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Diplomatic Letters of the Malay Empire of Bima and Netherlands

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Abstract
Letter is the eldest Malays manuscript that has been used in two ways communication since it is more formal and resembles the honesty of the senders him/herself regarding his/her motive. During the reign of past Era of Malay’s king, without sending a letter in any communication. It will depict that particular action is disrespectful. Hence, any delegation will be come together with the letter. In the meanwhile, letters must be written in well mannered and wisdom. The main objective of this research is to identify and analyze the diplomatic aspect in letters send by Bima’s Empire to Netherlands’ Empire. This research will be using the theory of Moral Diplomatic and enhanced with qualitative method. This method will analyze texts, collecting data, classifying data and conclude all those data based on their very own function. Hopefully, this research will help to identify diplomatic aspect that been used broadly in Letter during two way communication of Malay’s Empire and Netherlands’ Empire.

Keywords: Letter, Diplomatic, Malay’s Empire, Netherlands

Introduction
Malay’s letters is the earliest manuscript, therefore, it is really valuable to community to learn about the significant of nation heritage. Function of letter is to convey King’s intention during the empire. Letters must be beneficial towards state, community and Netherlands. This is because, letter is the most effective and efficient during that time. Letters is the medium of diplomatic between empire and others empire, therefore, given certain advantage to that Empire. Today’s researchers must be proactive in conducting a relevant research to gain more knowledge of selected letters. Communication by means of Letter is important for Malays during at that era as letters act of communication. According to Ab. Razak Ab. Karim (2006), the oldest aerogram is the earliest and valuable Nation’s heritage in Malay’s real. Letters become primer source in portraying politics research, diplomatic relationship, Malaysian history of economic, and also in history of development of Malay language in the past years. In the previous era, letter is used by the people who with high position in the palace or by the king himself for the purpose of merchandising or conveying news. Nowadays, research on Malay’s letters is less because there is no such thing as deep interest or awareness on the importance of value of the letters itself. More than 400 years ago, letters regards
as the main medium between merchant and the King. Hence, letters become important to ensure diplomatic relationship between regimes to run smoothly. The importance of letters cannot be comprehended if there is no thorough research about the contents of letters. This is supported by Ab. Razak Ab. Karim (2006), research on eldest Malay’s letters is less by the researchers either by locals or foreigners. More than 400 years ago, letters is the main medium between merchant and the local’s government in the purpose of diplomatic relationship. Letters plays important roles in potraying the content of the main interest by the sender to the receivers and vice versa. Therefore, the importance of letters cannot be centralized if there is no thorough research on this manuscript. It is supported by Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad (2015), even though there is a researchers who made research on letters, but letters that have element of Islamic Diplomatic relationship is rarely occurs in discussion. This is because, less of research conducted by the scholars and prolific researchers in the field of Malay’s letters. Less samples and research of the letters contribute difficulty towards researches to conduct a study. Therefore broad abandon towards Malay’s manuscript had caused desecrate in our own nations because lots of input and knowledge has not yet been explored is remains untouched. Abandon towards this manuscript is seemly to occurs when the community tend to regards research on manuscript is irrelevant indeed. According to Amer Hudhaifah Hamzah (2017), broad abandon towards valuable Nations Heritage in respect of intentionally or unintentionally had caused serious effect towards understanding of the subject of the matter itself. Our races would also become devastated when we continuously pay less attention or interest towards this valuable Nations Heritage.

Literature Review

Research on Malay’s Literature is less conducted in these recent years. But, recents researchers and scholars are actively made various of investigation to explore thoroughly about this special subject of matter of Malay’s manuscript since the outcome of the research has high potential in knowledge and has its own prestigious level. Several past research turn out to be a reference in this research. Furthermore, studies on diplomacy and theories will also be referred to the highlight of the intellectual outlook from the researchers such as Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad (2017), Isnariah Idris, Khushairi Fadzal and Abdul Rashid Daing Melebek (2017), Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad (2015a), Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad (2015b), Hashim Musa, Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad, Rozita Che Rodi & Nurliayana Zainal Abidin (2013), and Mohd Kasturi Nor Abd Aziz (2011).

