

HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF THE BATIN SAKAI TRIBE: Tracing the Missing Link in Sumatran Malay History

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ABSTRACT

The history of the Batin Sakai tribe, which has lived for generations in the area around the Mandau River, a tributary of the Siak River, is still dark and only relies on individual memories from the post-religious conversion period of the tribal community around the beginning of the 20th century AD. This study will try to describe the collective memories recorded in the period before the 20th century along with historiographic interpretations based on the correlation of historical traces that exist or are related to the area that was once home to the Batin Sakai Tribe. The description in the study is more focused on tracing the “missing link” in the history of the Batin Sakai Tribe, especially regarding the origins of this tribe.

Keywords: *Sakai, origin, history, Riau, Sumatera*

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I. INTRODUCTION

When Bengkalis Regency was designated as an autonomous regency through Law Number 12 of 1956, the existence of indigenous peoples or tribes along with the existence of their figures was not recognized at all in local history or in the studies of various researchers who had discussed Bengkalis Regency from an administrative government perspective. Several researchers who had discussed the history of Bengkalis Regency only focused on the existence of the center of power and the existence of figures from the Siak Sri Indrapura Kingdom, and most of these studies were still influenced by information from individuals who lived after the post-

independence period of the Republic of Indonesia, not based on the oldest heuristic information that should have been traced in various colonial records or in Malay chronicles. Information from these individuals tends to be subjective and difficult to ascertain its truth.

Most writers and researchers are also trapped in the history of the Siak Sri Indrapura Kingdom, so they often assume that all people in the kingdom have the same form of customs and traditions, namely as Malay from Siak Sri Indrapura. However, in reality, if referred to based on various old records from European writers and from local Malay writers in the past, it is clear that the population in various areas in the location now called Bengkalis Regency consists of various tribes with their respective customs and unique traditions. One of them is the Sakai tribe, a community that has lived for generations on the coast and around the Mandau River, a tributary of the Siak River.

Sakai was originally one of the ethnic identities of a non-Malay Islamic culture-based society whose existence was first recorded by Rijn van Alkemade in 1885 and Hijmans van Anrooij in the same year. However, information about the history or origin of Sakai can only be found in Rijn van Alkemade's notes, while Hijmans van Anrooij focused more on explaining the local demographic and economic conditions.

In 2022, the Riau Provincial Government recognized the existence of the Sakai Bathin Sebang Tribe as a customary law community, but the study of Sakai in a historical context has not yet become a focus of attention. Recognition by the governor through the Riau Governor's Decree on the Recognition of the Imbo Ayo Customary Forest and the Sakai Bathin Sebang Tribe Customary Law Community is only a partial policy that cannot accommodate all local communities who use the Sakai identity as their genealogical and cultural identity. Sakai Bathin Sebang is basically just one of the Hindus (sub-tribes) that used to be part of the Sakai Batin Selapan country. In the perspective of the administrative area during the Siak Sri Indrapura kingdom (1718-1945), the Sakai community was under 2 Sakai countries which at that time were called Negeri Batin Delapan Sakai and Negeri Batin Lima Sakai. These two countries are customary countries that are subject to the Siak Sri

Indrapura province of the Siak Sri Indrapura kingdom.

In accordance with the author's previous discussion, as can be seen in the article entitled "Sakai Society: Tracing the Traces of the Forgotten Identity of the Ancient Malay Tribe from Riau Province, Indonesia.", the concept of identity used in this study further uses the term "Suku Batin Sakai" as a general identity for all descendants of the local "Sakai" community who used to live in the area along the upper reaches of the Mandau River or at that time known as Negeri Batin Delapan Sakai and Negeri Batin Lima Sakai. The main focus of this study is tracing the traces of the origins of the Suku Batin Sakai along with its position in the local historical map in accordance with the historical dynamics that occurred during the period from the beginning of the emergence of the term sakai to the era of the Siak Sri Indrapura kingdom. The perspective of the description is prioritized on the analysis of heuristic data that was found in the early 20th century and the period before the 20th century AD.

Heuristic data analysis regarding the history of the Batin Sakai Tribe in this study is the first to be carried out, because discussions from other authors that have occurred so far have focused more on hypotheses regarding information from local communities in the post-independence era of the Republic of Indonesia which tends to have experienced distortion due to various reasons. Analysis that is specifically based on information before the independence of the Republic of Indonesia is still very rarely carried out and tends to only be quotations without further analysis.

Based on the description above, the discussion of the history of the Batin Sakai Tribe in this study aims to describe the "missing link" regarding the existence of "Sakai" in local, national and international history. This study is expected to be a basis for further research on the historical traces of the Malay tribes, especially the Malays on the island of Sumatra.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In a historical perspective, tracing the origin of the name or identity of an ethnic group is one of the clues that can be used to find historical fragments of the ethnic

group. The etymology or origin of the word of the name of an ethnic group and the relationship of the name to the socio-political and cultural conditions found in the chronological flow of the surrounding areas, which are estimated to have the possibility of being exposed to or in contact with the ethnic group, are factors to consider in further determining historical fragments that are directly related to the existence and chronological conditions of the ethnic group being studied.

Various authors have recorded the polemic conditions in the identity of the descendants of the pre-Islamic Malay community in the Mandau River which has repeatedly experienced changes in naming and speculation about the origins or rejection of the identity based on the word "Sakai". The polemic conditions in this identity ultimately caused a lot of distortion in the collective memory of the local community, so that in the end it is difficult to use the latest local information as heuristic data because of the high risk of information distortion by various causes due to "confusion" triggered by the distortion of the collective memory.

In previous studies, the author has described the contextual concept of "sakai" in the perspective of the correlation between the existence of residents in the Mandau River and the origins of the Gasib kingdom which in various ancient records such as records from Tome Pires in the 16th century and in the Malay chronicle Sulalatus Salatin in the 17th century is called the Siak Kingdom (Reino de Siak). Sakai in the pre-Islamic Malay era was a sacred term from Sanskrit to indicate the existence of a sacred hereditary bond between the ancient people of the Mandau River and the ancient rulers who were genealogically related to the Sriwijaya Kadatuan. This explains why later, after the Gasib kingdom, the ancient people of the Mandau River recognized the sovereignty of the following rulers who still referred to the genealogy of the Sriwijaya Kadatuan, especially the Kota Intan Sultanate by the Batin Delapan Sakai Tribe and the Siak Sri Indrapura Sultanate by the Batin Lima Sakai Tribe.

The word "sakai" is a term that comes from the Sanskrit सखा (sakhā, noun for men) or सखि (sakhi, noun for women) which means friend, colleague or companion. The meaning of the use of the word "Sakai" in the Malay diaspora is still being debated,

but if examined further, this word is only used to identify certain communities within the area of Malay Islamic hegemony, special communities that are subject to local Islamic Malay rulers but are resistant to the Malay cultural diaspora. Islam. It is possible that this word was also used during pre-Islamic Malay culture, especially during the Hindu/Buddhist diaspora era.

