

The history of Java previous to the rise of the Empire of Majapahit, in the age immediately following our Traveller's voyage, is very obscure. But there is some evidence of the existence of a powerful dynasty in the island about this time; and in an inscription of ascertained date (A.D. 1294) the King Uttungadeva claims to have subjected *five kings*, and to be sovereign of the whole Island of Java (*Jawa-dvipa*; see Lassen, IV. 482). It is true that, as our Traveller says, Kúblái had not yet attempted the subjugation of Java, but he did make the attempt almost immediately after the departure of the Venetians. It was the result of one of his unlucky embassies to claim the homage of distant states, and turned out as badly as the attempts against Champa and Japan. His ambassador, a Chinese called Meng-K'i, was sent back with his face branded like a thief's. A great armament was assembled in the ports of Fo-kien to avenge this insult; it started about January, 1293, but did not effect a landing till autumn. After some temporary success the force was constrained to re-embark with a loss of 3000 men. The death of Kúblái prevented any renewal of the attempt; and it is mentioned that his successor gave orders for the re-opening of the Indian trade which the Java war had interrupted. (See *Gaubil*, pp. 217 *seqq.*, 224.) To this failure Odoric, who visited Java about 1323, alludes: "Now the Great Kaan of Cathay many a time engaged in war with this king; but the king always vanquished and got the better of him." Odoric speaks in high terms of the richness and population of Java, calling it "the second best of all Islands that exist," and describing a gorgeous palace in terms similar to those in which Polo speaks of the Palace of Chipangu. (*Cathay*, p. 87 *seqq.*)

[We read in the *Yuen-shi* (Bk. 210), translated by Mr. Groeneveldt, that "Java is situated beyond the sea and further away than Champa; when one embarks at Ts'wan-chau and goes southward, he first comes to Champa and afterwards to this country." It appears that when his envoy Mêng-K'i had been branded on the face, Kúblái, in 1292, appointed Shih-pi, a native of Po-yeh, district Li-chau, Pao-ting fu, Chih-li province, commander of the expedition to Java, whilst Ike-Mese, a Uighúr, and Kau-Hsing, a man from Ts'ai-chau (Ho-nan), were appointed to assist him. Mr. Groeneveldt has translated the accounts of these three officers. In the *Ming-shi* (Bk. 324) we read: "Java is situated at the south-west of Champa. In the time of the Emperor Kúblái of the Yuen Dynasty, Mêng-K'i was sent there as an envoy and had his face cut, on which Kúblái sent a large army which subdued the country and then came back." (*L.c.* p. 34.) The prince guilty of this insult was the King of Tumapel "in the eastern part of the island Java, whose country was called Java par excellence by the Chinese, because it was in this part of the island they chiefly traded." (*L.c.* p. 32.)—H. C.]

The curious figure of a vessel which we give here is taken from the vast series of mediæval sculptures which adorns the great Buddhist pyramid in the centre of Java, known as Boro Bodor, one of the most remarkable architectural monuments in the world, but the history of which is all in darkness. The ship, with its outrigger and apparently canvas sails, is not Chinese, but it undoubtedly pictures vessels which frequented the ports of Java in the early part of the 14th century,* possibly one of those from Ceylon or Southern India.

* 1344 is the date to which a Javanese traditional verse ascribes the edifice. (*Crawford's Desc. Dictionary.*)