According to Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad (2017), communication is an important matter for the success of a diplomatic relationship. Communication is in two forms, written and oral. To ensure inter-state relations with other states are working smoothly. The use of the Malay language used in this letter is a very proud thing. This is because, with the use of Malay language has shown that the Malay language has its own value. The strength of the Malay language has been used as a spur to ensure diplomacy relations run smoothly. Language recognition and politeness are able to provide unparalleled success to diplomatic relations. This is because, its diverse beauty and nature allows the receiver and the listener to give positive feedback on the relationship. Strict discussion and direction to the goal of the relationship enables the agreement to be reached by both parties. Therefore, this study focuses on diplomatic relations using the Malay language established between the Malay and English Kingdoms. It is also supported by Hashim Musa, Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad, Rozita Che Rodi & Nurliayana Zainal Abidin (2013), various ways to carry out diplomacy in Malay letters during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Ibn Sultan Zain Al-‘Abidin. The study is more focused on the situation where the government has used several methods to enable the goal of diplomacy to be achieved. Some of
the things that the government has done are the start of good diplomatic relations between the Terengganu and Netherlands governments, widening trade power, conducting trade relations and gift delivery. Some of the methods used are to use appropriate and polite language, use the messenger as mediator and gifts giving as a sign of communication. This is what Sultan Ahmad I Terengganu highlighted to create mutual understanding and diplomatic relations between the two governments to achieve their goals. Therefore, this study will focus on letters from Terengganu state sent to the Netherlands’ government. This letter is a link to enable trade to occur well between two states. Moreover, according to Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad (2015a), diplomatic relations occur when a messenger is sent to represent a state. In order to make the diplomatic relations happening, the envoys will do their best to carry out their responsibilities well with the country they are visiting. The message should be vibrant, animated, diplomatic, noble and communicative. These diplomatic ties are also being carried out to prevent the attacks of great powers. It aims to make a powerful state as a trading partner. Diplomatic relations that are capable of achieving the goals of both parties will bring success. This study led to the diplomatic relations between the Malay government and the regional states taken from the study of Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad, four studies studied which are Siyar al-Muluk, Nasihat al-Muluk, Bustan al-Salatin and Taj al-Salatin.

According to Mohd Kasturi Nor Abd Aziz (2011), conducting a study on Sultan Abdul Hamid's letter and the state of Kedah's economy. In this study emphasized the economic progress of Kedah as stated in the Sultan Abdul Hamid letter. Various economic activities were carried out by the people of Kedah in the past to enable the economy to make good progress. Among its economic activities are farming, agriculture, mining and forestry which contribute considerably to the state of Kedah. This development process has given a positive impact to Kedah by creating new facilities such as new infrastructure and communications. According to the study of Sultan Abdul Hamid's letter also, Kedah's rapid progress has been disrupted by problems such as financial problems and turbulence in the tin mining sector from 1988 to 1905. However, this problem can be overcome by the cleverness of Sultan Abdul Hamid and its officials despite the fact that Kedah state was being intervened by Siam and British at that time. The focus of this study is on the economic progress achieved by the Kedah state. This matter is also supported by Salmah Jan Noor Muhammad (2015b), letters are an important medium that allows a relationship to be performed. This study relates the letter sent by the Malay government to Stamford Raffles, Francis Light and Lord Minto who had their own goals at that time. Letter is used for the purpose of diplomatic relations in order to run smoothly and to achieve goals carried out by the affected state. Some aspects are emphasized in this study, the recognition, the language used and gift gifts sent by the messenger. This is further reinforced by the theory introduced by Ahmed Musa, the Islamic Diplomacy Theory. Hence, the success achieved to enable the letter sent by the Malay government to foreign countries is due to its clear purpose. In addition, the letters are focused only on Malay government letters to Stamford Raffles, Francis Light and Lord Minto. Next study is by Isnariah Idris, Khushairi Fadzal and Abdul Rashid Daing Melebek (2017), focusing on the purity of the hearts contained in the old Malay letters. This writing focuses on the writing used in old Malay letters. It therefore focuses on the implied translation of the 12 Malay hearts contained in five letters in 1840 to 1900. This letter is taken from the text of The Legacy of the Malay Letter (Annabel Teh Gallop, 1994). The five letters that were elected were letters from the Sultan of Brunei to James Brooke, Sultan Muhammad (Selangor) to E.A. Blundell, Datu Kelana Putera from Semujung and Datu Laila to the Straits Settlements, Ahmad Raja (Maharaja Rembau) from Kedah to E.A. Blundell and Raja Ali Haji to H. von de Wall. These letters focus on the core of the heart of the Malays or the Malay Rulers at that time. Delivery of this letter was made to enable the Malay States to make contact with
the outside world. In addition, it also served as a tribute to the UK and highlighted the sense of responsibility from the Malay rulers at that time. The selected Malay letters highlighted the nature and attitude of the Malays at that time towards the British government.

