

The Salsila

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The Salsila or the Family tree from the Arabic “Silsilah” is the written genealogy of the Tausug nobility. It contains heroic deeds and significant events. It is jealousy kept by the Sulu nobility and is written in the jawi (Arabic) script (see page 3). If one claims to be a royal datu or chooses to be a sultan, the salsila serves as a proof that he is a descendant of Prophet Muhammad, though the first Sultan of Sulu. Sultan Sharif ul Hashim Abubakar (r, 1450-1480). Today the salsila is recited in the homes of the elite for the instruction of the datus and sultans’ children.

According to Tan, the sarsilas and luntars are royal genealogies and annals and were written in the native language or jawi, although some recent sarsilas such as the one in the possession of the Datu Tuban Family of Jolo have appeared in the modern script. These sources, by their very nature, were therefore, confined in usage and influence to the ruling sector of society and were not within the access of the Muslim masses. The sources were never reproduced for mass consumption but were closely guarded and kept for the exclusive benefits of the royal class (1982:112).

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Therefore, royal tarsilas or salsilas contain the following, namely:

1. A genealogical account of the reigning sultans;
2. The linkage to Prophet Muhammad through Sharif ul Hasim Abubakar, who came to Sulu and established the sultanate;
3. The introduction of Islam and the relation with other states like Sumatra, Java, Jahore, and Brunei;
4. And other credentials of royal ties to rule a people as religious leaders of the community.

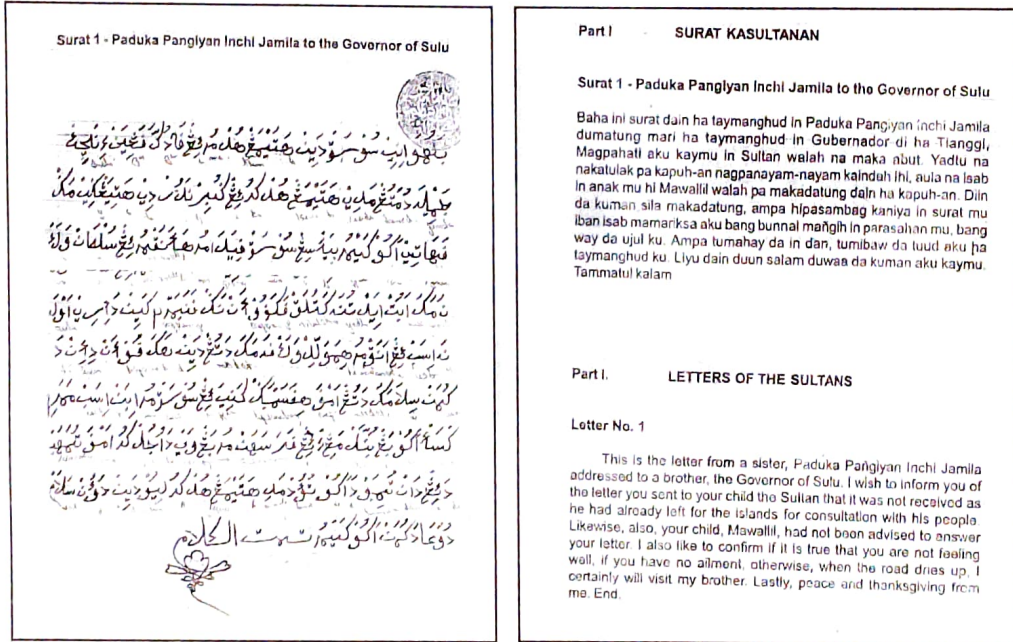
The reproduction of salsilas may have relevance to the Sabah (North Borneo) claim and may strengthen the propriety as well as the sovereign right of the real Sultan of Sulu over Sabah. This is perhaps the reason why another salsila associated with Buansa claimant needs to be reproduced in this study to shed light on the question of "Who is the real Sultan of Sulu?" "And who are the regents of the Sulu Sultanate?"

