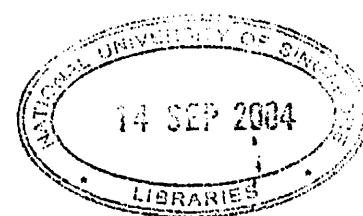
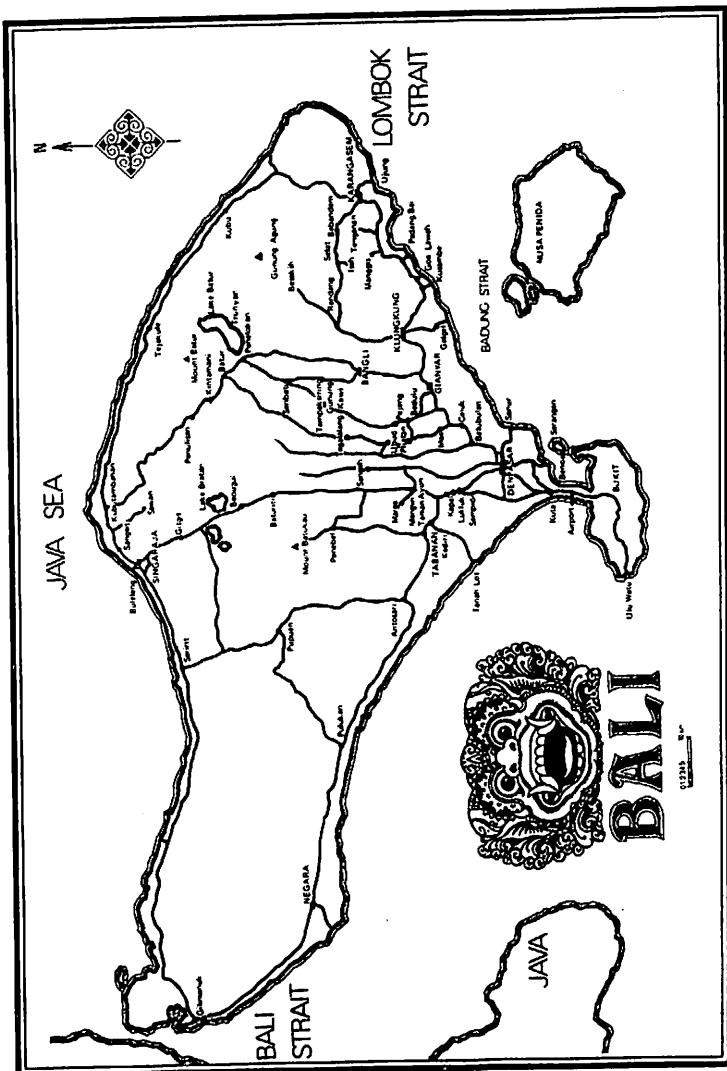


# Bali Chronicles

A Lively Account of the Island's History from  
Early Times to the 1970s

Willard A. Hanna



PERIPLUS

openly in opium, arms, and coins. The company was later to claim that the nonfulfillment of this expectation was one important reason for its losses; another was the necessity for housing, entertaining, sponsoring, and otherwise providing logistic support for the political missions whose activities it in part cloaked and in part promoted. It was mainly for the sake of these visitors that it had to place a special vessel at the disposal of the factory, build fine residential quarters protected by a high stone wall, and dispense expensive gifts and favors to the local rulers.

For this two-pronged colonial offensive against Bali (also neighboring and closely related Lombok), the Dutch could and did allege other motives, in particular humanitarianism. They proposed, they said, to impose peace and order for the benefit most of all of the local population, pointing to the serious disturbances in Lombok and Bali's continuing involvement in them as evidence of the need. They also mentioned four highly laudable specific aims to which no one except, perhaps, the people of Bali and Lombok could take exception. They were resolutely determined, they said, to wipe out opium smuggling and arms running, Bali and Lombok being the transshipment points for opium and arms from Singapore which found their way to Java and other Dutch-held islands in which the Dutch opium and arms monopoly presumably protected the public from many abuses. They were as resolutely determined to wipe out the two associated evils of plunder and slavery, pursuits in which the opium smugglers and arms runners also vigorously engaged, in diversification of their sources of income.

