NOTES

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Reconstructing the Tengger calendar

The survival of an Indic calendar among the Tengger people of the Brama highlands in east Java opens a window on Java's calendar history. Its hybrid form reflects accommodations between this non-Muslim Javanese group and the increasingly dominant Muslim Javanese culture. Reconstruction is challenging because of this hybridity, because of inconsistencies in practice, and because the historical evidence is sketchy and often difficult to interpret.

The need to rely on nineteenth-century sources

Recent accounts of Tengger ritual and belief incorporate the changes of the 1970s and 1980s that saw massive renovations of Tengger tradition under Balinese tutelage. Hefner's researches (1985:14-5, 206) in the 1970s showed that the last knowledgeable Tengger custodians of the old Buda tradition were then two generations in the past. The knowledge had been tightly held in priestly families, restricted to those born in the lineage and practiced only by those ordained into the priesthood. During the nineteenth century the tradition suffered a disjunction with the abandonment of the old-style script and writing on palm leaves in favour of writing modern Javanese script in paper books. This coincided with a reduction of the relative isolation of the Tengger as the Dutch became interested in the possibilities of growing coffee on the lower slopes of the mountains and built roads to Tosari and other foothill areas during the nineteenth century. Threads of the tradition have been cut short by the conversion of Tengger villages to Islam, a process that gained traction in the second half of the nineteenth century when distinctions between Muslim and non-Muslim began to be more clearly formulated. This attenuated Tengger tradition then had to deal with the modern state. Since the religious policies of the New Order government required the Tengger to regularize and modernize their religion, there has been a strong government-supported push to align the Tengger Buda religion with Balinese Hinduism, already recognized as an official and civilized religion. Under the tutelage of the Parisada Hindu Bali, the Tengger have adopted modern Balinese ritual

terms and manners of prayer, and a Balinese-style temple has been constructed on the Sea of Sand on Mount Brama, the geographical centre-point of Tengger identity (Waluyo 1997:18-9; Hefner 1985:250-60). The renovation of religious practice that the Parisada promoted also apparently involved the calendar (Lüem 1988:224). This means that we cannot rely on modern descriptions of the Tengger calendar, for example by Lüem or Widyaprakosa,¹ unless we can find corroboration for its features in evidence of older Tengger practice.

In the absence of a manuscript or priestly text dealing with the management of the calendar, we have therefore to make what we can of the nineteenth-century Dutch reports of Domis and De Jongh advised by Hageman. These sources and a few others also provide a handful of Tengger dates against which we can test the accounts. Van Hien (1912-13:277-8) gives a sketch of the Tengger calendar in his compendious modern *primbón*, which includes some curiously interesting detail, but is no help for a reconstruction.

The Meinsma papers

De Jongh's report on the Tengger calendar was published in Meinsma (1879). Because of its apparent completeness, it has been influential in all later Dutch discussions of the Tengger calendar. Rouffaer (1921a, 1921b) distilled it into the simple description of the calendar he presented in the *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië*. By projecting this model of the calendar back through time, he developed a rather complex historical argument about the relationship of the Tengger to Majapahit and later Mataram. Jasper (1928:34-9) incorporated the Meinsma-Rouffaer model into his monograph on the Tengger people, while adding incidental information from other sources. Most recently Van der Molen (1983:297-300) worked through the implications of the Meinsma-Rouffaer model by developing two projections of this calendar back through time. Only recently has the German ethnologist, Lüem (1988:24), dismissed key elements of the description as contradicting the findings of her own fieldwork.²

Meinsma's publication comprises his introduction and notes to a pair of papers describing aspects of Tengger time-reckoning. The paper published as 'Part I' seems to have been compiled in 1867 and 1868 by Colonel De Jongh. It contains some data from previously published sources, but is mainly a compilation of information provided by two correspondents with

¹ Lüem 1988:224-7; Widyaprakosa 1994:59. Lüem (1988) does not deal with the contemporary method of intercalating months, which would have been a useful diagnostic for Balinization. Widyaprakosa's short account (1994) appears to synthesize local investigations and Balinese sources.