Based on the above research findings, the objective of the study was to identify and elaborate the Malay and Netherlands Government papers. The research method used is a qualitative method that leads to research based on Malay government papers sent to the Netherlands. Letter analysis has been done carefully to get the clearest understanding of the purpose of the letter being sent and the way in which diplomacy is used. The data will be selected and filtered before being taken as the study material. The summary will be based on the description that has been done to achieve the goal of the research.

Methodology
This study uses a qualitative method by analyzing the letters sent by the Malay Kingdom to the Netherlands. This qualitative method is to collect data from the study results to be classified according to the diplomatic aspects used. Some letters have been used to obtain accurate and thorough data. This letter is a letter from the Bima government during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid who is the 9th King of Bima sent to the Netherlands to safeguard his country's interests. Among the letters taken as material are 5 letters:

1. Letter E (25 August 1792)
2. Letter L (30 September 1798)
3. Letter P (3 October 1800)
4. Letter Q (18 September 1801)
5. Letter V (21 September 1802)

This letter was taken from the book of Faith and Diplomacy of the History of Bima Kingdom. This book was written by Henri Chambert-Loir, Massir Q. Abdullah, Suryadi Oman Fathurahman and H. Siti Maryam Salahuddin in 2010. The book was published in the Gramedia Popular Library (KPG) in Jakarta, Indonesia. The planning stage will be done through four ways of selecting data, collecting data, analyzing data and making conclusions. Accurate and thorough data selection is very helpful in making sure the study to be implemented quickly and in quality. Reading and collecting true and valid empirical data is required to bring true conclusions. Then valid information will be analyzed and will be grouped according to the four groups given. The last is to make a conclusion that is able to solve the problem of research that has been suggested for the study to be considered successful. In order to further refine this study the Moral Diplomacy Theory written by Afzal Iqbal in 2000 will be used to find data on the Moral Diplomacy Theory used in this letter. This theory is taken from the treatment and formulation of the life of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. in leadership both locally and overseas. The Moral Diplomacy Theory has many components, among them are the polite attitude in humanity, the right communication, the patience in achieving the goal and more. But only a few components are taken to allow the study to be done in detail. In this Islamic Diplomacy Theory, Afzal Iqbal states that the Prophet s.a.w. has fully used his life with activities that are capable of advancing himself. Although there are many problems, pressure and suspicion, however, he never complains and explains what happened. This is because, every thing that happens has its own cause. Each problem will have a solution that can provide the best solution.
Data Analysis
Accordingly, the Moral Diplomacy Theory introduced by Afzal Iqbal has been applied to refine the topic of discussion. This study has focused on four aspects in the letter that successfully raised diplomatic relations between the Malay’s and Netherlands’ governments:

i. Pure Words of Greeting
ii. Gifts Giving
iii. Honor to the Netherlands
iv. Security Protection

