



The South China Roots of Minangkabau Culture: An Anthropological and Historical Study

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Abstract

Based on the information obtained in *Tambo* as a historical source for the Minangkabau tribe, it can be seen that *Tambo* presents a narrative of the relationship between the Minangkabau and Chinese tribes on various issues. The Minangkabau tribe has cultural products with Chinese names, such as the *guntiang cino* clothes worn by princes and the *aka cino* motif found in traditional Minangkabau houses, namely the rumah gadang. This article used historical research to explore the relationship between Minangkabau and Chinese ethnicities. Source collection was carried out using library research techniques. Data analysis used a historical-anthropological approach. Based on research findings, it is worth noting that two waves of *Proto-Malay* and *Deutero-Malay* human races arrived in Sumatra from the South China region. Data analysis in *Tambo*, cultural aspects, and literary sources concluded that the Minangkabau tribe has a history and culture similar to the Zhuang tribe in Guangxi Province, southern mainland China. This is based on the similarities in the cultural products of the two ethnic groups, such as traditional Minangkabau women's clothing in the form of *tingkuluak* and *suntiung* items. Both ethnic groups also uphold the buffalo as one of their traditional animals. Matrilineal descent is a unique connecting factor in the Minangkabau tribe. In contrast, the Zhuang ethnic group has abandoned this system due to socio-political developments, the dominance of the Han ethnic group, and patriarchal culture.

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I. Introduction

The island of Sumatra has a strategic role in developing Indonesian civilization because of its location as a trading area. According to Elizabeth E. Graves (2007), Sumatran residents have a high level of mobility and travel long distances (*merantau*) with various motivations. According to Van Vollenhoven in Koentjaraningrat's work (2009), the Minangkabau tribe is one of the 19 main tribes that inhabit Indonesia. The history of the tribe's arrival is complicated based on archaeological evidence. However, the tribe's history can be traced through oral cultural traditions passed down from generation to generation through *Tambo*. From a traditional historiographic perspective,

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Tambo has similarities with the genealogical approach in explaining Minangkabau ancestors, namely linking them to essential figures such as the Prophet Adam AS. and King Iskandar Zulkarnain. However, *Tambo* is less clear regarding chronology and biographical details (Abdullah T., 1985). From an academic point of view, *Tambo* is more often considered a literary work than a historical work because its historical content only reaches 2% (Mansur, 1970; Djamaris, 1991). However, oral sources remain an appropriate choice for writing history, as African history was primarily documented through oral sources before the arrival of European nations (Vansina, 2014). In *Tambo*, Iskandar Zulkarnain had three children who later founded their civilizations in various parts of the world. Among them are Nan Tuo Maharadjo Alif, who spread towards the Rum Continent, Nan Tengah Maharadjo Depang, who headed to China, and the youngest Nan Maharadjo Diradjo, who headed to Tanah Basa (India), then headed to Paco Island, which is now mainland Sumatra, and anchored precisely at Mount Marapi land (Basa & Permato, 1966). According to *Tambo*, the ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe were immigrants who had traveled long before arriving on the mainland of Sumatra. The complex genealogical structure of the Minangkabau tribe makes it attractive to study, especially in the assumption of its genealogical connection with community groups in the past region of Southern China.

