

A CRITICAL VIEW OF THE OPIUM FARMERS AS REFLECTED IN A SYAIR BY BOEN SING HOO (SEMARANG, 1889)

Claudine Salmon

Indonesianists are well aware that the opium farm failures of the 1880s were accompanied by an increasingly violent attack upon the farm system by Dutch missionaries, journalists, politicians, and even writers.¹ Among the latter, the most important were M. Th. H. Perelaer, a retired military man who served for some twenty-five years in the Indies and Dr. Isaac Groneman, who spent several years in Yogya as permanent physician to the sultan and was well known for his anti-Chinese feelings. Perelaer wrote a political novel called *Baboe Dalima* (Dalima the nanny, 1886).² It criticized the opium farm, which Perelaer regarded as a scandalous source of income for Hollanders. Although it has never been regarded as a masterpiece of literature, the novel made a considerable impact and was translated into English in 1888. Groneman wrote a novel entitled *Een Ketjoegeschiedenis* (A bandit's tale 1887). It was less ambitious than *Baboe Dalima* and was based on the author's intimate knowledge of Javanese society. The villains were, of course, the Chinese farmers and their agents.

Historians have done very little to investigate the literature in Malay that emanated from the Indonesian Chinese of the time to know whether writers among them may have reflected upon the problem. A very attractive *syair*, which at first glance may be regarded as a symbolic poem for the characters are represented by animals, is about the auction of the shares of the opium farms held by the Hoo (usually written Ho) family in Semarang, which

I would like to thank Henri Chambert Loir and Denys Lombard for their comments and James Siegel who polished the English of the text.

¹ See James R. Rush, "Opium Farms in Nineteenth-century Java: Institutional Continuity and Change in Colonial Society, 1860–1910," (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1977), chap. 9. An edited version has just been published under the title: *Opium to Java, Revenue Farming and Chinese Enterprise in Colonial Indonesia 1860–1910* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990). For a different view about opium among French writers, see Chantal Descours-Gatin, in "L'opium dans la société coloniale: Thème littéraire et réalité sociale," *Opium et finances coloniales: La formation de la Régie Générale de l'Opium en Indochine 1860–1914* (Thèse de 3ème cycle, Université de Paris 7, 1987), chap. 3.

² See Karin Evers, "De opiumroman *Baboe Dalima* (1886) van M.T.H. Peralaer" *Indische Letteren* jrg 1, no. 2 (June 1986): pp. 53–65.

took place on July 23, 1889, soon after the Ho partnership declared bankruptcy. The poem was written soon after and was published in Semarang on August 28, 1889. The author, who signed with the chop of his firm, Boen Sing Hoo, or "Literary Flourishing," in effect wanted to criticize the world of the opium farmers, of which he had intimate knowledge. It is, apparently, the first critical poem of its kind ever published in book form in Java. This piece of *littérature engagée* reveals what a peranakan writer could say in spite of the political pressure emanating from the opium farmers, on the one hand, and the limits imparted by the censorship of the time, on the other.

Boen Sing Hoo: Real Name, Tan Tjien Hwa

Little is known about Tan Tjien Hwa. He was the owner of a bookshop in Tjapkauwking (off Gang Pinggir) in the Chinese district of Semarang and was an agent for books published in Batavia—especially those printed by Albrecht and Rusche—and eventually in other cities of the Dutch Indies.³ His profits must have been very limited because his name never appeared among the donors who contributed to the construction or repair of temples in Semarang.⁴ He had a good knowledge of Chinese and Malay for he was among the first translators of Chinese novels into Malay. His first renditions in book form appeared in 1885. He translated no less than eight novels, which appeared between 1885 and 1891. Some of these have been reprinted up to six times, such as his *Tjerita dahoeloe kala di negri Tjina terpoengoet dari tjerita-an boekoe menjanji-an, Sam Pik—Ing Taij* (An ancient story set in China and adapted from a ballad called (Liang) Shanbo yu (Zhu) Yingtai), which was printed for the last time in 1922.⁵ He apparently received better schooling in Chinese than in Malay. When he translated this story of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, he made some attempts to retell it in verse, but after a few stanzas he admitted that the task was beyond him.

Apart from his writing in verse, *Boekoe Sair Binatang*, (Poem of the animals), which will be discussed here, it seems that at least one other work may be attributed to him—an anonymous poem entitled *Boekoe Sjairnja jang maha moelia Sri Padoeka Kandjeng Toewan Soesoehoenan di Solo dateng ka Semarang pada tanggal 10 Juni 1903*, which is about the visit to Semarang of the Susuhunan of Solo, Paku Buwono X, from June 10 to June 16, 1903. The poem was published in Semarang by Hap Sing Kong Sie in the same year. The last lines read: "Who the writer of this *syair* is is not said clearly/He works for the newspaper *Warna Warta*/And lives in Gang Pinggir in the city of Semarang."⁶ Tan Tjien Hwa worked as a

³ At the end of his translation of a short story taken from the *Jin gu qiguan* (Wonders new and old), which appeared in 1887, Tan Tjien Hwa (also written Tan Tjin Hwa and Tan Tjin Hoa) in an advertisement for his bookshop states that he will provide a list of already completed translations from the Chinese, free of charge: "Ini boekoe, bole dapet beli di Toko-Boekoe Tan Tjien Hwa, Tjapkauwking-Semarang. Begitoe djoegak ada sedia lain-lainnja boekoe tjerita Tjina njang telah tamat. Daftar boekoe kaloek di mintak boleh dapet pertjoema."

⁴ Two of his relatives (cousins or brothers) were Tan Tjien Teng, who in 1805 was among the chief donors who contributed money to the repair of the pavilion in front of the Sam Po Tong or San Bao Cave, giving eight "old cash" and Tan Tjien Goan, who in 1890 gave ten guilders, a very moderate amount, for the repair of the main temple in town, the Tay Kak Sie, or Dajuesi. See Wolfgang Franke, Claudine Salmon, and Anthony Siu, *Chinese Epigraphic Materials in Indonesia*, vol. 2, *Java* (Singapore: South Seas Society, in press).

⁵ For a complete list of Boen Sing Hoo's translations, see Claudine Salmon, *Literature in Malay by the Chinese of Indonesia: A Provisional Annotated Bibliography* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, études insulindiennes-archipel 3, 1981), pp. 155–57.

⁶ Soeda tamat Sjairnja Soesoehoenan Soerakarta,
Siapa pengarangnja tida terseboet njata,
Pembantoenja soerat kabar *Warna-Warta*,
Tinggal Gang Pinggir Semarang kota. (p. 96)

journalist for the daily *Warna Warta*,⁷ launched in Semarang ca. 1902 by Kwa Wan Hong (b. 1861), the manager of the N. V. Drukkerij en Handel in Shrijfbehoeften Hap Sing Kong Sie,⁸ and edited by J. C. Doppert. Although meant to be a paper for all the *bangsa*, or “nations,” of the Indies and commercially oriented with eight pages of advertisements to only two of news and articles, it nonetheless proclaimed itself the “unofficial organ of the Tjong Hoa Hwe Koan (Chinese Association).”⁹

Tan Tjien Hwa, as well as Kwa Wan Hong, were among the people who initiated the Tjong Hoa Hwe Koan in Semarang.¹⁰ In 1904, the year it was founded, Kwa Wan Hong had the position of first secretary, whereas Tan Tjien Hwa had that of commissaris, and Lieutenant Ho Sie Tik, a grandson of Ho Ijam Lo, was its president.¹¹ After this date, no information about Tan Tjien Hwa remains. These data, limited though they are, still provide some insight into the preoccupations of the author. It is obvious that he was concerned with the education of peranakan children as well as with reforms that he felt had to be implemented to improve the morality of his community. In view of this, one may better understand why he was so critical of the opium farmers.

The Boekoe Sair Binatang

The complete title of the first edition of this poem in book form reads *Boekoe Sair Binatang: Landak, Koeda dan Sapi, terkarang dalem bahasa Melajoe rendah* (Poem about animals: Porcupine, horse and ox, written in Low Malay); it was published in Semarang by the firm of P. A. van Asperen van der Velde and is thirty-five pages long. A second printing was published in Batavia in 1895 by the translator and publisher (*yang poenja*) Tjong Hok Long (1847–1917) on the press of Albrecht and Rusche. According to a note on the cover, this reprint was, at the request of the author, dated December 16, 1893, which means that the book had continued to be in demand.¹² But it is not clear why the reprint did not appear until 1895.

The edition used in this study is forty-four pages. The cover bears a new title that further clarifies the intention of the author: “*Sair Sindiran*” *tatkala lelang restantnja pacht madat tahon 1889 diantara meninggalnja Pachter “Hoo Ijam Lo” di Semarang. Tjerita “Gadjah poetih Radja di Oetan*” (Satirical poem about the auction of the remnants of the opium farms after the death of the farmer Hoo Ijam Lo in Semarang. Story of the white elephant, king of the forest). The original poem consisted of 230 stanzas (pp. 3–41). Two addenda of 7 stanzas each were

⁷ Liok An Tjoe, “Drukkerij Tjonghoa jang paling toea di Semarang,” *Sin Po* (weekly), p. 19; no. 963, Sept. 13, 1941, p. 18.

⁸ The N. V. Hap Sing Kong Sie, which had its headquarters in Gang Pinggir, had been founded in 1901. This newspaper was to compete with the *Slomporet Melajoe*, which was published by the firm of Van Dorp. Kwa Wan Hong, whose father was a physician born in China, became a big entrepreneur in Central Java. See Liok An Tjoe, “Drukkerij Tjonghoa,” pp. 18–19; Claudine Salmon, “L’édition chinoise dans le monde insulindien,” *Archipel* 32 (1986): 130.

⁹ See *Warna Warta*, no. 335, June 6, 1904, and no. 137, June 21, 1910; quoted from Achmad Adam, “The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Conciousness 1855–1913” (Ph.D. diss., London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1984), p. 151.

¹⁰ According to Nio Joe Lan, *Riwajat 40 taon dari Tjong Hoa Hwe Koan Batavia, 1900–1939* (Batavia: Tjong Hoa Hwe Koan, 1940), p. 50, in June 1903, Kwa Wan Hong himself wrote a letter to the committee running the THHK in Jakarta to inquire about the functioning of the association.

¹¹ Cf. Liem Thian Joe, *Riwajat Semarang 1416–1931* (Semarang: Ho Kim Yoe, ca. 1933), p. 174.

