixty inhabitants, and the most sparsely populated was the village of Suce, in Jember District, which offered shelter to only two inhabitants (See Appendix).

Conditions in the eastern part of Blambangan were a little bit different, but the committee did not give specific population data for each district or village. However, in at the end of October the Resident Schophoff of Blambangan delivered a quantitative population figure of those who had returned to the various villages in eastern Blambangan, especially the district of Kota (the capital city of Blambangan). As has been mentioned earlier, before the fall of Bayu at the beginning of October, a large number of inhabitants had fled this place. After this had been conquered, a steady stream of people returned to it and to other villages in East Blambangan. Up to the end of October, 1,723 people (628 men and 1,095 women and children) had come back. Among these arrivals, 131 were prisoners who were later sent to Surabaya and other destination outside Java (See Table 3 below).

Table 3. Number of people returned to Kota in the month October 1772⁴³

Date	Man	Women / Children	Total	Date	Man	Woman/ Children	Total
13	12	23	35	22	12	42	54
14	12	18	30	23	16	24	40
15	34	170	204	24	40	51	91
16	30	93	123	25	30	61	91
17	36	52	88	26	131 ⁴⁴	-	131
18	48	101	149	27	20	61	81
19	23	29	52	28	24	51	75
20	45	79	124	29	61	112	173
21	54	128	182				
Total	294	693	987	Total	334	402	763

These data give an approximation of the population figures in the eastern part of Blambangan at that time. A few reports mention that, during the early years of the rebellion of the Pseudo-Wilis, the bulk of the inhabitants marched to Bayu to join the rebel. In 1771, Resident Schophoff reported that he had experienced sore trials in trying to find people to be hired to work on the Dutch fort in Ulupampang. The number of *batur* and other labourers who usually did such work had died, debilitated by diseases. In 1772, Governor Van den Burgh announced that Blambangan was open to anyone who wanted to move there and settle in this region. An idea of taking Balinese and other people from that island to Blambangan was mooted, but this would have been very risky, and it would not necessarily have been an improvement since the authorities were well aware that most of the Balinese harboured strong sympathies for the rebel. Therefore, the Governor and *Gezaghebber* Luzac decided it would be better to address this appeal to those inhabitants who were still in Bayu and consciously willing to submit themselves to the Company. In order to stimulate the hoped for population influx, the Governor promised to distribute 200 Spanish *Reals* to the first 200 families who were willing to come back to Blambangan. The appeal fell largely on deaf ears because most of the families from Senthong, Kota and other places in eastern Blambangan, who had fled their villages during the war, had by then settled down in their new homes. In fact, those who had been able to

⁴³ VOC 3364, Resident Schophoff to *Gezaghebber* Luzac, 30 October 1772, 72 and 90.

⁴⁴ VOC 3364, These 131 prisoners were sent to Surabaya and banished to various places, 90.

establish themselves in new places displayed an even greater aversion to returning to Blambangan.⁴⁵ Governor-General Van der Parra reported that up to November 1772, the total head of population in eastern Blambangan numbered more than 2,503 people.⁴⁶

On the basis of the data available as presented above, it is obvious that, up to the end of 1772, the total population in the whole Blambangan was no more than 3,000 people or 8.3 per cent of what it had been before the Dutch occupation of the area. It should be noted that many of these missing inhabitants were not simply the casualties of war or victims of the epidemic. Some Dutch reports indicate that there were a considerable number of inhabitants who had fled away to other surrounding regions, such as the Island Nusa Barong, Bali, and Central Java.

The devastating effect of the spread of disease upon the population was quite staggering, but the archive gives no systematic quantitative data, either of the number of people infected by the disease or of the nature of the contagion itself. In such turbulent times, it was difficult to acquire such data. One report submitted by Resident Schophoff indicates that the contagious disease which infected both the local and the European population was dysentery. This illness is transmitted either through direct contact or indirectly through contaminated food, utensils, or water. Bacillary dysentery can be precipitated by under nourishment therefore it stalks its victims in the company of the famine.⁴⁷ Indubitably there had been rampant starvation in Blambangan, especially in Bayu and the surrounding areas since the Dutch had brutally destroyed all the irrigated rice-fields and the plots on which other food crops were cultivated. Consequently these places were highly vulnerable to the spread of dysentery. However, the disease was not confined only to these particular areas. Such places as Kota and Ulupampang, where Dutch settlements were established and there was a relatively good food supply, were also decimated by the scourge. It is quite possible that other diseases such as malaria were also endemic here.

