

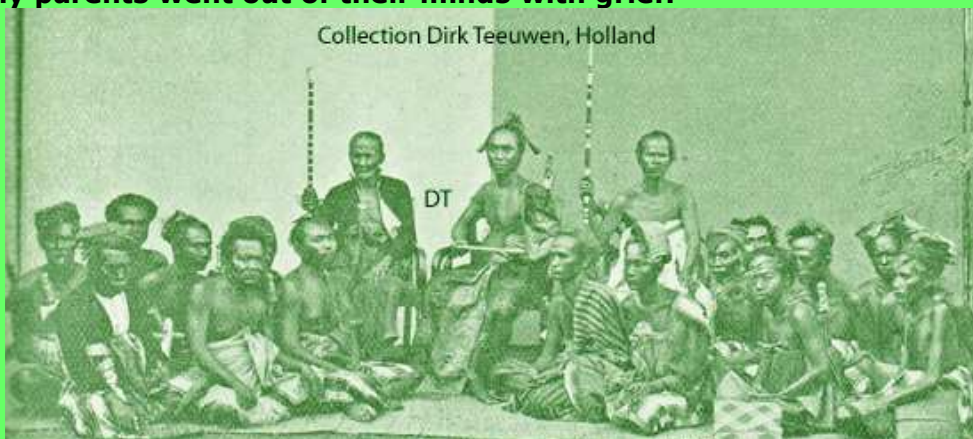
Petition from the Lombok Sasaks to the Dutch Government, Dirk Teeuwen MSc

The immediate cause of the expedition

Details of a (second!!) letter written by the Sasak Datus (chiefs) of the east coast of Lombok to the Dutch Resident of North-Bali and Lombok, written in the name of all the dессas and kampungs (hamlets) of their country about the position of the Mohammedans and Balinese there. The letter was sent to the Dutch Parliament in The Hague and submitted there by the Dutch Minister of the Colonies; July 7th and 8th, 1894. The letter was written Dec. 1891 (!!) Maybe the endless difficulties of the campaign in Aceh had shaken Dutch confidence in themselves.

Details from the Sasak letter

- The Balinese took possession of our Muslim Kingdom of Salaparang. The Balinese took possession of the princely dignity and placed the whole country under their own rule. They are the masters now. We became their subjects. We carried out their commands, yet we have always been cruelly treated and robbed. We paid taxes and we brought in supplies of rice, paddy and money.
- When there has been question of building houses, or raising other edifices, or laying pleasure grounds, we have done the work punctually. While thus employed we had to bring our own food, which was very hard for those living at a distance.
- In addition to having to work like this for the Balinese princes, we had to do the same thing for the smaller Punggawas (Balinese supervising chiefs), and still, notwithstanding this, we have been shamefully treated.
- People have been put to death without trial and have very frequently been drowned in the sea. If the Punggawas were annoyed with a man, he would be found guilty of some crime and condemned, and we dared not to rebel. Often our properties such as gardens, sawahs, buffalo-oxen and cows were stolen from us. Our sons were often made slaves and our daughters, especially girls of good birth, were taken away by force. Some they took for themselves, others were subjected to all sorts of outrages and finally became courtesans. Sometimes grown up girls were taken, but often little girls of about seven. Normally parents went out of their minds with grief.



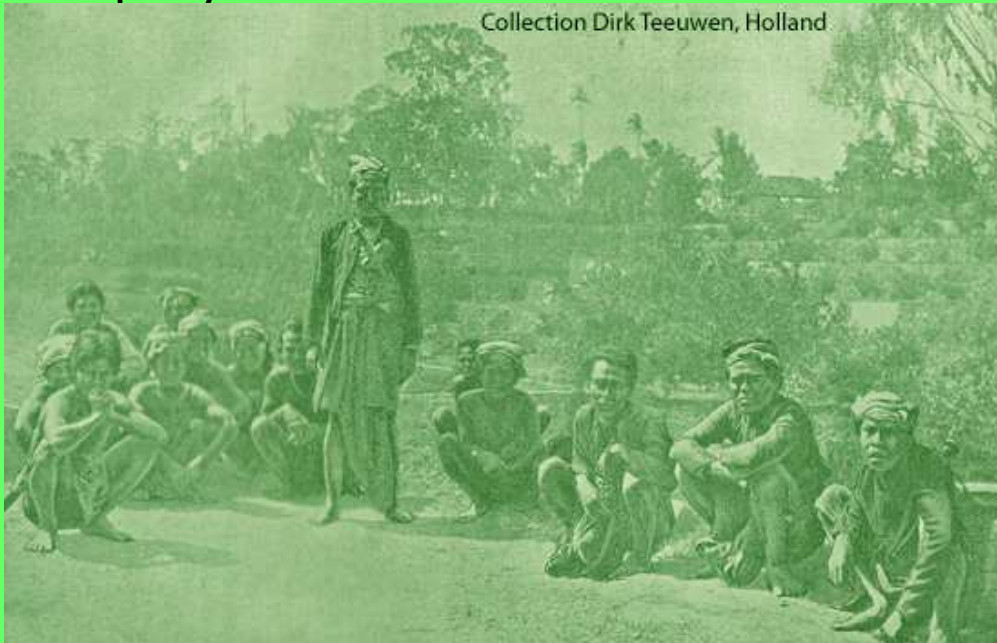
Balinese Raja and his Punggawas (subordinated aristocrats), circa 1880
From > Cool p. 197
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

- Every year the taxes were raised in a very unjust manner. After the harvest on our coffee plantations Balinese hirelings came and seized nearly all. They also stole the coffee we received from North-Bali (Buleleng, Dutch territory) and from Sumbawa. If the Balinese princes and others wanted anything, either people or horses or wearing apparel, they simply took them, without any compensation.