The special circumstances in Bali with regard to slavery and plunder have already been referred to in earlier context. The Balinese radjas routinely enslaved and sold indigent or unwanted persons. The Dutch themselves had been among their most unfortunate clients, for Balinese slaves, male and female, made excellent household servants and the males made splendid recruits for the colonial army. But Raffles had caused the colonial Dutch uneasy twinges of conscience, to which they paid special attention when their worrisome wars with the Mataram Empire ended and they no longer had much need for Balinese slave-soldiers.

With regard to plunder, from the Dutch point of view the material and metaphysical considerations were equally clear. The Balinese radjas entertained a traditional concept of ship salvage which seemed to the Dutch to combine the worst features of slavery, piracy, plunder, and *lese majesty*. In accordance with their principle of *tawan harang*, honoring *Batara Baruna*, the sea deity, the radjas accepted as a gift of the gods what-

ever ship came to grief on the treacherous reefs which ringed their island. They took the ship, the cargo, the crew, and the passengers as their personal properties, sharing, naturally, with those who actually performed the act of salvage or rescue but entertaining no doubts at all regarding the sanctity of the deed. From the Dutch point of view it was bad enough if the Balinese exercised their so-called reef rights (Dutch: *kliprecht*) upon a Chinese, an Arab, a Bugis, or a Javanese craft, many of which sailed under the Dutch flag and expected Dutch protection. It was quite intolerable if the ship in question was Dutch owned and operated. And it was acutely embarrassing even if it flew the English flag. The British then promptly and sternly protested. They were even so tactless as to intimate that if the Dutch presumed to sovereignty over the Indies, they were obliged to provide security and to suppress slavery and piracy, unless, that is, they preferred the English to do so for them.

At the end of the 1830s all circumstances combined to prompt the Dutch to address themselves quite earnestly to discussion with the Balinese radjas of the delicate subjects of trade and politics, slavery and plunder, and to try to blanket these various topics with treaties of friendship and commerce, in fact, recognition of Dutch sovereignty and monopoly. Batavia therefore dispatched three separate missions, first a small probing expedition headed by Captain J. S. Wetters (former recruiting agent at Kuta), then a commercial mission under G. A. Granpré Molière, the N.H.M. Agent in Surabaya, finally a political mission under H. J. van Huskus Koopman, a specially designated Commissioner for Bali and Lombok. Captain Wetters, who visited both Lombok and northern Bali between July 5 and September 3, 1838, reported that the time was at hand for some decisions. Molière and Koopman followed in due course. \*

#### Granpré Molière's Mission and Company Trade

Molière arrived in Bali on December 6, 1838. He traveled on the brig *Ondernemer*, chartered to the N.H.M. for fl. 2,500 per month, but he had decided to spare the expense of the war schooner *Zwaluw*, which was originally assigned to him as escort. On shore he practiced no economies, for he traveled with four to six horses and thirty to sixty porters, carrying with him everything needful for his comfort and dignity. Between December 6 and January 1 he made the rounds of the royal palaces of Badung, Karangasem, and Klungkung, but he failed to get an audience in which to present the impressive credentials with which the Governor-General had provided him.

Molière was not an inexperienced trader, so he resorted to well-

tested devices for opening Asian palace doors. He poured out samples of ginever, demonstrated a music box, and he distributed a few firearms as keepsakes. The Dewa Agung and the Radja of Badung became friendly; both received him in audience; they even began to manifest a healthy spirit of rivalry in representing the respective merits of Kusumba, Klungkung, and Kuta, Badung, as the site of the factory which, Molière hinted, would be well stocked with other trinkets. It developed that what the Dewa Agung had in mind was no trinket. The Dewa Agung craved a rhinoceros, a creature which did not exist in Bali but was necessary nevertheless for an especially solemn state ceremony which he was hoping to conduct. Even apart from its ritualistic significance, a rhinoceros would be a sensation among all Balinese connoisseurs of curiosities, and the Dewa Agung's badly frayed prestige would be immensely enhanced if he, and only he, possessed one. Molière, disguising his dismay, promised to deliver one live rhinoceros.