Research has been conducted on the relationship between the Minangkabau tribe and other tribes, such as the Jambi Malay tribe, both in political and cultural contexts. Rahim (2021) uses a genealogical approach to explain the connection between the Minangkabau elite and the establishment of the Malay noble elite in Jambi. Research findings show that tracing inter-ethnic relations can start from population migration from the area of origin to new areas or through the influence of political hegemony and the spread of cultural practices from one area to other affected areas. Apart from using a genealogical approach, a historical, anthropological approach was also used by Auliahadi and Pratama (2023) to research the relationship between the Minangkabau Tribe and the Anak Dalam Tribe. The research analysis emphasizes the cultural closeness of the two tribes being compared, which are culturally related in terms of language and matrilineal descent. Research on the relationship between the Minangkabau ethnic group and other ethnicities was also carried out using a phenomenological approach by Sahputri, Agustono, and Zuska (2021) about the Minangkabau merantau culture, which produced the Aneuk Jamee Tribe in Aceh. The results show that migration from one ethnic group to another can lead to changes in identity and resilience of the culture of origin. Research linking local ethnic relations with Chinese has been carried out by Prasetyo (2015), Said (2019), Sya (2019), Utami (2020), Pattiasina (2021) and Abelio & Junaidi (2021). This research does not explore the possibility of ethnic Chinese descendants in one of the Indonesian ethnic groups. However, it focuses on social interactions between ethnic Chinese and Indonesian society during the interaction process of their arrival. These interactions can lead to changes in the cultural identity of an ethnic group, both from an interactionist perspective and through cultural evolution. Research linking Minangkabau and Chinese ethnicities conducted by Ridzki (2017), Makmur (2018), Sjojfan (2018), and Kurniawan (2023) all highlight the cultural acculturation of Chinese people after arriving and settling in Minangkabau land. The Minangkabau people believe in adapting to the surrounding environment, as reflected in their saying, '*Dima bumi dipijak, disinan langik dijunjuang* or where the earth is stepped on, there the sky is upheld.' The acculturation of Minangkabau and Chinese culture can be seen in various wedding decorations, including motifs of phoenixes, peacocks, butterflies, deer, lotus flowers, chrysanthemums, and the gold color of the threads (Rahmanita, 2012; Fitra, 2022).

After carrying out the study, it is necessary to study further the historical and cultural links between the Minangkabau tribe and non-local Indonesian (Nusantara) tribes. This research will analyze the connection or relationship between the Minangkabau tribe and the Chinese tribe in the Southern China region. This area is used as a benchmark for the origin of the migration area of the ancestors of the Indonesian people, both during *the Proto-Malay* and *Deutero-Malay* waves. Cultural similarities arise from the historical process of cultural diffusion (Koentjaraningrat, 2007; Koentjaraningrat, 2009). These scattered cultures can develop and transform into new cultures due

to environmental influences and interactions with other cultures. So, rather than focusing on the acculturation aspect, this research tries to explain the historical traces of the Minangkabau and Southern Chinese ethnicities in terms of their historical and cultural links.

The initial argument of this research is based on the theory of the distribution of ancient humans in the archipelago originating from southern China, as explained above. Another argument used is the existence of several narratives in *Tambo* that explain the relationship between the ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe and China. The initial argument is based on socio-cultural facts contained in Minangkabau cultural products. These objects have names related to China, such as the traditional clothes of traditional leaders called *baju guntiang chino* and one of the motifs on Minangkabau traditional houses, namely *rumah gadang* which features the *aka cino* motif.

II. Methods

The research was qualitative research using historical research methods consisting of four stages: 1) collecting sources, which in this case was carried out through narratives in *Tambo*, Minangkabau cultural products, as well as a study of relevant books and journal articles; 2) source criticism, which involves selecting the most relevant data sources from the collection; 3) interpretation and analysis of data carried out using a historical-anthropological approach; and 4) writing down the results of historical or historiographic research.

The data collection technique in this research did not adapt the raw information obtained in the *Tambo*. As stated in the research introduction, the historical information in the *Tambo* only covers approximately 2% of the available data. Therefore, existing archaeological evidence must be utilized to strengthen the narrative references in the *Tambo*. Because there is no archaeological evidence, such as statues or inscriptions, that can explain with certainty the chronology of the arrival of the Minangkabau tribe to mainland Sumatra, these cultural products are used to trace the history of the Minangkabau tribe and their relationship with human groups from Southern China. Thus, the sources used in this research are not only *Tambo* but also Minangkabau cultural products (clothing, traditions, arts, and so on), literature that studies Minangkabau history and culture, and other related references.