- By order of the Balinese Princes cock-fighting and dice-playing were continually kept up; those who owned any thing lost it, whilst others were thriven to theft; the Balinese Princes encouraged this pastime because fines were imposed on the players; as a result the small man became poor and in those dessoes (countryside municipalities), where the games did not take place regularly, the Datus were punished. It was/is almost impossible to obtain a livelihood. All imports and exports were levied/taxed. All taxes and dues have been exorbitantly increased in the interest of the Balinese aristocracy only. The Balinese Princes put a duty on debts and on paid interests on debts. All goods, people of the interior of this island sell and buy at the coast, are taxed. The originators of such schemes are mostly Arabs from Ampenan, such as Entji Oemar.

- When war broke out on Bali between the states of Karangasem and Klungkong, we were ordered to provide weapons and food. Some of us were immediately summoned up to take part in the war and they did so. They were poor and were very badly cared for. Later many were unable to come home. Are they dead or alive? We don't know.

- We must tell that when a Muslim dies here without leaving male issue, all his female relations, as well as all his real and personal estate are appropriated by the Balinese Princes; as a result of this the girls are mostly converted into prostitutes. If the deceased leaves brothers, they get nothing either. And later, when some Balinese is banished here from Karangasem, the lands are given to him, so that he may crush down the Sasak population to his heart's content. As an example: when a man dies (no sons, one brother), his widow could be converted into a forced prostitute and the brother gets nothing. His heritage goes to the Balinese aristocracy. Tracts of land suitable for "sawahs" (rice fields) are frequently not allowed to be cultivated.



Balinese Punggawa and his men, Lombok circa 1880

From > Cool p. 73
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland

- Our Balinese rulers have also made it known that they heard that some of the Muslims of Tangkah (in Lombok) were going to rebel against them and that owing to the complications connected with the war on Bali, they (Balinese) were unable to do anything. But after the war the rulers made it known that all those who had wanted to rebel, as well as all the notable Muslims, as well as all the "hadjihs" (pilgrims to Mecca), as well as the leaders of that faith should be put to death. The Balinese Punggawa, Ida Bargus Gama Oka, stated this fact at the house of the Arab Hadji Abdurrahman at Ampenan in the presence of several people, some of whom came from Dutch North-Bali (the district/residency of Buleleng).

- For this decision there is absolutely no course whatever, and we are continually hearing that many Muslims are to be put to death, especially at Praja. But in service at the Balinese palaces etc., Sasak people had heard the same thing. Remember: "stealing" only some rice by a Muslim could put him or her to death, guilty or not. In consequence of this a Guru (Bangkol) and some Sasaks went three times to see responsible Punggawas (Balinese chiefs) in Ampenan. But their complaints remained unheeded and Sasaks, fellows of Guru Bangkol or not, were informed of what had occurred in Ampenan.



Balinese Punggawa in Lombok, circa 1880 From > Cool p. 264



Buddhist temple at Lingsar in Lombok, circa 1880 From > Cool p. 283

- The rebellion broke out at Praja, the other Muslims know nothing about it and we were obeyed by the Balinese to march against dessa Praja. Praja was besieged and many of the kampungs (hamlets) belonging to it were burned to the ground. Persons belonging to dessa Praja who surrendered (rebels or not) were nevertheless put to death immediately by command of the Balinese aristocracy. Amongst them, as usual, many old men, women and children.

- We executed the Balinese Prince's orders to fight against Praja and on our side there were some wounded and some killed. No provision was made for us, as we had to find our own food, so that those from great distances suffered

untold privations. Praja was not brought into speedy subjection owing to the fact that the Muslims were secretly in unison with the rebels and did not throw themselves heart and soul into the fight.

- Thereupon the Sasak Datu of Batu Klian, as well as Mami Ardina of Praja, and all their children and followers, thirteen in number, were summoned to come over to Sakra and on their arrival were all put to death. When these murders took place all the Sasak "Radens" and Sasak Datus of the District of Timor were present.

- Mami Noersasi, Datu of Sakra, was ordered to come to Mataram with all his followers and bring a canon with him. But he learned that that they were all to be taken prisoners, so that Noersasi fled back to his dessa. The same day 150 inhabitants of dessa Sakra, 150 of dessa Djero-Arn and 150 from other dessas, 450 in all, were taken prisoners and put in chain. The Muslims decided now to rise in a body against the rulers. They were not longer going to submit to seeing their killed like chickens. The Balinese had expressed their determination that all the Lombok "Hadjis" should be put to death, because these "Hadjis" incited the Sasaks to rebel. But we decided to rebel among ourselves only.

- We have endured all the things above set forth and they are certainly not a tenth part of what we have had to put up with.

- (In the letter courtesies follow and the Sasaks remind the Dutch that in a previous letter they asked for help as well as asked about weapons.)

- "We offer you our most respectful greetings and hope to receive an answer."

Written at Kopang, December 9th 1891 (!)

Djero Moestadi of Kopang

Mami Bangkol of Praja

Mani Noersasi of Sakra

Ginawang of Batu Klian

Raden Ratmawa of Rarang

Raden Wiranom of Pringa Baja

Raden Melajoe Koesoema of Mas Bage



Balinese Punngawas in Lombok, circa 1890. From > Magazine "Eigen Haard"
Volume 1897; library Dirk Teeuwen, Holland
Dirk Teeuwen, Holland