Probably Raffles and Hageman exaggerated the population figure of Blambangan before the war. Nevertheless there is proof that the

⁴⁵ VOC 3364, Governor J. R. van der Burgh to Governor-General Parra in Batavia, 1772, 90.

⁴⁶ De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, vol. xi, Governor-General Van der Parra to the *Bewindhebbers*, 31 December 1772, 233.

⁴⁷ Boomgaard, 'Morbidity and Mortality in Java', 52.

decrease in the population continued inexorably up to the end of the eighteenth century at least. Besides the casualties of war, the Dutch had repeatedly expelled thousands of people, especially Balinese who had been settled there for centuries and had shown themselves particularly belligerent in the series of war in Blambangan. The Dutch had banished many other population groups, both local and foreigners (mostly Buginese, Mandarese, and Chinese) because they could also not count on their loyalty. The population exodus from Blambangan during the war was also high, the island Nusa Barong being the chief destination of the refugees. The Dutch report mentions that, after the fall of Bayu, around 2,000 refugees had made their way there and later, in 1777, they were forcibly transported back to Java.⁴⁸

What happened in Blambangan at the beginning of the 1770s was nothing short of a catastrophe. Certainly it was not in the same league as the famine in Bengal or even the epidemic which decimated West and Central Java in the same period, but ineluctably war and disease in Blambangan caused serious depopulation. For the Company, the demographic collapse was an enormous calamity as it was then confronted with tremendous difficulties in extracting as much profit as possible for an area as rich and fertile as Blambangan in order to recoup the expenses it had incurred in the war. For the people of Blambangan, these appalling conditions wrought havoc and drove the local leaders to desperation in their desire to redevelop what had been a prosperous kingdom under a just king, repeating the feat achieved by Tawangalun a century before.

Quantitative data on the population of South-East Asia before the advent of colonial censuses is untrustworthy. However, it is not completely correct to assume that surveys of the local population before the colonial census was introduced were based merely on the *cacah*-system. In certain places, such as West Blambangan, the Dutch had carried out a demographic survey on the basis of an individual unit. Probably a more extensive survey of the Dutch Company sources will yield more systematic data. This research offers some significant new findings which may at least be useful to launch new research into demographic history in Java, particularly East Java, during the late eighteenth century.

⁴⁸ After the conquest of the Island Nusa Barong in 1777, 2000 people were transport back to Java, but these repatriates no longer showed any inclination to remain in Blambangan. Once back in Java they dispersed to Pasuruan, Bangil, and Surabaya. De Jonge, *De Opkomst*, vol. xi, p. xxxiv.

Conclusion

After five years of occupation of Blambangan, the Dutch authorities in *Java's Oosthoek* began to build up a sound idea of the local political situation. The election of *Mas Alit* represented the long-delayed realization that ethnic sentiment was an inherently serious issue in Blambangan politics. Although ethnic segregation could not be pragmatically implemented in the administration or in social life, anti-Balinese sentiment was still rife in Dutch minds as they set themselves the task of managing the local administration. The repudiation of the promotion of Carangandul, who was of Balinese origin, and the decision to maintain *Mantri Jurukunci* as the *Patih* of Blambangan were born of such misgivings. However, by and large the Dutch had to face the fact that they could not eradicate the Balinese element from the politics and socio-cultural life in Blambangan, because over centuries the Balinese had become integral part of the ethnic composition in Blambangan. The alteration of the administrative structure and the subsequent relocation of the Dutch fort and the capital of Blambangan from Ulupampang to Banyuwangi were mainly in answer to the immediate need for an improvement in the defence strategy in anticipation of further threats which might be posed, above all by the Balinese rulers across the strait. The Company believed that after the Pseudo-Wilis rebellion, the threat to its occupation of Blambangan was not an internal one but from overseas, including the economic menace presented by *smokkelaars* or smugglers, and pirates. Now the major internal problem which had to be faced by the Dutch authorities in Blambangan lay no longer in the imminent menace of rebellion but in depopulation and in how the newly conquered land could be best be exploited for the economic benefit of the Company. The data available suggest that Blambangan had indeed suffered a serious depopulation problem, perhaps more severe than other regions in Java after a similar period of wartime and this certainly presented itself as an insistent problem which required to be addressed immediately.