¹² “Atas permintaän: ‘Boen Sing Hoo di Semarang’ dengan soerat ddo 16 December 1893 minta akan di tjitak njang kadoewa kali ja itoe: Sair Binatang.”

composed later; one entitled *Ankatan Betawi datang kombali* (The group of Batawi came again) (pp. 42–43) is, in fact, a sequel added after another auction held on September 6 of the same year, whereas the other, entitled *Sam Kok* (The Three Kingdoms), is a kind of epilogue (pp. 43–44). The main poem is divided into four parts: the introduction, the presentation of the animals, the auction itself, and a rather stereotyped conclusion.

The Introduction

In the introduction, Boen Sing Hoo provides two interesting comments: the first about the language he uses, which is the unrefined Malay mixed with Javanese spoken in the market in Semarang and the second, about the symbolism of his poem.

Toewan pembatja djangan lah goesar, Sair ini, bahasanja kasar, Melajoe Semarang di dalem pasar, Serta lagi banjak kasasar. (p. 3)	Honorable reader, don't be angry, The language of this poem is rude, It is the Malay as spoken in the market in Semarang, And quite often goes astray.
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Then he explains how he will proceed: he does not want to express his thoughts directly, he says, but will represent the characters, "the wealthy people" (*orang berharta*), by animals (*Di oepamakan binatang poenja tjerita*). According to Boen Sing Hoo, the reader will have no difficulty in identifying them because they are all well known in Semarang:

Maski begitoe nanti djadi lah terang, Sebab namanja, terkenal banjak lah orang, Njang kenal dia, tida lah koerang, Soedah kasoehoer dalem Semarang (p. 3)	As it is, it will nevertheless become clear For many names are well known, Those who know them are plenty, They are famous in Semarang.
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

He even presents his syair like a game, saying that the reader "just has to rack his brain,/Then the jesting will become clear" (*Misti lah tjari dalem pikiran/Baroe lah njata, ini sindiran*, [p. 4]). But at the same time, he is a bit apprehensive of the eventual response of the readers to his satire and he further states:

Djangan Toewan bersakit lah hati, Kaloe ada famili terseboet nanti, Soedah takdirnja Allah dan Goesti, Djahat dan baik, terkarang misti. (p. 4)	Please, Sir, don't worry, If some relatives of yours are mentioned, This has been decreed by the Almighty, Evil and good must be recorded.
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

He carefully advises those who may be infuriated or grow sad by discovering some of their relatives' names in the syair not to read it. No doubt, Boen Sing Hoo was a bit afraid of the eventual reprisals of the opium farmers.

Then he invites the reader to proceed to the *Kebupaten*, or regent's residence, to become acquainted with all the fierce animals (*chewan njang garang*) who are seated in a line facing the authorities:

Doedoek berderek kiri dan kanan, Pangkat Majoer Kapitan dan Luitenan, Orang kaja asal toeroenan, Dan orang dagang dalem Petjinan. (p.16)	They are seated in a line on the left and right, Those with the rank of major, captain, and lieutenant, The wealthy whose ancestors belonged to the elite And the merchants from the Chinese quarter. ¹³
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

¹³ Boen Sing Hoo does not allude to the fact that the bidders were given alcohol; cf. William Barrington d'Almeida, *Life in Java with Sketches of the Javanese* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1864), 2: 16–17: "Shortly after our arrival, a carriage drove up, bringing the two assistant Residents of Ngawie and Ponorogo. After kirsch-wasser had been handed round in small glasses, the secretary, as representing the Resident, who was still an invalid, took his seat near the middle of the upper end of the table, the two assistant residents placing themselves on each side of him"; see also, Rush, *Opium Farms*, pp. 31–32: "They (the Dutch authorities) provided legitimate farm

They are waiting for the big business of the day: the sale of this marvelous fruit called “antidote” (*boewah “Penawar”*) which is imported from abroad and enjoyed by many people in Java—for “When you smoke it, the vapor comes out,/Filling your entire body flesh and skin with ease.”¹⁴ This auction is for the sale of the “rice fields” (*sawah*) of Semarang, Surakarta, Yogya, and Kedu.

The Animals Face to Face

About forty animals are involved in the auction.¹⁵ Although Boen Sing Hoo mentions their names one by one, it is clear that what interests him are the various relationships that link the animals into several partnerships, or *koempoelan*. This kind of presentation is particularly instructive because it provides insight into the social life of the *peranakan* Chinese elite, especially in Central Java. Indeed, several descriptions exist of auctions held in different cities of Java in the 1880s and 1870s¹⁶ and even one from the 1860s,¹⁷ but their European authors were not familiar enough with Chinese society to perceive its social structure and the links that were interwoven at social and economic levels. Perhaps they were also more interested in the auction procedure.¹⁸

Boen Sing Hoo now presents the animals and, to appraise his portraits more clearly; their real identities will be unveiled simultaneously and comments will be added to allow the twentieth-century reader to perceive the context of the time. Altogether seven partnerships took part in the auction: two from Semarang, Batavia, and Kedu, respectively, and one from Yogyakarta. Of these, only the two from Semarang were really powerful. But before scrutinizing these new rivals, Boen Sing Hoo lingers over the rise and fall of the *Landak*, or “Porcupine,” family.

The Defunct Ho Partnership

The defunct partnership run by the “Porcupines” who symbolize the Ho family, was one of the most powerful in Central Java until the death of its founder, Landak Toewa, or Ho Ijam Lo, on June 22, 1888. Unlike the other big opium farmers of the time, Ho Ijam Lo was a self-made entrepreneur: “He did not belong to the aristocracy” (*Landak itoe soewatoe lah chewan/Asalnja lagi boekan bangsawan*, [p. 10]). According to a Dutch report published in the press when he died, Ho Ijam Lo’s father owned a small *toko*, or shop, in the Chinese quarter, and Ijam Lo himself started as a cashier for the Dutch firm of Dorrepaal before opening his own shop, presumably in Gang Warung where he then resided. His activities were quite successful, and he easily obtained credit from Dutch firms.¹⁹ His rise may be traced to ca.

candidates with free transportation to auction, and at preauction festivities served champagne to loosen the inhibitions of prospective bidders.”

¹⁴ “Kalo di isep, koekoensja kaloewar/Enakken badan, dalem dan loewar.” (p. 6)

¹⁵ See the list in app. 2.

¹⁶ See Rush, *Opium Farms*, p. 31, n. 4, who mentions three descriptions in Dutch, two of which were published in 1872 and the third in 1889.

¹⁷ Barrington d’Almeida, *Life in Java*, 2: 13–22, provides a vivid description of an auction held in Madiun in the early 1860s.

¹⁸ See, for instance, Barrington d’Almeida, *Life in Java*, 2: 22. At the end of his description, he merely says, “I was informed, on good authority, that the Government on that day made as much as a million of rupees.”

¹⁹ *De Locomotief*, June 23, 1888. Liem Thian Joe, *Riwajat Semarang*, p. 141. According to the epigraphic material kept in the temples of Semarang, the Ho family was already established in Semarang at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ho Ijam Lo had a brother or cousin named Ho Hok Lo, who in 1845 contributed 200 guilders to the repair of the Houfu miao and in 1854, 60 guilders for a restoration of the Tay Kak Sie (Dajue si). Ijam Lo made his first and only (?) contribution to the Houfu miao in 1870, giving 80 guilders.

1874 when he started to purchase opium farm leases: "He had been rich for about 15 years,/Until his position became uncertain" (*Ampir 15 tahoen doedoek hartawan,/Kemoedian djadi tida karoewan*, [p. 10]).

Ho Ijam Lo invested the profits earned from his revenue farms in other activities. He had purchased from a Dutchman named Pietermaat the sugar mill of Maron in Probolinggo and held long-term leases on indigo and coffee lands in the district of Pekalongan and rice lands in Semarang.²⁰ As early as 1876, he built a Western-style residence²¹ next to a garden designed by Chinese artists at Gergaji, south of Semarang, and had the idea of developing the hilly area of Candi (further south) into a holiday resort.²² For this purpose, in 1887 he first constructed a hotel, which was run by a Dutch manager, and decided to pay for the water supply of the whole area of Candi. Boen Sing Hoo only alludes to this last project when he speaks of the flood (of June 17, 1889) that ruptured a dam,²³ a cataclysm that, according to him, was the sign of the fall of the Ho family.²⁴ Ho Ijam Lo wanted to be considered a philanthropist. As early as 1878, he created a fund to defray the costs of decent funerals for those who could not afford them.²⁵ Although Boen Sing Hoo does not allude to this fund, he mentions another charitable foundation initiated by Ho Ijam Lo that was inaugurated after his death. It was a kind of dispensary (*roemah obat*) located in Jalan Krangang, opposite his own dwelling, where a Chinese physician, a pharmacist, and their assistants treated the indigent patients without ethnic distinction.²⁶ A touch of criticism toward Ho Ijam Lo is evident here, when Boen Sing Hoo writes:

²⁰ *De Locomotief*, July 7, 1888; Rush, *Opium Farms*, p. 110.

²¹ After the bankruptcy of Ho Tjauw Ing, the mansion and the garden were purchased by Oei Tiong Ham, who repaired them. His daughter Hui-lan Koo (Madame Wellington Koo, b. 1889), in her memoirs, *An Autobiography, as Told to Mary van Reusselaar Thayer* (New York: Dial Press, 1943) pp. 30–1, provides an interesting description of them: "My father's house in the European quarter was Dutch Colonial in style. . . . A long entrance-drive wound through an ornamented garden filled with quaint rockeries, pergolas, and other fanciful Chinese conceits. The house itself, dazzling [sic] silhouette against a background of extravagant tropical trees, spread regardless of space. Its single story, high roofed with moss-gray tiles, was surrounded by a broad verandah. Inside, the huge, high-ceilinged rooms opened onto corridors made wide to coax any errant breeze.

Behind the house was an informal garden shaded by tall trees. . . . Beyond this shady spot stretched a miniature park with a plump little hill in its exact center. Stuck to the top of its grassy slopes, like a candle on a cake was a lone, exceedingly dignified tree.

The park had been laid out by a remarkable Chinese gardener whom my father had discovered on the neighboring island of Sumatra. . . . There were exciting artificial caves and rockeries dotted with dwarf shrubs. Canals threaded through the lawns and were spanned with steep camelbacked bridges, while pools, shallow as saucers, were crowded with goldfish that nibbled lazily at lotus roots." See plates.

²² According to Liem Thian Joe, *Riwajat Semarang*, p. 150, Ho Ijam Lo was the first Chinese who was permitted to reside in Gergaji. *De Locomotief*, May 5, 1887.

²³ *De Locomotief*, June 25, 1889.

²⁴ *Landak* ini, *Landak Prawira*,
Banjak orang tiada lah kira,
Alamat datang dengan lah gara,
Aer di sungei bagi segara.