This research analysis used a historical and anthropological approach to examine the links and interrelationships between two groups of people. In analyzing *Tambo* as a historical source, it was essential to maintain a critical attitude toward its scientific content while still recognizing its authority as a cultural, historical, and traditional literary product that holds sacred value for the Minangkabau people. *Tambo* provided information about the origins of the Minangkabau tribe, its distribution, its territory, and the rules that guide community life. According to Koentjaraningrat (2007), ethnicity is a social unity with cultural roots and identity. It refers to a group with the same consciousness and desire for cultural and ancestral unity. Based on this theory, researching relationships between different ethnicities can be done by examining cultural similarities and origins.

According to Pratama (2019), Siregar (2020), and Haerullah (2021), ethnic migration can be motivated by various factors, such as the need for new land due to population growth, economic reasons, nomadic culture, interaction with other groups, beliefs, and even conflict. These factors can also influence the continuity or change of culture migrants bring from their origin. When examining relations between different ethnicities, it is essential to consider two trends in constructing ethnic identity. Romli (2015) describes this tendency as an exclusive and inclusive assessment. Exclusive assessment prioritizes one's ethnicity and views inclusive ethnic groups as competitors. Meanwhile, an objective assessment attitude is an attitude that considers all parties to have the same position and equality with other parties.

Tracing history through human cultural artifacts is possible because they were created according to the values and conditions of human thought and the environment of the era in which the artifacts were created. Clifford Geertz defines culture as a pattern of meaning or ideas in

symbols through which people learn about life and express consciousness (Geertz, 1983). The symbols in cultural products such as language, clothing, and customs can be used to trace the interrelationship between the Minangkabau tribe and their early ancestors. This research focuses on ethnic Chinese in the southern region of China.

III. Results and Discussion

Formation of Early Civilization in the Proto-Malay Migration Era

During the *Proto-Malay wave*, Austronesian peoples migrated to the archipelago between 2500 and 1500 BC (Ryan, 1976; Horridge, 2006). This migration is considered the beginning of the two-wave theory of the origins of the Indonesian nation, which historians believe occurred during the Neolithic cultural era. According to some historians, the area may have been inhabited by indigenous people from the archipelago. These people are characterized by dark skin, curly hair, and short stature. In the 19th century, historians, archaeologists, and colonial biologists theorized that the archipelago's indigenous people were related to Africans (Jinam et al., 2017; Mahdi, 2017).

The groups that came from the north consisted of Austronesian peoples from Taiwan and Southern China, as stated by Blench (2016). These two groups share common ancestors with 'pre-Austronesian' people from mainland Fujian, China, and with the Dongson and Hoabinh groups from the direction of Champa (Vietnam and Cambodia) (Bellwood, 1988; Barnard, 2004). The distribution route is divided into two routes: one through Taiwan, spreading to the Philippines, Sulawesi, Maluku, and Papua, and another through mainland South China to reach Indochina, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Kalimantan and Java (Simanjuntak, 2017). The assimilation and acculturation of immigrants and native populations took place peacefully, as evidenced by the birth of various ethnic groups in the archipelago and Polynesia. These groups are a mixture of Austronesian, Negrito, and Melanesian relations. Immigrants and natives assimilate each other's identities and blend.

Following the formation of Sumatran society as a result of this mixture, the ancestors of the Sumatran people who belonged to the *Proto-Malay* group developed stone culture. This culture is widely found in Southeast Asia, with the largest concentration in Western Indonesia. Prasetyo explained that this stone culture is not the original culture of the Austronesian island group but rather a culture acquired through subsequent interactions with new arrivals from mainland India and China. Archaeological evidence in the form of large stones is rarely found in Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines (Prasetyo, 2006; Tan, 2016). This stone cultural tradition is often found in Polynesia and Micronesia, and is thought to have developed due to interactions between island communities through shipping relations. The island's people developed a new culture, including mystical beliefs in magical and natural powers associated with objects like boulders. This belief is based on animism and dynamism (Liston & Rieth, 2010; Carson, 2012; Peterson, 2012; Richards et al., 2015; Rainbird & Wilson, 2015; Watts et al., 2015).

