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A NEW DATE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
MELAKA MALAY SULTANATE DISCOVERED

Abdul Rahman Haji Ismail, Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali &
Zulkanain Abdul Rahman

Abstract

Scholars and historians have never really reached a consensus on the correct foundation date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka. Although the year 1400 A.D. was accepted by many scholars as the foundation date of the Melaka Sultanate, we argue that it is not the correct foundation date. This paper examines a variety of suggestions and mixed information based on various sources, those of the same era and others, which showed discrepancy on the beginning date of the Malay Sultanate of Melaka.

Keywords: Melaka, Malay Sultanate, Discovery Date

Introduction

Ancient authors were widely at variance in their dating of the foundation of Malacca. The earliest date assigned to this event was the eighth century by Gaspar Correa, who was notoriously inaccurate when reporting at second hand. Joao de Barros, an unusually conscientious and discriminating historian, proposed the first half of the thirteenth century, Valentijn 1252 or 1253 and Diogo de Couto the first half of the fourteenth century. Eredia, a scholar of honest intent who lived in Malacca some two centuries after the event, placed the founding of the city at 1411, while the son of Afonso de Albuquerque, the conqueror of Malacca, basing his account on original documents, fixed the date at c. 1420. Among modern scholars, only Gabriel Ferrand has attempted to substantiate Correa’s claim for an eighth century foundation, and his arguments have been effectively refuted by Rouffaer. The Malay scholar, Otto Blagden, proposed the last quarter of fourteenth century, while most recent authors have favoured the turn of the century...