Lantaran djatoehnja, *Landak sa'orang*,
Bandjir besar dalem *Semarang*,
Hari "Pektjoen" Langitlah terang,
Tida kira aer menjerang," (p. 11)

As for Porcupine, Porcupine the Warrior,
Contrary to all expectations,
A sign arrived with a cataclysm,
In the river, the water was like a sea.

Because of the fall of the Porcupine,
There was a big flood in Semarang,
The day of the Pecun, the sky was clear,
There was no prospect that the water should flow over.

²⁵ *De Locomotief*, July 11, 1888, "Een philanthropische Instelling."

²⁶ Pesenan *Landak* njang soeda mati,
Roemah obat terboeka misti,

According to the late Porcupine's will,
The dispensary had to be opened

Djoewal obat moerah sekali, Separo ter'amal separo di beli, Hendak perbaik nama kembali, Soepaija terteloeng Dewa dan Wali. (p. 13)	The medicines were sold very cheap, A part given for free, the other sold, He wanted a good name in return, So as to be assisted by Gods and Saints.
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

After the death of Ijam Lo, his son, *Landak moeda*, "Porcupine Junior," or Ho Tjiauw Ing, who had been appointed lieutenant on December 20, 1886, was his sole heir and inherited the farms of Semarang, Yogya, and Kedu. Tjiauw Ing also acquired the farms of Surakarta (on June 29, 1888) and Madiun (on February 3, 1889) after the previous licencees had gone bankrupt, so that he held five farms.²⁷ He had three main partners. Tikoes, "Rat," or Goei Som Han, was a wealthy merchant, landowner, and entrepreneur in Pandean at Semarang²⁸ who had worked for Koeda Toewa, "Horse Senior" or Be Biau Tjoan (an enemy of the Ho as we will see below), before joining Ho Ijam Lo. Gangsa Yogya, "the Goose from Yogya," or Liem Kie Djwan, who since 1883 had been captain and Landak Yogya, "the Porcupine from Yogya," Ho Tjiauw Ing's elder brother Ho Tjiauw Soen,²⁹ who also resided in Yogya where he had been appointed lieutenant in 1884. For a time, Tjiauw Ing also hired his cousin Ho Tiang Goan to administer his opium farm in Madiun.³⁰ But for years he had two enemies: one called Lintah, "Leech," who was lieutenant in Semarang, presumably Tjoa Sien Tjing (appointed lieutenant in Sept. 1883 and captain in Dec. 1889), because he was married to a daughter of Koeda Toewa, or Be Biau Tjoan,³¹ the principal enemy of the Ho. When he comes to the fall of Ho Tjiauw Ing and consequently that of his partners,³² Boen Sing Hoo does not provide a clear explanation.

Boewat toeloeng orang njang tida seperti, Tandanja berdjalan baik lah hati." (p. 13)	In order to help the indigent, As a lasting sign of his generosity.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------

Cf. also *De Locomotief*, July 11, 1888, "Een philanthropische Instelling" and "In die apotheek zullen alle behoeftigen, Chinezen, Europeanen, Arabieren, inlanders, Afrikanen enz. die zulks verlangen, gratis geneeskundige hulp en medicijnen kunnen bekomen." For a comparison with similar private medical institutions in China, see Leung Ki Che, "Organized Medicine in Ming-Qing China: State and Private Medical Institutions in the Lower Yang Zi Region," in *Late Imperial China* 8 (1) (1987): 134-66 (Taipei: Institute of the Three Principles of the People, Academia Sinica).

²⁷ *De Locomotief*, Nov. 26, 1891.

²⁸ The tomb of Goei Som Han (Wei Senhan) and his wife, Chen Quanniang, erected by their three sons and eight grandsons, was still in situ in the early 1980s. As for Be Biau Tjoan (see n. 44), his was erected during the lifetime of Goei Som Han, for it is dated 1885. One of his sons, Goei Keh Pien, was appointed lieutenant in Semarang in November 1884. From another tombstone inscription still in situ in Semarang, it appears that the Goei and the Ho were related by marriage; Wei (Goei) Jingtai, an uncle of Goei Som Han, married a certain He Lanniang (Ho Lan Nio); their tomb is dated 1867. Goei Som Han was at least a third-generation *peranakan*. His grandfather, Wei Bingyao, was buried in Semarang, and his tomb is dated 1853; cf. Franke, Salmon, Siu, *Chinese Epigraphic Materials*. According to Arnold Wright, ed., *Twentieth Century Impressions of the Dutch Indies*, (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Company, 1909), pp. 511-12, the Goei family of Semarang came to Java in the late 1770s.

²⁹ It seems they were three brothers; the third was possibly Ho Tjiauw Hai, whose name appears among the donors who in 1870 contributed for the repair of the Houfu miao. He only gave four guilders; Ho Ijam Lo gave 80.

³⁰ Cf. *De Locomotief*, November 26, 1891. Ho Tiang Goan was apparently based in Semarang, for in 1890 he contributed 15 guilders to the repair of the Tay Kak Sie (Da Juesi) and in 1900, 100 guilders for the construction of the Ganfu miao.

³¹ Cf. unpublished genealogy of the Be (Ma) family. This source is from Myra Sidharta.

³² According to the *Bintang Soerabaia*, June 22, 1889, one of his two guarantors, Liem Kie Djwan, even tried to poison himself.

Landak djatoeh di itoe hari,
Lantaran *patah*, dia poenja doeri,
Bikin gojangnja lima negeri,
Orang njang kaget di kanan kiri.

Porcupine fell that day,
His prickles being broken,
Shaking five lands,
The people were afraid all around.

Lima negeri, seloeroeh Dessa,
Tanah *Madioen* djoega berasa,
Sehandei *Landak*, tida binasa,
Terlebieh koewat, dari Raksasa. (p. 12)

Five lands including all the villages,
The territory of Madiun also felt it.
Had Porcupine not been exterminated
He would have been stronger than a giant.

He, nevertheless, gives the impression that the ruin of the Ho had been partly caused by their enemy, the Be family.

Landak bermoesoeh sama *si' Koeda*
Dari njang Toewa sampe njang moeda,
Sahingga sekarang, masih lah ada,
Simpan dendem di dalem dada. (p. 11)

Porcupine and Horse have been enemies,
From the old to the young generation,
Up to now it is still so,
Their hearts are filled with grudges.³³

This impression is even more clearly expressed in the epilogue, where it is said that for three years Bapanja Saboe (presumably Be Ik Sam)³⁴ had been smuggling opium into their territory.³⁵ It is known from Dutch sources that Ho Ijam Lo did support the policy initiated by TeMechelen to control opium smugglers along the northern coast.³⁶ But elsewhere, Boen Sing Hoo also alludes to the fact that after the death of Ho Ijam Lo, "The management was not satisfying, /The commissioners were not committed enough, /and as a result the name of Ho fell."³⁷

³³ *Locomotief*, July 26, 1888, in a note entitled "Eene ongepaste aardigheid," reports that because of the bad relations between these two families, Be Biau Tjoan had decided to organize a nautical race that would start just the day of Ho Ijam Lo's funeral, but the Dutch authorities opposed it. Eventually, Be Biau Tjoan contented himself by entertaining in his residence the poor of the place, to whom he gave half a guilder each. The reporter comments, "De toeloop bij de begrafenis is er evenwel niet minder groot om gewest." According to Boen Sing Hoo, it seems that Lintah, "Leech," or Tjoa Sien Tjing, was among the initiators of this race (p. 15).

Soenggoeh *Lintah* bersakit lah hati,
Gemesnja *Landak* setengah mati,
Lantaran koeboeran di tjegati,
Tjilaka datang lantah berganti.

For sure Leech was hurt,
Porcupine [junior] was infuriated,
Because the funerals were obstructed,
Misfortunes succeeded each other.

³⁴ Be Ik Sam was captain of the Chinese in Bagelen from 1862 to 1864. In the 1860s, he and his brother Be Biau Tjoan had formed a kongsi. They not only controlled the opium farms in their own districts, but together with the local captain also managed the farm in Banyumas. In 1864, they were found guilty of malpractice and were stripped of office, heavily fined, and for a time forbidden to participate in opium farms as farmers, guarantors, subfarmers, or employees. They were rehabilitated in the early 1870s. In the early 1880s, Be Ik Sam was established in Semarang as a trader, owned lands in the area of Japara, and held the opium farms of Bagelen and Kedu. He became famous as the author of an open letter to the king in which he gave insight into the shortcomings of the opium farm system and offered his recommendations for reform. Be Ik Sam, *Vijftien millioen vermeerdering der staatsinkomsten zonder belasting verhooging, Open Brief aan Z. M. den Koning der Nederlanden* (Djakakarta: Buning, 1886).

³⁵ See app. 1.

³⁶ Cf. Rush, *Opium Farms*, pp. 189–90, 197.

³⁷ *Tatkala mati si Landak Toewa*,
Djalankan prentah banjak katjiwa,
Koerang setia sekalian Poenggawa,
Maka namanja, djatoeh di bawa (p. 10). Cf. also Rush, *Opium Farms*, pp. 220–23.

The Be/Lim Partnership

This group was the most prestigious, for it was headed by the two most powerful Chinese in Semarang: Oelar Naga, "Dragon," or Liem Liong Hien, major since 1885, and Koeda Toewa "Horse Senior," or Be Biau Tjoan, honorary major since 1873.³⁸ Liem Liong Hien was a native of Gresik (*Poetra di Gresik, lah soedah terang*). He was the son of Liem Khee Soen (1810–1896), who in the 1860s was lieutenant in the same city and an opium farmer in Surabaya in 1871.³⁹ He married Be Biau Tjoan's daughter Tjong King Nio (b. 1844).⁴⁰ Liem Liong Hien was a refined and competent person:

<p><i>Oeler Naga</i> sebagai (M)erpati, Orangnja haloes, moerah lah hati, Kaloe bekerdja, amat lah titi, Memegang Sawah, dan Oetan Djati." (p. 7)</p>	<p>Dragon is like a dove, He is refined and generous, And strict while working, He holds rice fields⁴¹ and teakwood forests.</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Liem Liong Hien became an opium farmer in association with his father-in-law. During the farm term 1887–1889, he was party to the Bagelen, Batavia, Krawang, and Banten opium farms. In the late 1880s, he was a license holder, as were Ho Tjiauw Ing and Be Kwat Kong, for the exploitation of forests in the district of Semarang.⁴²

Boen Sing Hoo gives the following portrait of Be Biau Tjoan (1826–1904).