Resistance to culture but subject to the hegemony of the Malay kingdom is the main characteristic of the "Sakai" identity. Likewise with the pre-Islamic society in the Mandau River, this resistance is clearly visible in the historical journey of the society at the time of the founding of the Gasip kingdom, which will be explained further in this study. The concept of resistance can be used further as the main parameter in describing the various missing links in the history of "Sakai" in the Mandau River as well as opening the mystery of the relationship between the existence of the pre-Islamic society and the dynamics of the hegemony of local Malay Islamic kingdoms, especially the Malay kingdoms in the location now called Riau Province, Indonesia.

III. METHODS

The object of the study is the pre-Islamic Malay ethnic community that used to exist in the area around the Mandau River, a tributary of the Siak River. The identity of this community, according to Hasiolan-Sidauruk, et al., (2024), is hereinafter referred to as the "Suku Batin Sakai" or abbreviated as "Batin Sakai". However, in the heuristic analysis process, the terms for object identity are adjusted to the terms in the heuristic data being discussed.

The main subject of the study focuses on the history of the origins of the Batin Sakai Tribe and the relationship between the existence of the tribe and the historical dynamics of the kingdoms that once ruled or had an influence on the local conditions where the Batin Sakai Tribe used to live.

This research was conducted using the historiolexis method developed by Freddy Hasiolan Sidauruk. This method is carried out by analyzing interpretation, correlation, comparison, and/or counter-interpretation of the meaning of words in collective memory or heuristic data related to the research object as historical clues to find further clues and facts that can be analyzed conclusively with the factual situation of the collective memory of historiographic premises. The interpretive analysis process of various historiographic heuristic references is carried out by (1) collecting heuristic evidence from various collective memories recorded by writers in the past; then (2) analyzing the correlation between collective memory and various local historical facts, and then (3) tracing interpretive premises from the information contained in the collective memory.

The main parameters in historiolexis analysis are lexical concepts that contain heuristic data, especially the oldest records of the collective memory of the community that is the object of research and other communities that are related to or live side by side with the object of research. The oldest records are traced from various ancient records or other forms of written records based on the filtering of the suitability of collective memory with historical facts that existed at that time, so that data that is distorted due to perceptions of isolative conditions or lack of local knowledge can be distinguished from data that is suitable for use as historiographic data.

The heuristic data used is limited to information recorded during the period before the independence of the Republic of Indonesia to avoid information bias due to local memory distortion during the transition of identity as part of the Indonesian nation after independence. Each piece of information that becomes heuristic data is then traced for its suitability as a fact based on the historical dynamics in the area including the areas around the research object, namely the area where the Batin Sakai Tribe used to live.

In tracing the location of origin, linguistic analysis methods are used, especially etymological analysis of terms or words used as identities, as well as the relationship of these terms with the existence of various heuristic data related to historical facts in areas that are thought to be directly or indirectly related to the object of research. In this case, toponymy analysis is only used in locations that are thought to be related to the history of the origins and migration of the Batin Sakai Tribe. Toponymy analysis is only carried out if correlative proof is needed regarding the origins of the tribe with the location that is thought to be the point of correlation.

IV. RESULTS

The origins of the Batin Sakai Tribe are closely related to the existence of an ancient kingdom located on the coast of the Gasip River, a tributary of the Siak River. In the collective memory of the local community at the end of the 19th century, as recorded by Rijn van Alkemade, the Gasib kingdom was a kingdom founded by Yam tuan Belang from who came to the Gasip River with four dubalang, namely Raja Padjang, Lebé Pandjang, Nè Dondong and Nè Katoelangan. In Rijn van Alkemade's notes, it is explained that Nè Dondong and Nè Katoelangan and their followers were a group known at that time as "Orang Sakai".

The Gasip River area before the arrival of Yam toean Belang was inhabited by the "Orang Talang" who refer genealogically to four datoe (datuk) from "Priang Padang Pandjang" known as Datoe Merpoesoan, Datoe Sai, Datoe Kelantan and Datoe Merbadak. These four datoe came from the same place as Yam toean Belang, namely from Priang Padang Pandjang.

Yam toean Belang was then recognized and appointed as king by the four tribal chiefs. This event marked the establishment of a kingdom called the Gasip Kingdom on the Siak River.

The arrival of the ancestors of the "Orang Sakai" together with a figure called Yam toean Belang to Gassip is an early clue explaining that "Orang Sakai" were part of the Yam toean Belang troops when they wanted to establish the Gasip Kingdom. However, referring further to Rijn van Alkemade's notes regarding the existence and period of the Gasip Kingdom, if correlated with historical records from various previous authors, it can be found that there is a discrepancy in information regarding the duration of the Gasip Kingdom's government.

Rijn van Alkemade mentioned that the Gasip Kingdom only had one king, whose reign was short until the kingdom was attacked by the Aceh Kingdom. The total destruction of the Gasip Kingdom by the Aceh Kingdom according to Rijn van Alkemade was marked by the death of Yam toean Belang, as he concluded as follows:

Wij laten den derden Atjehschen tocht, waarvan de overlevering gewaagt als geschied zijnde met het doel om de edelgesteenten, waarmede de kist (of het graf) van de permaisouri was versierd, te rooven, buiten bespreking; deze viel wellicht samen met den Atjehschen rooftocht, waarvan in 1635 sprake was [2], zoodat dan ook de dood van Yam toean Belang en de ondergang van Gassip omstreeks dezen tijd moet hebben plaats gehad.

We will leave out of discussion the third Acehnese expedition, which tradition mentions as having taken place with the aim of robbing the precious stones with which the coffin (or the grave) of the permaisouri was decorated; this probably coincided with the Acehnese robbery mentioned in 1635, so that the death of Yam toean Belang and the downfall of Gassip must have taken place around this time.

However, Rijn van Alkemade's statement contradicts the statement of Hijmans van Anrooij (1885) who explained as follows:

Alleen weet men, dat in de 14e of 15e eeuw het tegenwoordige eigenlijk Siak, zoo niet geheel dan toch gedeeltelijk stond onder bet gezag van de radja's van Gasip.

It is only known that in the 14th or 15th century what is now Siak was, if not entirely then at least partly, under the authority of the Rajas of Gasip.

The difference in information regarding the years of the Gasip Kingdom's existence from Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij shows that there has been a distortion in the collective memory of the people who were the sources for both people. This makes it difficult to ascertain the estimates of when the "Orang Talang" and "Orang Sakai" existed, which are related to the existence of the Gasip Kingdom on the Siak River, if only based on the collective memory collected by Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij.

Other written information related to the kingdom on the Siak River before the Siak Sri Indrapura Kingdom can basically still be found in Portuguese records as well as records from Malay chronicles that existed before Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij.

In early 16th century AD Portuguese records, information regarding the kingdom on the Siak River can be found in the records of Tome Pires (1512-1515) as translated by Cortesão (1944) as follows:

Siak is a kingdom; it has a king. It is a small country. It is also obedient to the king of Malacca. In these countries they live by agriculture; they are not traders. They come to Malacca to buy cloth, and [people] from Malacca go to sell it [to Siak]. They bring gold in exchange.