In terms of architectural similarities, Austronesian groups in Taiwan, South China, the Islands, and Polynesia had houses built on stilts. This design is intended to avoid natural disasters such as floods and wild animals. The basement of the house was also used as a livestock pen. House buildings are usually supported by pillars (Sato, 1991; Arbi et al., 2013) and consist of a main house, living room, community room (called *balai* in the Minangkabau language), and a hut or food storage area (in Minangkabau *gadang* houses it is called *rankiang*), *lepau* for food storage (or *lapau* in Minangkabau language). Meanwhile, the terms *kamalir* room (men's room) and *banua* (group area) are not used in Minangkabau houses (Fox, 1993; Blust & Trussel, 2013).

Archaeological findings reveal evidence of life in the Stone Age in the West Sumatra region, specifically at the ancient site in Nagari Maek, Limapuluh Kota Regency. This site displays a vast expanse of menhirs. The first Austronesian human groups to inhabit the region arrived via the South China-Indochina-Malay Peninsula-East Sumatra route, and the prehistoric lands of West Sumatra were located in the Maek area. It is still being determined whether the Austronesian people who

founded the stone civilization in Nagari Maek were the ancestors of the Minangkabau people known today. The prehistoric inhabitants of Nagari Maek are believed to be related to the Austronesian tribes of the Proto-Malay wave, including the Batak in North Sumatra and the Mentawai in Mentawai, West Sumatra. It is uncertain whether the structure of Minangkabau society, as it is known today, existed in the Stone Age. Historians and anthropologists include Minangkabau in the Deutero Malay group.



Figure 1. Menhir Situ in Nagari Maek. Source: (Katik News, 2021) .

The Formation of West Sumatran Civilization in the Era of Deutero-Malay Migration

Deutero Malay Wave was marked by the emergence of the Austronesian civilization, which shifted from stone culture to the management of metals such as iron and bronze (Ooi, 2004). This metal processing culture originated from Mainland Asia and spread through the South Indochina-Malay Peninsula-Nusantara route and the previous wave's entry route. This second wave of society no longer lives a nomadic life. They began to settle and cultivate their agricultural land using more advanced equipment than in the Stone Age. They formed their villages, especially near water sources such as rivers, lakes, and coastlines, and interacted with other immigrants, primarily through waterways. This society is considered the ancestor of today's Malay society, including the Minangkabau society (Bakar, 2002).

Apart from metal management, this wave of development also led to the emergence of language and script among Austronesian people. The script used by this family is the result of interactions with other cultures (Fischer, 1997). For example, Austronesian people in Southeast Asia obtained their first letter of the alphabet after interacting with Ancient Indian people who had Abugida, Brahmi, Grantha, and Pallawa scripts. This process aligns with the Indianization of Austronesian peoples in Southeast Asia. The shape of the characters is adapted to the writing media used; round characters are often found in soft writing media, and sharp characters are often found in complex writing media. They were intended to write about worldly, medical, and even mystical matters (Adelaar, 2005). The route of distribution of this ancient Indian script also passed through Indochina, the Malay Peninsula, and the Indonesian Archipelago.

The Minangkabau script is also found in the *Tambo* book in Nagari Pariangan and Nagari Sulik Aia. This script is similar to the Lontara script used by the Bugis tribe. The language used in the *Tambo* manuscript, written in Minangkabau script, is Minangkabau. Gradually the Minangkabau

script was lost due to external influences, such as the adoption of the Pallawa script during the Hindu Pagaruyung era and the Malay Arabic script (Jawi Arabic) during the Islamization period.



Figure 2. Minangkabau Script. Source: (Limbago: Majalah Adat dan Kebudayaan Minangkabau No. 5 Tahun 1987).

Note: This is a script found in Nagari Tuo Pariangan. This script is also found in the Baanjuang Museum at the Kinantan Zoo in Bukittinggi.