² Lüem (1988) reports the reverse counting *pasaran* years, and implicitly dismisses intercalation.

access to Tengger informants, one on the northern (Pasuruhan) side, the other on the western (Malang) side. The correspondent on the north was almost certainly Hageman.³

The correspondents sent notes to De Jongh, and in the process of drafting his synthesis of the material, he noticed some points of divergence. He sent a brief list of points for clarification to Hageman, who was back in the field in early January 1868. Hageman's response now constitutes the second of the Meinsma papers. Rather than incorporating this new material into his survey, the compiler made it an appendix to his earlier draft, inserting only a reference to it in his main report when dealing with the 9-day week-cycle. Understanding the history of the two documents, we can certainly go beyond Meinsma's assessment that 'both pieces were almost of the same tenor',⁴ but in so doing we have reduced the independent evidential value of the reports.

The main report is, then, a pastiche of secondary information. Although De Jongh was not insensitive to contradictions in his sources, as the questions he posed to Hageman indicate, he was also willing to report contradictory information without comment. The list of years and *pasaran* labels given near the end of his report throws some light on the process of compilation. The list begins with a year corresponding to 1827 AD. This must be taken from the date reported by Domis in *De Residentie Passoeroeang*, but it has been corrected from the 'Malang' era to the supposed 'Pasuruhan' era, which was considered more authentic. It is questionable whether the year number can be changed while holding the years' *pasaran* name constant, but the recalibration has gone wrong in any case. It is the Tengger year in the second part of 1827 that was a Pon year, not that in the first part, as the revision has it. This revision is not likely to have been made by De Jongh, who went on include, without comment, an incompatible later year (Pon 1783) in his list of *pasaran* equivalents. Nor is it likely to be Hageman's, for he was not convinced of the superiority of either of the eras, as his comment in 'Part II' reveals. So perhaps the amendment to Domis's date was made by De Jongh's Malang informant. He might also be the source of the comment made by De Jongh that the dates in the list are products of 'the best calculations'.⁵

This inconclusive example shows the multiple layers of reworking that the published information has undergone. The distance between the published data and the original Tengger informants is a problem that affects all our sources in varying degrees. Within Tengger society, specialized ritual and cultural knowledge – of which operating the calendar is a part – was restricted to the *dukun* and to some extent the headman of the village, and passed

³ We deduce this from the fact that the date reported in the second of the Meinsma papers is more fully detailed in Hageman's own publication (1871:17).

⁴ Meinsma (1879:131): beide stukken bijna gelijkkluidend waren.

⁵ De Jongh (1879:137): Naar alle mogelijke berekeningen ...

down in hereditary succession. It took the Hefners a long time to win the confidence of the *dukun* sufficiently for them to be allowed to witness and record ceremonies. They were never given access to written sources. Dutch officials working through lowland Javanese regents seem to have found things little easier, as Van Herwerden (1844:67) commented. These conditions are fertile ground for miscommunication, half-understandings and even obfuscation. Dutch observers were not loath to rationalize what they thought they heard, and Hageman was notably prone to engage in fanciful calculations.⁶ There is nothing we can do about this, except to recognize that the reports we have at second, third or fourth hand are not infallible. We have to grope our way gingerly through this fog, mindful always of Hefner's warning (1985:9) of the 'speculative errors that have plagued many analyses of Tengger tradition'.

Summary of the empirical evidence

Below is a distillation of the empirical information found in published sources for specific Tengger dates plus the two Tengger-like dates found in the Merapi-Merbabu manuscripts of central Java. The sources are indicated in the notes following. The *Sūryasiddhānta* date is given as a good proxy for gauging the phase of the moon, a little more precisely than the Javanese Muslim date. For seasonality the Gregorian Christian calendar is the best guide.

⁶ Witness the farrago of figuring in Hageman (1852, II:368-77). Hageman (1871:5-6) thought that the Tengger were ethnically distinct from the Javanese and had their own calendar dating back to 26 July 99 AD.