The Siak Kingdom referred to by Tome Pires is clearly the kingdom referred to by Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij as the Gasip Kingdom, because there is no other information, either in writing or in the collective memory of the local community, regarding the existence of other kingdoms on the Siak River before the kingdom Siak Sri Indrapura. In other words, Tome Pires' notes are the oldest evidence of the existence of an ancient kingdom called the Gassip kingdom on the Siak River.

The existence of the ancient Siak kingdom can also be confirmed in one of the Malay chronicles of the early 17th century or around 1612 known as Sulalatus Salatin. Unlike Tome Pires who mentioned the ancient Siak Kingdom as a small

kingdom, Sulalatus Salatin actually mentioned that the Ancient Siak Kingdom was a large kingdom, as can be seen in the Sulalatus Salatin version of A. Samad Ahmad as follows:

Akan Siak itu dahulukala negeri besar, Maharaja Parameswara nama rajanya, asalnya daripada raja Pagar Ruyung yang dahulu, tiada ia mahu menyembah ke Melaka; sebab itulah maka baginda suruh serang.

That Siak used to be a big country, the king's name was Maharaja Parameswara, originally from the former Pagar Ruyung king, he didn't want to worship in Malacca; that's why he ordered to attack.

Furthermore, the information from Sulalatus Salatin in the 17th century that mentions that the king of Siak "is originally from the king of Pagar Ruyung" is basically in line with the information from the collective memory of the local community in Siak collected by Rijn van Alkemade as follows:

Deze soekoe's breidden zich langzamerhand uit, vooral de soekoe Gassip, die de voornaamste schijnt te zijn geweest; de ontwikkeling dezer streken, die daarvan het gevolg was, trok de aandacht van een vorstentelg uit Priang Padang Pandjang. Yam toean Belang, gelijk de overlevering dien anak -radja noemt, begaf zich naar de soengei Gassip, waar de soekoe Gassip verblijf hield en een versterking bezat, die Kota Merangei heette. Daar hij uit dezelfde negari als de vier soekoe's af komstig was, bestond er tusschen beide een zekere band, en niet veel moeite kostte het Yam toean Belang, om weldra veel invloed en grooten aanhang te verkrijgen, waarvan het gevolg was dat de vier soekoehoof den hem tot hun vorst uitriepen. Hij werd alzoo Radja van Gassip en hield zijn verblijf in de Kota Merangei.

These soekoe's gradually expanded, especially the soekoe Gassip, which seems to have been the most important; the development of these regions, which resulted from this, attracted the attention of a royal descendant of Priang Padang Pandjang, Yam toean Belang, as tradition calls that anak -radja, went to the soengei Gassip, where the soekoe Gassip resided and had a fortification, which was called Kota Merangei. As he came from the same negari as the four soekoe's, there was a

certain bond between the two, and it did not cost Yam toean Belang much trouble to soon obtain much influence and a large following, as a result of which the four soekoe chiefs proclaimed him their monarch. He thus became Radja of Gassip and resided in the Kota Merangei.

Rijn van Alkemade's statement regarding Priang or Padang Pandjang in "een vorstentelg uit Priang Padang Pandjang (a royal descendant of Priang Padang Pandjang)" shows that Yam toean Belang, mentioned by Rijn van Alkemade, came from an area related to the Pagaruyung Kingdom, because the area was previously under the control of the Pagaruyung Kingdom. However, if we refer to Rijn van Alkemade's statement which states that the Gasib Kingdom was only led by one king named Yam toean Belang and was then destroyed in 1635 or the 17th century, of course this statement contradicts the statement from Sulalatus Salatin and Tome Pires' notes, because the incident of the Malacca Kingdom's attack on Siak in Sulalatus Salatin occurred during the reign of Sultan Mansur Syah who lived in the middle of the 15th century. The information about the Malacca kingdom's attack on Siak during the time of Sultan Mansur Syah in Sulalatus Salatin can be verified in the notes of Tome Pires who recorded this event a century earlier than Sulalatus Salatin. This means that the records in Sulalatus Salatin and Tome Pires' records prove that the Gasip Kingdom or Siak Kingdom has lasted for several generations and not just one generation as stated by Rijn van Alkemade. The Malacca attack in these two records is proof that the Gasip kingdom existed in the 15th century, so it is impossible for the Gasip kingdom to have only one king.

If we refer to Rijn van Alkemade's statement, it can be estimated that the "Sakai People", who accompanied Yam toean Belang at the time of the founding of the Gasip Kingdom, formed their settlements in the area around the Siak River or its tributaries or in one area that was previously the territory of the Gasip Kingdom. There is no information in the century before the 20th century which states that there were other kingdoms that were formed in the middle area of the Siak River apart from the Siak Sri Indrapura Kingdom which was founded in the early 18th century, the Gasip Kingdom in the 17th century, as explained by Rijn van Alkemade, and the

kingdom of Siak in the 15th century based on the records of Tome Pires and Sulalatus Salatin.

The Siak Sri Indrapura kingdom cannot possibly be the Siak kingdom mentioned in the notes of Tome Pires and Sulalatus Salatin, because the Siak Sri Indrapura kingdom was only founded in the 18th century. On the other hand, the kingdom of Siak which was related to the kingdom of Malacca and the kingdom of Johor which was the successor to the kingdom of Malacca, as written in the notes of Tome Pires and Sulalatus Salatin, still existed at the beginning of the 17th century based on Winstedt's (1932) notes as follows:

On 16 October 1610 Joao Lopes d'Amoreira from Malacca got Johor to sign a treaty of peace with Portugal. It was arranged by the king's half-brother, ruler of Siak, to whose daughter the king's eldest son was married on 18 January 1610.

Regardless of the lineage of the Siak rulers, the Siak kingdom in the 17th century that Winstedt refers to is the Gasip kingdom as mentioned by Rijn van Alkemade as the 17th century kingdom on the Siak River. The Siak kingdom referred to by Winstedt is also the Siak kingdom mentioned in the notes of Tome Pires and the chronicles of Sulalatus Salatin. So it can be concluded that there has been a distortion in the memories of local people collected by Rijn van Alkemade.

With the proof that the Siak Kingdom was the Gasip Kingdom, as explained above, it can be ascertained that Yam toean Belang at the beginning of the founding of the Gasip Kingdom and Yam toean Belang at the time of the fall of the Gasip Kingdom were two different people. Most likely the distortion in the memory of the local community when recorded by Rijn van Alkemade occurred because Yam toean Belang referred to by the local community was not the name of someone who became a ruler in Siak, but was a title for the rulers in the Siak River during the Gasib Kingdom.

The term Yam toean Belang is likely a personification of the ruler of Siak as a figure who rules over the tiger (*Panthera tigris*) which in local beliefs is seen as the ruler of the forest (king of the forest). The term Yam toean in Malay is called "Yang Dipertuan" is a term to refer to someone who rules in an area, while Belang is a synonym in the local language to refer to the tiger which is seen as the ruler of all

forest dwellers. Thus, Yam toean Belang can be interpreted as someone who has power (Yam toean) over all the rulers of the forest dwellers (Belang) or all the rulers of the local area in the Gasip Kingdom which was previously dominated by the forest area.