Pure Words of Greeting

Greeting words are very important and play a comprehensive role in ensuring that diplomatic relations run smoothly. Good language is a gentle, polite and nice to be heard by an opponent's speakers. How to speak softly according to the norms of society gives a positive impact in a relationship. Conversations that are inappropriate and violate the communication ethics definitely give the speaker a problem. It will offend someone else who hears the communication. According to Sara Beden & Indirawati Zahid (2015), language politeness and courtesy are the use of polite, gentle and delicate language to be heard. Language modesty can be seen through a language approach that conforms to the usual cultural norms. However, using a language that violates ethical norms is definitely considered ego, arrogant and incomprehensible to communicate with the public. Among the letters showing the pure word of greeting used to take the heart of the Netherlands are E, L, P, Q and V. Examples from Letter E are:

“Bahwa ini Surat tulus dan ikhlas serta tabeya sebegitu banyak yang dihiringi dengan beberapa puji-pujian dan rindu dendam kasih mesra yang tiada berantara kepada tiap-tiap siang dan malam, yaitu terbit daripada fuad al-qulub al-bayadh. Paduka Sri al-Sultan yang mempunyai tahta kerajaan Bima. ... panjang umurnya dan selamat sejahtera. Amin!”

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid , 25 Ogos 1792: 169)

[“That this is a sincere letter and so much respect which is accompanied by some hymns and long-suffering love affair which does not interfere with every day and night, which is derived from fuad al-qulub al-bayadh. Paduka Sri al-Sultan who has the throne of the Bima kingdom. ... long life and peace be upon you. Amin!”]

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: Letter of Sultan Abdul Hamid, 25 August 1792: 169)

Examples of letter L can be seen at the beginning of the letter when it was written with a start:

“Bahwa ini surat tulus dan ikhlas serta tabe begitu banyak daripada Paduka Sri al-Sultan yang mempunyai tahta Kerajaan Bima dengan sekelian wazir al-menteri. ... yang Tu[h]an Allah kasih selamat umur panjang, kekal di atas martabat kebesaran dan kemuliaan. Amin!”

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid, 30 September 1798: 173)
Gifts Giving

Gift giving is done for a country to take the interest of a country of interest. This certainly has a positive impact on a diplomatic relationship. The prize intends to give something to the other party without asking for a reply from the opponent. It is supported by Fadhl Ihsan (2010), which states the gift intends to give something to create a good relationship with the intention to get reward from Allah s.w.t. without asking for a reply. Example of Letter E is:

“Syahdan Paduka Raja Bima mempersembahkan kepada Tuan Yang Maha Mulia yaitu budak Perempuan dan budak Laki-laki dan dua pasang Kuda merah tua dan dua pasang kuda kelabu dan dua pasang lagi kuda kelabu putih. Maka haraplah [persembahan] Paduka Raja datang dengan selamat ke bawah hadirat Yang Maha Mulia adanya”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid, 25 Ogos 1792: 171)

Examples of Letter L can be seen through the following passage:

“... Paduka Raja Bima barang-barang, yakni lima puluh elo (ss ta), emas lebar setengah dua duim, dan sepuluh kayu (btbh), beruci merah berkepala emas dan dua puluh kayu kain (btylh), dan seratus kayu kembaya alus panjang enam (kw-bt), dan satu kayu sahlat ijo panjang empat puluh enam elo setengah, dan dua puluh elo beludru ungu, dan d[ua] belas elo beludru biru, serta elo berudhu merah”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid, 30 September 1798: 173)

Honor to the Netherlands

Honors are given from a person or a country from a country to another. This statement is supported by Adirini Pujayanti (2017), the goal of diplomacy is well done to attract foreign country into our country. This is because, if diplomatic is implemented well it will attract foreign countries who want to engage in economic and communication activities to be comfortable in getting into our state administration. The honor of the Netherlands can be seen in Letter L namely:

[“... You are the king of Bima the goods, which is fifty elo (ss ta), the wide gold and the two half duim, and the ten timber (bth), the red head of gold-headed and twenty wood cloth (btylh) and a hundred Kembaya woods with long six-legged (kw-bt), and a long green wood with forty-six elo half, and twenty elo violet velvet, and twelve elo blue velvet, and elo red velvet ones. “]