List 1. Tengger and Tengger-like dates

#	source	date	Sūryasiddhānta	Javanese Muslim	AD
<i>Merbabu</i>					
1	vd Molen	– Wesaka 1635	11 Weśākha 1633	10 Mulud 1635	29 Apr 1711
2	vd Molen	Kliwon 1667 / 1687			? 1742 / 1762
<i>Tengger</i>					
3	Domis	22 Kanem Pon 1755	24 Kārtika 1749	23 Bakda Mulud 1755	13 Nov 1827
	(a) De Jongh	Pon 1751			1827
	(b) De Jongh	Wage 1752			1827
4	Herwerden	14 Kasada –	14 Māgha [1763]	14 Sura [1770]	24 Feb 1842
5	Hageman 1852	1 [Kasa] 1778	5 Māgha 1771	5 Mulud 1778	18 Jan 1850
6	De Jongh	Pon 1783	1779-80	1786-87	1858
7	De Jongh	14-15 Karo 1786	20 Mārḡasīra 1782	18 Jumadilakir 1789	1 Jan 1861
8	De Jongh	Wage 1792	1788-89	1795-96	[1866]-1867
9	Hageman 1879	[1 Kasa] Kliwon 1793	5 Asuji 1789	3 Jumadilakir 1796	2 Oct 1867
	Hageman 1879	[1 Kasa] Kliwon 1796	5 Asuji 1789	3 Jumadilakir 1796	2 Oct 1867
10	Hageman 1871	[1 Kasa] Kliwon 1795	5 Asuji 1789	3 Jumadilakir 1796	2 Oct 1867
11	Hageman 1871	13 Kapat Wage 1793	16 Poṣya 1789	15 Pasa 1796	10 Jan 1868
12	Hageman 1871	14/15 Kasada	16 Bhādrapada 1790	15 Jumadilawal 1797	3 Sep 1868
13	Hageman 1871	14/15 Kasada	17 Bhādrapada 1791	15 Jumadilakir 1798	22 Sep 1869
14	Hageman 1871	14/15 Kasada	18 Bhādrapada 1792	16 Jumadilakir 1799	12 Sep 1870
15	Hageman 1871	[1 Kasa] Pon 1797	4 Asuji 1792	3 Rejeb 1799	28 Sep 1870
16	Lüem	1 Kasa [1915]	2 Phālguna 1904	2 Jumadilawal 1915	15 Feb 1983

Sources

1. Van der Molen 1983:76-83. MS H of Kunjarakarna, which Van der Molen shows is from Merbabu = MS 187 (Setyawati 2002). Van der Molen credibly reconstructs this date as 29 April 1711. On this day the *pawukon* matches in all items except the 4-day cycle (which is inexplicably half a cycle awry) and conforms with a date in Wesaka (so long as we take this to be the Indic month falling in April-May). Van der Molen considers placing the date in either the Śaka era or a Tengger era that he reconstructs using De Jongh's deficient description of the Tengger calendar. These proposals require emendation of the year to 1633 or 1634 respectively although the year is very clearly expressed in the manuscript as 1635. The alternative possibility that this is a year in the Javanese Muslim era fits the evidence more cleanly.
2. Van der Molen 1983:83-87. MS K of Kunjarakarna, from Pamrihan, that is Merbabu = MS 53 (Setyawati 2002). The *pasaran* label of the year is clear, but all else is dubious. The year number is given as a chronogram, and there are internal inconsistencies in the *pawukon* values.