As an ethnic group classified as *Deutero Malay*, the Minangkabau tribe already has its script; however, the Anak Dalam tribe (formerly known as Kubu), which identifies itself as a community group tied to the Minangkabau tribe, does not have a similar script. They do not even make the buffalo the symbol of their tribe, even though they claim to share the same leadership under the Pagaruyung Kingdom in Minangkabau. Extensive research has been conducted on the Anak Dalam tribe, focusing on their history and relationship with the Minangkabau tribe and their transition from a nomadic to a settled tribe. Based on the findings obtained, it is proven that the Anak Dalam tribe is not among the Austronesian immigrants who came from the Southern China region. The tribe still belongs to the Weddoid racial group because of their short stature, dark skin, and curly hair (Auliahadi & Pratama, 2023). Historians and anthropologists argue that the Indonesian archipelago was once inhabited by a race of dark-skinned, short-bodied, curly-haired humans related to the African Negrito, before the arrival of the Proto-Malay group (Jinam et al., 2017; Mahdi, 2017).

When comparing the Anak Dalam tribe with Austronesian tribes such as the Batak, Nias, and Mentawai, it is important to note that although they adhere to animist beliefs and dynamism, they do not come from the same ancestral line and have different cultures. The Anak Dalam tribe adheres to matrilineal customs. Apart from that, the stone civilization in Nagari Maek seems to have nothing to do with the Anak Dalam tribe. Based on my research experience in the field, it appears that the Anak Dalam Tribe adheres to animistic beliefs and dynamism, which they express by attaching themselves to the natural surroundings such as hills, forests, plants, and animals. Not expressed in rock media. The humans who had previously formed civilization in Nagari Maek had spread to other areas to form new settlements. Therefore, the Anak Dalam tribe was already the

original population of Sumatra Island before the arrival of the *Proto-Malay* group and long before the wave of *Deutero Malays* who became the ancestors of the Minangkabau people.

I use the 'Sundaland Distribution' theory developed by Stephen Oppenheimer to support my theory. Oppenheimer provides his explanation of the indigenous peoples of the Indonesian archipelago. He stated that there was once land in Southeast Asia called Sundaland, which connected Kalimantan, Sumatra, Java, and the Malay Peninsula. Part of this land sank and separated, resulting in the current configuration. Oppenheimer explained that the existing communities remained in their respective areas and were not submerged. Others spread to other lands, including the Asian continent (Palmer, 2007; Soares, 2008; Abdullah, 2009; Oppenheimer & Enfield, 2011).

Minangkabau ancestors were among the many people who built civilization in West Sumatra. Before his arrival, there were Indigenous Peoples, including the Anak Dalam Tribe, and the Proto Malay group who formed civilization in Nagari Maek. The Minangkabau people came 'late' in the Deutero Malay wave, originating from India and South China. Therefore, the customs and culture of the Anak Dalam tribe do not include the use of buffalo or their attributes as symbols, in contrast to the Minangkabau people.

Minangkabau Culture Adopting Southern Chinese Tribal Culture?

Awil (2017) discovered interesting information about the Zhuang Tribe, the largest ethnic minority in Guangxi, during his visit to the region. The Zhuang tribe is a minority group located in southern China. The Zhuang people are the largest ethnic minority in the Guangxi autonomous region. They are also spread across the Yunnan, Guangdong, Guizhou, and Hunan regions. In the Aswil tourism experience in the city of Guangxi, there was an interesting phenomenon: several portraits of the life of the Zhuang people have similar cultural values to the Minangkabau people.

In his research, Aswil saw that this tribe's traditional clothing was similar to the traditional clothing worn by the Minangkabau people, especially the use of buffalo horn elements. While visiting Longji PingAn village, also known as '*sawah terasering*', he passed through the Sangjiang County area and observed that the local residents had the habit of worshiping buffalo. Additionally, two giant buffalo statues can be found in the area mall. The Zhuang deeply respect the buffalo and consider it a symbol of their society. Apart from that, the Zhuang people used buffalo to plow the fields.