Historical information in the collective memory of local communities in the Siak River collected by Rijn van Alkemade, although there are still distortions, is valuable information if the inaccuracy of the year or period of existence of the Gasip kingdom that he conveys is ignored. Inaccuracy regarding the year or period of existence of the Gasip kingdom in the collective memory of local communities in the Siak River is normal and often occurs due to the absence of written records from local communities regarding their past. The collective memory of local communities that has been passed down from generation to generation is more likely to experience distortion due to differences in transmission between generations, local socio-political changes, or due to “intentional” actions from certain parties with various background interests.

To find out when the Sakai people inhabited the upper Mandau River area, it is necessary to first identify initial information that can be used as historical fragments in tracing the past of the Sakai people in the upper Mandau River.

FIRST, information regarding the existence of the ruler of Siak (Gasip) who came from the area now called the province of West Sumatra, as can be clarified in the statement of Rijn van Alkemade “een vorstentelg uit Priang Padang Pandjang (a royal descendant of Priang Padang Pandjang)” and Sulalatus Salatin “asalnya daripada raja Pagar Ruyung (originally from the king of Pagar Ruyung)” shows that the ruler was related to the existence of kingdoms that once existed in the West Sumatra region. In the context of territorial power, West Sumatra was once controlled by the Sriwijaya kingdom in the 7th to 11th centuries AD, the Dharmasraya kingdom or Sriwijaya kingdom centered in Dharmasraya in the late 11th to 13th centuries AD, the Singhasari kingdom in the late 13th century AD, the Majapahit kingdom in the early 14th century AD, the Malayu Pura kingdom in the 14th century, and the Pagaruyung kingdom which ended in the early 19th century AD. However, of the various kingdoms, in the context of large kingdoms, only the

Dharmasraya kingdom, the Malayu Pura kingdom, and the Pagaruyung kingdom had their center of power in West Sumatra.

The Dharmasraya kingdom, the Malayu Pura kingdom, and the Pagaruyung kingdom were still kingdoms whose rulers had kinship ties, so that, in the view of the local community associated with the kingdom, these three kingdoms were often viewed as one kingdom. Based on this and when associated with information from Rijn van Alkemade and Sulalatus Salatin along with Tome Pires, the migration of Sakai from West Sumatra Province to Siak in Riau Province likely occurred between the 11th and 15th centuries AD.

SECOND, the cultural connectivity between Sakai and Minangkabau culture from West Sumatra province is a historical fragment that needs to be considered. The historical fragment related to this culture is about matriarchal culture, as stated by Rijn van Alkemade, exactly the same as the culture that applies in Minangkabau society from West Sumatra. This matriarchal custom is known as Adat Perpatih which is believed to have been created by Datuk Parapatih nan Sabatang.

Sidauruk (2022) stated that Adat Perpatih was a means of legitimizing Adityawarman (c. 1347–1375 AD) who used the tradition of inheritance from uncle to nephew, which was later called Adat Perpatih as his legality for the inheritance of the Dharmasraya kingdom from Akarendrawarman, his uncle, the previous ruler of Dharmasraya. Adityawarman was the son of Rakryan Adwyabrahma who married Dara Jingga, the daughter of Dharmasraya and Akarendrawarman's sister. With this legitimacy, Adityawarman succeeded in establishing the Malayupura Kingdom in the Minangkabau region, which Adityawarman claimed as the successor of Sriwijaya from Dharmasraya.

Then Adityawarman made a change in the tradition of the leader's position from "Batin" to "Penghulu" as a manifestation of Adityawarman's efforts to break the loyalty of the Dātu-Dātu leaders of the Sriwijaya mandala region to the descendants of the Sriwijaya Kadātuan who still existed in Dharmasraya and Palembang. This tradition based on the position of "Penghulu" was later known as Adat Temenggung (Temenggong). Because Adityawarman had a background from

Majapahit, the new traditions built by Adityawarman can still be said to be one form of Majapahit hegemony.

Third, the relationship between the "Orang Sakai" and the rulers of the Gasip Kingdom. In Rijn van Alkemade's notes, it is stated that the "Orang Sakai" are descendants of "Nè Dondong en Nè Katoelangan (Nè Dondong and Nè Katoelangan)" and their followers who migrated with Yam toean Belang to the Siak River from Priang Padang Pandjang. Not long after, a conflict occurred between the "Orang Sakai" and Yam toean Belang, as can be seen in Rijn van Alkemade's statement below:

Deze orang sakai nu hadden, om de eene of andere reden, zich de ongenade van den vorst op den hals gehaald, zoodat zij genoodzaakt waren uit te wijken en naar de andere zijde van de Siak -rivier te vluchten. De door hen aldus verlaten grond werd toen weggegeven aan de soekoe Gassip, die door den vorst gelast werd om die streek te bewonen en te bebouwen. De orang sakai vestigden zich eensdeels in boven-Mandau en Koenta (Kota -Inten), anderdeels aan de soengei Prawang. Hoewel later weder door den vorst in genade aangenomen, durfden de orang sakai niet weder uit hunne schuilplaatsen terugkeeren en trokken zij zich meer en meer terug in het binnenland, waar zij tot op den huidigen dag in hunne bosschen een zwervend leven leiden. Diegenen evenwel, die naar de soengei Prawang, een zijtak van de Siak-rivier, waren getrokken, bleven daar onder een hoofd, dat den titel van Batin Prawang verkreeg.

These orang sakai had, for one reason or another, brought the disfavour of the monarch upon themselves, so that they were forced to flee and to the other side of the Siak River. The land thus abandoned by them was then given away to the soekoe Gassip, who was ordered by the prince to inhabit and cultivate that region. The orang sakai settled partly in upper Mandau and Koenta (Kota-Inten), partly at the soengei Prawang. Although later again accepted in favour by the monarch, the orang sakai did not dare to return from their hiding places and they withdrew more and more into the interior, where they lead a wandering life in their forests to this

day. However, those who had moved to the Soengei Prawang, a tributary of the Siak River, remained there under a chief who obtained the title of Batin Prawang.

Rijn van Alkemade's statement shows that the "Orang Sakai" were not completely subservient to Yam toean Belang, something strange considering that at that time the power of a king over his followers was absolute. The conflict between the "Orang Sakai" and Yam toean Belang shows that the relationship between the two was more of a fellowship or alliance, the same relationship can be found in the relationship between the sea tribes and the Malay kings in the Strait of Malacca. This proves that the name "sakai" is an identity that shows the relationship between the "Orang Sakai" and the rulers who are their allies.

The alliance relationship between the "Orang Sakai" and Yam toean Belang also proves that the etymology of "sakai" comes from the Sanskrit word सखा (sakhā) or सखि (sakhi) which means friend, colleague or companion. Sanskrit during the Sriwijaya Dynasty and the Malay kingdoms that succeeded it was a mystical language and was only used as a political language to refer to the elite, as can be seen in the Sabokingking Inscription (Telaga Batu Inscription) and in Malay chronicles.