<p><i>Koeda</i> Toewa, asal di Birma, Soedah kesoehoer dia poenja nama, Maski Toewa, masieh oetama, Dari kajanja tiada njang sama. (p. 7)</p>	<p>Horse Senior is native to Bima,⁴³ Famous is his name, In spite of his old age he is still prominent, And his wealth is incomparable.⁴⁴</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

³⁸ Be, or Ma in Mandarin, also means "horse."

³⁹ According to the late Basuki Soejatmiko, *Etnis Tionghoa di awal Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (Surabaya: P. T. Surya Chandra Kencana Press, 1982), pp. 314–15, Liem Khee Soen's grandfather arrived in Tuban from Fujian province in 1750. Rush, *Opium Farms*, pp. 40–41: "Liem Kee Soen kept a district around Gresik—where he was Chinese lieutenant—for himself and subfarmed the Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Mojokerto districts to others."

⁴⁰ "Djadi mantoenja, si 'Koeda Gerang," p. 7 (He became the son-in-law of Horse the Fierce). We assume here that *gerang* stands for *garang*.

⁴¹ Here, opium farms.

⁴² Rush, *Opium Farms*, p. 101. *Regeerings Almanak*, 1880s.

⁴³ This verse raises a problem. According to Liem Thian Joe, *Riwajat Semarang*, p. 91 and the genealogy of the Be family, Be Ing Tjioe (1803–1857) had been brought from China as a child by a successful peranakan dealer in tobacco and later, interisland shipping. He eventually married the dealer's daughter, Tan Tjiauw Nio (b. 1808). He served as manager of the opium farm in Bagelen under Tan Tiang Tjhing and was appointed lieutenant in 1833 and captain in 1835. Later he returned to Semarang where he worked in partnership with Major Tan Hong Yan (Tan Tiang Tjhing's son) and became the richest businessman in the city. In 1841, he was appointed honorary major. He had three sons who were born in Java: Biau Tjoan (1826–1904), Soe Ie (1833–1888), and Ik Sam (1838–1891), and three others who were born in China. When Be Ing Tjioe died, Biau Tjoan succeeded him. The Be were allied to Tan Hong Yan through the marriage of Biau Tjoan to the daughter of the former Djiang Nio (1825–1870). Consequently Birma, which probably stands for Bima, should be interpreted as the horses' place of origin as well as Sawu and Roti (see app. 1).

⁴⁴ Be Biau Tjoan, like his children, was a big landowner. He also owned several ships (cf. *Regeerings Almanak* 1870) and for a time had been involved in the opium farm in Singapore (cf. Rush, *Opium Farms*, 100, 110). Some years ago, one could still see his sumptuous tomb to the south of Semarang, on the western side of Jalan Haryono (see plate). Like many wealthy, influential persons, he had it constructed during his lifetime. The stone inscription bears the date 1882. It is worth noting that Goei Som Han (see n. 28) did the same.

He adds further, "But he had the temperament of a woman" (*Tjoema tebijatnja sebagai prampoewan*). A ballad in Chinese from the midnineteenth century states that Be Biauw Tjoan's father was a homosexual.⁴⁵ The Be and the Liem families formed a partnership:

<p><i>Naga dan Koeda, ada disitoe, Anak Koeda sedia, boewat bantoe, Tiga berkoempoel, djadi lah satoe, Aken toeroet tawar, soedah tentoe.</i> (p. 8)</p>	<p>Dragon and Horse are present, Horse Junior is ready to help, The three of them are united, No doubt they will take part in the bargain.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

"Horse Senior," or Be Kwat Kong (b. 1843), was also quite successful: Major Liem Liong Hin's son, Tjoe Tiang, had married his daughter, Pien Nio (b. 1867) (*Anak Naga djadi lah Mantoe, Mantoenja Koeda, njang Ka'satoe*, [p. 8]).⁴⁶ He himself had been appointed lieutenant in 1878 (*Memangkoe Pangkat, di dahoeloe hari*, p. 8). Moreover, through other children he was related to Banteng or "Wild Buffalo" from Kediri, very likely Han Liong Ing (*Besannja tinggal, Tanah Kediri, Banteng besar memegang negeri*, [p. 8]), who held the farms in Cirebon, Tegal, Pekalongan, Rembang, and Japara.⁴⁷

The Oei Partnership

The second group from Semarang was rather new to managing opium farms, but it was very promising. It was composed of Sapi, "Ox," or Oei Tjie Sien (1835–1900), and Anak Sapi, "Ox Junior," or Oei Tiong Ham (1866–1924), who had been appointed lieutenant in 1886, and Sapi Soerakarta, "the Ox from Surakarta," or Oei Tjo Pie, who was the guarantor. Only the latter two attended the auction:

<p><i>Anak Sapi doedoek sebelah kanan, Masih moeda berpankat Luitenan, Asal Sapi Tjina poenja toeroenan, Berdagang gereh ikan ikanan.</i> (p. 16)</p>	<p>Ox Junior is seated on the right side, Still very young but named lieutenant, His father is a totok from China, A trader in salted fish.⁴⁸</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The business of Oei Tjie Sien prospered, and in 1863, with some partners, he launched the firm of Kian Gwan, "Source of All Welfare," which traded in Chinese commodities and exported some sugar and tobacco:

⁴⁵ Cf. Gustave Schlegel, "Philippica des Chinesen Tan lok Po gegen den Kapitän des Chinesen Li-Ki-Thai," *T'oung Pao*, ser. 1, 1 (1890): 32, who translated it into German: "Erst diente er (a certain Li Ki Thai) Sun-bi (Be Ing Tjioe's style) mit der grössten Speichelleckerei: /Er schlachtete, kochte und bereitete die Speisen, um seine Kunst zu zeigen, /Liess sich von ihm prügeln und befehlen, ohne etwas zu erwidern, /Und war verächtlich wie ein Sklave oder eine Sklavin."

⁴⁶ Liem Tjoe Tiang was educated in Dutch and in Chinese. In 1888, he launched a Western-style shop called Bazaar Insulinde. It was the first attempt of a Chinese to open a Western-style department store, especially in the European district, but after two or three years he was compelled to close it, perhaps because of the competition of the Dutch-owned firms. Cf. Liem Thian Joe, *Riwajat Semarang*, pp. 150–51, 153.

⁴⁷ Rush, *Opium Farms*, p. 102. In 1870, he was appointed lieutenant in Berbek (Kediri district).

⁴⁸ According to Liem Thian Joe (quoted by Charles Coppel, "Liem Thian Joe's Unpublished History of Kian Gwan," in *Oei Tiong Ham Concern: The First Business Empire of Southeast Asia*, ed. Yoshihara Kunio (Kyoto University: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1989) p. 127 and Liem Tjwan Ling, *Raja Gula Oei Tiong Ham*, (Surabaya: Liem Tjwan Ling, 1979) p. 8. Oei Tjie Sien left China because he was involved in the Taiping rebellion (1850–1864). He is supposed to have landed in Semarang in 1858 accompanied by his brother Oei Sien Tjo (about whom little is known except that he settled in Parakan and was buried in Semarang) and his nephew, Oei Tjo Pie, who resided in Surakarta and who remained an associate of Oei Tjie Sien and Oei Tiong Ham until he died around 1904. According to Boen Sing Hoo, Oei Tjoe Pie was also wealthy and was the guarantor of the Be from Semarang (*Sapi ini djoega berharta, Boewat borgnja, lah soedah njata*). According to the Oei's genealogies (in Chinese and in Malay) provided by Charles Coppel, Tjie Sien married Tjan Biet Nio (1839–1896), the fourth daughter of Zeng (Tjan) Kanshui, a merchant based in Semarang.

Ho Ijam Lo's house at Gergaji as it stood in the 1970s



Main building

Gate leading to the Chinese garden





Portrait of Be Biau Tjoan by an unknown western painter



Overview of Be Biau Tjoan's tomb as it stood in the early 1970s

Sapi berdagang oentoeng njata,
Lantaran tertoeoeng oleh Dewata,
Toewan tanah dan banjak harta,
Gedongnja berderek sa'dalam kota.(p. 16)

Ox's business has been successful,
Because he is assisted by the Gods,
He is a landowner and a wealthy man.⁴⁹
He has rows of buildings in the city.

The Oei were allied through marriage to the big families of Semarang and Rembang, says Boen Sing Hoo: Oei Tiong Ham first married a daughter of "Rat," Goei Bing Nio. The granddaughter of "Porcupine," Ho Kiem Hoa (1901–1965), and a daughter of "Garudas," Tan Sien Nio, were his seventh and eighth wives.⁵⁰ A sister of Tiong Ham had been given in marriage to the wealthy Mendjangan, or "Deer," from Rembang (*Tjoetjoe Landak dan anaknja Garoeda Semarang, Ketarik famili lah soedah terang*, [p. 17]).⁵¹ Ajam, "Chicken," or The Tik Goan, who had been appointed lieutenant, also became Oei Tjie Sien's son-in-law:

Ajam garang Ajam kabiri,
Tiga mantoenja moeda bastari
Mampoe memegang pekerdja'an negeri,
Oentoengnja Ajam soekar tertjari. (p. 17)

Chicken the fierce, Chicken the capon,
The third son-in-law, is bright,
He assumes his office with talent,
Profits similar to his are difficult to obtain.⁵²

Formerly, The Tik Goan and his brothers were also partners in the opium farms run by Ho Ijam Lo.⁵³

The External Partnerships

Boen Sing Hoo insists that since the disappearance of Ho Ijam Lo, the animals from other countries have dared to cross the sea to take part in the battle, especially those from Batavia (*Binatang Betawi, brani menjerang, Langkah laoetan dateng Semarang*, [p. 14]). They were not united and constituted two different partnerships (*Dari Betawi doewa koempoelan, Tida sama dan lain djalan*, [p. 23]). The most impressive was headed by two captains: Boeaja Emas, "Gold Crocodile," or Loa Tiang Hoei, who had been appointed in the capital in 1879⁵⁴ and the opium farmer and honorary captain, Oei Hok Tiang, who was granted his title in September 1883.

⁴⁹ In 1878, he purchased the land of Simongan, where the Sanbao Cave is located, (the stone inscription of 1879 commemorating the event is still in situ) and that of Penggiling next to it, where Oei Tjie Sien had his *Landhuis* or "cottage."

⁵⁰ According to Yoshihara, *Oei Tiong Ham Concern*, pp. 148, 184, who interviewed the two sons of Hoo Kiem Hoa (or Lucy Hoo, 1901–1965), Oei Tjong Ie and Oei Tong Tjay, Oei Tiong Ham had nine wives. In a brief portrait of his mother Tjong Ie says: "My mother was an overseas Chinese born in the Netherlands Indies, and compared with my father's other wives, she was well educated—Western educated. I know for instance, in the later years of his life, my mother helped him a lot in his business, especially in dealing with Dutch-speaking people. I think she was also useful to my father in Singapore" (p. 150).