Figure 3. Buffalo Statue in Sangjiang County, China. Source: (Aswil, 2017)

Aswil (2017) found additional information about the tribe's traditional dish, baked in bamboo, which is similar to how Minangkabau food is served (called *lamang*). In addition, some tribal women in China wear head coverings in the shape of buffalo palanquins, similar to *the tikuluak* and *suntieng* head coverings worn by Minangkabau women. The traditional clothing of men from the Zhuang and Dong tribes is similar to that of Minangkabau men, especially during ceremonies and traditional arts such as *silek* and *randai*. In the traditional house section, the Zhuang tribe's traditional house also follows the stilt house style. It leaves a *ksoong* space under the house, in accordance with the characteristics of Austronesian traditional houses. However, the roof is not shaped like buffalo horns like the *bagonjong* roofs of *gadang* houses in Minangkabau land.



Figure 4. Comparison of Minangkabau and Chinese Traditional Wedding Clothing. Source: (Aswil, 2017)

Note: Minangkabau clothing is on the left, traditional Chinese clothing is on the right.



Figure 5. Comparison of Traditional Minangkabau and Chinese Wedding Women's Clothing. Source: (Aswil, 2017).

Note: Minangkabau clothing is on the left (*Tikuluak* and *Suntieng*), traditional Chinese clothing is on the right.



Figure 6. Comparison of Minangkabau Men's Traditional Clothing and Men in Yunnan, South China. Source: (Aswil, 2017)

Note: Minangkabau clothing is on the left and traditional Chinese clothing is on the right.



Figure 7. Comparison of Minangkabau and Zhuang Buffalo Fighting Traditions. Source: (Aswil, 2017)

Note: Minangkabau (left) and Chinese (right) buffalo fighting.

Additionally, the Zhuang have ethnic relatives, particularly the Nùng tribe of Vietnam (West, 2010). The Nùng tribe in Vietnam experienced a shift in identity due to political pressure from the majority group in Vietnam. Previously, they were considered immigrants from Southern China by Vietnamese people. However, they are now recognized as native to Vietnam (Barlow, 1987). The Zhuang have abandoned their matrilineal culture. These genealogical traces show that the Zhuang tribe is descended from the Lạc Việt tribe in the North Vietnam region, whose social system inherited power through the maternal line or matriarchy (Chaisingkananont, 2014). Land ownership in the Lạc community is communal and not based on individuals. Inheritance rights to land are given to men and women. In contrast to Chinese society, where sons inherit wealth through their fathers, in Lạc society both men and women inherit wealth through their mothers (Taylor, 2013).

Furthermore, it is worth noting that women of the Lạc tribe held high positions in society (Tessitore, 1989). The Lạc Việt tribe adheres to a matrilineal society system, where a husband and wife live together or near the wife's parents. As a result, the female descendants of a mother continue to live in or near the mother's house, forming an extended clan family. After marriage, the couple often lives with the wife's family. It is important to note that *Proto-Vietnamese* society was also matrilineal (O'Harrow, 1979). The status of Lạc rulers was passed down through the maternal line, and women had inheritance rights. In addition, they practiced levirate, which allowed widows to marry male relatives of their late husbands. This practice ensures an heir for the mother, protects the interests of widows, and reflects women's authority. However, some patriarchal societies use it to maintain wealth in the male family line (De Vos & Slote, 1998; Taylor, 2013; Kiernan, 2019). The Zhuang tribe follows a matrilineal system in which bloodlines are traced through both male and female members. Men are actively involved in raising children and usually live with their wives' families rather than forming their own families (Encyclopedia.com, 2024).