3. Domis 1836:144, 146. The date is from the Pasuruhan side (Domis 1836:150). Domis reports this date as '22 Kanam' and not, as panglong 7 Kanam, as one would expect if the dates of the month were counted in waxing and waning fortnights in the Indic manner. It is Domis also who mentions that the 30 days were counted with the names of the 30 *wuku*, a practice not consonant with the use of fortnights.
(a), (b) De Jongh 1879:137. These dates appear to be recalculations of the date Domis gives. I do not regard them as empirical evidence.
4. Van Herwerden 1844:73.
5. Hageman 1852, II:374. Like all Hageman's data, this date has to be treated with caution. Hageman is prone to present his calculations as if they were fieldwork data. He loves playing with figures, but is often inaccurate even on his own terms.
6. De Jongh 1879:138. De Jongh's source for this date is unclear. It may have been corrected from the 'Malang' era to that of 'Pasuruhan' as it is presented in the same context as 3 (a), (b) above. If it has been adjusted, its year coincides with #7.
7. De Jongh 1879:138. This date is given as the beginning of the Tengger civil (*burgelijk*) year, but the opening comment in Hageman (1879:139) and an earlier remark in De Jongh (1879:133) indicates that De Jongh had received conflicting advice on the beginning of the Tengger year. There seems to have been a notion that the Karo commemoration was a Tengger New Year celebration. This is analogous to the idea that Lebaran is the Muslim New Year, and is not relevant to the calendar.
8. De Jongh 1879:137.
9. Hageman 1879:139.
10. Hageman (1871:6) expresses this as 1794 elapsed years. It is possibly not an empirical date.
11. Hageman 1871:17. Note the different *pasaran* label of no. 9.
- 12-14. Hageman 1871:8. The context in which Hageman presents these dates suggests that they are, for once, empirical data and not his own calculations. The series indicates that the 1869 AD date has been preceded by a leap month.
15. Hageman (1871:8) gives this date as 1797, but it seems to be an erroneously calculated date. Subsequent dates in the same list are calculated beyond the date of publication of the paper.
16. Lüem (1988:225) does not give the Tengger year at this point, but it can be deduced from the equivalence of 1919 Tengger and 1987 AD mentioned at the beginning of her appendix on the calendar (Lüem 1988:224).

With this empirical evidence we are able to throw some light on the mechanics of the Tengger calendar.

Length of months and suppression of dates

Domis, in 1827, states that every month has 30 days. This notion is compatible with the suppression of dates. This is also what we find in the modern Tengger calendar described by Lüem (1988:224), where the days within the month on which a date is suppressed are called *mecak*. On the other hand, the De Jongh report, in 1867, lists the months of the year with alternately 29 and 30 days, and specifies that a leap month has 30 days. We might take this as merely a simple way of explaining the effect of suppressing days,⁷ but two further pieces of information show that it has to be taken at face value. First, it is carried through to the calculation of the number of days missing in the five-year *windu*. According to De Jongh's account, the Tengger informant explained that each *windu* should have 1800 days, and that by the end of the *windu* 30 days had gone missing. This fits with the alternating months of 29 and 30 days, not a Balinese-style suppression of days. Second, the explicit information that short months finish on *panglong patblas* (the 29th) rather than *tilem* (the 30th) is incompatible with the suppression of dates: rather it points to truncation of the short months.⁸

It is possible that both methods were current. If the month is to keep in phase with the moon, the simple alternation of short and long months requires the lengthening of a short month a little less than every three years.⁹ An occasional adjustment of this kind would keep the two systems broadly in step. The empirical evidence has Tengger dates inconsistently slightly slower than the phases of the moon. This seems to sit more comfortably with the idea that some suppressions had been forgotten, rather than – in the alternative – that there had been too much enthusiasm for lengthening short months. Whatever the case, the variability of the slowness indicates that ad hoc adjustments were being made.

⁷ De Jongh 1879:132-3. Note Friederich's description (1850:50) of the Balinese months as 'divided into 29 to 30 days'.

⁸ It is probably coincidental that another remnant group, the Baduy of West Java also have months of alternately 29 and 30 days, although Van Tricht (1929:92) unaccountably calls this 'an old Javanese institution'. Jacobs (1891:78) says every month had 30 days.

⁹ The Javanese Muslim 8-year *windu* contains three such lengthened months, and requires still further adjustment about every 120 or 126 years.