The use of the Sanskrit word सखा (sakhā) or सखि (sakhi) for "Orang Sakai" by the rulers of the Sriwijaya kadatuan (empire) and its successor Malay kingdoms, indicates that the "Orang Sakai" were a group that was an ally of the rulers but could not be fully controlled. This may explain why the Malay kings who had converted to Islam, both in Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, could not force the community group called "sakai" to embrace Islam.

FOURTH, further clues can be seen based on the existence of the names of tribal leaders' positions at the beginning of the Gasip Kingdom as described in Rijn van Alkemade's notes as follows:

Het hoofd van de soekoe Gassip, die in de nabijheid van den vorst woonde, werd door dezen aangesteld tot hoofd van de zoogenaamde hambaradja [2], en verkreeg als zoodanig den titel (gelar) van Panghoeloe Bidoewanda (lijfwatch). Evenzoo werd het hoofd van de soekoe Senapalan door hem getiteld Batin Senapalan, terwijl de hoofden der soekoe's Mandau en Betoeng den titel van

Panghoeloe kregen. De leden van de soekoe Gassip bleven dus bij den vorst nabij de Kota Merangei wonen, doch het duurde niet lang of zij (ten minste een groot gedeelte) moesten meer naar het binnenland verhuizen, daar waar de tegenwoordige talang Gassip ligt, terwijl hun hoofd den titel van Batin Gassip ontving. Als reden voor die verhuizing geeft de overlevering het volgende op.

The head of the soekoe Gassip, who lived near the prince, was appointed by him as head of the so-called hambaradja, and as such received the title (gelar) of Panghoeloe Bidoewanda (bodyguard). In the same way, the head of the soekoe Senapalan was titled by him Batin Senapalan, while the heads of the soekoe's Mandau and Betoeng received the title of Panghoeloe. The members of the soekoe Gassip therefore continued to live with the prince near the Kota Merangei, but it was not long before they (at least a large part) had to move further inland, where the present talang Gassip lies, while their head received the title of Batin Gassip. Tradition gives the following reason for this move.

Based on Rijn van Alkemade's statement above, when the Gassip Kingdom was established, Yam toean Belang gave a title called "Panghoeloe" to the leader of "soekoe Gassip", soekoe's "Mandau" and "Betoeng", but "soekoe Senapalan" was given the title of "Batin" . If this information is compared with Rijn van Alkemade's previous statement, which states that "vier soekoehoof den hem tot hun vorst uitriepen. (... four tribal chiefs proclaimed him as their ruler.)", raises the question, why was "soekoe Senapalan" not given the title "Panghoeloe" like the three tribes out of the four tribes that appointed Yam toean Belang as ruler? An initial clue to get an answer to this question, perhaps can be obtained from Rijn van Alkemade's statement regarding " "Deze orang sakai nu hadden, om de eene of andere reden, zich de ongenade van den vorst op den hals gehaal,.. (These orang sakai had, for one reason or another, brought the disfavour of the monarch upon themselves..)" which indicates a conflict between the "Orang Sakai" and Yam toean Belang at the beginning of the founding of the Gasip Kingdom.

The existence of the title of *batin* and *penghulu* (Panghoeloe) has a different historical background. The background of the existence of the *batin* position can be seen in the explanation of Sidauruk as follows:

Keberadaan gelar jabatan “*Dātu*” dan “*Batin*” bukan merupakan diaspora ataupun sinkretisme budaya India (Hindu/Budha) yang berkembang di Kadātuan Śrīvijaya, tetapi adalah jejak identitas dan wujud ikatan mandala dari berbagai wilayah yang mengakui kekuasaan Kadātuan Śrīvijaya. Mengacu kepada luas penggunaan “*Dātu*” dan “*Batin*”, jejak gelar *Dātu* dapat ditemukan di sebagian besar kawasan yang dahulu menjadi wilayah Kadātuan Śrīvijaya, sebaliknya gelar jabatan *Batin* hanya ada di Semenanjung Malaka dan Pulau Sumatera namun tidak terdapat di wilayah-wilayah lain yang juga pernah dalam kekuasaan Śrīvijaya. Jadi dapat disimpulkan bahwa gelar “*Batin*” merupakan jejak budaya yang terbentuk secara khusus di Semenanjung Malaka dan Pulau Sumatera pada masa-masa awal ekspansi Śrīvijaya, yakni sekitar abad ke-7 Masehi.

The existence of the title of office “*Dātu*” and “*Batin*” is not a diaspora or syncretism of Indian culture (Hindu/Buddhist) that developed in the Kadātuan Śrīvijaya, but is a trace of identity and a form of mandala ties from various regions that recognized the power of the Kadātuan Śrīvijaya. Referring to the widespread use of “*Dātu*” and “*Batin*”, traces of the title *Dātu* can be found in most areas that were once the territory of the Kadātuan Śrīvijaya, while the title *Batin* only exists in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra Island but is not found in other regions that were also under the rule of Śrīvijaya. So it can be concluded that the title “*Batin*” is a cultural trace that was formed specifically in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra Island during the early days of the Śrīvijaya expansion, namely around the 7th century AD.

On the other hand, regarding the existence of the title of *penghulu*, Sidauruk explains it as follows:

Perubahan tradisi “*Batin*” menjadi “*Penghulu*” adalah salah satu wujud dari upaya Adityawarman memutus loyalitas *Dātu-Dātu* pemimpin wilayah mandala Śrīvijaya terhadap keturunan Kadātuan Śrīvijaya yang masih ada di Dharmasraya

maupun di Palembang. Tradisi berbasis “Penghulu” ini kemudian dikenal sebagai Adat Temenggung (Temenggong). Oleh sebab Adityawarman memiliki latar belakang dari Majapahit, maka tradisi-tradisi baru yang dibangun Adityawarman masih tetap dapat dikatakan sebagai salah satu bentuk hegemoni Majapahit.

The change of the “Batin” tradition to “Penghulu” is one of the manifestations of Adityawarman’s efforts to break the loyalty of the Dātu-Dātu leaders of the Śrīvijaya mandala region to the descendants of the Śrīvijaya Kadātuan who still exist in Dharmasraya and Palembang. This “Penghulu”-based tradition is then known as the Adat Temenggung (Temenggong). Because Adityawarman has a background from Majapahit, the new traditions built by Adityawarman can still be said to be one form of Majapahit hegemony.

Referring to the two explanations of Sidauruk above, if connected with Rijn van Alkemade's statement regarding the conflict between the “Orang Sakai” and Yam toean Belang at the beginning of the founding of the Gasip Kingdom, then it is very likely that the conflict was triggered by Yam toean Belang's efforts to change the batin tradition of the “Orang Sakai” that had existed since the era of the Sriwijaya Kadatuan into a tradition based on the “Penghulu” or Adat Temenggung (Temenggong) developed by Adityawarman (1339–1376 AD). The batin tradition was still maintained by the “Orang Sakai” until the era of the Siak Sri Indrapura Kingdom, as can be found in Rijn van Alkemade's notes and Hijmans van Anrooij's notes, both of these authors published writings mentioning the existence of the “sakai” in the same year, namely 1885.