⁵¹ Oei Tjie Sien had four daughters, but the genealogy of the family does not mention their names. According to Song Ong Siang, *One Hundred Years' History of the Chinese in Singapore* (Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1967), p. 353, another sister of Tiong Ham married Mr Lim E. Ging, at one time a well-known merchant in Singapore, who owned large brickworks at Pasir Panjang. According to Liem Tjwan Ling, *Raja Gula*, p. 12, Liem Ie Khing's (Liem E. Ging) father, Liem Liat Boen, was in charge of the Kian Gwan office in Singapore.

⁵² According to Arnold Wright, ed., *Twentieth Century Impressions*, p. 546, The Tik Goan's father, The Siok Lian from Surabaya, "carried on business as a merchant and was the owner of a large sugar factory." Cf. also Liem Thian Joe, *Riwajat Semarang*, 152.

⁵³ "Ajam Djago, Ajam kabiri, bersama Ajam poenja soedara sendiri, Bertjampoer Landak di dahoeloe hari, Pegang sawah di ini negeri" (p. 18).

⁵⁴ The *Bintang Barat* of July 20, 1889, states that Captain Loa Tiang Hoei, Lieutenant Liem Goan Tjing, Tan Djien Soei, Kan Tjeng Sie, and other wealthy persons from Batavia went to Semarang to take part in the auction to be held on July 23.

Boeaja Emas sebagai Pendita,
Toeroenan berdagang lah soedah njata,
Kesoehoer amat di *Betawi* kota,
Moerah hati dan banjak harta.

Gold Crocodile looks like a clergyman,
He belongs to a merchant's family,
He is quite famous in Batavia,
He is generous and wealthy.

...

Kawannja njang satoe terlaloe pinter,
Sapi katee, *Sapi* di Meester,
Akalnja sampe bisa tepoeter
Dalem negeri berpankat *Pachter*. (p. 20)

"One of his companions is very clever,
That is dwarfish Ox from Meester,
He is tricky,
An opium farmer in his country.⁵⁵

They were accompanied by two merchants: Koetjing di oetan, "Wild Cat," presumably Kan Tjeng Sie,⁵⁶ and Boeloes Lautan, "Sea Tortoise," possibly Tan Djien Soei, of whom Boen Sing Hoo gives the following portraits.

Koetjing di hoetan, boekannya kata
Pegang Tambak, dan banjak harta,
Orangnja koeroes, tadjem lah mata,
Pinternja lagi, soedah lah njata.

Cat from the forest, not from the mud,⁵⁷
Owns fishponds and is very rich,
He is thin and his eyes are sharp,
Obviously, he is cunning.

Boeloes laoetan, boekannya kali,
Orangnja tinggi, tjakep sekali,
Omongnja manis, dengan lah geli,
Pandai berdagang, berdjoeval beli. (p. 20)

Sea Tortoise, not Land Tortoise,
Is tall and capable,
His talk is pleasant and humorous,
He is good at business."

Tan Djien Soei was related to the "Garuda" or the Tan, who joined the partnership together with other animals from Semarang such as Ayam Kabiri or The Tik Goan, Boeroeng Noeri, "Lory," a merchant born in China, who had quarreled with Oei Tjie Sien (*sama Sapi koening, ada stori*, [p. 22]), and another bird named Dandang Emas "Gold Cormorant" (?).

The second group from Batavia was represented by Kidang Bogor, the "Deer from Bogor," or Captain Tan Goan Pauw, who had been appointed in June 1883, and his two companions: Oelar sawa, "Python," a funny merchant who was not native to Java (*Langkah laoetan dateng di Djawa, Loetjoenja lagi, tida lah doewa*, [p. 24]) and Seetan, "Satan,"⁵⁸ well respected in Batavia and whose brother was captain (*Dalem Betawi banjak kahormatan, Soedaranja lagi, berpangkat Kapitan*, [p. 24]). Boen Sing Hoo obviously does not know much about them:

Menoeroet kabar orang poenja tjerita,
Betoel tidanja beloen lah njata,
Koempoelan ini hendak memegang kota,
Njang di ingin, sawah *Soerakarta*.(p. 24)

According to the rumor,
Which has not yet been confirmed,
This group wants to hold a city,
They longed for the rice fields of Surakarta.

⁵⁵ According to the *Regerings Almanak* (1879, 1885), Oei Hok Tiang was also the president of a Chinese association called "Batavia," which was founded in 1876. He owned property in Batavia and in 1877 had been appointed lieutenant.

⁵⁶ The name of Kan Tjeng Sie appears among the donors who in 1890 contributed to the repair of the Jinde yuan in Jakarta, along with the name of a relative (brother or cousin), Kan Tjeng (Soen).

⁵⁷ The meaning of this verse is not clear. I have supposed here that *kata* stands for *gatak*, which in Javanese means "mud."

⁵⁸ Or Shé Tan, "a certain Tan." If that were the case, he would be the brother of Captain Tan Boen Kwi, who had been appointed in 1883.

The two partnerships that came from the district of Kedu were rivals; the one from Magelang was headed by the Bébék or "Ducks," who were on friendly terms with Be Biauw Tjoan (*Bébék Magelang Bébék bangsawan, Koeda toewa poenja lah kawan*, [p. 25]) because they were related through marriage (*Bébék dan Koeda maka berkawan, Ketarik dari famili prampoewan*, [p. 25]). One was "Duck Senior," or Kwee An Ki, who had been appointed captain in Magelang in 1878; the other was his son, Anak Bébék, "Duck Junior," or Kwee Siang Ging, who had held the position of lieutenant in Ambarawa since 1878:

Berpangkat Kapitan Si 'Bébék itoe,
Tinggal Magelang sebelah itoe,
Sama Koeldi termoesoeh tentoe,
Tapi si' Koeda tida membantoe.

That Duck has the rank of captain,
He resides in the neighborhood of Magelang,
Duck and Donkey are enemies,
But in that Horse does not interfere:

Anak Bébék di bilang Meri,
Tinggal di Ambarawa dalem Negeri,
Berpangkat Lieutenant di ini hari,
Adilnja terpoedji di kanan kiri. (p. 25)

Duck Junior is said to be envious,⁵⁹
He resides in the country of Ambarawa,
And currently has the position of lieutenant,
Everywhere, people praise his fairness.

The rival group from Kedu was headed by Koeldi, "Donkey," a dealer in tobacco whose father had the position of captain. His two guarantors Loetoeng, "Monkey," and "Bamboe-doeri" (a sort of bamboo) were regarded as insufficiently strong by his enemies the "Ducks" (*Borg Koeldi kena di sawat, Loetoeng terbilang koerang lah koewat*, [p. 25]), who were quite arrogant because "Duck Senior" had been decorated by the Dutch authorities.⁶⁰

The last group, which came from Yogya, was also very fragile. It was represented only by Kambing, "Goat," or Njo Gai Sing, a young man without title and with little capital, but who was ready to act as manager for Be Biauw Tjoan:

Dateng djoega Si' Kambing Djockdja,
Kambing njang pinter, ber'akal Kodja,
Angkatan Goela, dia poenja kerdja,
Toeroenan ketjil, boekan lah Radja.

The Goat from Yogya also came,
Keen and shrewd like a Khoja,
Conveyor of sugar is his job,
A man of low extraction, not a king.

...

Kambing beloen ada kekoewattan sendiri,
Boewat pegang sawahnja Negeri,
Koeda Toewa sigra di tjari,
Maka berkoempoel lah itoe hari. (pp. 26-27)

The Goat does not yet have power of his own,
To hold his own rice fields,
He immediately approached Horse Senior,
At the auction they gathered together.

The Battle of the Animals

Boeroeng Peking, "Pekingese Bird," or Tan King Gie, secretary since 1881, announced the terms for the competition, which was held under the presidency of Gadjah Poetih, "White Elephant," or the Resident of Semarang, symbol of Dutch authority:

Boeroeng Peking boeloenja serat,
Pangkat Secretaris di dalam Rat,
Lantas berdiri, membatja lah soerat,
Soewara njaring, tida lah sarat. (p. 27)

Pekingese Bird has his feathers well stuck,
He has the rank of secretary in the council,
He stands while reading the text,
His voice is loud and clear.

⁵⁹ *Meri* in Javanese means "envious" and in Malay, *anak itik*, or "duckling," so this verse may also be rendered as "Duck Junior is a duckling."

⁶⁰ *Bébék* terbilang di taboer Perada,
Dapet nama baik, pada Baginda,
Dateng soerat kapoedji'an dari Ollanda,
Ber' bintang Emas, di atas dada. (p. 26)

Duck is said to be coated with gold,
He was granted a title by His Majesty,
He received a letter of praise from Holland,
He bears a gold decoration on his chest.

When this preliminary proceeding was terminated, the announcement of the name Semarang caused great excitement:

Orang njang tawar ganti sa'oetan,
Sama braninja, soedah keliattan (p. 28)

The bargainers one by one made an offer,
Obviously equally daring.

...

Orang njang nonton, bersoeka hati,
Siapa njang dapet, belonnja misti.(p. 28)

The spectators were delighted,
It was too early to assign the license.

"Dragon," or Liem Liong Hien, stopped his bid, but the contest continued between "Gold Crocodile," or Loa Tiang Hoei, and "Ox Junior," or Oei Tiong Ham. The onlookers enjoyed themselves, wanting to laugh at the competition between the two rivals:

Boeaja menawar, lagi sekali,
Anak Sapi tambah kembali,
Soedah poetoes, tiga lah kali,
Sawah Semarang, Sapi njang beli. (p. 29)

Crocodile made another offer,
Ox Junior raised the bid,
The final "thrice" was decisive,
It was Ox who purchased the ricefields of Semarang.

The value of the license was no less than 125,300 guilders. According to rumor, "Ox Junior" had been too audacious. He had exceeded the calculations of his father and the latter was infuriated:

Orang di loewar pada berkata,
Anak Sapi, berani sendjata,
Melanggar Bapanja poenja kata,
Liwatin taksiran, lah soeda njata. (p. 30)

The people outside all said,
Ox Junior dared to fight,
He transgressed his father's words,
And exceeded his estimation.