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: The Letters of Sultan Abdul Hamid, 30 September 1798: 173)
“Maka Paduka Raja Bima pun telah menerima serta dengan hortam kemulian serta telah sudah diartikan daripada sekalian bunyi dalamnya, sebab Tuan Yang Maha Mulia telah sudah (mn-hsw-skn) daripada sarang burung, Paduka Raja Bima telah sudah diperesembahkan kepada hadirat Yang Maha Mulia”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid, 30 September 1798: 173)

[“So, King Bima, has received and with honor as well as has been interpreted from the inner noise, because Your Majesty has been (mn-hsw-skn) from the bird’s nest, King Bima has been presented to the presence of Your Majesty”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et al: The Letters of Sultan Abdul Hamid, 30 September 1798: 173)

Letter V, the government of Bima, paid tribute to the Netherlands by:

“... Bumi Cenggu yang telah tersurat pada sebelas hari bulan Desember tahun seribu dualapan ratus asa itu telah sampailah dengan selamat sejahteranya atas Paduka Raja Bima dengan sekalian Wazir al-menterinya serta telah diartikan daripada sekalian bunyi dalamnya atau mazkur daripada harganya kayu sepang yang telah diserahkan kepada tangan bumi Cenggu dan Bumi (A-yr-y). Maka Paduka Raja Bima dengan sekalian wazir al-menterinya sampai sekalian rakyatnya telah menerima serta dijunjungnya dengan hati tulus iklhas serta suka rida yang tiada diumpamakannya adanya”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid, 21 September 1802: 181)

[“... Earth Cenggu which has been written on the eleventh day of December of the thousand-year-olds of the hundred had come safely on your behalf of King Bima with its Wazir ministers and has been interpreted from all the sounds within it or the stated price of Sepang wood which has been handed over to the hands of the Earth of Cenggu and Earth (A-yr-y). So, King Bima with all the ministers of his ministry, including all his people have received and upheld him with a sincere heart and tender love that he cannot imagine”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et al: The letters of Sultan Abdul Hamid, 21 September 1802: 181)

Security Protection

The former government is in dire need of security protection from a larger and powerful external government. This is because, in order to ensure their government’s sovereignty is preserved. Therefore, security protection approaches are taken to not allow other countries with bad intentions to feel confident of hijacking or attacking their country. This is an important aspect and is heavily guarded by the former Malay kingdom. This is supported by, Zarina Othman, Mohd Kamal Omar, Firdaus Abdul Jabar and Nor Azizan Idris (2016), that is national security means strategic definition and non-strategic definition. It is related to economic resources to make the country provide functions that involve military aspects. Therefore, the protection of security is a protection of the nation which is an important and dignified matter.

In addition, this safety protection can be seen in Letter L as below:
“Karena Raja Bima dengan sekalian rakyatnya di dalam berlindung dan naung di dibawah pemerintah kompeni jua, maka hidup dengan senang atas tanah negerinya dengan sekalian wazir al-menterinya, sampai kepada sekalian rakyatnya adanya”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid, 30 September 1798: 176)

[“Because King Bima with his people take refuge and shelter under the government of the company, he lives happy with his land with his vizier minister, reaching to all his people”.

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: The letters of Sultan Abdul Hamid, 30 September 1798: 176)

In addition, the example of Letter Q shows that the state of Bima requested security protection from the Netherlands’ side as follows:

“Walakin kebetulan ada kesukaran Negeri Betawi kepada tahun dahulu itu sebab ada Inggris yang mengerjakan haru biru Muara Betawi. Sebab itulah maka ada diperintahkan Tuan Edeler di Semarang akan menyuruh mengeluarkan kayu Sepang di Semarang adanya... Syahdan adalah Paduka Raja Bima mengharapkan dengan beribu harap kurniai dan nugerahi Paduka Yang Maha Mulia dan kompeni sebab amat kekurangan belanja atas Tanah Bima ...