Tengger era

Of all the elements of a date, the numbering of years tends to be the least stable and most subject to error. If the Palembang chancery could issue charters with dates one year different from all its neighbours (Proudfoot 2006:73), and if Mas Rahmat could keep a diary with dates regularly one or two years wrong as he travelled about Java (Kumar 1985), then it comes as no surprise that the Tengger, keeping track of time in more isolated conditions, might have deviations. De Jongh's report mentions a disagreement in the numbering of years: the year numbered 1793 in the north was numbered 1796 in the west. De Jongh speculated that the Northerners held to an authentic Tengger era while their more acculturated brethren in the west had adopted the Javanese Muslim era.

A glance at the empirical record shows that in a spread of cases gleaned from independent sources, the number of the Tengger year corresponds with the number of the Javanese Muslim year. These are indicated in bold in the following list.

List 2. Evidence of the Tengger era

	Tengger	Sūryasiddhānta (approx. Bali)	Javanese Muslim	provenance if known
3 Domis	22 Kanem 1755	24 Kartika 1749	23 Bakda Mulud 1755	Tosari (N)
5 Hageman 1852	1 [Kasa] 1778	5 Magha 1771	5 Mulud 1778	
6 De Jongh	1783(*)	1779-80	1786-87	
7 De Jongh	14-15 Karo 1786*	20 Margasira 1782	18 Jumadilakir 1789	
9 Hageman 1879	[1 Kasa] 1793*	5 Asuji 1789	3 Jumadilakir 1796	'Pasuruhan' (N)
Hageman 1879	[1 Kasa] 1796	5 Asuji 1789	3 Jumadilakir 1796	'Malang' (W)
10 Hageman 1871	[1 Kasa] 1795	5 Asuji 1789	3 Jumadilakir 1796	
11 Hageman 1871	13 Kapat 1793*	16 Pausa 1789	15 Pasa 1796	Tosari (N)
15 Hageman 1871	[1 Kasa] 1797	4 Asuji 1792	3 Rejeb 1799	Tosari (N)
16 Lüem	1 Kasa [1915]	2 Phalguna 1904	2 Jumadilawal 1915	Ngadisari (NE)

The hypothesis that there was an authentic Tengger era surviving on the Pasuruhan side of the highlands has only slim support. Dates that might belong to this era are marked with asterisks in the list. Whether or not we think that #6 has been recalculated, we see that support for the 'Pasuruhan' calendar comes only from dates reported in De Jongh and Hageman over a ten-year period, with the strong likelihood that all these dates come from Hageman. Rather than postulate an era on this basis, it may be safer to think of a localized confusion over the year count. Hageman indeed reports

other dates that are incompatible with both the Javanese Muslim era and the 'Pasuruhan' era. But if we still think that there might have been a specifically Tengger era, the difference of three years in 1868 AD (#9) would fit with the notion that the peculiar Tengger calendar began its independent existence either in the conditions of cultural autarchy that preceded the reestablishment of a focal power in Java under Mataram, or at the time of the adoption of the Muslim calendar by that state (in 1663 AD).¹⁰ Whether we prefer to credit that there was a largely forgotten Tengger era or merely local inconsistencies, the fact remains that a majority of the dates attested over a long period use Javanese Muslim year numbers.

Whether the Tengger year was given the number of the Javanese Muslim year current when it began or whether the current Muslim year was directly appropriated for Tengger dates we cannot tell. The nineteenth-century sources all assume that the Tengger year began with the Kasa, the 'first' month, but in Bali and earlier Java, the year began with the ninth month, Kasanga or Caitra. For the Baduy, too, another non-Muslim remnant group, the beginning of the year falls near this season, in Sapar, the fourth month (Van Tricht 1929:93; Jacobs 1891:78). If the nineteenth-century accounts are correct, it may be that the loss of seasonality in the Tengger year also changed the idea of the year's beginning.

Tengger windu

Do the *pasaran* labels of years in the Tengger *windu* match with year numbers, or are they a separate method of counting? The evidence is too internally contradictory to begin answering this question. Consider the *windus* implied by the dates for which we have *pasaran* labels.