The conflict between the “Orang Sakai” and Yam toean Belang at the beginning of the founding of the Gasip Kingdom, if connected with the possibility that the conflict occurred because of Yam toean Belang's efforts to change the “batin” tradition of the “Orang Sakai”, then the reason why “soekoe Senapalan” was given the title of “Batin” was most likely an attempt by Yam toean Belang to reconcile with parties who wanted to maintain the batin-based tradition. This means that the

granting of the title by Yam toean Belang to the “vier soekoehoof (four tribal chiefs)” did not take place at the same time.

The conflict situation between the “Orang Sakai” and Yam toean Belang likely occurred after Yam toean Belang inaugurated the leaders of “soekoe Gassip”, soekoe's “Mandau” and “Betoeng” with the title Panghoeloe (penghulu). So when a conflict occurred, Yam toean Belang carried out reconciliation as stated by Rijn van Alkemade “...later weder door den vorst in genade aangenomen,.. (... later again accepted in favour by the monarch,..)”. To show his good faith, Yam toean Belang then maintained the position of “Batin” in “soekoe Senapalan”. This may explain why the leader of “soekoe Senapalan” used a different title from the leaders of the three tribes out of the four tribes who appointed Yam toean Belang as ruler. However, according to Rijn van Alkemade, the reconciliation carried out by Yam toean Belang was unsuccessful and the “Orang Sakai” moved further upstream to the Mandau River.

Based on the four historical fragments that can be identified above, the possibility of when the “Orang Sakai” inhabited the upper Mandau River area can be further estimated.

The first fragment regarding the possibility of the migration of Yam toean Belang with the ancestors of the “Orang Sakai” which occurred in the time span between the 11th century and the 15th century AD, if correlated (connected) with the second fragment regarding the existence of a matriarchal culture (Adat Perpatih) and the fourth fragment regarding the rejection of the “Orang Sakai” against the change of the batin system to the penghulu system (Adat Temenggung), shows that the “Orang Sakai” are a community group that accepts Adityawarman's claim to power when establishing the Malayu Pura kingdom based on the existence of the Adat Perpatih, but rejects the Adat Temenggung which was used by Adityawarman to break the loyalty of the Dātu-Dātu leaders of the Sriwijaya mandala region to the descendants of the Sriwijaya Kadātuan who still exist in Dharmasraya and Palembang.

On the other hand, the existence of Adat Perpatih based on the second fragment and the fourth fragment regarding the existence of Adat Temenggung in

the Gasip Kingdom, shows that Yam toean Belang has a close relationship with the Minangkabau or Malayupura Kingdom founded by Adityawarman around 1339-1347 . The location of the origin of Yam toean Belang, according to Rijn van Alkemade's statement "een vorstentelg uit Priang Padang Pandjang (a royal descendant from Priang Padang Pandjang)", shows that Yam toean Belang was a noble and came from an area not far from Pagaruyung.

It is possible that Yam toean Belang is a descendant of the kadatuan in Priang Padang Pandjang, because he still uses the local name from the Malay language. In this case, Yam toean Belang is the heir to the mandala of the kadatuan formed during the Sriwijaya era, so that he can then be accepted as the leader of the four datoe in the Siak River. The four datoe probably moved from Priang Padang Pandjang to form a new kadatuan, namely Kadatuan Merpusun (Merpoesoën), Kadatuan Sai, Kadatuan Kelantan and Kadatuan Merbadak. The existence of the four kadatuan in the Siak River is what caused them to later have the right to use the title of datoe. However, because they come from the same place as Yam toean Belang, their position remains below Yam toean Belang who is a descendant of the datoe Priang Padang Pandjang who was previously their leader.

The use of the Adat Temenggung by Yam toean Belang at the time of the founding of the Gasip Kingdom probably also had the same motive as Adityawarman, namely to break the loyalty of the datoe-datoe in Siak to the descendants of the Sriwijaya kadatuan who still existed in Dharmasraya, Palembang, and Malayupura in Pagaruyung. Meanwhile, the existence of the Adat Perpatih shows that the Priang Padang Pandjang area which was the origin of Yam toean Belang had recognized Adityawarman's authority. The existence of the Orang Sakai or Batin Sakai Tribe who accompanied Yam toean Belang shows that their migration was caused by the rejection of the abolition of the kadatuan by the Malayupura Kingdom through the Adat Temenggung.

In addition, the existence of Adat Perpatih and Adat Temenggung implemented by Yam toean Belang in the Gasip Kingdom shows that the Gasip kingdom was established after Adityawarman founded Malayupura. Thus, the migration from Priang Padang Pandjang can be narrowed down in terms of time,

namely the possibility of occurring at the end of the 14th century after the Malayupura kingdom had its capital in Pagaruyung or the beginning of the 15th century before the Malacca Kingdom attacked Siak. So, this estimate is similar to Hijmans van Anrooij.

After the conflict with Yam toean Belang in the Gasip Kingdom, the existence of the "Orang Sakai" is unknown in terms of their condition in history. Local memories collected by Rijn van Alkemade explain that after the conflict, "Orang Sakai" then migrated across the Siak River. Some of them then settled in the upper reaches of Mandau and Koenta (Kota-Inten), some others in the Prawang River.

The location left by the "Orang Sakai" is described by Rijn van Alkemade as follows:

De door hen aldus verlaten grond werd toen weggegeven aan de soekoe Gassip, die door den vorst gelast werd om die streek te bewonen en te bebouwen.

The land they had thus abandoned was then given to the soekoe Gassip, who was ordered by the prince to inhabit and cultivate that region.

Rijn van Alkemade's statement above shows that the initial settlement area of the "Orang Sakai" during the founding of the Gasip Kingdom was located in one of the locations that later became the "soekoe Gassip" settlement area. This location is between the Siak River and the Kampar River, but where exactly?

Referring to the topographic map of the Dutch East Indies in 1933, it is clear that there is a tributary of the Kampar River named the Sakai River located south of Merangei City and east of the Datoe Merpoesoan location. Based on the name of the Sakai River, there is a great possibility that this river was the location of the "Orang Sakai" settlement during the founding of the Gasip Kingdom.

Pic. 1. The initial locations of settlements during the founding of the Gasip Kingdom.

Source: compiled from Topografische dienst in Nederlandsch-Indië (Batavia) 1928-1939. Downloaded from <http://maps.library.leiden.edu/>.

In this migration process, there is a statement by Rijn van Alkemade that contradicts the statement in the Bab-alkewa'id of the Siak Sri Indrapura Kingdom. Rijn van Alkemade's statement is as follows:

Diegenen evenwel, die naar de soengei Prawang, een zijtak van de Siak-rivier, waren getrokken , bleven daar onder een hoofd, dat den titel van Batin Prawang verkreeg.