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: Surat-surat Sultan Abdul Hamid, 18 September 1801: 179)

[“Coincidently, there was the difficulty of the Betawi State that year ago because there was a British who did chaos at the blue harbor of Muara Betawi. That’s why there’s been told that Mr. Edeler in Semarang will order to remove the wood of Sepang in Semarang... then afterwards is King Bima hoping with all the hope and generosity of Your Majesty and Company because of the lack of fund on the Land of Bima ...”]

(Henri Chambert-Loir et.al: The letters of Sultan Abdul Hamid, 18 September 1801: 179)

These aspects are showed in Malay’s letters of Bima’s and Netherlands’ Regimes. It is also been investigated to ensure it is aligned with the Theory of Moral Diplomatic that has been used throughout this research. It can be conclude that to ensure the successful of diplomatic relationship between regimes of past era, King of Bima has used these four aspects which are pure words of greetings, gifts giving, paying honor to the Netherlands and provides security protection. It is similar with the King’s intellectual in the past era to avoid any rebellion and wars. Hence, it is well known as strategic method in moral of diplomatic between regions.

Summary
The research of letters from eldest Malay’s empire is important to stimulates interest of younger community towards diplomatic in eldest Malay’s empire. This research focus on letters received from Bima’s empire of 19 which is more interesting as it relatively linked to diplomatic between Malay’s empire and Netherlands’ empire, as both empire is the famous leadership in that era. This research concludes every diplomatic occurs would relatively resemble the intelligence of the leader. Those leaders implement the solid method which is letters that contained their own interest in diplomatic. Writing styles and wise idea that been used in letters had caused the Netherlands more attached to
the content. This matter of fact supported by Mohd Farhan Abd Rahman and Rahimin Affandi Abd Rahim (2012), stated that political and diplomatic relationship between Malay’s empire and outside world are well enhanced the leadership of Eldest Malay’s empire. This can be proven by the remarkable rename of Penisular Malaysia into *Golden Kherson* (Semenanjung Emas) and well known by Western world and relatively resembles that leadership of Malay’s kings is immense. It can be supported by Kasful Anwar Us (2010) that clearly stated, souvereignty of leader will protects living underneath and gives triumph to its own country. Achievable objectives in certain administration are the symbol of growth and united community in the nation. Next is, opinion from Norazimah Zakaria (2005), stated that Nation with peace and harmony is begins with obligation from Allah has been conducted wisely by the King. That is why it can gives peace and harmony in the Nation as it can also strengthened the military system to protect Nation’s souvereignty. By protecting Islamic religion and beliefs, the leadership will be blessed and resembles the ability of the king in protecting his Nation is strong. This research must be centralized in order for past knowledge from eldest community can become one of biggest attention among recent community. This statement supported by. Razak Ab. Karim (2006), language manners used in the letters is the main element while replying letters practiced by successful diplomatic empire. Letters is the best method used to develop diplomatic relationship by formal or informal between local empire and foreign empire. It has become a practice because positive feedback gained during the diplomatic relationship had been conducted.

**Conclusion**

As a conclusion, this research gives benefit to certain group of people which is students of traditional Malay’s literature and lecturer of Malay’s literature, this is because, in the future these kind of group can adopt and adapt input from this research into their very own related research since the research material that related to letter is difficult to be found. Besides that, any deficiency of this research can be upgraded so that it will become unwavering, developing and stimulate the research of letters from Malay’s empire into the next advanced phase. The result of this research which are new and fresh can also gives benefit to the fans of Malay’s Literature and Eldest Malays administration, because in this recent years, the number of people who acknowledge history is less. Hopefully, this research can change people’s mind to regard the traditional Malay’s Literature as prestige treasure of Nation’s Heritage. Internet facilities and high technology equipment in the library must be used wisely in order to become knowledgeable community. In this context, Malaysian Education Ministry (KPT) must also take advantage from this research as a guideline to ensure that Malay’s Literature gain more attention by enhancing the system of education of the traditional Malay’s literature by combining in advance the past research and recent research. Future research will be more focus on how to understand eldest Malays’s letters that is not yet been translated and alert on knowledge of diplomatic that has been used widely and wisely by The Eldest Malay’s empire.

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