But the license had been assigned, and "Ox Junior" had to look for his guarantors: one was Oei Tjie Sien himself and the second, his son-in-law from Rembang, named "Deer." Against all expectations, *Landak di Djocdja*, the "Porcupine of Yogya," or Ho Tjiauw Soen, who was formerly associated with his brother Ho Tjiauw Ing, was also a party:

Djalanken kerdja, pegang koewasa,
Landak di Djocdja memang biasa,
Maski namanja soedah binasa,
Tapi doerinja masieh berbisa. (p. 31)

To run a farm, to act as manager,
These tasks are familiar to the Porcupine in Yogya,
Although his reputation has been ruined,
His spines are still poisonous.

In effect, Ho Tjiauw Soen was also a shareholder, and it was he who could show the Oei how to run the opium farm (*Bikin persero satoe koempoelan, Pekerdja'an Landak njang kasi djalan*, [p. 31]). In the same way, Andjing, "Dog," another partner of the Ho, was also hired by the Oei:

Andjing item djadi Poenggawa besar
Boeloenja haloes, tida lah kasar,
Andjing tertjinta oleh Pembesar,
Maka Toewannja, takoet lah goesar. (p. 32)

Black Dog has become high commissioner,
His hair is soft, not coarse,
He is loved by the great ones,
So his masters are afraid to anger him.

Further, Boen Sing Hoo states that "Dog" had already worked for several masters and that they were all afraid of him, although they liked him (*Toewannja lagi, berganti-ganti, Semoea takoet dan tjinta hati*, [p. 32]). When the name of Surakarta was announced, Anak Koeda, "Horse Junior," or Be Kwat Kong, bid first; he was immediately followed by Boeroeng Noeri, "Lory," and Oeler Sawa, "Python," who raised the bid to 54,000 and 60,000

successively; but Koeda Saboe, Koeda pingittan, "Horse from Sawu, Horse the secluded," or Be Kwat Koen, who was captain in Solo,⁶¹ offered 60,010, and he got it:

Di karang pèndèk, ini lah tjerita, Soedah poetoes sawah di <i>Soerakarta</i> ,	In short, the story is this, The rice fields of Surakarta have been assigned,
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

...

<i>Koeda Saboe, Pachter</i> di Djawa, Borgnja lagi famili berdoewa, <i>Koeda Moeda dan Koeda Toewa.</i> (p. 34)	Horse from Sawu became farmer in Java, His guarantors, two relatives of his, Horse Junior and Horse Senior.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The same process was repeated for the farm of Yogya. Kambing Moeda, "Goat Junior," or Njo Gai Sing, vied with Boeroeng Noeri, who was a supporter of the Batavia-based partnership. The bargaining was rapid and soon reached 30,630 (*Tjepatnja lagi, sebage sikatan, 30,630, soedah kelihattan*, [p. 36]). And the winners were again the Be:

Soedah poetoes, sawah <i>Djocdjakarta</i> , Kena si' <i>Kambing</i> , lah soedah njata, Doewa Borgnja, <i>Koeda-kareta</i> , <i>Koeda Semarang</i> , njang banjak harta. (p. 36)	The ricefields of Yogya have been assigned, The winner is that Goat, The cart horses are his two guarantors, The wealthy Horses from Semarang.
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The last territory to be sold on that day was that of Kedu, which had been managed by Bébék istri, "Duck's wife," or the wife of Captain Kwee An Ki (*Hendak terdjoewal, sawah di Kedoe Negeri, Njang terpegang, oleh Bébék istri*, [p. 36]). Further, Boen Sing Hoo makes clear that "she was a woman" (*Bébék istri, Bébék prampoewan*, [p. 37]). It is the only reference to a woman administrator of an opium farm found so far. This time, the contest between the Bébék, or "Ducks," and their rival Koeldi, "Donkey," was sharp. Because Koeda Toewa or Be Biau Tjoan finally refused to support Bébék istri, she had to give way to Koeldi who bid 25,000, although he still had to find a guarantor (*Borg Koeldi masieh lah koerang, sebab njang koewat tjoema sa'orang*, [p. 39]).

This was the end of the auction, which was marked by the sound of a gamelan orchestra:

Lantas moendoer, samoea Pembesar, Gamelan berboenji, lagoe njang kasar, Orang njang nonton pada bergingsar, Soedah habis, dan boebar pasar. (p.39)	Then all the officials left, The gamelan started a vulgar melody, All the spectators disappeared, It was the end, the market was dispersed.
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The two groups from Batavia did not obtain any farm:

Tida beroentoeng ini lah hari, Angkatan <i>Betawi</i> tida pegang negeri, Tetapi ada ingetan, di dalem diri, Lain lelang, hendak kemari. (p. 35)	Today they were unlucky, The groups from Betawi do not hold lands, But in their hearts they cherish the hope, To the next auction they will come again.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Indeed, they came again to Semarang at the beginning of September to take part in an auction, but Boen Sing Hoo neither mentions the name of the territory nor that of the purchaser.

⁶¹ According to Tan Hong Boen, *Orang-orang Tionghoa jang terkemoeka di Java* (Solo: Biographical Publishing Centre, ca. 1935), p. 128, Be Kwat Koen was born in Purworejo (Bagelen) in 1863. As Be Ik Sam (see nn. 34, 43) was then in that city, where he was promoted to the position of captain in 1864, one may assume that Kwat Koen was his son.

The *Syair Sindiran* as a Literary Genre

The *peranakan* certainly appear to have had a pronounced taste for Malay classical literature at this time and to have been familiar with the fashionable genres. Many nineteenth-century *syair* about animals or plants, which, as Overbeck has shown,⁶² were symbols for real people, generally nobles whom the poet did not dare mention by name, were known to the *peranakan*. In Batavia at the end of the nineteenth century, an image of the *Burung Nuri* and the *Burung Bayan* (two kinds of parrots) were even carried in procession during the Capgomeh festival.⁶³ Some *peranakan* also wrote poems in this vein. To the best of our knowledge, the first to appear in book form, entitled *Saier mengimpie dan Saier boeroeng* was written by Tan Kit Tjoan.⁶⁴ Toward the end of the nineteenth century, a *peranakan* assisted by a Malay published a version of *Syair ikan* (poem about a fish) in romanised Malay.⁶⁵ Fables such as the well-known story of Kancil (mouse deer) were found in many Chinese lending libraries in Java. It may be that the *peranakan* borrowed the satirical *syair* in which people are represented by animals from the Malays as well.

Unfortunately, little is known about the rise of the *syair sindiran*. In the *peranakan* world, one may assume that the genre was already popular in the midnineteenth century. The *Bintang Barat* of November 5, 1872, alludes to a *Sair Satoe Kidang* (Poem about a deer) written by a certain Tan Giok Laij from Bogor to criticize a woman who had run away to follow her lover.⁶⁶ Certainly Boen Sing Hoo was neither the first and nor the only poet to ridicule the opium farmers. In 1865, a certain Kiai Kong Bing⁶⁷ had already published a brief *syair* without title in the *Bintang Timoer* (Nov. 25), which makes fun of an opium farmer from Besuki who was called by his initials "K. B." He is depicted as being tricked by three brothers, who are referred to as three heroes from the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. It is quite likely that such satirical poems also appeared in the press in the 1870s and 1880s. So far, two other *syair* aimed at making fun of the farmers have been traced: one supposedly appeared in Batavia 1891, and the second was definitely published in Batavia in 1897. The first is only known from a poem that appeared in the *Bintang Soerabaia* of March 31, 1891. Therein the author, Babah K.T. (assisted by K. S. H.), asks his relatives residing in Besuki (East Java) for permission to circulate in Semarang a poem about contests between opium farmers (*Dari perkara pachter lah tjandoe, Siapa jang pegang siapa jang ganggoe*) that he wants to

⁶² Hans Overbeck, "Malay Animals and Flowers Shaers," *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 12 (2) (1934): 108–48.

⁶³ Cf "Boeroeng noeri djenge" (*Burung nuri's* procession), *Bintang Soerabaija*, March 1, 1894.

⁶⁴ Tan Kiet Tjoan was a knowledgeable landowner established in Batavia, where he had purchased several plots of lands in Pekojan, Pangkalan, and Klenteng. (cf. *Bintang Barat*, July 19, 1872). In the 1860s, he enjoyed reading Malay newspapers and even published articles and poems in *Bintang Barat* (Batavia) and *Bintang Timoer* (Surabaya). He was versed in classical Malay literature for he quoted the *Bustanus Salatim* (cf. *Bintang Timoer*, April 6, 1867). The first surviving edition of his poem dates back to 1882. However, an earlier edition is known by an advertisement in the *Bintang Barat* of January 7, 1871.

⁶⁵ See Salmon, *Literature in Malay by the Chinese of Indonesia*, p. 31.

⁶⁶ The editor refused to publish it because, he said, this woman had already rejoined her first master: "Tan Giok Laij di Bogor! Baba poenja tjerita dan sair satoe kidang, tapi mengertinja satoe prampoean dari kampoeng Patjebokan njang bekas di piara oleh satoe Kapitan dan kerna di pikat oleh satoe orang Bogor nama Tj. S. sampe dapet, abis terlepas kombali, kita fikir tiada baik boeat di masoekin didalem soerat kabar. Sobat djangan ambil pergoesar."

⁶⁷ Kong Bing or Kong Ming is, in effect, the style of Zhuge Liang (A.D. 181–234), another hero of the Three Kingdoms period (A.D. 220–65).

print in book form in Batavia the following month. He states that the aim is not to be insulting:

Tapi familikoe djanganlah soesah,
Tida kira koe bikin lah hina,
Tjoema di bikin sedikit tjerita,
Keada'annja segala perkara.

But my relatives, do not worry,
According to me it is not offensive,
It is just a short account
Of events as they are.

He apparently received a favorable reply, for the author published in the same newspaper (May 19, 1891) a second syair ("Soerat kiriman sairán") to express his gratitude and his hope that they would not be sued:

Djika soenggoe soeka noeloengi,
Saja trima bersenang hati,
Tapi misti jang hati-hati,
Djangan sampe naik Raad Justitie.

If you really want to help,
I will be pleased,
But you should be cautious,
Not to take legal action.