However, those who had moved to the Soengei Prawang, a tributary of the Siak River, remained there under a chief who obtained the title of Batin Prawang.

Based on this information, Rijn van Alkemade is of the view that the people who lived in Sungai Perawang at that time were part of the "Orang Sakai". However, in Bab-alkewa'id, the people in Sungai Perawang are called the Akit tribe or Akit Perawang, not Sakai. Perhaps the proximity of the location of Akit Perawang to the "Orang Sakai" and the use of batin for their leader, caused Rijn van Alkemade to assume that Akit Perawang was still a "Orang Sakai" ethnic group. On the other hand, there is a possibility that Akit is a descendant of the dubalang (hulubalang) of Radja Padjang and Lebé Pandjang who was the son of Radja Padjang. These two Dubalang together with the ancestors of "Orang Sakai" or Batin Sakai (Nè Dondong and Nè Katoelangan) were followers of Yam toean Belang in the early days of the Gasib kingdom.

The existence of the "Orang Sakai" was still a mystery to Dutch writers in the 19th century. Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij had written about the existence of the "Orang Sakai" but, as stated by Moszkowski (1909), they never entered the area or visited the settlement of the "Orang Sakai". Furthermore, Wilken (1888) also provided information about the "Orang Sakai" as follows:

Uit de bosschen, die zij bewonen en waar zij grootendeels een zwervend leven leiden, komen zij zelden of nooit te voorschijn, zoodat zij, met geringe uitzonderingen, geheel vrij gebleven zijn van alle vreemde invloeden.

They seldom or never emerge from the forests which they inhabit, and where they lead a largely nomadic life, so that, with few exceptions, they have remained entirely free from all foreign influences.

The resistance of the "Orang Sakai" to foreign influences until the 19th century, as explained by Wilken above, shows that there was a tendency for people in the upper reaches of the Mandau River to avoid parties outside their community. This tendency is likely a behavioral legacy resulting from the conflict between the "Orang Sakai" and Yam toean Belang during the Gasip Kingdom. Yam toean Belang's efforts to change the spiritual system that applied to the "Orang Sakai" had caused disappointment and distrust of the Gasip Kingdom, so that they then avoided government circles in the Gasip Kingdom. This can be seen from the following statement by Rijn van Alkemade:

Hoewel later weder door den vorst in genade aangenomen, durfden de orang sakai niet weder uit hunne schuilplaatsen terugkeeren en trokken zij zich meer en meer terug in het binnenland, waar zij tot op den huidigen dag in hunne bosschen een zwervend leven leiden.

Although later accepted into favour by the monarch, the orang sakai did not dare to return from their hiding places and withdrew more and more into the interior, where they lead a nomadic life in their forests to this day.

Perilaku untuk menghindari kalangan pemerintah masih dapat ditemukan pada masa Kerajaan Siak Sri Indrapura, sebagaimana dapat dilihat dalam keterangan Hijmans van Anrooij berikut ini:

De Sakei's stellen zich nooit in direct contact met den Sultan, maar slechts door een gemachtigde van dezen aan de Soengei Mandau, tegenwoordig een zekere Mat Saleh. Komt een batin te overlijden, dan wordt door dien gemachtigde daarvan kennis gegeven aan den Sultan en tevens een nieuwe candidaat voorgedragen, naar men zegt uit de kamanakan van den vorigen. De Sultan zendt dan aan den nieuw benoemde een baadje als teeken zijner erkenning.

The Sakei's never come into direct contact with the Sultan, but only through an agent of the latter to the Soengei Mandau, currently a certain Mat Saleh. If a batin dies, the agent notifies the Sultan and at the same time nominates a new candidate, said to be from the kamanakan of the previous one. The Sultan then sends the newly appointed candidate a badge as a token of his recognition.

Hijmans van Anrooij's statement above can also be found in the notes of Rijn van Alkemade (1885), but he mentions Mat Saleh's name as Nakoda Ma Saleh.

After inhabiting the upper reaches of the Mandau River, the existence of the "Orang Sakai" was unknown to Europeans until the publication of notes by two Dutch authors in 1885, namely Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij. One of the historical fragments from these two authors that needs to be noted is the information about two tribal groups of the "Orang Sakai".

The first group by Hijmans van Anrooij was called "Batin Selapan" who inhabited the northern area of the upper Mandau River to the banks of the Rokan River.¹ Rijn van Alkemade called this *Batin Selapan* ethnic group with the terms "de *Batin Delapan*", "Batin VIII", and "sakai's van Kota Inten (Sakai from Kota Intan)".² While in the Bab-alkewa'id book from the Siak Sri Indrapura Kingdom, this ethnic group is called "Suku Batin Delapan Sakai" and their leader is called Batin Meradjo Lela.³

The next ethnic group is the ethnic group referred to by Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij as the "Batin Lima".⁴ Bab-alkewa'id calls this ethnic group the "Batin Lima Sakai" tribe.⁵ However, unlike the Batin Delapan Sakai Tribe, Bab-alkewa'id mentions that this ethnic group is led by the Penghulu Mandau who is also the Chief of the Talang Mandau Tribe.

The Batin Delapan Sakai tribe submitted to the king of *Kota Intan (Karang Inten)*, but still recognized the authority of the Sultan of Siak Sri Indrapura. The batin who became the leaders of each tribe that joined the Batin Delapan Sakai Tribe were

¹ Anrooij, "Nota Omtrent Het Rijk van Siak," 305, 348, 350.

² Rijn van Alkemade, "Het Rijk Gassip," 236, 237, 239.

³ Jamil, *Bab - Alkewa'id*, 18.

⁴ Anrooij, "Nota Omtrent Het Rijk van Siak," 305, 350; Rijn van Alkemade, "Het Rijk Gassip," 236, 237.

⁵ Jamil, *Bab - Alkewa'id*, 18.

appointed by the king of Kota Intan. Conversely, the batin of the Batin Lima Sakai tribe were appointed by the Sultan of Siak Sri Indrapura.⁶

It is not known when and for what reason the Sakai separated into two ethnic groups. Referring to Rijn van Alkemade's statement regarding the existence of *Nè Dondong* and *Nè Katoelangan* who were the ancestors of the Sakai, it is possible that the Sakai in the upper Mandau River had separated from the beginning by following the lineage of the two figures. However, there is no explanation regarding which ethnic group follows the lineage of *Nè Dondong* or *Nè Katoelangan*. In addition, the existence of the followers of *Nè Dondong* and *Nè Katoelangan* who were also the ancestors of the Sakai makes the possibility of the separation of ethnic groups in Sakai even more unclear. This means that this possibility still needs to be proven further.

The next possibility regarding the reason for the separation of the Sakai into two ethnic groups is the existence of kingdoms around the Sakai area. The Batin Delapan Sakai Tribe separated from the Batin Lima Sakai Tribe due to their geographical factors close to Kota Intan which is located in the Rokan River area. Their recognition of Kota Intan's authority is likely due to the locations of the Batin Delapan Sakai Tribe to barter forest products for daily needs being mostly located in areas controlled by Kota Intan. Likewise, the same thing happened to the Batin Lima Sakai Tribe group when they submitted to Siak Sri Indrapura. So, it is possible that the separation of the Sakai was more due to economic interests that were directly related to the economic center closest to the geographical location of their settlement.