In the buansa salsila, North Borneo (now Sabah) was ceded to the Sulu Sultan Alimuddin I in 1698 by the Sultan of Brunei, Sultan Muhuddin, as a token of gratitude for Sulu's war aid. In 1769 (Majul, 1973:182; the Buansa salsila; 1-22) the Sulus under the leadership of Datu Raja Muda Israil (later Sultan Israil I), the son of Sultan Alimuddin I, fought the Orang Tedong (Tiruns) of Kuran and Berow and forced them to pay tribute. On January 22, 1878, Sultan Jamalul Alam leased North Borneo to the British North Borneo company represented by Baron Gustavus von Overbeck. The lease expired in 1978 and the sovereign right should have returned to the descendants of Sultan Alimuddin I.

Relation to History

The other three namely, the Maimbung salsila, as reported by Saleeby (1980), the Patikul Salsila, as reproduced by Majul (1973) and the Dalrymple salsila (Majul, 1973) version differ in a significant way from the aforementioned Buansa salsila. But the difference as well as the similarities has relation to the cultural dimension of the issue. The Maimbung salsila was reported by Saleeby and was made available to him by Hadji Buto Abdul Baqi, the Prime Minister of Sultan Jamalul

Kiram II. It contains a short chapter on the original and later settlers of Sulu and enumerates seventeen rulers from Sultan Sharif ul-Hashim to Muhammad Alimud Din II.



Sample of jawi from Samuel Tan's collection published by the National Historical Institute, pp. 1-2, 1995.

Dalrymple listed the Sulu rulers while in Sulu in 1761 (Majul, 1973). His list contains the names of the Sultans from the first to Sultan Muhammad Alimud Din I whom he helped restore to the throne in 1764.

Dalrymple's list

1. Sultan Serif
2. Kama-al-odin
3. Maharaja Upu
4. Pangeran Boddiman
5. Marahom Tang-a
- Maimbung Salsila

1. Sultan Sharif

2. Sultan Kamalud Din
3. Maharaja Upu
4. Pangeran Buddiman
5. Sultan Tanga

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 6. Marahom Bongso | 6. Sultan Bongso |
| 7. Jal Alodin Marahom Karamat | 7. Sultan Narisud Din |
| 8. Sitecabil Ampy | 8. Sultan Karamat |
| 9. Sahabodin | 9. Sultan Shahabud Din |
| 10. Sapheodin | 10. Sultan Shapiud Din |
| 11. Mahomud Badorodin | 11. Sultan Nasarud Din |
| 12. Mahomed Nassarodin | 12. Sultan Muizzid Din |
| 13. Mahomed Allimodin I | 13. Sultan Alimud Din 1 |
| 14. Mahumud Mo-i-jodin | 14. Sultan Israil |
| 15. Mahamud Allimodin II | 15. Sultan Alimudin II |
| 16. Mahamed Allimodin I | 16. Sultan Sarapud Din |
| | 17. Sultan Alimud Din III |

However, Majul utilizes the list of Sultans found in the Patikul salsila which according to him was the most comprehensive list. The following is the listing in the Patikul salsila:

1. Sharif ul-Hashim
2. Kama ud-Din
3. Ala ud-Din
4. Amir ul-Umara
5. Muizz ul-Mutawad Din
6. Shah Nasir ud-Din Ula
7. Sha Muhammad ul-Halim
8. Batara Shah
9. Muwallil Wasit
10. Nasir ud-Din Akhir
11. Sala ud-Din
12. Ali Thani
13. Azam
14. Al Haqunu Idn Wali ul-Ahad
15. Shahab ud-Din
16. Shafi ud-Din

17. Badar ud-Din
18. Nasar ud-Din
19. Azim ud-Din I
20. Muizz ud-Din
21. Muhammad Israil
22. Azim ud-Din
23. Sharaf ud-Din
24. Azim ud-Din III
25. Ali ud-Din
26. Shakirullah
27. Jamalul-Kiram

But the Buansa salsila was recently discovered and contains a longer listing of sultans. It was told orally in 1900 and retold in 1917 and 1932 by Pangian Lana Fatima Albaini Jamalrah-Rah, the only daughter of Sultan Jamalul Kiram I, to Datu Salip Rajamuda Bassal Pulalun. This salsila, which also has jawi script, is then called the Buansa salsila since Pangian Sitti Jamala resided in Buansa, the old name of Jolo. The following are the Sultans in the Buansa Salsila:

1. Sharif Hashim Abubakar
2. Kamaluddin
3. Amirul Umara
4. Muizzil Muttawassin Upoh
5. Nasifuddin Awwal Dirugan
6. Pangiran Buddiman
7. Batarasa Sha Taga
8. Muwallil Wasit Raja Bungsu
9. Nasiruddin Ahir
10. Salahuddin Karamat (Baktir)
11. Sahabuddin
12. Safiuddin
13. Bararuddin Awwal
14. Nasaruddin
15. Alimuddin I
16. Muizuddin (Bantilan I)
17. Israil I

18. Alimud Din II
19. Sarafuddin
20. Azimuddin Sali (Alimuddin III)
21. Aliyuddin I
22. Sakirawllah
23. Israil II
24. Aliyuddin II
25. Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan
26. Jamalul Alam
27. Muhammad Pulalun
28. Jamalul Alam
29. Bararuddin II
30. Aliyuddin III
31. Harun Ar Rasid
32. Jamalul Kiram II
33. Sarafuddin II
34. Tuban Aranan Wizer Kiram Alimmudin I

The Dalrymple's list mentions two names, Sitecabil Ampy and Badorodin which are not found in the Maimbung Salsila. The latter adds the names of Nasirud Din and Isra'il which are missing from the Dalrymple's list but are found in the Patikul salsila.

The list of the Patikul salsila, as reported by Majul, adds ten more Sultans who are not found in the Maimbung salsila. These sultans are: 3. Ala ud-Din; 4. Amirul-Umara; 6. Shah Nasir ud-Din Ula; 14. Al Haqunu Idn Wali ul-Ahad; 17. Badar ud-Din; 25. Ali ud-Din I; 26. Shakirullah; and, 27. Jamalul Kiram.

The significance of the difference is in the fact that there is an inclusion of more names in the Patikul salsila than in the Maimbung salsila. This presumably leads Majul to conclude that the Patikul salsila is the most comprehensive and therefore more reliable than the Dalrymple's list or the Maimbung salsila.

On the other hand, the Buansa salsila does not mention Sultans Ali Thani (12), Azam (13), and Al Haquno Ibn Wali Ul-Ahad (14) who are included in the Patikul salsila. The Buansa salsila is different from the Patikul salsila. It includes more names of sultans which are missing in the Patikul salsila, such as the following: 5. Nasifuddin Awwal Dirugan;

24. Aliyuddin II; 25. Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan; 27. Muhammad Pulalun; 28. Jamalul Alam; 29. Bararuddin II; 30. Aliyuddin III; 31. Harun Ar Rasid; 32. Jamalul Kiram II; 33. Sarafuddin II; and 34. Tuban Aranan Wizer Kiram Alimuddin I.

It is important to mention that following Majul's observation the Buansa salsila, which has a longer list of sultans, is thus more reliable than the Patikul salsila and represent the most authentic. Sultans in the Buansa salsila represent various and legitimate houses that claims to successional right. The houses established by the following sultans: Sultan Alimuddin I (r. 1735- 1773), Sultan Muizzudin (Bantilan I) (r. 1784-1763), Sultan Shakirullah (r. 1808-1823), and Sultan Jamalul Kiram I (r. 1823-1842). They were not dissolved but continued to exist in their respective centers during the periods of rivalries and conflicts. For example, in the House of Sultan Alimuddin I, the descendency is from Sultan Alimuddin I to Israil I, to Agimuddin Sali (Alimudin III), to Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan Alimuddin IV, to Tuban Wizer Aranan Alimuddin I. In the house of Sultan Muizzudin (Bantilan I), the descendency is from Sultan Muizzudin Bantilan I to Alimuddin II, to Bantilan III, to Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan Alimuddin IV, to Tuban Wizer Aranan. In the house of Sultan Shakirullah, the descendency is from Sultan Shakirullah to Israil II, to Aliyuddin III, to Tuban Wizer Aranan Alimuddin I. In the house of Sultan Jamalul Kiram I, to Sultan Pulalun, to Jamalul Alam, to Bararuddin, to Jamalul Kiram II.

As shown in the Maimbung salsila ends with Alimuddin III while the Patikul salsila ends with Jamalul Kiram. Obviously, the Kiram house is being focused in these two salsilas simply because in the Maimbung salsila (no. 17) and the Patikul salsila (no. 24) Alimudin III is the son of Sultan Sarafuddin and the Kirams line connects with him through Jamalul Kiram, the son of Alimuddin III. Hence, there seems to be no break in the line of the Kirams to the



Sketch of Sultan Alimudin I courtesy of Rita C. Tuban

Sultanate. However, in the Buansa salsila, Sultan Alimuddin III (20) was the son of Sultan Israil I and he was popularly known as Aggimuddin, an adopted son of Sultan Alimuddin I (Reber, 1966:77-78). The Buansa salsila, presents Datu Israil Maulana, who pretends to rule as Sultan Alimuddin III in 1805. He was the son of Dayang Dayang Fatima Piandao, the daughter of Sultan Sharifuddin. He was nominated by his mother, Dayang Dayang Fatima Piandao to succeed his grandfather Sultan Sharifuddin. According to the Sulu Sultanate law, no female descendant can claim the throne unless nominated by her father. Princess Piandao was not nominated by her father, Sultan Sharifuddin. Datu Israil Maulana (or Alimuddin III to his mother) was neither nominated by his grandfather Sultan Sharifuddin to succeed him. So he was not a Sultan of Sulu but a reigning datu of Maimbung, a town in Jolo island, where he and his mother resided. Sultan Alimuddin III (Datu Israel Maulana) died at the same time (same date) with his grandfather, Sultan Sultan Sharifuddin I in 1805. This fact cast doubt on the strength of the Kiram claim to the Sultanate because the Kiram line is traceable to Datu Israel Maulana, a son of Maranao datu and Dayang Dayang Fatima Piandao, the daughter of Sultan Sharifuddin. According to Majul "the daughter of a Sultan could become sultana (pangyan) provided her husband was a royal datu or she married a royal datu within seven days after demise of her father (Majul, 1964:6). In such case, her husband could become sultan. The husband of Dayang Dayang Fatima Piandao was not a Tausug royal datu but a Maranao datu. Thus, Dayang Dayang Piandao could not become sultana because her husband was a Maranao datu.

The emergence of several claims to the sultanate of Sulu can be traced to the time when Sultan Sakirawllah died in 1823. As revealed in the Buansa Salsila, there was chaos or disorder in the sultanate of Sulu because there were four claimnants to the throne: 1. Sultan Israil II of Patikul; 2. Sultan Jamalul Kiram I of Maimbung; 3. Sultan Aliyuddin II of Buansa; and 4. Sultan Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan Alimuddin IV of Parang. The latter later transferred to Dungan, Tawi-tawi. Obviously, upon Sultan Sakirawllah's death, the power of the Sulu sultanate disintegrated or was shared by the four claimnants, who were jealous of each other, who refused to join forces under one leader. While the three claimants, Israil II, Aliyuddin II and Tumanggung Bantilan Alimuddin IV, were fighting with each other, Sultan Jamalul Kiram waited for them to be exhausted. Then he took the opportunity to sit on the throne with

the support of his men from Maimbung. As a result of their civil strife, Tumanggung Bantilan Alimuddin IV took refuge in Dungun, Tawi-tawi, Israil II reigned in Patikul, and Aliyuddin II returned to Buansa. Thus, only the reign of Israil II in Patikul actively continued vis a vis that of Sultan Jamalul Kiram I in Maimbung. The reign of Sultan Jamalul-Kiram I witnessed the Spanish move to weaken the Sultanate by promoting division. The Spaniard succeeded in using the house of Kiram as the point of alienation. The feud between the house of Kiram and the house of Sakirawllah was only temporarily suspended when Sultan Jamalul Kiram the First's daughter, Dayang Dayang Fatima Lana Albaini Sitti Jamala-Rah, married Sultan Aliyuddin III, the son of Sultan Israil II of Patikul.

Respectively Sultan Israil II (23) (r. 1823-1862) succeeded his father Sultan Sakirawllah. He was the only son of Sultan Sakirawllah. Before his father died, he was designated as heir to the throne of Patikul, despite the fact that Jamalul Kiram I was also reigning as Sultan of Sulu. Israil II was succeeded by Aliyuddin III who was succeeded by Sarafuddin II, the latter crowned his nephew Sultan Tuban Wizer Han Alimuddin I in 1917 as heir to the Sakirawllah line. This shows that the House of Sultan Sakirawllah was not dissolved as contended by other claimants to the throne.

The other claimant, Sultan Aliyuddin II (24) (r. 1823) was the son of Sultan Aliyuddin I, the son of Sultan Sharifuddin. Unfortunately, he died after only a few weeks of reign.

Sultan Tumanggung Bantilan Alimuddin IV (25) (r. 1823 - 1862) was the son of Sultan Azimuddin Sali (Alimuddin III), the son of Sultan Israil I, the only legitimate son of Sultan Alimuddin I. He was also the great grandson of Sultan Alimuddin II. He reigned in Dungun, Tawi-tawi. He was succeeded by his son Amirhamja Ramiir Tuban, who was succeeded by his son Anni Titu Tuban. The latter was then succeeded by Sultan Tuban Wizer Aranan (34). Thus the house of Sultan Alimuddin I did not dissolve but continued to exist under the leadership of Sultan Tuban Wizer Aranan Sultan Alimuddin I. Moreover, Sultan Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan Alimuddin IV was also the grandson of Bantilan III, the son of Sultan Alimuddin II (Bantilan II) who was the son of Sultan Muiziddin Bantilan I. hence, the house of Sultan Muizuddin Bantilan did not dissolve but also continued under the leadership of Sultan Tuban Wizer Aranan Sultan Alimuddin I, the great grandson of Sultan

Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan Alimuddin IV. In effect, the lines of Alimuddin and Bantilan converged in the Tuban claim.

On the other hand, Sultan Jamalul Kiram I (26) (r. 1823-1842) was the son of Datu Israel Maulana or Sultan Alimuddin III of Maimbung. He was a grandson of Dayang Dayang Fatima Piandao, the daughter of Sultan Sharifuddin. He was succeeded by his son, Sultan Moh. Pulalun (Pogdar) (r. 1842- 1862). When Sultan Pulalun died, the throne was offered to his uncle, Datu Aranan, a grandson of Bantilan II, the son of Sultan Alimudin II. Datu Aranan was a sultan in Parang, sometime in 1914 (Majul, 1973:289). In the Buansa salsila, Aranan was Sultan Tumanggung Bantilan Aranan Alimuddin IV who reigned as sultan in Dungun, Tawi-tawi from 1823 to 1862. Aranan became Sultan for a year but he was poisoned by Jamalul Alam, the son of Sultan Pulalun. Datu Ramir Tumanggung Bantilan, the son of Sultan Aranan succeeded his father. However, because of ambition which could not be denied in every struggle for political power, Sultan Jamalul Alam proclaimed himself Sultan and continued to reign and tried to liquidate the descendants of Sultan Alimuddin II (Bantilan II). This was the reason why the descendants of Sultan Alimuddin II retreated to Dungun, Tawi-Tawi. When Sultan Jamalul Alam (28) died in 1881, he was succeeded by his son Sultan Bararuddin II (29) (r.1881-1884) instead of an heir from the Aranan Alimuddin line. Thus the conflict of claims and reigned continued indefinitely.

Meanwhile, Sultan Aliyud Din II (r. 1884-1896) succeeded his father, Sultan Israil II, the son of Sultan Sakirawallah, as sultan in Patikul 1862. In 1884, Sultan Aliyud Din III succeeded Sulatn Bararudin II. He made his son, Pangiran Sarafuddin II, as his Raja Muda. In 1917, Pangiran Sarafuddin crowned his nephew, Datu Tuban Wizer Han Alimuddin I, a son of his sister, Dayang Dayang Sarirah Mariam, as Sultan.

According to the Buansa salsila Jamalul Kiram I decreed that the rule of the Kirams must end after the reign of his son, Sultan Moh. Pulalun, and give up the throne in favor of Aliyuddin III. Sultan Jamalul Kiram I issued this decree upon the protest of his daughter, Pangian Lana Fatima Albaini Sitti Jamala-Rah, who wanted her husband Sultan Aliyud Din III to succeed her brother Sultan Pulalun as sultan, because she contended that Sultan Alyud Din III was the rightful sultan to the Sulu Sultanate. Sultan Aliyud Din III was the grandson of Sultan

Sakirawllah and Sultan Jamalul Kiram I was the great grandson of Sultan Sahriffudin I whose daughter Dayang Dayang Fatima Paindao was the grandmother of Jamalul Kiram. Sultan Bararuddin II in fact followed the decree of his great grandfather, Sultan Jamalul Kiram I, that Sultan Aliyud Din III would be his successor.

In 1881, Sultan Aliyud Din III took over the throne when Sultan Bararuddin II went to Mecca. Upon the latter's arrival in Jolo from Mecca, he again ascended the throne until he died on February 22, 1884 (Majul, 1973:303). Accordingly, Sultan Aliyud Din III succeeded Sultan Bararuddin II. However, Datu Amirul Kiram (later Sultan Jamalul Kiram II) (32), a son of Jamalul Alam, protested on the ground that he was the brother of Sultan Bararuddin II. At any rate, Sultan Aliyud Din III continued to reign as sultan because he was older than Amirul and the rightful heir to the Sultanate of Sulu. Meanwhile, the Spaniards courted Harun Ar Rasid (31), a great, great, great grandson of Sultan Alimuddin I. On September 24, 1886 they crowned Harun Ar Rasid sultan in Manila (Majul, 1973:306) as a subtle way of creating intrigue in the Sultanate by introducing the Spanish factor in the legitimizations of claims.

As pointed out by Saleeby, Sultan Aliyu Din III proclaimed himself sultan in Patikul, and Datu Amirul likewise did in Maymbung (Saleeby, 1963:137),

Gen. Parrado offered his good office and tried to overcome the difficulty by suggesting that Amirul Kiram be elected Sultan but Alyud Din should act as regent during the minority of the former. He went as far as to name a new general council of State to meet at Maymbung and decide the question. He submitted this proposition to both parties threatening to leave to their fate in case they did not comply with his advice. The Maymbung party accepted the Governor's proposition but the Patikul party did not; consequently both candidates were proclaimed Sultan, one at Patikul and one at Maymbung, and both prepared to fight.

In 1887, Gen. Arolas attacked Patikul and Lati which forced Alyud Din to flee Siasi (Saleeby, 1963). However, he returned to Jolo to join the awaiting forces of Kalbi and Julkarnain, and again in 1890, a civil war ensued between the forces of Sultan Alyud Din III and Datu Amirul Kiram (Jamalul Kiram). In 1894 Harun Ar Rasid ended his de facto rule. The Spaniards were now banking on Datu Amirul Kiram whose mother Putli Insih Jamila or Dayang Dayang Sayah of Spanish descent, requested help from the Spaniards. With the aid of the Spaniards, Datu

Amirul's forces outnumbered those of Aliyud Din III. In 1896 during the civil war, Sultan Aliyud Din III was wounded compelling him to retreat to Basilan, then to Laminusa, Siasi. Later, he went back to Patikul where he died. Sultan Alyud Din III was called the second Amirul Mu'minin (the defender of the faithful). According to Saleeby(1963), Alyud Din died in 1892 in Patikul. In this regard, it must be mentioned that the rule of Amirul Kiram was recognized only in 1894 by the Spanish authority (Majul, 1973:308) indicating the ambiguity in the successional line to the Sultanate.

It is interesting to note that when Sultan Jamalul Kiram II died on June 7, 1936, there was chaos in his house as regards his successor. Dayang Dayang Piandao, the last of the Kiram house and the only daughter of Sultan Bararuddin II and the niece of Sultan Jamalul Kiram II, wanted her husband Datu Ombra Amilbangsa to succeed Sultan Jamalul Kiram II. But Gulamu Rasul and his father, Hadji Butu Abdul Baqi Rasul, a Datu bendahara during the reign of Sultan Jamalul Kiram II, wanted Datu Tuban, a direct descendant of Sultan Alimuddin I and a grandson of Sultan Alyud Din III and Sultana Jamala Kiram, only daughter of Sultan Jamalul Kiram I, to be sultan. However, Datu Tuban, the only living cousin by sanguinity of Princess Piandao, was in Zamboanga, so they decided to look for Datu Julaspi Kiram, who claimed to be the son of Sultan Jamalul Kiram II. Unluckily, Datu Julaspi Kiram was in Sitangkai, Sulu. To frustrate the claim of Dayang Dayang Piandao, Hadji Gulamu Rasul decided to crown Datu Tambuyung as Sultan Jainal Abirin to end the dispute with Dayang Dayang Paindao over the successor to the Sultanate of Sulu.

The Sabah claim became a hot issue during the ASEAN meeting in Manila on December 14, 1987 (Malaya, 1987:1). There were three sultans who decided their rights to succession: Sultan Tuban Wizer Han Alimuddin I, Sultan Julaspi Kiram and Sultan Jamalul Kiram III. Based on the Buansa Salsila, the real Sultan of Sulu is Sultan Tuban Wizer Han Alimuddin I, the conqueror and owner of North Borneo.

It is a fact that political might played an important factor in the history of the Sulu Sultanate. For example, despite the fact that Alimuddin III or Israel Maulana was half Maranao, he reigned for sometime as Sultan of Sulu according to the Maimbung Salsila but he died on the same day with his grandfather, Sultan Sharif ud Din in 1805.

The Kiram line is traceable to Alimuddin III or Israel Maulana who was the father of Sultan Jamalul Kiram I, who established the house of Kiram in 1842 until Jamalul Kiram II died in 1936. Sultan Pulalun, the son of Sultan Jamalul Kiram I gave the throne to Sultan Aranan of Parang in 1862. Sultan Aranan became Sultan of Sulu for a year, but he was poisoned by Jamalul Alam the son of Sultan Pulalun. Sultan Jamalul Alam was succeeded by his two sons, Badaruddin and Jamalul Kiram II. This political might can be attributable to foreign intervention. To crush the claims of the royal datus to the Sultanate, the Kirams tried to be friendly with the Spaniards who helped them strengthen their political power in Sulu. For example, Sultan Jamalul Kiram II sought the help of General Arolas who attacked Patikul and Lati which forced Sultan Alyud Din to flee to Siasi in 1887.

Presently, foreign intervention still exists to create intrigue among the claimants to the Sulu Sultanate. Sultan Jamalul Kiram III, who was criticized by Julaspi Kiram is said to be supported by some Japanese businessmen. Sultan Julaspi Kiram, who claims to be the son of Sultan Jamalul Kiram II was supported before by the Malaysian government until he was eased out from Sabah sometime in 1981. According to Datu Atalad, Sultan Tuban Wizer Han Alimuddin I claims to be supported by the Sultan of Brunei who has acknowledged him as a relative.

Basically, salsilas are valuable to the members of Sulu nobility since they serve as proofs lineage from the Prophet Muhammad through the first Sultan of Sulu, Sharif ul-Hashim. They serve to authenticate descent from the Prophet Muhammad in an unbroken line. According to customary laws, only a datu who is a descendant of a Sultan can be a Sultan. A mere datu cannot be a Sultan. The salsilas upholds the prestige of the royalists in the upper class society since they are the ruling elite. Furthermore, the salsilas are recited in the homes of the royalty for the instruction of the royal children who preserve and pass on the salsilas to the next generation. Because of their nature, the salsilas were never reproduced for mass circulation but were closely guarded and kept for the exclusive use of the nobility.

Moreover, the salisilas, particularly the Buansa salsila, have relevance to the current disputes over Sabah (North Borneo). They can be used as evidence to prove the proprietary claim of the House of Sultan Alimuddin I through Sultan Tuban Wizer Han Alimuddin I. In this connection, Tan (1982:113), stresses that the sarsilas and luntars which

pertain to the ruling class, helped in the institutionalization of an elitist type of historical consciousness.

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SULU SULTANS AND DESCENDANTS

