

“In the same island, towards the south, is another kingdom, by name SUMOLTRA, in which is a singular generation of people, for they brand themselves on the face with a hot iron in some twelve places,” etc. This looks as if the conversion to Islam was still (*circa* 1323) very incomplete. Rashiduddin also speaks of *Súmútra* as lying beyond Lamuri. (*Elliot*, I. p. 70.)

The power attained by the dynasty of Malik Al-Şalih, and the number of Mahomedans attracted to his court, probably led in the course of the 14th century to the extension of the name of Sumatra to the whole island. For when visited early in the next century by Nicolo Conti, we are told that he “went to a fine city of the island of Taprobana, which island is called by the natives *Shamuthera*.” Strange to say, he speaks of the natives as all idolaters. Fra Mauro, who got much from Conti, gives us *Isola Siamotra* over *Taprobana*; and it shows at once his own judgment and want of confidence in it, when he notes elsewhere that “Ptolemy, professing to describe Taprobana, has really only described Saylan.”

We have no means of settling the exact position of the city of Sumatra, though possibly an enquiry among the natives of that coast might still determine the point. Marsden and Logan indicate Samarlanga, but I should look for it nearer Pasei. As pointed out by Mr. Braddell in the *J. Ind. Arch.*, Malay tradition represents the site of Pasei as selected on a hunting expedition from Samudra, which seems to imply tolerable proximity. And at the marriage of the Princess of Parlak to Malik Al-Şalih, we are told that the latter went to receive her on landing at Jambu Ayer (near Diamond Point), and thence conducted her to the city of Samudra. I should seek Samudra near the head of the estuary-like Gulf of Pasei, called in the charts *Telo* (or *Talak*) *Samawe*; a place very likely to have been sought as a shelter to the Great Kaan's fleet during the south-west monsoon. Fine timber, of great size, grows close to the shore of this bay,* and would furnish material for Marco's stockades.

When the Portuguese first reached those regions Pedir was the leading state upon the coast, and certainly no state called Sumatra continued to exist. Whether the city continued to exist even in decay is not easy to discern. The *Ain-i-Akbari* says that the best civet is that which is brought from the seaport town of Sumatra, in the territory of Achin, and is called *Sumatra Zabád*; but this may have been based on old information. Valentyn seems to recognise the existence of a place of note called *Samadra* or *Samotdara*, though it is not entered on his map. A famous mystic theologian who flourished under the great King of Achin, Iskandar Muda, and died in 1630, bore the name of Shamsuddín *Shamatráni*, which seems to point to the city of Sumatra as his birthplace.† The most distinct mention that I know of the city so called, in the Portuguese period, occurs in the *soi-disant* “Voyage which Juan Serano made when he fled from Malacca,” in 1512, published by Lord Stanley of Alderley, at the end of his translation of Barbosa. This man speaks of the “island of Samatra” as named from “a city of this northern part.” And on leaving Pedir, having gone down the northern coast, he says, “I drew towards the south and south-east direction, and reached to another country and city which is called Samatra,” and so on. Now this describes the position in which the city of Sumatra should have been if it existed. But all the rest of the tract is mere plunder from Varthema.‡

There is, however, a like intimation in a curious letter respecting the Portuguese discoveries, written from Lisbon in 1515, by a German, Valentine Moravia, who was probably the same Valentyn Fernandez, the German, who published the Portuguese edition of Marco Polo at Lisbon in 1502, and who shows an extremely accurate conception of Indian geography. He says: “La maxima insula la quale è chiamata da Marcho Polo Veneto Iava Minor, et al presente si chiama *Sumotra*, da un *emporie di dicta insula*” (printed by *De Gubernatis, Viagg. Ita.* etc., p. 170).

Several considerations point to the probability that the states of Pasei and

* *Marsden*, 1st ed. p. 291.

† *Veth's Atchin*, 1873, p. 37.

‡ It might be supposed that Varthema had stolen from Serano; but the book of the former was published in 1510.