When Kota Intan formally handed over its authority over the Tapung Kiri and Tapung Kanan regions to Siak Sri Indrapura in 1876,⁷ Kota Intan's authority over the Suku Batin Delapan Sakai was administratively transferred to Siak Sri Indrapura. However, according to the notes of Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij, when the two authors compiled their notes, the inauguration of the inner clan of the Suku Batin Delapan Sakai was still carried out by the King of Kota Intan. The inauguration of the inner clan by the Sultan of Siak probably only began after the Bab-alkewa'id was published in 1898.

⁶ Rijn van Alkemade, "Het Rijk Gassip," 235-6.

⁷ Wilken, "De Verbreiding van het Matriarchaat op Sumatra," 166-7, fn. 15.

When the Batin Sakai Tribe was still divided into two tribal groups, namely when the Batin Delapan Sakai Tribe was still subject to the King of Kota Intan and the Batin Lima Sakai Tribe who recognized the authority of the Sultan of Siak Sri Indrapura, outside access to this tribe was still very limited. The isolation carried out by the Batin Sakai Tribe against outsiders was likely done to prevent changes and protect their cultural roots that had existed for hundreds of years before.

Resistance to external influences is clearly seen from the statements of Rijn van Alkemade and Hijmans van Anrooij who stated that at that time, namely around 1884-1885, they had not yet embraced Islam as was the case with the Malay community in the surrounding areas. However, Rijn van Alkemade noted that there had been significant changes due to the ongoing relationship or interaction between the Malay community and the Batin Sakai Tribe. One of these changes, as stated by Rijn van Alkemade, was that the clothing previously worn was a loincloth then changed to clothing in the form of trousers and shirts commonly worn by the Malay community.

Rijn van Alkemade's statement in 1885 regarding the change in the clothing of the Batin Sakai Tribe, was the starting point of the transformation of this tribe into Malay. Uniquely, Rijn van Alkemade predicted that not long after, namely after 1885, the Batin Sakai Tribe would be converted to Islam. A prediction that was proven later.

Moszkowski in 1909 found that the Sakai on the Rokan Kiri border had converted to Islam and almost completely changed into Malay. In addition, he mentioned that at that time the Batin Sakai Tribe preferred to be called "orang batin", Sakai was a great insult to them.

Moszkowski's statement on the rejection of the term Sakai for the people in the upper reaches of the Mandau River shows that the process of converting the identity of the Batin Sakai Tribe into Malay has been very rapid. The Batin Sakai Tribe during Moszkowski's time began to adopt various customs in Malay culture or in this case had become Malay. Although not all of them embraced Islam, various past customs that were once part of the Batin Sakai Tribe's culture began to be abandoned one by one. Trade access that began to be built during the time of Sultan

Syarif Hassim, further accelerated the acculturation of Malay culture and changes in identity in the Batin Sakai Tribe. This change in identity then triggered what Porath (2018) called cultural amnesia.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Discussions on the history of the Batin Sakai Tribe in Riau Province by historians, anthropologists, and other writers, until this study was made, were still a record of collective memory or individual recordings without any in-depth analysis to ensure the correlation of the information obtained in accordance with the chronological conditions of the various historical events that occurred in the Batin Sakai Tribe and in various areas around the tribe's settlements. The polemic that often occurs is the view that the Batin Sakai Tribe is an isolated tribe and has no historical connection with the surrounding area, except when this tribe began to integrate with the Malay-Islamic identity community. This integration then triggered identity conversion and ultimately eliminated many varieties of past knowledge as a form of adaptation of this tribe when it became Malay, as this phenomenon was later called by Porath as cultural amnesia. However, tracing the historical traces of the Batin Sakai Tribe is very important to describe the various missing links in the journey of the history of Malay civilization. The historical exploration of the Batin Sakai Tribe, as described in this study, is a basic milestone in proving that endemic cultural diasporas in Indonesia still exist and can survive for centuries when foreign cultural diasporas enter Indonesia.

Endemic culture that can be found in the history of the Batin Sakai Tribe, one of which can be seen based on the event of the founding of the Gasib Kingdom by Yam toean Belang. The existence of Yam toean Belang in the collective memory of the Talang community and the Batin Sakai in the notes of Rijn van Alkemade is the title of a figure from the ruler of the Gasip kingdom. This collective memory is evidence that there is a special title used by the rulers of the Gasip kingdom, a title that tends to be different from the titles of rulers of other Malay kingdoms. The title of the ruler of the kingdom in the Malay kingdoms usually uses the additional term

“besar” or ‘agung” after “yang pertuan” or in the terms of the ancient people in the Siak River it is called “Yam toean”. Meanwhile, the word “Belang” in the name Yam toean Belang, which is the personification of the ruler of Siak as a figure who rules over the tiger (*Panthera tigris*) which in local beliefs is seen as the ruler of the forest (king of the forest), shows that the ancient rulers of the Malay kingdom in the period before the Siak Sri Indrapura kingdom personified themselves with the characters of natural elements, so it is not impossible that the names of the ancestors of the Batin Sakai Tribe are also personifications of natural elements.

The migration of the ancestors of the Batin Sakai Tribe with Yam toean Belang to Sungai at the end of the 14th century after the Malayupura kingdom had its capital in Pagaruyung or the beginning of the 15th century before the Malacca Kingdom's attack on Siak, shows that this tribe is not a backward tribe or a certain race such as the race with the term Weddoid as has been referred to by other writers before this study. Their life in the wilderness area is a life choice in order to maintain their social, cultural and political integrity as a free society that cannot be controlled by anyone. This means that the life of the ancestors of the Batin Sakai Tribe until the 19th century AD was a cultural commitment and not backwardness or lagging behind with the “progress” in the dynamics of the lives of other communities around them.

Further research still needs to be carried out intensively, because there are still many missing links in Malay culture in the Malacca Strait whose clues may still be found from research on the past of the Batin Sakai Tribe. It is possible that tracing the past of the Batin Sakai Tribe could also open up the mystery regarding the Siak River area being the choice center of power for the rulers of the Malay Kingdom after the Malayu Pura kingdom, especially regarding the center of power of the Gasib kingdom and the Siak Sri Indrapura kingdom.

In addition, the phenomenon of cultural amnesia that occurs in the Batin Sakai Tribe also needs to be studied further, because this phenomenon also occurs in many tribes or ethnic groups that were previously misconceptualized in the category of Underdeveloped Tribes by the Indonesian Government. With the government's efforts to accommodate the existence of customary law communities, the

phenomenon of cultural amnesia can trigger efforts to create fictional historical stories by certain irresponsible groups. If there are no obstacles, the phenomenon of cultural amnesia in the Batin Sakai Tribe will be discussed further by the author in the next study publication.

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