List 3. *Pasaran* labels of Tengger years

Years ending	#3 Domis	#6 De Jongh	#8 #9 De Jongh/ Hageman 1879	#11 #15 Hageman 1871
	1755	1783	1792, 1793	1793, 1797
...0, ...5	Pon	<i>Kliwon</i>	<i>Pahing</i>	<i>Manis</i>
...1, ...6	<i>Wage</i>	<i>Manis</i>	<i>Pon</i>	<i>Pahing</i>
...2, ...7	<i>Kliwon</i>	<i>Pahing</i>	Wage	Pon
...3, ...8	<i>Manis</i>	Pon	Kliwon	Wage
...4, ...9	<i>Pahing</i>	<i>Wage</i>	<i>Manis</i>	<i>Kliwon</i>

¹⁰ This is slightly earlier than what Rouffaer (1921) deduced with his deficient model of the calendar.

The dates reported around 1867-1870 AD by De Jongh and Hageman have internally consistent pairings (#8, 9 : : 11, 15), but these differ from each other and from the earlier dates (#3, 6). This remains true whether or not we allow for the possibility of a divergence between years numbered in the Javanese Muslim era and in a possible Tengger era, and whether or not the *pasaran* sequence was counted backwards, as Lüem (1988:224) avers.

There is no ready explanation for this randomness. Leap months must have been implemented consistently across the Tengger lands or else the timing of the Tengger-wide Kasada ceremony would fall into disarray. If the conflicting information on *pasaran* labels reported by Hageman for the same year (#9, 11) reflects conditions on the ground, the implication is that the addition of a leap month did not always take place in Manis, as stated in De Jongh's report. Manis for those who followed #8, 9 would be Kliwon for those who followed #11, 15. Alternatively, the difference may be a confusion of Hageman's making.

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Book reviews

Michele Stephen, *Desire, divine and demonic; Balinese mysticism in the paintings of I Ketut Budiana and I Gusti Nyoman Mirdiana*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005, ix + 179 pp. ISBN 0824828593. Price: USD 52.00 (hardback).

ANDREA ACRI

Complemented by several illustrations, this monograph presents itself as a study of Balinese mysticism based upon the paintings of I Ketut Budiana and I Gusti Nyoman Mirdiana, two accomplished contemporary Balinese artists. However, the title only partly reflects the content of the book, and may fail to attract the attention it deserves from a wider scholarly audience. Stephen's work indeed offers an innovative, ground-breaking interpretation of the complex phenomenon of Balinese religion. Taking the artwork as her point of departure, the author draws on contemporary Balinese practices as well as ancient texts, thus initiating a wide-ranging analysis bringing together disciplines such as anthropology, religious studies and philology. Her analysis is not limited to the modern period, but attempts to redefine a mystical and philosophical tradition going back several centuries that 'is not owed to, and predates, twentieth-century reformist efforts to realign Balinese religion with Indian Hinduism or introduce Hindu devotional religion' (p. 27). This tradition, as she points out, is much more complex than most scholars have previously assumed.

In the first chapter the author details the aims of her work, critically surveying and synthesizing in the form of statements the received ideas that have dominated scholarship on Balinese religion since the middle of the twentieth century. In doing so she describes as misleading such ideas as the emphasis on ritual praxis, the denial of a developed speculative and philosophical textual tradition, and the tendency to consider Balinese Hinduism as an autonomous entity capable of being correctly understood only on its own terms. Criticizing the widespread assumption that any attempt at comparing Balinese Hinduism with Indic Hinduism constitutes a foreign superimposition, the author aims to demonstrate the strong Indic roots of Balinese religion by comparing some of its fundamental tenets with those of Hindu Śaiva Tantrism.

Having posited that 'Balinese art is the mirror of religious thought' (p. 25) and after outlining her working methodology, Stephen introduces the artists Budiana and Mirdiana – both of them her personal acquaintances and collaborators during fieldwork on Bali – and analyses twelve paintings by each