The second poem, which was published by Albrecht and Co., is anonymous. Its title is *Sair Binatang, Soewatoe dongeng jang betoel soedah kedjadian di Betawi, berikoet Sair Madat*, (Poem about animals, A true story about an opium farm case that occurred in Betawi [pp. 3–20]), followed by a poem about opium [pp. 21–33]). This *Sair Binatang*, like the one by Boen Sing Hoo, is a poem *à clés*, but its interpretation is much more difficult for at least two reasons. First, the story is not precisely set in space or time—the writer only says that he composed it a long time ago (*Sair hewan terkarang lama*). Second, the portrayal of the characters is not sufficiently detailed to allow a noncontemporaneous reader to identify them. One only knows that some of them were native to Bogor, whereas another one was based in Deli. The author's aim is nevertheless clear: he intends to show the malpractices of opium farmers and their victims. The appended syair about opium (pp. 21–33) describes the suffering of the opium addicts and is intended to discourage people from taking up opium smoking.⁶⁸

The Exemplarity of Boen Sing Hoo's Syair

To twentieth-century readers, the poem by Boen Sing Hoo is undoubtedly the most attractive. It allows one to perceive how educated *peranakan* of the middle class looked at the *cabang atas* and shows that the author had an intimate knowledge of social networks, economic connections, and stratagems. Especially well described is the part played by women in the making of new alliances by means of intermarriages. One can see, for instance, that the Oei, who were just at the beginning of their social climb, could rely on their *bésan* (children's in-laws) to obtain the required capital and competent assistants to help them run their newly purchased farm. One can also see the mobility of this elite. Boen Sing Hoo never forgets to mention the successful newcomers who entered the battlefield. Apart from Oei Tjie Sien, he also alludes to Boeroeng Noeri, who was also born in China (*Asalnja di Tjina, boekan di Semarang*, [p. 35]), and Oeler sawa, or "Python," who also came from abroad (*Langkah laoetan dateng di Djawa*, [p. 24]), probably from China or from Singapore. These newcomers, who were extremely keen to acquire farm leases, quite often raised their bids in an inconsiderate manner. This is stressed by Boen Sing Hoo when he relates how Oei Tiong Ham bargained to obtain the opium license for Semarang, thereby arousing the fury of Boeaja Emas, or Loa Tiang Hoei:

⁶⁸ Judging from the language of this poem, which contains numerous Hokkien terms, one may assume that its author was a *peranakan* Chinese.

Boeaja Emas, boeaja laoettan,
Sapi moeda, *Sapi* di hoetan,
Sama-sama ada kakoewatan,
Bertaroeng sampe loepa ingettan. (p. 29)

Gold Crocodile or Sea Crocodile,
Ox Junior or Ox from the forest,
Have the same strength,
They fight until they forget all.

He continues:

Hendak bertaroeng, njang sampe mati,
Tida lah inget, di hari nanti,
Soedah melangkah, taksiran njang mesti. (p. 29)

They want to fight to the death,
Not even thinking of the future,
They have already exceeded decent limits.

A similar attitude of a totok was remarked upon in the 1860s for Probolinggo.⁶⁹ Whereas in Probolinggo the totok was defeated, here, on the contrary, the peranakan farmer from Batavia is beaten:

Boeaja Emas, berhati lah marah,
Warna moekanja, sampe lah merah,
Hatinja panas, sebage barah,
Blakang kali, *Boeja* menjerah. (p. 29)

Gold Crocodile is furious in his heart,
His face is flushed with anger,
His heart is as hot as live coals,
Next time he will give up.

It is interesting to see how Boen Sing Hoo proceeds to ridicule the peranakan elite. Reduced to the position of fierce animals who spend their time contending for territory, the opium farmers are just good enough to entertain the populace. Thus, the auction becomes a way to derive amusement. The spectators apparently attended the auction as if it were a show, as if they were watching a cockfight or a bullfight. They looked at the opium farmers as if they were simply figures in a contest; their social status was no longer visible. The author does not state who was permitted to attend the auction, but we know from other sources that many people crowded around the pendopo. He merely says, "The onlookers were numerous" (*Njang nonton, banjak lah orang*, [p. 28]). He describes the beginning of the auction with the sale of Semarang:

Njang nonton, pada madjoe menjerang,
Maoe dengerken, njang sampe terang, (p. 28)

All the spectators advance offensively,
They want to hear clearly.

He even provides insight into the enjoyment of the spectators:

Orang njang nonton soeka semoewa,
Rasanja hati, hendak tertawa. (p. 29)

The spectators enjoyed everything,
In their hearts, they feel like laughing.

In his portraits of the opium farmers, Boen Sing Hoo takes liberties. He alternates reverential portraits—as in Oelar Naga (prior mention)—with caricatures of real creatures like Tikoes or Goei Som Han:

Idoengnja *Tikoes*, seperti gerdoe,
Matanja lagi, sebage gandoe,
Bitjaranja manis, terlebih madoe,
Sebage *Advocaat*, bisa mengadoe. (p. 15)

Rat's nose is like a sentry box,
His eyes are like black rounded pips,
His speech is sweeter than honey,
He is able to argue as a lawyer does.

In his epilogue, which is in a different vein, Boen Sing Hoo exhibits even more satirical wit. Probably to avoid censorship, or perhaps just because the allegories came

⁶⁹ The *Bintang Timoer* (February 13, 1867), in an interesting report about the sale of opium farms in Probolinggo (*Kabar di residentie Probolinggo tempo lelang pacht apion di dalem boelan Dec. tahoen 1866 poor tahoen 1867*), noticed that the former opium farmer Oen Tik Gowan (or Wen Baochang), who also held the position of captain (from 1860 to 1869), was compelled to purchase the license at a prohibitive price because he would not give way to an adventurous totok. The totok, here called *China Gendeng* or "Crazy Chinese," dressed extravagantly (*berpake bagoes, tjelana Loktjan, badjoe kinsin, laken hitam*) and successively dared to raise his bid higher than Oen Tik Gowan.

spontaneously to his mind, he draws a scathing comparison between the opium farmers and characters from the Three Kingdoms period (in China, A.D. 220–265). Whereas he guarantees that his *Sair Binatang* is clear, here he states that his “Semarang Three Kingdoms Story” will remain obscure. However, one may assume that for his contemporaneous peranakan readers, who were still quite familiar with the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, this was just another game, perhaps slightly more sophisticated than the first one. The heroes of the *Three Kingdoms* were so well known among the Chinese that they were used as qualifiers in daily speech.

For Boen Sing Hoo, the story of the fall of the Ho is as follows: Ho Ijam Lo, represented by Tjoo Tjhoo (Cao Cao), a famous cunning rebel, is attacked by Be Biauwo Tjoan, or Soen Kwan (Sun Quan), a talented military man. On the advice of the clever Bang Tong (Pang Tong), another strategist, (here, Be Biauwo Tjoan’s brother, Ik Sam), the Be manage to trick him for three years and finally succeed in burning down his fleet. The defeat of Tjoo Tjhoo, that is, Ho Lam Ijo, delights Bang Tong, or Be Ik Sam, and at the same time allows Soe Ma Jam (Sima Yan), here Oei Tiong Ham, to start his own life.⁷⁰ As one may see in this epilogue, the author shows very little sympathy toward the big farmers of the time.

Considering the wealth of information about the mental attitudes of the peranakan found in the works by writers such as Boen Sing Hoo, Tan Teng Kie, and Na Tian Piet,⁷¹ one wonders whether it would not be worth studying the literature that appeared in the press in Malay of the nineteenth century. Such in-depth research would enable a better appraisal of how the peranakan perceived the surrounding world, how they reacted to the impact of Western culture, and how they reflected on China and upon themselves.

In so doing, one would have to reappraise the reformist movement of the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan, which was preceded by a phase during which educated peranakan merchants began to express their views and to exchange ideas through the press.

⁷⁰ See the Malay text and its English translation given in app. 1.

⁷¹ Cf. Claudine Salmon, “The Batavian Eastern Railway Co. and the Making of a New ‘Daerah’ as Reflected in a Commemorative Syair by Tan Teng Kie (1890),” *Indonesia*, 45 (1988): 49–62, and idem, “Na Tian Piet et sa vision du monde malais dans les années 1890,” *Archipel* 42 (in press).

Appendix 1

SAM KOK

Samkok tiroean dalem *Semarang*,
Terkarang pendek, tida lah terang,
Tjerita *Binatang*; boekan lah orang,
Angkat sendjata sama lah perang.

Perang ini di "*Kang Lam*" negara
Tjoo Tjhoo dan *Soen Kwan* poenja perkara,
83 laksa, banjaknja tentara,
Djadi binasa tida lah kira.

Bapanja Saboe, di bilang *Rotti*,
Sebagi *Bang Thong*, poenja mengarti,
Djalanken tipoe, amat lah titi,
Gemesnja *Tjoo Tjhoo*, setengah lah mati.

Lantaran *Bang Thong* poenja akallan,
Pake tipoe dari *Bangkalan*
3 Tahun tipoenja berdjalan,
Bikin *Tjoo Tjhoo* djadi seselan.

Tipoeanja *Bang Thong* sebegi boekit,
Tjoo Tjhoo kena lah sampe sakit,
Roeginja lagi, boekan sedikit,
Rasanja tida bisa berbangkit.

Perang "*Kang Lam*," perang di kali,
Praoe teriket sama lah tali,
Terbakar abis sama sekali,
Bang Thong liat, hatinja geli.

Praoe terbakar, kanan dan kiri,
Tjoo Tjhoo kepaksa misti lah lari,
Soen Kwan menang perang negri,
Soe Ma Jam djoega, bakal berdiri.

THE THREE KINGDOMS

The San Guo Story of Semarang,
Is made concise and abstruse,
It is not a story of men, but of animals
Taking up arms, as if they were at war.

The war in the "Southern Countries,"
Was between Cao Cao and Sun Quan.⁷²
The armies amounted to 830,000,
Inconceivable was the number of the victims."

Horse Senior from Sawu, also named Roti,
Was as clever as Pang Tong,⁷³
So tricky were his stratagems
That Cao Cao was most infuriated.

Pang Tong, thanks to his cunning mind,
From Bangkalan had been playing tricks,⁷⁴
Which lasted for three years,
Making Cao Cao repent in vain.

Pang Tong's tricks had piled up as high as a hill,
Making Cao Cao fall ill,
Inflicting great loss on him,
Causing him to feel that he could not rise again.

The Jiangnan War occurred on the river.
The boats bound together with ropes
Were completely burnt down,
At this sight, Pang Tong was amused.⁷⁵

The boats on the left and right being destroyed,
Cao Cao was compelled to run away,
Sun Quan won the war,
But Suma Yan was about to rise.⁷⁶

⁷² Cao Cao (155–220) obviously stands for Ho Ijam Lo. This figure from the San Guo period is rather complicated. He is popularly regarded by the Chinese as a type of bold minister and cunning, unscrupulous rebel. His large armies are proverbial. Sun Quan (181–252) symbolizes Be Biau Tjoan. After a long and successful resistance against Cao Cao, he finally recognized him as his suzerain; when Cao Cao died and was replaced by his son, Sun Quan threw off his allegiance.