The Radja of Badung, an earthier type than the Dewa Agung, yearned for one hundred pikuls of lead. He intended, he said, to cast it into balls for use with the bronze cannon which, it seemed, Wetters had promised but neglected to deliver. Wetters' oversight accounted for the coolness of his original attitude toward Molière, who seems to have convinced him, however, that the promise still held good. A daughter of Radja Pamajutan (a minor ruler of Badung) wanted quantities of linen and offered advance payment of three pikuls of tobacco, adding, as an afterthought to clinch the deal, three slaves. In view of the government's disapproval of slavery, Molière might have passed up this first trading opportunity except that the slaves insisted upon attaching themselves to him.

All in all, Molière judged his visit a success. On the basis of his own experiences he anticipated certain unpredictable difficulties, but he thought that a factory in Bali might flourish and he so reported to the N.H.M. and the Governor-General. He kept a meticulous record of his expenses, for which the N.H.M. was later to claim compensation. Inclusive of gin, guns, and incidental items like payment of ship charter, but not allowing for the rhinoceros (later procured and delivered at cost of fl. 839.25), the trip cost exactly fl. 9,738.58.

#### Schuurman, the Rhinoceros, and the N.H.M. Factory

After Molière's visit, the N.H.M. moved fast to establish a factory at Kuta, where the Radja of Badung had promised to prepare quarters for its representative. The company designated one of its brightest young men, D. Boelen Schuurman, as its Kuta factor at a salary of fl. 500 per month,

placed an order for a factory trading ship, the *Merkurius*, to be completed and delivered at an early date, and meanwhile chartered the bark *Blora* at fl. 1,800 per month to get men, goods, and equipment moving Baliwards. On July 30, 1839, the *Blora* appeared off Kuta, carrying Heer Schuurman, his assistant, G. W. Veenman Bouman, trade goods to the value of fl. 42,000 (inclusive of the linens for the princess), construction materials for a company warehouse, and one healthy young rhinoceros for the Dewa Agung.

Heer Schuurman hustled hopefully ashore only to discover that the Radja had made no provision whatever for his reception. He made his way wearily on foot to Kuta, then by horse to the *puri*, where the Radja allowed him to wait at the gate, much to the diversion of the public, while deciding whether to receive him. The Radja, whose intelligence in matters of commerce was better than his memory of his own promises, seems already to have been informed that although the ship's manifest listed one gift rhinoceros, it showed no lead and no cannon.

Schuurman, who may have deemed a rhinoceros token enough of company esteem not just for the Dewa Agung but for all the lesser rulers as well, spent a few frustrating days trying to interest the Radja in his factory and his residence. It finally occurred to him to make a present of a fine sword and to renew assurances of the N.H.M. intentions with regard to the lead and the cannon. The cannon was in fact to be delivered two years later. It cost the company fl. 1,007.95, and it had been cunningly miscast so that the Dutch need never fear looking this gift gun in the mouth. The Radja himself seems never to have tested it out. He made it the nucleus of what was to become rather an extensive palace armory, to which, in 1849, in appreciation of his good behavior during the Dutch-Balinese wars, the government added a mate. The second cannon probably was not miscast; it seems to have come out of current military stock with which the Dutch themselves had just subdued the island.

Heer Schuurman underwent many harrowing experiences highly educational to a young trader in the course of his first few months in Badung. He spent the early weeks as a not especially welcome and certainly an uncomfortable guest in rather a dingy pavilion inside the Radja's *puri*. Eventually he persuaded the Radja to assign him a scrap of property in Kuta—a run-down compound with one fairly habitable clay hut. But when he started building his factory, he had to rely upon the crew of the *Blora* and later that of the *Merkurius* for skilled labor which the Balinese themselves could not or would not provide. His precious rhinoceros had proved enormously difficult and costly to offload, and the people of

Badung seemed more interested in obstructing than assisting. The eventual delivery to Klungkung, fortunately, was a great success. On his way back from Klungkung, however, Schuurman decided impulsively to drop in on the Radja of Gianjar. The Radja, no doubt apprised of the massive tribute to his near but unclear neighbor, allowed the perplexed merchant to wait for an hour at the palace gate and then to go away unreceived and unenlightened. Schuurman's subsequent commerce in Kuta did not flourish and he was no happier than Pierre Dubois had been before him. The Balinese, the Chinese, and the Bugis visited his factory in droves, impelled, however, by curiosity rather than by desire to purchase. They took their trade to the Danish factory which Mads Lange was opening up just next door.

