A JAPANESE SAILOR'S RECORD OF SOUTH KALIMANTAN IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by

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Introduction

With the political reunification of Japan in 1600, the Tokugawa Bakufu (the Shogunate Government) gradually began to establish a policy of limiting intercourse with foreign countries, which came to be known as *sakotu seisaku* or the "Closed Door Policy". This culminated in the 1639 prohibition of all foreign contact, except for trade conducted officially with the Netherlands and China. Dejima, a tiny reclaimed island off the port of Nagasaki was Japan's sole window to the outside world. As a result, the techniques of pelagic sailing acquired during the previous centuries were gradually forgotten.[1]

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[1]The sea-route across the Korean channel and along the west coast of Korea was already well established by the seventh century A.D. Japan's contacts with China, on the other hand, were less easily established because of the perilous East China Sea. It was only after the fifth century A.D. that navigators bound for China explored a less perilous route, northward along the west coast of the Korean Peninsula, until they reached the vicinity of Kwanghwa Island, when they sailed westward, across the calm Yellow Sea, to reach the Shandong Peninsula. However, with the emergence of the ancient kingdom of Yamato, in what is presently known as Nara region towards the end of the sixth century, when Japanese interest in Chinese civilization was enhanced, they looked for a shorter route to the South China coast, avoiding the menace of the pirates haunting the Korean coast. Japan's contacts with China were encouraged by the reunification of China under the Sui dynasty in 589, when the newly emerged Yamato regime in Japan, with the sagacious Prince Shotoku at the helm, sent a series of missions to Sui China, known as *Kenzuishi* among Japanese historians. However, due to the lack of sufficient knowledge about oceanic meteorology, especially the dangerous typhoons, these missions faced raging storms *en route*, which each time claimed many lives. Some of them, after desperate attempts to make the homeward journey, settled down permanently on Chinese soil. Abe-no-Nakamaro, a promising young Japanese student, for instance, went to Chang-an, the capital of Tang China, with the hope of

On the other hand, with the stabilization of the domestic political situation by the middle of the seventeenth century, there began a rapid development in the domestic industry and commodity distribution based in the modern cities. This was especially so in the case of the Bakufu's capital city, Edo (modern Tokyo) and the commercial city, Osaka. There was a thriving exchange of commodities between them, and each formed the centre of a network of commercial linkages with other parts of the country. The result was the expansion of marine transport which made bulk movement possible.[2]

The expansion of marine transport was, however, followed by an increase in maritime accidents due to the treacherous seas and the all too often raging winds which surround Japan. Between Edo and Osaka, for example, there were perilous areas, such as the Sea of Kumano (off the Wakayama Prefecture) and the Sea of Enshu (off the Shizuoka Prefecture). In addition, since celestial navigation, using instruments such as the astrolabe which had been introduced from Europe in the sixteenth century were forgotten after the establishment of *sakoku seisaku*, sailing was limited to coastal waters, using largely "land watching navi-

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bringing home the advanced knowledge of China. However, he was blown by the treacherous storm further south, as far as Hainan Island where, finally giving up all hope of repatriation, he became a prominent mandarin in the Tang court.

There were, on the other hand, quite a few Chinese who overcame the perilous high seas to visit Japan and disseminate advanced knowledge among the Japanese. Among them, Reverend Yanzhen, who played an important role in upgrading the standard of Japanese Buddhism in the eighth century, is well-known. In fact, he was shipwrecked several times *en route*, and the harsh experiences eventually impaired his sight. The difficulty of overseas travel, in fact, sharpened the curiosity of the Japanese about foreign civilizations. They cherished various folktales in which a hero, travelling overseas, often by chance and after a breathtaking adventure, finally brought back many previous treasures, among which advanced knowledge from abroad figured prominently.

Japanese sailors seem to have learned the technique of pelagic sailing either from the Chinese or from Portuguese. *Genna kokuzu*, a sailing chart of Genna era (1615-23), amply testifies to the high standard of contemporary sailing technique and, prior to the Tokugawa era, Japanese trading boats sailed as far as Banten, Java and Melaka. Their frequent visits to the various parts of Southeast Asia brought about the establishment of *Nihon-machi* or a Japanese quarter in the port-cities, such as at San Miguel and Dilao, on the outskirts of Manila, Ayutthaya, in Thailand and Faifoo, in Central Vietnam. See "German Kokuzu", *Kaihisoroku*, Vol. 3 (Kyoto: Koseikaku, 1927).
See Iwao Seichi, *Nanyo Nihon-machi no kenkyu* (A Study of Japanese Quarters in Southeast Asia in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966). Furuta Ryoichi, *Kaiun no rekishi* (History of Shipping) (Tokyo: Shibundo, 1969). Makino Nobutaka, *Kitamaebune* (The Kitamae Shipping) (Tokyo: Kyoikusha, 1979).

gation" (*yamani koho*) which depended entirely on sighting onshore landmarks.[3] Thus, if a heavy storm struck and a ship was blown far out to the sea, there was no way to determine its location. Moreover, because of the strict closed-door policy, there were virtually no foreign ships in the waters off Japan, and there was hardly any chance of being rescued by foreign vessels, except by Dutch ships or Chinese junks in the East China Sea. Consequently, there were many tragic cases of boats which drifted for several months until food and water ran out and the crew died of starvation, or else, were cast ashore on deserted islands where they spent the rest of their lives without any means of returning home.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, there was a marked increase in the incidents of Japanese crew being rescued by foreign vessels. Particularly when American whaling ships began extending their operations into the West Pacific Ocean, there were many cases of individuals who were repatriated to Japan after their rescue by foreign ships, or after enduring hardships in the foreign countries where they had drifted ashore.[4] Generally speaking, the majority of these lucky people were those who had drifted southward and were sent back to Nagasaki, abroad trading junks from China.[5]

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[3]Tanikawa Ken'ichi (ed.), "Hyoryu", *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryo shusei* ("Castaways", *Collections of Materials Concerning Common Peoples' Life*), vol.5, (Tokyo: Keisoshobo, 1968), 869-884; Arakawa Hidetoshi, *Ikoku hyoryu monogatari* (Stories of Castaways Abroad) (Tokyo: Shakaishisosha, 1969).

[4]For example, both John Manjiro and Joseph Hico, two famous castaways of the late Edo period, were rescued by American whaling boats based in Honolulu, Hawaii. See Kondo Haruyoshi, *Joseph Heco* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa-Kobunkan, 1963); Nakagawa Tsutomu and Yamaguchi Osamu (trans.), *Amerika Hikozo jiden* (Autobiography of Hikozo of America) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1964).

[5]cf. Arano Yasunori, "Kinsei Nihon no hyoryumin sokan taisei to higashi Ajia" (The System of Repatriation of Castaways in Early Modern Japan and East Asia), *Rekishi hyoron*, No.400; Katsuragawa Hoshu, *Hokusa bunryaku* (Tokyo: Yoshikowa-Kobunkan, 1943); Kamei Takataka, *Daikokuya Kodayu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa-Kobunkan, 1964); Murayama Shichiro and Kamei Takataka (ed.), *Roshia mojishu* (Collection of Russian Language) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa-Kobunkan, 1967). Of those who drifted north, there are many who were returned to Ezo (the present day Hokkaido) by the Russian government. For example, a sailor from Ise (Mie Prefecture), known by the name of Daikokuya Kodayu, was blown out in 1782 to the high seas during a storm off Shizuoka, and drifted ashore to the Aleutian Islands. He had an interview with the Russian Empress, Ekatherina II, in St. Petersburg and, after ten years, returned to Hokkaido with the Russian mission commanded by Adam Laxman.

The Records of Castaways as Historical Sources

Because of the strict prohibition against Christianity, when castaways were returned to Japan, the Tokugawa Shogunate Government usually conducted a detailed investigation into the nature of their experiences abroad. The foreign news, thus brought into Japan by these castaways during the closed-door period, served as a valuable source of information for reports prepared by prominent scholars at the Shogunate's request.[6] For example, on the basis of Daikokuya Kodayu's adventures, Katsuragawa Hoshu, who had achieved prominence for his knowledge of Western medicine and served in the Shogun's household, was able to compile *A Brief Report on the Northern District (Hokusabunryaku) and Strange Tales of the Surrounding Sea (Kankai-Ibun)*.[7] On the other hand, in order to maintain the closed-door policy, the Shogunate did not want the repatriated castaways to relate their experiences freely to ordinary citizens. Consequently, after the castaways returned to Japan, the Nagasaki Magistrate's Office (*Nagasaki Bugyosho*) sometimes resettled them in regions away from their native villages to restrict their communication.[8]

The Tokugawa Shogunate Government's stringent implementation of the closed-door policy, far from suppressing, only increased curiosity amongst the populace about foreign lands. Hence, the experiences of castaways often came to the attention of local progressive scholars and intellectuals who secretly circulated their accounts in the form of hand-copied manuscripts. The account which I am concerned with in this article is that of Magotaro (or Magoshichi), a young sailor from the port of Karadomari, whose adventures were recorded by intellectuals living in Fukuoka.

Such records of castaways, that is, adventure stories, played an important role in increasing the awareness of Japanese intellec-

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[6]Major sources of foreign news were the reports of the Dutch factory in Nagasaki, which was presented annually to the Shogunate government in Edo. Contrary to general assumption, the Shogun and his close subjects were well informed about world affairs such that they even knew about the Napoleonic War in Europe.

[7]Katsuragawa Hoshu, *Hokusa bunryaku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa-Kobunkan, 1943).

[8]For example, Daikokuya Kodayu was not permitted to return to his home in Ise but, instead, spent the rest of his life in Edo under house arrest in the "Yakusoen", the Bakufu's walled-in medicinal herb garden.

tuals about the outside world, and laid the foundations for the establishment, later in the nineteenth century, of an open-door policy.[9] In this respect, the influence of these adventure stories on modern Japanese history was perhaps greater than has hitherto been acknowledged. Among the nineteenth century castaways, Joseph Heco, a fisherman (also known as "America Hikozo"), deserves our special attention. He was a native of Harima (Hyogo Prefecture), who was rescued by an American whaling ship based in Honolulu, Hawaii, and under the auspices of several American philanthropists, was educated in the United States and finally obtained citizenship there. Upon his repatriation, however, to Japan in 1859, after living for a decade in the United States, he began to take an active part during the twilight of the Tokugawa Shogunate Government, as a mediator in the U.S.-Japan diplomatic relations. These international exchanges and internal feudal rivalries culminated in the adoption of the open-door policy, which led to Japan's modernization under a new regime of Imperial Japan.

Apart from their significance to developments in Japan, the castaways' records often provide vivid descriptions of contemporary societies and provide valuable historical, ethnographic and anthropological data. Yet, the records of Japanese castaways have hitherto been labelled simply as "curious tales", and their value neglected. From this point of view, the eighteenth century record of Magotaro's adventures in Southeast Asia seems worthy of consideration.

Relevant Materials

There are many variant editions of the record of Magotaro's experiences abroad. They can be divided roughly into two categories: those of documentary value, and others of a strong literary flavour. The most important of these is *An Account of a Journey to the South Seas (Nankai Kibun)* [National Diet Library Collection (ed.) Ishii Kendo.][10] The Nankai Kibun is

[9]Sugimoto Kaoru, *Chikuzen rangaku kotohajimeko* (A Study of the Origin of Western Medical Studies in Fukuoka) (Fukuoka, n.d.).

[10]The others of a documentary value include: "Nankai Kibun", Ishii Kendo (ed.), *Hyoryu kidan Zenshu* (Collected Strange Tales of Castaways), 148-225 (Tokyo, Hakubunkan, 1900); *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryo shusei*, Vol.5 (Tokyo: Kensoshobo, 1968). "Hyofutan" (Tateishi Ihei Private Library, Fukuoka City). Among those of a literary nature are:

an account of an interview conducted with Magotaro in his old age by Aoki Kosho (1760-1812), a *rangaku* or Western medicine scholar of eighteenth century Fukuoka. The record was posthumously compiled by Aoki's disciples.

Another work which appears to be reliable is *Hyofutan* (A Castaway's Record), which was found by its present owner, in a small shrine. The other manuscripts all have a more or less literary flavour and are not reliable in their dating. For example, the dates quoted in *Kaikunenroku* (A Record of Nine Years in China and the Babarian Countries) are three years after the actual event, apparently to circumvent Shogunate Government censorship.

The most important contemporary official documents concerning Magotaro are the following. There is, firstly, the *Interrogation of Magoshichi from Karadomari, Chikuzen, who drifted ashore to a foreign country (Ikoku hyoryu tsukamatsurisoro Chikuzen no kuni Karadomari Magotaro Kuchigaki, Tsuko Ichiran,* Vol.20), which, in fact, is the transcript of the Nagasaki Magistrate Office's interrogation of Magotaro when he arrived in Nagasaki in June 1771. There is also *A Collection of the Report from the Dutch Captain, No. 176 (Oranda Fusetsugaki Shusei)* submitted to Natsume Izuminokami Nobumasa, the Nagasaki Magistrate by Arend Willem Feith, the captain of the Dutch ship on which Magotaro was repatriated.

Names

Although called Magoshichi in *Hyofutan*, the Japanese adventurer is referred to as Magotaro in *Nankai Kibun*, the transcript of his interview at the Nagasaki Magistrate Office, as

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"*Kaikunenroku*" (A Record of Nine Years in China and the Babarian Countries), Arakawa Hidetoshi (ed.), *Kinsei hyorykishu* (Collected Records of Early Modern Castaways) (Tokyo: Hosei University PRess, 1969), 122-159; "Fukinagare Tenjiku monogatari" (A Narrative of Being Blown to India), Ishii Kendo (ed.), op.cit., 109-148; "Kunenroku Karadomari Magoshichi jitsuden monogatari" (The True Story of Magoshichi of Karadomari's Nine Years in India) (Fukuoka City Library); "Karadomari Magoshichi Tenjiku banashi" (Karadomari Magoshichi's Tale of India) (Karadomari Fishery Cooperative Library). According to Mr. Takada Shigehiro, a local historian living in Fukuoka, who was interviewed by the present author in 1984,there are some other records concerned with Magotaro's adventures scattered throughout the northern part of Kyushu, but a complete survey of them seems impossible. The quotations from the *Nankai Kihun* in this article derive from the *Hyoru Kidan Zenshu* edition.

well as in the *Oyakugashira Kaisen Mokuroku,* a business record of the family of Tsugami, a shipping agent in his home village.[11] According to the record of his interview at the Nagasaki Magistrate's Office, Magotaro is said to have later changed his name to Magozo, which appears in the register book (*shushi ninbetsucho*) of the Gankaiji temple where his ancestral tomb is located. But it is the name, Magotaro, which authoritative sources use.[12]

Magotaro's Home Village

Born probably in 1747, Magotaro's home was in the port of Karadomari, Shima County, Chikuzen.[13] Today this area is incorporated into the western suburbs of Fukuoka City, the largest city in Kyushu. The name "Karadomari" literally means "Gateway to China/Korea". It is located at the entrance of Hakata Bay which Fukuoka faces, and from ancient times, all the ships which sailed for China and Korea waited for favourable winds at this port. The name appears in the *Manyoshu*, Japan's oldest anthology compiled as early as the eighth century, thus, indicating that Karadomari had been an important port in terms of maritime activities in west Japan.

However, from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries, the twin villages of Karadomari and Miyanoura flourished, along with Imazu, Hamasaki and Noko Island, as ports in the Hakata Bay where cargo ships called *gokaura kaisen* (Five Port Shipping) were based.[14] Though today Karadomari is reduced to a small lonely fishing port, during the eighteenth century, its people formed the crew for ships which transported tributary rice from the Fukuoka domain to the central government of Edo, and manned cargo ships which sailed extensively between Hokkaido and Kyushu.

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[11]Takada Shigehiro, *Chikuzen gokaura kaisen* (On the Five-port Shipping of Chikuzen) (Fukuoka: Nishinihon-shimbunsha, 1975), 119-127; Unpublished documents of the Tsugami family, Hamasaki, Fukuoka.

[12]The record of his interview at the Nagasaki Magistrate's Office states that Magotaro was twenty-six years old when he returned to Nagasaki in 1771, which infers that he was born in 1747.

[13]The Chikuzen region of the Edo period coincides roughly with the present day Fukuoka Prefecture.

[14]Takada Shigehiro, 1975, 29-56.

Shipbuilding Under The Closed-door Policy

With the implementation of the closed-door policy, the construction of ocean-going vessels, such as *shuinsen* (the vermilion-seal boat) of the late sixteenth century, was prohibited by the Shogunate government. Japanese trading vessels which once flocked various ports of Southeast Asia disappeared from the international scene and were replaced by Dutch and Chinese vessels which had a total monopoly of the foreign trade at Nagasaki. The Japanese themselves had long since forgotten the shipbuilding technology acquired from the Portuguese and Spaniards during the sixteenth century.

Since the Tokugawa Shogunate government did not permit large trans-oceanic vessels to be built, a medium-sized cargo boat, the *bezai*, was developed, primarily for use in the inland sea waters between Kyushu and Osaka. In a sense, it embodied technical advancement of the new era, because the *bezai* could make use of adverse winds to some extent, a navigational technique unknown to the navigators of the previous century. However, it was primarily used for sailing in inland waters and usually relied on onshore landmarks.

While both Dutch ships and Chinese junks had a strong keel to sustain the hull, the *bezai* was flat-bottomed; thus it was too fragile for oceanic navigation, being unable to sustain itself against rough waves. In addition, its rudder was simply tied up with the rope to the helm, and was often lost when the boat met a storm. This resulted in frequent shipwrecks leaving those whom it carried as castaways. The majority of the castaways may be considered, therefore, as victims of the Shogunate government's stringent closed-door policy.[15]

Magotaro was on one such ship, with a 1600 *koku* (*koku*: 5.119 bushels) capacity, named *Ise Maru*. It had a crew of twenty-one and was owned by one Aoyagi Bunpachi. It left the port of Kodomari near Cape Tappi, in the modern Aomori Prefecture, early in the seventh month of 1764, loaded with lumber, and arrived in Obuchiura on the Ojika Peninsula, in the

[15]Tanikawa Ken'ichi (ed.), *Hyoryu*, 864-67.

present day Miyagi Prefecture. On the thirteenth day of the tenth month, it left Obuchiura, waited for favourable winds and, on the seventeenth, set sail again, finally arriving at Cape Shioya in the Ibaraki Prefecture. There, strong winds arose and the ship began to drift to a south-eastly direction.

Meteorological Circumstances in Japanese Waters

Boats went adrift mainly during the season from the tenth month to the first month, as is shown in Table I of Appendix G. According to the lunar calendar, this season would correspond with the period from mid-November through mid-February. During this season, many ships used to sail to Edo and Osaka transporting annual tributes of rice harvested in the autumn, from the various provinces to the central government at Edo and carrying special food such as seaweed and salted salmon, for the New Year feasts. However, it was also the season when the northwest monsoon blew from the high pressure zone over Siberia to the Aleutians, causing boats leaving the coast of Japan to be blown off course. In winter, low pressure belts pass over the Japanese Archipelago every three to nine days. Immediately after this, strong northwest winds arise and blow continuously for several days. Early sailors called this strong wind the 'Big West Wind' (*onishikaze*).

Having been blown out to the Pacific Ocean by the 'Big West Wind', it would appear that the *Ise Maru* was caught by the *kuroshio*, the ocean current which flows from the vicinity of the Philippines to the North Pacific along the east coast of Japan, then up to the area of latitude 40°N and longitude 150°E. Presumably, the vessel was then blown south by the Northwest monsoon to about latitude 5°N before it was picked up by the North Equatorial Current, enabling it to reach the east coast of Mindanao Island. *Hyofutan* explains the episode as follows:

> We left on the 17th of the tenth month. However, as the west wind started blowing strongly near Cape Shioya in the Sea of Kashima that night, we lowered the sails and started drifting out into the spacious ocean. On the 21st, the helm was broken and we cut down the masts. Strong west winds continued until the 11th of the eleventh month, during which the sailors were in serious trouble. During that time, we drifted into the eastward.

> ....We drifted for four months. As we had so much lumber aboard the boat, we had but little food which we soon finished and had trouble finding more. Therefore, we fished often when the sea was relatively calm and ate what we caught. Thus, we arrived finally at a small island, at about 8 o'clock in the morning, on the 1st of the first month the next year. We tied the boat with rope and boarded the barge. We landed on the island and looked for signs of humans. [pp. 155-59]

Life in Mindanao and Sulu

Magotaro and his crew arrived at the island on the first day of the first month, 1765, and began looking for signs of human habitation. Failing to find any, they continued sailing to the east for 14 to 15 *ri (ri*: 4 km.) until they reached a big island. On this island, they also searched for signs of human habitation over several days, spending their nights on the beach. Suddenly, they found themselves surrounded by about a hundred natives who began to relieve Magotaro and his crew of their belongings and items from the barge. The sailors were then conducted into a boat and, after sailing for five days, arrived at a place called Karagan. Here, they were brought to an old man, most likely a chief, who recognized them as "Jiwapon" or Japanese.

Nankai Kibun identifies the second island they arrived at as "Magintarou". It seems reasonable to assume that this is the port of Magindanao on the coast of the modern Mindanao Island. As for "*Magintarou*" being Mindanao, J.F. Warren writes in his book, *The Sulu Zone*, the following:[16]

> The word Magindanao is derived from the root "danao" which means inundation by sea, river or lake. Magindanao means 'that which has been inundated'. It is the most appropriate term that could have been designated to describe the broad lowland of the Rio Grande de Cotabato, because of the often flooded condition in which this intermontate basin and neighbouring river valleys are found. It was the Magindanao, people of the flooded plain, who lent their name to the vast island which the Spaniards shortened and corrupted to Mindanao.

[16]J.F. Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768-1898* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981), xxi, footnote.

With regard to "Karagan" (also written as "Karakan"), *Nankai Kibun* describes it as a small island at the south of Mindanao, and most likely refers to the small Sarangani islands. Magotaro and his group were eventually enslaved by Sulu pirates who were active in the region and may have used Sarangani as a supply base.

During their three months' stay in "Karagan", it is said that some of Magotaro's comrades were taken away one by one, probably to be sold as slaves. Finally, around July 1765, the remaining seven were put on a boat which travelled for about fifteen days until it reached a place called "Sauroku", namely Sulu. There they were kept as servants for half a year. The description of "Sauroku" is not given in any real detail. Magotaro simply says that the town of "Sauroku" was located about three *ri* (ca. 12 km.) up a big river where there were about 400 to 500 houses. One of the reasons for his scanty memory about Sulu may be attributed to his slave status which allowed him no freedom to walk about in the town, which would most probably have been either Jolo or Balangingi, in the Sulu kingdom.[17]

Sulu was a unique country whose economic basis was piracy. According to the *Hai-lu*, the Chinese topographical work of the early nineteenth century, large amounts of cargo were brought from Sulu to Pontianak and Banjarmasin. It may indicate the lucrative trade between Sulu and South Kalimantan in the eighteenth century, of which a major commodity was slaves, many of them captured, like Magotaro himself.[18]

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[17]Magotaro narrates that he and his comrades were "purchased" by a certain "Gorou", the captain of a Suluan boat, though this may not have been his real name. The capital of the Sulu Kingdom then, was located on the island of Jolo. Jolo's "j", is pronounced with a strong guttural sound, resembling the German "ch". Therefore, when the captain told them that he was from Jolo, the Japanese castaways might have taken this word to be his name.

[18]J.F. Warren, in *The Sulu Zone, 1768-1898*, examines the institution of slavery and piracy in the region. Some documents regarding the Sulu Kingdom appear in the Spanish records, but they are all, so to speak, written from the viewpoint of the enemy. On the other hand, Magotaro's record, in spite of its simplicity, may be considered very valuable as the sole record from the point of view of an insider. Of the Sulu pirates' attack on Luzon, Najeeb Saleeby states, "About 500 Spanish and native Christians were every year carried into captivity by the Moros". Najeeb M. Saleeby, *The History of Sulu* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1908), 83.

Magotaro also recalls that he met people from Manila as well as "Bogeshi" (Bugis) on board the vessel bound for Banjarmasin. These people might perhaps have been the victims of the piratical activities of the Sulus. The people from Manila, especially, could well have been captured in the battle between Suluan naval forces and the Spanish armada based in Manila.

Life in Banjarmasin

Half a year later, Magotaro and Kogoro from Hamasaki village were separated from the other five Japanese and put on board a boat. However, Kogoro died of illness during the voyage, leaving Magotaro on his own. After sailing for thirty-five days, the ship reached Banjarmasin, a large city in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. *Hyofutan* describes the city then as follows:[19]

> After sailing for about thirty-five days, the boat finally entered a big river. This country is called 'Banjaramaashi' and is located within India [*Tenjiku*]. It is a 'negro' country and has various kinds of products. There are about 300 Chinese shops. There is an incalculable number of 'negro' houses too. this country is a very hot place and summer lasts forever. [p.96]

Here Magotaro was taken by Taikon-kan, a Hokkienese merchant of Zhengzhou, and worked for him for several years. The ending *kan* in the name "Taikon-kan" would suggest that the merchant himself, like other Hokkienese gentry, were of equivalent status to the mandarins (*guan*).[20]

The substance of Magotaro's records concerns Banjarmasin, for it was here that he stayed longest during his years away from Japan. While at Banjarmasin he had a chance to gain knowledge of the local manners and customs of the society. Both *Nankai Kibun* and *Hyofutan* describe trade and commercial

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[19]The term "Tenjiku" originally meant India. Later, however, it came to mean all other foreign countries, except Korea and China.

[20]It is well known that the famous Koxinga, the anti-Manchu hero, used to be addressed by his nickname, Zheng Yi-guan, instead of his real name, Zheng Chenggong. The numerals usually precede *guan* to denote brotherly order. Taikonkan's younger brother was called Kanbenkan and both names are likely to have been nicknames rather than real names. See, Ishihara Dosaku, *Nihon kisshi no kenkyuu* (Tokyo: Fuzambo, 1945), 265.

activities, annual events and various customs and ceremonies of Banjarmasin in minute detail which could serve as important primary material for the study of Banjarmasin and the Archipelago during the eighteenth century. As Magotaro worked for a Chinese merchant family, his records also contain much information about Chinese customs, particularly those pertaining to that of the overseas community. Often, because of local adaptation, it is difficult to distinguish Chinese customs from those of the indigenous people.

Nankai Kibun gives a detailed account of the daily life of Taikon-kan and his family as related by Magatoro, the following being one example:

> After Taikonkan purchased me with thirty pieces of silver coins [Dutch *stuiver* = 60 Dutch cents], he provided me with a gun, a sword, a spear, shirts and some other personal effects and called me 'Japan' .... Taikonkan, the owner of the shop, was a native of Chakuchiu [Zhengzhou], China and his mother was a native of Hokuchiu [Fuzhou]. His wife was called Kinton and his brother, Kanbenkan. He hired two Chinese managers, Kimurayuteki and Laihon, and four native negro servants. Among these, Chinchai and Wondon were general servants while the other two, Areshi and Mouzeri, were sailors and were married and lived independently. There were also three female servants called Hirakan, Ukin and Barou, described also as 'negros' but were not natives of Banjarmasin.
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> My job there was to accompany my master with a bulk of commodities when he went out to trade. When my lord despatched his own boat, I became a crew member. While at home, I was engaged in cutting firewood and watering from the well....
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> Taikonkan dealt in porcelain and cloth at his shop. Customers were first served tobacco as a token of hospitality and, afterwards, with a cup of tea accompanied with betel. Floors inside the house were paved with firebricks and stools and benches served for sitting. They decorated a beautiful Buddhist altar in a back room. Senior women often prayed at it as if they served a living master. Every morning and evening, when they made an offering at the altar, they used to mutter some words. Those ladies always remained in the back rooms and never showed up at the shop. Taikonkan was very rich, but he never showed off his wealth and lived quite modestly. I was told that the owners of the neighbouring shops were all his former clerks. [pp. 169-71]

The resident Chinese in Banjarmasin seem to have adopted local customs and manners to some extent and appear to have been in total harmony with the local community. Nevertheless, kinship ties with their homeland were never severed. The following passage, for instance, suggests their strong ties with China:

> One day Kanbenkan, Taikonkan's younger brother, married a girl called 'Chire'. She was a daughter of a Chinese merchant also resident in Banjarmasin. Both Taikonkan and Kanbenkan used to return to China every other year to register their names in a census and to purchase Chinese commodities, the whole trip taking them about half a year. [p. 171)

Taikonkan's frequent visits to China implied a thriving junk trade between Southeast Asia and such ports in South China as Ningpo, Fuzhou, Zhengzhou, Chuanzhou, Xiamen (Amoy) and Guangzhou (Canton). In Volume II of *Nankai Kibun*, Aoki Kosho further describes commodities traded at Banjarmasin as well as the local customs and manners prevalent there.[21]

Because Magotaro's life in Banjarmasin was largely confined to the home of his master, we cannot expect much information about the political situation of eighteenth century Banjarmasin from his accounts. Nevertheless, what is made available is valuable.

About the origin of the kingdom of Banjarmasin, there is little information. *Sejarah Nasional*[22] summarises *Hikayat Banjar*, the only extant indegenous source, as saying that the Banjarese *kraton* (court) moved several times before the beginning of the sixteenth century when the Pangeran Samudera finally established a firm seat of power at Banjarmasin.

Soon after the arrival of the Dutch in Indonesia, the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.) signed a commercial treaty in 1606 with the Banjarese Sultan. In 1711, a Dutch factory was established in Banjarmasin and later, in 1733, the Company compelled the Sultan to sign a treaty allowing the Dutch monop-

[21]A full translation of this is being undertaken by the present author.
[22]Nugroho Notosusanto and Yusmar Basri (ed.), *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1979), Vol 2, 51-2.

oly over the local pepper produce which was its major export. In 1747, the Banjarese Sultan was again forced to allow the Dutch to establish a settlement and a fortress on the island of Tatas where the main city was located. Finally, forty years later, in 1787, the Sultan gave up his sovereignty and territory to the Dutch East India Company and became a petty pensioner.

Magotaro's stay in Banjarmasin coincided with the period when Dutch presence became more and more conspicuous and, the Sultan's power was fast dwindling day by day. In fact, Magotaro's record is one of the few accounts of the last phase of Banjarmasin's fame and prosperity.

Through working in the Chinese trading house Magotaro was apparently aware of the importance of pepper to the economy of Banjarmasin as is evident in the following description in Volume II of *Nankai Kibun*:

> A kind of creeper ... it was grown extensively by the natives.... Pepper and clove were the two major products of that country. The local chief [i.e. the Sultan] used to sell them to the Dutch and the Chinese, thus earning large amounts of income. The natives paid their annual tribute in pepper, cloves and rice. (p. 194)

The Dutch presence in Banjarmasin was, according to the *Nankai Kibun,* very conspicuous:

> Upon the arrival at Banjarmasin, I saw hundreds of thousands of ships, big and small, from China, Holland and other foreign countries flock at the harbour, which appeared to be thriving. I saw 400 to 500 houses, all with tiled roofs and mortar walls lined up along the river bank. These were all Chinese trading houses. The native quarter was located a little further from the Chinese quarter. The Dutch factory was located on the opposite bank and it looked like a castle; it had a high stone wall soaring right above the river. It was guarded by a large artillery. [p. 168]

When we look at the nineteenth century map of Banjarmasin in *Nederlandsche Bezittingen van Oost-Indië* (1885, 's-Gravenhage), the Chinese quarter (*Chineesche kamp*) was located on the southern bank of Martapoera (Martapura) river, a tributary of the Barito, which the city of Banjarmasin faces. The residential quarter of the Dutch Resident (*woning van den Resident*) was on the opposite bank, together with the Dutch

fortress (*versterking*) and Kampung Bugis. This testifies to the accuracy of Magotaro's account. The nineteenth century map also locates the warehouse and customs office (*pakhuis en havenkantoor*) further down the Martapura River on its right bank. The location is exactly as Magotaro recalls it in the *Nankai Kibun*:

> Banjarmasin was a thriving port to which many ships from various countries flocked. Its wealth often became the pirates' target. Therefore an office called *habean* [*pabean* or customs office] was set up about half a *ri* [ca. 2 km.] downstream from the city. It was equipped with cannons, spears, guns and the iron-chain of 10 *jo* [ca. 30 m.] in length and a garrison of the native soldiers was on duty. [p. 209]

Carl Bock, a Norwegian naturalist who visited Southeast Kalimantan in the 1870s gives a similar description of the well defended strategic location of the harbour in *The Head-hunters of Borneo* (London 1881, reprinted 1985, Oxford University Press, p.166).

> Here is a fort, with a garrison, admirably situated from a strategic point of view, commanding the Barito and the Nagara river opposite, and entirely guarding the entrance to the interior of the country....[p. 166]

When Magotaro talked about the native authorities of Banjarmasin, he referred to them as "kaitan" and to their chief as "rato". While "rato" may most probably be either Malay *datuk* or *ratu*, the term of "kaitan" is more difficult to identify. In *Nederlandsche Bezittingen van Oost-Indië* is found, at the south of Martapoera, a township named Kajoe Tangi (modern spelling: Kayu Tangi). Carl Bock also refers to Kajoe Tangi as one of the suburban regions of Banjarmasin. "Kaitan" could therefore be a poor transliteration of "Kajoe Tangi", the township to which the Sultan retreated when Banjarmasin was overwhelmed by Dutch military presence. Magotaro writes of "kaitan" and its " rato" as follows:

> There was a place called Kaitan at 14 to 15 *ri* upstream from Banjarmasin. It was where the native chief resided. Taikonkan took me there several times for trade. Unlike Sauroku [Sulu] and Karakan, there could be found about 10,000 houses which looked very thriving.

> The chief was called "rato". His residence was surrounded by wooden walls made of rosewood planks with several loopholes at which artilleries were deployed. The whole premise was further guarded by a moat. It had a tower gate on which were engraved reliefs of strange beasts. Inside the gate could be found three sedan chairs with brass roofs. The buildings in the premise were covered with red roof-tiles and they resembled our temples.
> On day, Taikonkan was granted audience to the *rato*. He was dressed in a beautiful costume and sat on the chair, attended by many subjects. First, Taikonkan clasped his hands and greeted him respectfully. His attending subjects urged me to follow my master's manner. However as I thought it ridiculous to do so for the 'negro' chief, I kept standing still in front of him, pretending that I could not understand what they meant. I uttered some insulting words, too. However, as they did not understand my language, they neither blamed nor punished me. [pp. 171-2]

Head Hunting

Especially valuable are his comments on the Biaajo or the Biaju (commonly known as Ngaju Dayak) village, a fourteen to fifteen day voyage from Banjarmasin up the Kapuas or Kahayan River. His descriptions of tatoos, hunting and the head-hunting of the indigenous people provide invaluable material for learning about the Ngaju Dayak people in the eighteenth century.

About the Biaju or Ngaju Dayak tribe situated on the confluence of Kahayan river and Rungan river in central Kalimantan[23] the Nankai Kibun records the following:

> Biyaajo was a mountain village up river from Banjaramashi. It took fourteen to fifteen days to sail to it. It was not under the control of the *Kaitan* [the Sultan of Banjarmasin], and its people formed an independent district. The local people were hunters and they made their living by trading forest animals. Men wrapped

[23] R.M. Koentjaraningrat, *Manusia dan Kebudayaan Indonesia* (Jakarta: Penerbit Djambatan, 1971), 118-142; Aoki Kosho, the compiler of *Nankai Kibun*, quotes a classical Chinese work, *Yin-du hai-tu*, as saying that during the Ming period (1368-1644), the Chinese used to call *Biyaajo*, *Mai-wa-rou* or *Mei-ya-rou*. He also quotes it as saying that there was a place called *Yusutaburafu* in that region, from which arose a big river which flowed down to Banjarmasin.

their curled hair in a white cloth, and wore tattoos of snakes and monsters on their bodies. They wore coiled brass wires on their arms, below their elbows, as well as from below thir knees to the angkles, their chief garment was a white cloth around the hips. Women wore fresh flowers in their hair. Both men and women adorned themselves with earrings. The women's earrings had two to three loops but basically both sexes wore the same costume.

Blow pipe: Using guns was prohibited in Biyaajo. Foreigners with guns were not allowed to enter their territory. 'Negroes' used blow pipes as their chief weapons. The length of the blow pipes was about five or six *shaku* [17-20 cm.], made in the same way as Japanese blow pipes. The length of the wooden arrows was six or seven *sun* [2-3 cm] (with a little hollow in the middle to catch the wind), and their points made of poisonous fish bones. Local people used them very cleverly. Once Magotaro saw them hunting. They were all naked and bare-footed. As they walked deep into the mountains, they knocked down thorny trees to scare away wild bulls and goats which they shot with their blow pipes. They never wasted even one arrow, and the arrows had exactly the same effect as bullets. They could kill a beast with a single short — a marvellous technique.[24] [pp. 201-211]

On the subject of selling heads Magotaro wrote:

Taikonkan's father-in-law had been staying in Biyaajo for several years, trading for domestic animals. Once when he wanted to find out how his father-in-law was doing, Taikonkan sent his younger brother, Kanbenkan, and Magotaro accompanies him. They loaded some pottery on a boat and set out for the journey, first from Magatoro to Biyaajoo. After sailing for ten days by boat, they found themselves deep in the mountains with huge old trees lining both sides of the river. From time to time, they heard the howls of strange animals from out of the desolate wastes. As they approached the village, they changed their course to take a middle course upstream, and soon arrived at Biyaajo's port, *Irinkawa*. Here they unloaded the boat, and went to the inn where the father-in-law was staying. The next day Kanbenkan ordered Magotaro to carry the pottery and they walked about the area. When they dropped in at one house, they saw three human heads placed on a shelf. Magotaro's hair stood up on end, and, on asking Kanbenkan about them was informed that the heads were commodities for sale. Magotaro could not understand his explanation, and on returning to the inn that evening, asked Kanbenkan again about the trade in human heads. Upon hearing this he

[24]Bock refers to the poisoned arrows which were used among the Dayaks. See Carl Bock, *The Head-hunters of Borneo* (London: Oxford University Press, 1881, reprinted Oxford, 1985), 73.

told his master that he was so frightened he did not want to stay there any longer. Kanbenkan, however, reassured him, saying, "Feel safe. I come here often and know many people. They do not harm Chinese merchants. But, when we are here, we cannot sail the river after dark. The local people build an elevated stand on the bank with a trap on it, and stationed small boats there. When a passenger boat passes by, they drop the trap suddenly and chop off the passengers' heads. Therefore sailing at night is dangerous even for Chinese."

The local custom was to offer a head when some family member died. They carved a wooden snake and placed a human head on it. They then placed it on the mound of the grave. If the offering was not presented, it was believed that the dead soul would curse the people. Therefore, rich people captured or bought outsiders in advance for the funeral ceremony. To prevent them from escaping, an iron plank was chained between their legs and suspended from the neck by a chain. In this way, since the chain was so heavy, they could not take more than a hundred steps in a couple of days. When a funeral was to be held, the captive's head was chopped off and used. As poor pople could not afford keeping such captives, they bought dried human heads at a store. What Magotaro saw in Biyaajo were such heads. The heads were smoke-dried for preservation, thus extending their 'shelf life'. Magotaro said he had often seen such heads on mounds.[25] [pp. 211-212]

Local Vocabulary and Popular Songs

Both *Nankai Kibun* and *Hyofutan* contain examples of the local vernacular and the Chinese dialect spoken by Magotaro's master. In addition, there are also three popular songs from Banjarmasin. Among these languages, what Magotaro generally terms "Negro's language" would appear to be Malay. However, words like *parai* (*palay* in Tagalog and some other languages, meaning "rice") and *pettou* (*pitu* in Minahasan, meaning "seven") are also included. It seems that Magotara picked up these words on his way to Banjarmasin by way of Mindanao and Sulu. The indigenous words mentioned, though few in number, represent the earliest examples of Malay vocabulary known to the Japanese.

[25]Carl Bock states that four wooden idols were placed upon the grave but does not mention the snake-shaped object. He refers also to a Dayak chieftain's funeral where human heads were offered but does not mention anything about the preservation of heads. Carl Bock, *Head Hunters of Borneo* (1881) 225, 215-17.

However, words such as *bintan* (*bintang* in Malay, meaning "star"), which obviously ought to belong to the general category of 'negro' vocabulary, are included within the list of Chinese words representing chiefly the Minnan (i.e. South Hokkien) dialect of Zhangzhou. There are also a number of kinship terms, which are hard to identify. This is probably because of error on the part of Magotaro or could even indicate the development of some sort of hybrid language amongst the Chinese community in Borneo, equivalent to the 'Baba Malay' which developed later in the Malay Peninsula.

At the end of the vocabulary list, under the title of "Three negro popular songs", are recorded the words of songs in *katakana* (the Japanese syllabaries), with their meaning rendered in classical Chinese. The reasons why classical Chinese and not Japanese was used for the translation was because the intellectuals of contemporary Japan, such as Aoki Kosho, for example, used to regard official documents in classical Chinese as being more authenthic. It takes only a glance to learn that these popular songs are Malay *pantun*. Though indigenous in format their content suggests that they had greater relevance to the Chinese than the indigenous community. It is curious that these popular songs of the Chinese community of Banjarmasin during the eighteenth century should be preserved in distant Japan.

Repatriation

It is hardly surprising that during his long years in Banjarmasin, Magotaro should have contemplated securing his return to Japan. On observing that his master, Taikonkan, was a dutiful son, he developed a plan to play on his feelings of filial piety and obligation. Although Magotaro's only surviving relative at home was an elder brother, he lied to his master that his parents were still alive. He pleaded with him, saying "I have been leading a very happy life with a generous master, but my parents are still alive in my home town and they must have been wondering what became of their son. I would like to return to my home town to reassure them and then come back here." Taikonkan was touched and responded warmly: "Do you really want to go home that much? You say you will return to Benjarmasin, but do you know how far Japan is? I meant to keep you as a

slave forever", he continued, "but I understand that you really are thinking of your parents. I will find an opportunity for you to return home."

Although several Chinese junks called at the port subsequently, none of them would take him on board because he did not wear his hair in a pigtail.[26] Only when a regular Dutch ship finally arrived from Batavia, did he manage to persuade his master to talk to the Dutch captain to give him passage to Nagasaki.[27] Taikonkan, with his family and neighbours, gave Magotaro a warm send-off, presenting him with some pocket money and souvenirs such as tortoise shells and a parrot which he prized.

After staying overnight at the Dutch factory in Banjarmasin, on 4th April 1774, at 12 noon the ship left the pier of Banjarmasin. It sailed down the Barito river, unloaded at the river mouth for three days before it reached the Java Sea. It took seven to eight days to sail to "Sorobaaya" (Surabaya). Nobody landed and, after the ship unloaded its cargo, the vessel proceeded to "Jagatara" (Jakarta) arriving there at 6 p.m. on 2nd May. Here they loaded a barge before sailing up the river (the Ciliwung) and landing at the water gate, where they stayed over-night "in a captain's house". The next day, on the 3rd, he accompanied the Dutch captain in a cart drawn by two white horses to the office of the "Zenetaraaru" or General, perhaps the Governor-General of the Dutch East India Company, then P.A. van der Palla (1761-1775). The lack of anything further on this matter would suggest that the simple castaway was not privy to any important business conducted by the ship's captain.

On the 5th, Magotaro boarded either one of two ships the *Walcheren* or the *Burgh* which left Batavia that season, and the captain was Arend Willem Feith. Three days later, they dropped anchor of "Purenban" (Palembang) for a celebration party. From then on, they sailed north, taking advantage of

[26]Magotaro was perhaps reluctant to wear a pig-tail for fear of persecution or even expulsion by the Nagasaki Magistrates for adopting foreign customs.

[27]The V.O.C. had established commercial relations with the Sultan of Banjarmasin as early as 1606 and, since 1733, the V.O.C. had monopolized the pepper trade of Banjarmasin. See *Beknopte Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsche-Indië* ('s-Gravenhage: Leiden and Batavia, 1921), 36-7.

the southwest monsoon and, on the 16th of the eighth month, arrived at Nagasaki.[28].

Upon his arrival in Japan, Magotaro was examined by the Nagasaki Magistrate, Natsume Izuminokami Nobumasa.[29] He received clearance from Edo on the 21st of the same month, and the following day left Nagasaki. He arrived at Karadomari at the end of the eighth month. Nine years had lapsed since he left his home village aboard *Ise Maru* and, within this time, he had had many unusual experiences which set him apart from his own people. The famous Swedish botanist, Peter Thunberg who visited Nagaski in 1775 and authored *Flora Japonica*, refers in the travel book, *Resa Uti Europa, Africa Asia Forradiad Aren 1770-79*, to "a Japanese sailor who wears the costume of the Malays".[30]

Aftermath

After his return, Magotaro seems to have been often visited by Fukuoka intellectuals and others who were interested in his colourful adventures. The wide circulation of his travelogue around northern Kyushu is proof of this. Among those who sought Magotaro's acquaintance was Aoki Kosho who often invited Magotaro for interviews which helped him compile the *Nankai Kibun* in two volumes in 1820. Therefore, it may be said that Magotaro played some part in helping the intellectuals of Fukuoka to turn their attention to foreign countries.[31]

As it turned out, Magotaro was quite lucky in having drifted ashore to the non-Christian region in Mindanao, and then finding his destination eventually in Banjarmasin where the Dutch, the only European nation which had commercial contacts with Japan, had a factory. In contract, five sailors aboard the *Mura Maru* from Noko Island, who was also shipwreckedave

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[28]Nichiran Gakkai and Hosei Rangaku Kenkyukai (ed.), *Oranda fusetsugaki shusei* (Collection of the Dutch Captains' Reports) (Tokyo: Nichiran Gakkai, 1979), Vol.2, 52-3.

[29]*Tsuko Ichiran* (Collection of the Official Documents of Nagasaki Magistrate's Office) (Tokyo: Tosho-kankokai, 1913), Vol.270.

[30]C.P. Thunberg, *Resa uti Europa, Africa, Asia, forratiad aren 1770-1779* (Japanese trans. by Yamada Tamaki, Tokyo: Yushodo, 1928), 449-50.

[31]Sugimoto Kaoru, *Chikuzen Rangaku Kotohajimeko* (Fukuoka), 23-34.

maru from Noko Island, who were also shipwrecked off the coast of Ibaraki at about the same time as Magotaro, drifted ashore at Cebu in the Christian influenced region of the Philippine Islands. They returned to Nagasaki in 1767 by way of Zhapu in the Zhejiang Province in China, only to find themselves suspected by the Shogunate government of having been converted to Christianity. The local records recount that they spent the rest of their lives under house arrest.[32] Thus, while Magotaro himself drew the attention of many intellectuals, his five contemporaries who had travelled abroad from Noko Island left no record except those of the Nagasaki Magistrate's examination.

Contained in the *Hyofutan,* which is claimed to have been written in 1801, is a portrait of Magotaro, but identified as Magoshichi, at the age of fifty-eight. How long he lived beyond this age, however, remains unknown. On my visit to Karadomari in 1982 to do some field investigation, I met the widow of the late Mr. Den'ichi Itaya, a descendant of Magotaro, and inquired about Magotaro's grave. I learned that, unfortunately, the old cemetery was converted several years ago into a public park and, today, only the place where the grave had once been remains to be seen. According to Mrs. Itaya, until quite recently, Magotaro was called "Toomago San", literally "Uncle Mago of China". This presumably was because of his connections with the foreign countries, as the word for China ("Too") during the Edo period implied simply "a foreign country" or "overseas". His estremely good fortune in having survived his interesting adventures overseas apparently made him a celebrity among its own people many of whom, it is said, scratched his gravestone to use the powder as a talisman.

[32]Takada Shigehiro, 1975, 99-119.