⁷³ Pang Tong (185–221) was not successful as an administrator, but he was an excellent strategist. Pang symbolizes Be Kwat Koen's father, presumably Be Ik Sam (see nn. 34, 43).

⁷⁴ Here Boen Sing Hoo probably alludes to the smuggling of opium from Madura into Ho Ijam Lo's territories.

⁷⁵ This passage, which refers to the famous Chibi, or Red Wall, Battle (on the Yangzi River) during which Sun Quan inflicted a severe blow to Cao Cao by destroying his fleet, possibly alludes to the unsuccessful attempts of Ho Ijam Lo to control the smuggling along the coast.

⁷⁶ Sima Yan (236–290) was the eldest son of Sima Zhao, who had been made prince of Jin. In 265 his father died, and at the end of the year he deposed the emperor Yuandi and founded the Jin dynasty, placing his capital at Luoyang in Henan. Here in the poem, Sima Yan is the symbol of Oei Tjong Ham, who has replaced Ho Ijam Lo in Semarang.

Appendix 2
Identification of the Names of Opium Farmers and
Partners Appearing in the Poem

The Defunct Partnership of the Ho family (bankrupt on June 12, 1889)

<i>Landak Toewa</i> , "Porcupine Senior"	Ho Ijam Lo (d. June 22, 1888).
<i>Landak Moeda</i> , "Porcupine Junior"	Ho Tjiauw Ing (b. 1845), who inherited the three farms held by his father (in Semarang, Yogya, and Kedu). In June 1888, the same month in which Ho Ijam Lo died, Ho Tjiauw Ing acquired the Solo farm; the following February, he took over Djie Bok Hien's farm in Madiun as well. Appointed lieutenant in Semarang on December 20, 1885.
<i>Landak Djocdja</i> , the "Porcupine from Yogya"	Ho Tjiauw Soen, eldest son of Ho Ijam Lo, appointed lieutenant in Yogya on August 9, 1884.
<i>Gangsa Djocdja</i> , the "Goose from Yogya"	Liem Kie Djwan, appointed captain in Yogya in 1883.
<i>Tikoës</i> , "Rat"	Goei Som Han, merchant, landowner, and entrepreneur in Semarang, former partner of Be Biauws Tjoan.

The Auction of July 23, 1889, and the Seven Competing Partnerships

Gadjah Poetih, Radjah di hoetan, "The White Elephant, King of the Forest"	The Resident of Semarang.
Boeroeng Peking, "Pekingese Bird"	Tan King Gie, secretary of the Kongkoan, or Chinese Council, appointed on September 17, 1881.

Partnership 1 (The Be/Lim from Semarang)

<i>Oelar Naga</i> , "Dragon"	Liem Liang Hien, son of Liem Khee Soen (b. 1810, lieutenant in Gresik), married Be Biauws Tjoan's daughter, Tjong King Nio (b. 1844). Appointed lieutenant in 1866, captain in 1877, and major in 1885.
<i>Anak Naga</i> , "Dragon's Son"	Liem Tjoe Tiang, married Be Kwat Kong's daughter, Pien Nio (b. 1867). Appointed lieutenant on December 20, 1889.
<i>Koeda Toewa</i> , "Horse Senior"	Be Biauws Tjoan (1826–1904). First wife was Major Tan Hong Yan's daughter, Djiang Nio (1825–1870). Appointed honorary major in 1873.
<i>Koeda Moeda</i> , "Horse Junior"	Be Kwat Kong (b. 1843), eldest son of Be Biauws Tjoan; married Tan Bola Nio, a granddaughter of Tan Goan Sing, captain in Kudus. Appointed lieutenant in 1878.
<i>Koeda Saboe</i> , the "Horse from Sawu"	Be Kwat Koen (b. 1863), Be Biauws Tjoan's nephew (presumably a son of Be Ik Sam, 1838–1891). Appointed captain in Surakarta in 1888.

Banteng, "Wild Buffalo"

Han Liong Ing?, *besan* of Be Kwat Kong, appointed lieutenant in Berbek (Kediri) in 1870 and opium farmer.

Partnership 2 (The Oei father and Son from Semarang)

Sapi Toewa, "Ox Senior"

Oei Tjie Sien (1835–1900) founder of the firm Kian Gwan (1863). Married Zeng (Tjan) Kanshui's daughter, Tjan Biet Nio (1839–96).

Sapi Moeda, "Ox Junior"

Oei Tiong Ham (1866–1924), appointed lieutenant 1886; related to the Goei by his first wife, Goei Bing Nio, to the Ho by his seventh wife, Ho Kiem Hoa, and to the Garudas of Semarang by his eighth wife, Tan Sien Nio.

Mendjangan, "Deer"

Merchant in Rembang married to a daughter of Oei Tjie Sien (unidentified).

Ajam, "Chicken"

The Tik Goan, Oei Tjie Sien's son-in-law, appointed lieutenant.

Djalak Oeren, "Black Mynah Bird" (?)

Oei Tjie Sien's son-in-law.

Sapi Soerakarta, the "Ox from Surakarta"

Oei Tjo Pie (d. ca. 1904): Oei Tjie Sien's nephew.

Landak Djocdja, the "Porcupine from Yogya"

Ho Tjiau Soen, appointed lieutenant in Yogya in 1884.

Andjing, "Dog"

Unidentified former partner of the Ho.

Partnership 3 (from Batavia)

Boeaja Emas, "Gold Crocodile"

Loa Tiang Hoei, appointed captain in Batavia in 1879.

Sapi di Meester, the "Ox from Meester Cornelis"

The opium farmer Oei Hok Tiang, appointed honorary captain in 1883.

Koetjing di Hoetan, "Wild Cat"

The merchant Kan Tjeng Sie from Batavia(?)

Boeloes Laoetan, "Sea Tortoise"

Tan Djien Soei from Batavia(?)

Boeroeng Garoeda, "Garuda Birds"

the descendants of major and opium farmer Tan Hong Yan from Semarang, whose daughter, Tan Djiang Nio (1825–1870), married Be Biau Tjoan.

Ajam, "Chicken"

The Tik Goan, Oei Tjie Sien's son-in-law.

Boeroeng Noeri, "Lory"

A totok merchant from Semarang.

Dandang Emas "Gold Cormorant" (?)

Unidentified.

Partnership 4 (from Batavia)

Kidang Bogor, the "Deer from Bogor"

Tan Goan Pauw, appointed captain in Bogor in 1883.

Oelar Sawa, "Python"

(?)

Seetan, "Satan" or "a certain Tan"

(?)

Partnership 5 (from Kedu)

Koeldi "Donkey"

Son of a captain, and tobacco dealer.

Loetoeng "Monkey"

(?)

Bamboe-doeri (a kind of bamboo)

(?)

Partnership 6 (Magelang)

Bébék "Duck Senior"

Kwee An Ki, appointed captain in Magelang in 1878, friend of Be Biauw Tjoan but rival of *Koeldi*.

Anak Bébék "Duck Junior"

Kwee Siang Ging, appointed lieutenant in Ambarawa in 1878.

Partnership 7 (Yogyakarta)

Kambing "Goat"

Njo Gai Sing, sugar conveyor based in Yogya, accomplice of Be Biauw Tjoan.

LIST OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

Bang Thong (Pang Tong) 龐統

Be Ing Tjioe 馬瀛洲

Be (Ma) Biau Tjoan 馬淼泉

Be Ik Sam 馬益三

Be Kwat Koen 馬厥昆

Be Kwat Kong 馬厥功

Be Pien Nio 馬彬娘

Be Soe Ie 馬思怡

Be Tiong King Nio 馬忠敬娘

Boen Sing Hoo 文興號

Cao Cao 曹操

Chen Quanniang 陳全娘

Chi bi 赤壁

Ganfu miao 感福廟

Goei Bing Nio 魏明娘

Goei Keh Pien 魏嘉賓

Goei Som Han (Wei Senhan) 魏森漢

Han Liong Ing 韓隆口

Hap Sing Kong Sie 合興公司

He Lanniang 何蘭娘

Ho Hok Lo 何福老

Ho Ijam Lo 何炎老

Ho Kiem Hoa 何金花

Ho Sie Tik 何世德

Ho Tiang Goan 何長[源]

Ho Tjiau Hai 何朝海

Ho Tjiau Ing 何朝[熒]

Ho Tjiau Soen 何朝順

Houfu miao 厚福廟

Jinde yuan 金德院

Jin gu qiguan 今古奇觀

Kan Tjeng Sie 簡增泗

Kan Tjeng (Soen) 簡增純

Kian Gwan 建源

Kong Bing (Kong Ming) 孔明

Kwa Wan Hong 柯遠芳

(Liang) Shanbo yu (Zhu) Yingtai

梁山伯與祝英台

Liem Goan Tjing 林元貞

Liem Liong Hien 林隆興

Liem Tjoe Tiang 林梓樟

Loa Tiang Hoei 賴長輝

Oei Hok Tiang 黃福長

Oei Sien Tjo 黃神助

Oei Tjie Sien 黃志信

Oei Tiong Ham 黃忠涵
Oei Tjo Pie 黃祖庇
Oei Tjong Ie 黃宗詒
Oei Tjong Tjay 黃宗才
Pektjoen 爬船
Penggiling 楓宜嶺
Sam Pik - Ing Taij 山伯英白
Sam Po Tong (Sanbao dong)
三保洞
Shé Tan 氏陳
Sima Yan 司馬炎
Simongan 時望安
Soe Ma Jam (Sima Yan) 司馬炎
Soen Kwan (Sun Quan) 孫權
Sun-bi 順美 (Be Biauw Tjoan's style)
Sun Quan 孫權
Tay Kak Sie (Dajue si) 大覺寺
Tan Boen Kwi 陳文貴
Tan Djiang Nio 陳讓娘
Tan Hong Yan 陳烽烟
Tan Sien Nio 陳莘娘
Tan Tiang Tjhing 陳長菁
Tan Tjiau Nio 陳招娘
Tan Tjin Goan 陳振源

Tan Tjien Hwa (Tan Tjin Hoa)
陳振華
Tan Tjin Teng 陳振廷
Tay Kak Sie (Dajue si) 大覺寺
The Tik Goan 鄭德源
Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan 中華會館
Tjan Biet Nio 曾蜜娘
Tjapkauwking 十九間
Tjiong Hok Long 鍾福隆
Tjoa Sien Tjing 蔡承貞
Tjoo Tjhoo (Cao Cao) 曹操
Wei (Goei) Bingyao 魏炳耀
Wei (Goei) Jingtai 魏景泰
Wen Baochang 溫寶昌
Zeng (Tjan) Kanshui 曾坎水
Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮

