

I. Boni 渤泥 in the *Record of Places Outside the Known World (Zhifang waiji 職方外紀)*. Translated by Johannes L. Kurz.

The *Zhifang waiji 職方外紀*, a work written by Giulio Aleni (1582-1649), a Jesuit who worked in China in the first half of the seventeenth century, clearly indicates Boni 渤泥 as the island of Borneo and not as a specific country.

The island of Boni is south of the equator (*chidao 赤道*). It produces camphor which is very excellent. When it is ignited and thrown into the water, the fire is not extinguished, until it is completely burnt. There is a beast that resembles a goat and a deer which is called Bazaer 把雜爾, in whose stomach grows a stone that can cure a hundred illnesses. Western guests (*xike 西客*) value it very highly, and they pay up to a hundred times (of its basic prize). The king of the country relies on it to make profits.¹

II. The country of Boni 淳泥 in the *Record of the Customs of the Tributaries in the Western Ocean (Xiyang chaogongdian lu 西洋朝貢典錄)*, 1520. Translated by Johannes L. Kurz

In 1520, Huang Shengzeng 黃省曾 (*jinshi* of 1531) who hailed from Wuxian (modern day Suzhou in Jiangsu) finished his work on the countries that had come to the court and submitted tribute. Entitled *Record of the Customs of the Tributaries in the Western Ocean (Xiyang chaogongdian lu 西洋朝貢典錄)*,² this drew on earlier works such as the *Xingcha shenglan 星槎勝覽* (1436) by Fei Xin 費信 and the *Yingyai shenglan 鷹涯勝覽* (1451) by Ma Huan 馬歡, and especially in the sections on local products that were included in all entries, supplemented the earlier works in more detail.

This country is situated six thousand *li* southwest of Zhancheng. It comprises fourteen prefectures (*zhou 洲*). In their customs they cultivate Buddhist teachings (*futu jiao 浮圖教*), they worship statues, and they well maintain fasting. The buildings of the royal palace are covered with leaves

¹ Ai Rulüe 艾儒略 (Giulio Aleni), *Zhifang waiji jiaoshi 職方外紀校釋* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), rev. and annotated by Xie Fang 謝方, 62.

² See Wolfgang Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1968), 221; Huang Shengzeng 黃省曾, *Xiyang chaogongdian lu jiaozhu 西洋朝貢典錄校注*, Xie Fang 謝方 (rev. and annot.) (Beijing: Zhonghua shudian, 2000), preface 5-6.

from the Nipa palm. The houses of the people are [covered] with grass. The men and women [wear their hair] in a topknot, they cover their thighs with multi-colored brocade and use flowered cotton cloth for shirts.

Their customs are plenty. When they happen upon a Chinese on their path, who is drunk, then they will help him return and let him sleep in their house. The climate of that place is cold in summer and hot in winter. It is rich in fish and salt. Its grain consists of rice and sorghum. It produces sorghum liquor (*shu2jiu* 秫酒), *duojiangzhen* 多降真 incense, and bee's wax, and there are camphor and tortoise shell. Its defending locality is called "Mountain Which Ever Peacefully Protects the Country" (*changning zhenguo zhi shan* 長寧鎮國之山). (Commentary: In the sixth year of the Yongle era (1408) its king Manarejiana 麻那惹加那 addressed the emperor: "I have been enfeoffed with [the title of king and] all the territory of my country is subject to your administration. Behind the country there is a mountain and I humbly request that it be enfeoffed as the protector of the country." After the king's death, his son Xiawang repeated this request. Consequently it was given the present name, and the emperor composed an inscription for a stele to be carved in stone on top of the mountain.)

The country regularly sent tribute. (Commentary: In the fourth year of the Hongwu era (1370) the king Mamosha 馬謨沙 sent his official Yisimayi 亦思麻逸 to present a golden memorial and a silver letter together with

local products. In the third year of the Yongle era (1405) an envoy was dispatched from the court to enfeoff king Manarejiananai 麻那惹加那乃 as king (*wang* 王), giving him a seal, a tally and a title patent (*gaoming* 誥命). In the sixth year [of the Yongle era (1408)] the king leading his consort, his family and officials to court, arrived in Fujian. A court eunuch was sent there to give them a banquet and reward them, and it was ordered that every prefecture that they passed through [on their way to the capital] was to banquet them. After arriving at the capital, the king submitted a memorial written in golden characters and many precious objects, while his consort presented a letter and local products to the Central Palace (of the imperial consort) and the Eastern Palace (of the crown prince). The emperor personally entertained the king with a banquet at the Fengtian Gate. That same year when the king had died in the Interpreter's Institute in Nanjing, all court business was suspended for three days, and he was given lavish sacrifices. An imperial decree conferred the posthumous name of Gongshun 恭順 (Respectful and Obedient) onto him, and his was given a burial at the Shizigang, south of the city walls of Nanjing. Southwestern *yi* 夷-people, who were registered in China, were to guard [the tomb], a commemorative stele was set up and a shrine was built, and it was officially ordered that sacrifices were to be held every spring and autumn. By another order his son Xiawang was conferred succession to the throne, and a eunuch and a messenger were dispatched to accompany him back home. Both in the twelfth year [of the Yongle era (1414)] and

the first year of the Hongxi era (1425), [envoys] came with tribute to the court.) Their tribute products were as follows: pearls, gems, golden finger rings, golden silk braided rings, camphor, chipped camphor, plum blossom camphor, incense, high-quality gharu wood, sandalwood incense, cloves, cardamom, bee's wax, rhinoceros horn, tortoise shell, carapaces, snail shells, hornbill beaks, bearskins, peafowl, lories (*daoguaniao* 倒掛鳥), multi-coloured parrots, black page boys, and cutlery made from precious materials.

I comment: I once traveled to Jinling, and arriving at the Shizigang, passed by the tomb of the Respectful and Obedient king of Boni. I could not but admire the emperor's treatment of the island barbarians and celebrate his meeting the Respectful and Obedient. During the times of the August Emperor (the Hongwu emperor) the Office Manager Shen Zhi and the Censor Zhang Jingzhi upon orders went to that country to instruct them. When they had arrived there, they made the king come down from his seat and ordered him to bow to the court. Furthermore [they made] him say: "The emperor is the ruler of all under Heaven, and he is my prince and father." Such were the words that he uttered. That our two officials rejected his presents of golden knives and cotton, and that later on he would respect China and be happy to submit himself — this is extraordinary indeed!³

³ Huang Shengzeng, *Xiyang chaogongdian lu jiaozhu*, 1.44-46.