Schuurman could not complain that his life was either inactive or uneventful, and being young, vigorous, and ambitious, he labored mightily during the first year or two to make his factory a success. He had to adjust to the fact that his assistants were usually less rugged than himself. The first of them, Veenman Bouman, fell seriously ill almost immediately upon arrival and had to return to Java. The second, J. A. Santbergen, was his mainstay and remained in Bali until the end of the period of N.H.M. operations, well after Schuurman himself had been transferred. The third, Andries Beetz, died shortly after arrival and was buried at Kuta. Intermittently, there were others, and always there was an armed guard, but only Santbergen was of much comfort or assistance.

The factory itself gradually expanded, although its business did not. It became rather too overawing and fortress-like to create a very favorable impression upon the Balinese or upon certain later and highly critical Dutch visitors. At enormous expense, with materials and labor imported from Java, Schuurman built a high stone wall and behind it placed a big stone warehouse, providing also residential quarters for the staff and for visitors. From the very first the factory catered more to visitors than to customers, much better serving Dutch political than commercial purposes.

The first important guests were the officers of the government steamship *Phoenix*, who arrived on October 29 on a visit of inspection and wished to pay courtesy calls upon the radjas. It was an exercise which cost Schuurman much effort and many gifts and yielded no discernable results. Next, in early April 1840, came Navy Lieutenant Van Oostervijk accompanied by the important Pangeran (Prince) Hamid of Pontianak, Borneo, who also wanted to meet the radjas. In between these visits Schuurman took delivery on his own factory ship, the *Merkurius*, and

sailed off on a trading cruise of all of Bali and Lombok, hoping to stir up more business than at Kuta, but with equally meager results. Then, on April 27, 1840, there arrived in Kuta, traveling presumably on the *Merkurius*, the soon to be famous political agent, Heer H. J. van Huskus Koopman. Schuurman and the N.H.M. factory played thereafter the support role in the evolving drama of Dutch colonial penetration.

#### Huskus Koopman, the Contract-Maker

H. J. van Huskus Koopman, famous in Dutch colonial history as the "contractsluiter" (contract-maker), had received his appointment on December 10, 1839, as special commissioner for Bali and Lombok, at salary of fl. 700 per month, plus fl. 300 for expenses, with instructions to perform what seemed at first rather a vague and innocuous mission. He was "to bring the radjas ... into such a relationship with the government [of the Netherlands Indies] that they will be removed from foreign influence." The foreign influence from which they were to be removed and isolated was mainly that of the English. The relationship into which they were to be brought and held was that of colonial subjects. These Dutch objectives, which were to become precise and categorical as time went on, were formulated into various sets of highly legalistic "contract concepts" which Huskus Koopman was charged with explaining to the radjas in order to elicit their concurrence. The preliminary contract concepts were to be converted into perpetually binding treaties just as soon as there was an agreed-upon text which both the Governor-General and the radjas had ratified.

Huskus Koopman's job was essentially that of the traveling salesman. It was the Governor-General's expectation that the Dutch-drafted texts would be endorsed with little if any necessity for modification. These Western documents, however alien they might at first appear to the Balinese mentality, would form the basis for an enduring new commercial and political relationship agreeable both to the Dutch and the Balinese without occasioning anything so distasteful to both as a military campaign. As it turned out, the radjas gave their preliminary concurrence, the Governor-General ratified, the radjas refused to ratify, the Dutch-Balinese wars followed, and Dutch might prevailed. But by then Huskus Koopman, who had been awarded the Order of the Netherlands Lion for his services, was already in his grave; so was Governor-General Merkus, so too were numerous of the offending Balinese princes, and a great deal of history had happened.