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**A Voyage To New Guinea, And The Moluccas, From  
Balambangan: Including An Account of Magindano,  
Sooloo, and other Islands; And Illustrated With Thirty  
Copperplates, Performed In The Tartar Galley, ...**

**Forrest, Thomas**

**London, 1779**

Chapter II. Geographical Sketch of Places on the Banks of the Rivers  
Pelangy and Tamantakka, by Tuan Fakymolano - Description of the  
Saltpetre Cave - Rajah of Boyan

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## C H A P T E R II.

*Geographical Sketch of Places on the Banks of the Rivers Pelangy and Tamantakka, by Tuan Fakymolano—Description of the Saltpetre Cave—Rajah of Boyan.*

ON the Pelangy,\* above Coto Intang, are the nigris (countries) of Katib-tuan, Labungin, and Batanig, on the left hand going up; then Kabantallan on the right, where the Tamantakka strikes off; also Limopog on the left: Utandan, with a hill on the left, opposite to Boyan † on the right, where is a river; Kabolokan on the right, where are hills: Pelangy Lamo, (*old Pelangy*) on the left, opposite Udfudun, on the right, where is a river that goes to the lakes of Liguassin and Buloan. In these are many teal and ducks. Then Babuingad on the right, a little below Lagungan on the left; Dupilas on the left, opposite Makatudog on the right. A little higher, on a small river, is Maliduggou, where grows much cocoa. Then, Kaban on the right of the Pelangy, where a little river discharges itself into it. Dalapuan on the right; Mulita on the left. Ulupelangy on the left, Sanipan on the right; Gillang, with a river, on the left, and

1775.  
May.

\* Plate XVII.

† The Chinese settled at Mindano are not permitted to trade higher than Boyan; the Mindanoers being jealous of their superior abilities in trade.

B b

Selag



1775.  
May.

Selag on the right, near the source of the Pelangy, where is much cinnamon.

On the banks of the river Tamantakka, are the nigris of Kabug, by the sea-side, where they make salt; Demapatty, Tamantakka, Dywan, Ampuyan, Tanuel, Batu, Sagil, Dalikan, Tapidan, Butillan; and then you come to Kabantallan, where the two rivers meet. At Tapida is a small river, up which are the places called Bunwoot and Talaian. A little below the lake Leguaffin, is a river which leads to Gunong Salatan\* (south hill), where the Subanos or Haraforas † get more gold than they can dispose of; trade being so dead at Magindano. ‡ Of this I have been assured by the Sultan. †

As I am now upon the Tamantakka, the saltpetre cave, near a creek running into that river, having excited my curiosity, the reader may not be displeas'd with an account of the visit I made.

I pass'd in a canoe from Magindano up the Melampy two miles; I then struck off on the right through many narrow winding creeks, about three miles; and got to Ampuyan, on the banks of the river Tamantakka, four miles above its bar. I then ascended the Tamantakka, about six miles in a winding course to Tapidan. I stay'd all night at the Rajah's, whom I acquainted with my intention of going

\* The chart of these countries and rivers, drawn by Fakymolano, is deposited in the British Museum. Plate XVII.

† Called sometimes Oran Manubo.

‡ This is different from Valentine's account, who says there is no gold on Magindano. I have seen lumps weighing above an ounce.

next

next morning to the salpêtre cave. He entertained me very politely, as he knew my connexions; and early next morning we set out, accompanied by some of his people.

1775.  
May.

At Tapidan, a river sets off to the right from the Tamantakka. Having mounted it about half a mile, we found running into it a small brook of a sky blue colour, with a very offensive smell and taste. This brook comes from the hill, where opens the Saltpetre Cave. After paddling up about a mile, I left it on the right, and entered another brook of common fresh water. This with some difficulty (it being very shallow) brought me to the foot of the hill.

Having climbed the hill a quarter of a mile pretty steep, I came to a hole, twelve yards to the right of the path way, and about ten foot diameter. I then descended by means of some poles laid slanting about thirty foot, to a circular area of twenty-five diameter. Exactly above the center of this area is a hole about six foot diameter, which, besides the passage we came down by, gave light into it.

I then descended about six yards through a sloping passage, which in height and width will admit only one man at a time, and that stooping, into a magnificent round hall, with a flat floor of earth. From the top hung somewhat like icicles; but from the sides seemed to spring half icicles, which, rising from the height of five or six foot to the dome, looked like the clustered columns of Gothic architecture. The dome may be twenty-five foot high, and the hall is thirty foot in diameter.



1775  
May.

From the hall, I passed on the same level into a crooked gallery, in length about two hundred yards. It was seven or eight foot broad, and from six to eight or ten high. The sides and top looked like dirty freestone; the floor was perfectly level, and, in most places, miry to the ancles. Around us flew an infinite number of small bats,\* from which I defended myself by the lighted torch I carried in my hand. Many of these birds of darkness clung by little hooks at their wings to the sides of the passage. I might have gone farther, but declined it.

Returning, I saw the entrance into another passage, and felt a very small draft of air, which made our torches burn. This passage, I was told, went a good way, and gave another outlet; but at a distance reported so great, that none of my guides had ever ventured to explore it. As I went in barefooted, I found the miry stuff stick to my feet. Being very glutinous, it was not easily washed off. To make saltpetre, they mix one measure of this stuff with two of wood ashes; and then filter through it the water of which the saltpetre is made. The gunpowder they make here is very coarse grained, and has but little strength.

Many of the countries above Boyan are subject to the Rajah of Boyan. He is a Mahometan, and his subjects, called by the

\* Combes says, in the caves of Mindano are bats as large as fowls, and that saltpetre is made of their excrement.

On Sumatra are saltpetre caves, in the Sultan of Mocomoco's dominions. Mr. Terry, resident of Cattown, in 1770, offered to work them; but the governor and council of Fort Marlbro' gave him no encouragement.

Magindano

Magindano people, Oran Selam de Oolo (inland Muffulmen), may be about twenty thousand males.

1775.  
May.

While I was at Magindano, the Rajah of Boyan paid a visit to Rajah Moodo. He had an iron gun, at least a six pounder, in a large sampan or canoe. All his boats were covered; and numerous were his attendants, male and female; the former armed with sword, shield, and lance. All day they were ashore at Rajah Moodo's; but at night retired to their canoes. The visit lasted a week. The fight of us seemed to strike surprise.

In case of war, the Rajah of Boyan is obliged to supply Magindano with a certain number of men. The Rajah of Boyan can have no connexion with any body out of the river, without leave of Magindano. As all egress must be by water, the Sultan has him in a manner locked up; unless indeed he go by the lake Buluan, and the harbour of Sugud Boyan, between which is a communication by land over a flat country; as will be shown hereafter.

About twenty miles above Coto Intang, where, I am told, the tide runs little or nothing, the grounds are overflowed, as in all similar flat countries, during the wet season. There, the grounds are richer than where the water runs off with the tide, and afford a much greater increase of rice. At Coto Intang they plant rice in May and June, and reap when the dry season begins, which is in November.

C H A P.