However, the Zhuang tribe no longer practices matrilineal descent. This change is believed to be due to the political domination of China's other majority ethnic group, namely the Han people. The Zhuang tribe has had a long history of interaction with the Han tribe since 202 BC – 202 AD and the two groups have been in intense competition since ancient times. In the past, Northern Chinese ethnic groups, particularly the Han, held negative views of the Zhuang due to the prominent social status of Zhuang women (Encyclopedia.com, 2024). Following a conflict between the two tribes in 1055, the Zhuang were defeated and assimilated into Han culture (West, 2010).

Interpretation of the Migration Journey of Minangkabau Ancestors in Tambo

In *Tambo*, Iskandar Zulkarnain is said to be a descendant of the Prophet Adam; during his life, he had three children, who then spread and founded their own civilizations in various parts of the world. Among them are Nan Tuo Maharadjo Alif, who spread towards the Rum Continent, Nan Tengah Maharadjo Depang who headed to China, and the youngest Nan Maharadjo Diradjo who headed to Tanah Basa (India) then headed to Paco Island which is now mainland Sumatra, and anchored precisely at Mount Marapi land (Basa & Permato, 1966). According to *Tambo*, the ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe were immigrants who had traveled long distances before arriving on the mainland of Sumatra. On his journey, King Maharadja Diradja was accompanied by his advisor, Cati Bilang Pandai, and four of his bodyguards: *Anjing Mualim* (from India), *Kambiang Hutan* (from Champa), *Harimau Champo* (from Champa), and *Kuciang Siam* (from Siam, Thailand - Indochina). Please pay attention to the quotations in *the Tambo* which are quoted from the *Tambo* manuscript Minangkabau Law belonging to Surau Parak Laweh, Nagari Tuo Pariangan:

a. The story of the birth of Iskandar Zulkarnain in *Tambo*:

Adapun tatkala bumi akan berkembang, tatkala Adam akan bertemu akan tapaku isi dunia ialah anak cucu Adam 'alaihissalam datang jadi Raja ialah anak Adam nan bungsu. Adapun anak Adam 'alaihi salam tiga puluh sembilan orang bernikah antara satu anak kepada satu anak, maka tiada boleh istri anak adam nan bungsu maka dikirimkan oleh malaikat kepada awang-kemawang, maka heranlah Adam dengan Hawa dan anaknya. Maka bertiup angin dalam surga, maka dipalu gendang surga tabuh, maka bertiup serunai sirundang kacang, dan rebana dan kecapi, maka terkembanglah payung obor, maka menari segala anak akan bidadari dalam surga, karena suka melihat anak Adam dari awang-kemawang dari langit yang ketujuh, maka bergoyang yang kayu Sidratul Muntaha. Maka terbuka pintu baitul ma'mur, maka segala Malaikat itu pergi kepada anak Adam itu, maka sama-sama memegangkan tangannya dan kakinya maka menangislah Adam serta Hawa anak beranak kepada langit maka dilihat mereka itu anak itu bertanduk emas sejati. (As for when the earth will develop when Adam meets my father, the contents of the world will be the grandchildren of Prophet Adam, who will come to be King, namely Adam's youngest son. As for the sons of Adam 'alaihi salam, thirty-nine people married one child to another, so the wife of Adam's youngest child was not permitted so the angel sent them to Awang-Kewang, so Adam was amazed at Eve and her children. Then the wind blows in heaven, then the drums of heaven are hammered, then the drums of the peanuts, the tambourine and the harp blow, then the umbrella of torches spreads, then all the children dance and become angels in heaven, because they like to see the children of Adam from the clouds of the seventh heaven. , then the Sidratul Muntaha wooden one sways. Then the door of Baitul Ma'mur opened, then all the angels went to the son of Adam, and they both held his hands and feet, so Adam and Eve cried to the sky, and they saw that the child had real golden horns).

Maka takutlah dia, maka kedengaran suatu suara dari pada Pucuk Bukit Kaf, maka menangislah Adam serta anak beranak kepada Bukit Kaf itu. Maka melihat Adam akan anak-beranak diatas bukit itu, seperti buih di laut putihnya. Maka heranlah Adam serta Hawa anak-beranak, maka meminta doalah ia kepada Allah ta'ala "Ya Rabbi al-'alamin pertemuan jua hamba serta anak cucu hamba". Maka hampirlah turun kedunia, maka laut itupun berombak, maka ikan yang beri bernama Nun pun menyambar, maka bergerak bumi semuanya antah-berantah rasanya alam. Sebab itulah bernama Tanah Rum bermuka kata segala anak Adam yang laki-laki serta ibu bapanya. Maka sudipun kita melihat rupanya maka Malaikatpun menurunkan anak Adam itu kepada bumi yang suci antara Pasirik jo Pasiruang antara masyriq dan magrib, antara timur dan selatan, antara Bukit Siguntang Penjaringan, ialah akan namanya Tanah Rum. Maka di keluarkan Allah anak Indera Cati salapan orang, bernama Cati Dipasudi dia lagi banyak lagi manis mulutnya itulah nan jadi

angkat-angkatan sembah Adam itu. (So he was afraid, and then he heard a voice from the top of Mount Kaf, so Adam and his children cried on Mount Kaf. So Adam saw children on the hill, like foam in the white sea. So Adam and Eve were surprised to have children, so they asked Allah to pray, "O Rabbi al-'alamin, meet my servant and my children and grandchildren." Then it almost came down to earth, then the sea was wavering, then the fish called Nun grabbed, then the earth moved, everything felt like it was in the middle of nowhere. That is why the name Land of Rum is said to be the name of all the sons of Adam and their parents. So even if we look at it, the angel sent down Adam's child to the holy earth between Pasirik and Pasiruang, between Mashriq and Maghrib, between East and South, between Bukit Siguntang Penjaringan, which will be called the Land of Rum. So Allah gave birth to the child of Indra, Cati, named Cati Dipasudi. She had much sweetness in her mouth and became the adopter of Adam's worship).

Maka berkampunglah segala anak Adam itu. Semuanya berkata kepada saudaranya takut kami akan tanduknya, itu maka dikeratnya tanduk itu sekerat jadi mangkuto sangkahani, sekerat jadi lembarang/lambanglamiri sekali, sekerat jadi sirih orang tampuknya kuning, gagangnya merah rupanya, parutannya jadi tembaga seramaian koto. Turunlah Malaikat dari pada langit yang ketujuh akan menamai tanduk itu maka dinamai oleh Malaikat akan tanduk itu ialah bernama Dzulqornain, yang mempunyai dua kerajaan dunia artinya masyriq dan magrib. Maka dinamai oleh Malaikat Raja Iskandar namanya, Dzulqornain gelarnya. (So, all of Adam's children settled down. Everyone said to their brothers that they were afraid of us for their horns, so they cut off a piece of the horn to make it a mangkuto sangkahani, a piece of it to become a leman/symbol of lamiri once, a piece of it to become a betel nut, the tampuk is yellow, the handle is apparently red, the grate is made of copper like a koto. An angel came down from the seventh heaven and named the horn, so the angel named the horn Dzulqornain, which has two world kingdoms, Mashriq and Maghrib. So it was named by the Angel King Iskandar, Dzulqornain his title).

b. The story of the distribution of Iskandar Zulkarnain's children:

Maka beranak raja itu tiga orang sekali seorang bernama Sultan Maharaja, anak nan surang bernama Sultan Maharaja Diraja, nan seorang bernama Sultan Maharaja Dipang. Maka sampai baligh ketiganya, maka memandang daulat yang dipituan/dipertuan ke masyriq tentang itu (...) semuanya, maka memandang ia ke Selatan tentang itu (...) semuanya, maka memandang ia ke dataran tentang itu semuanya. Maka mufakat ketiganya kemana akan berjalan, maka ia ke magrib maka terbitlah api antara Bukit Siguntang maha tinggi, ialah dalam Laut Selatan. Maka seorang hendak mangkuto sungguhan, maka berebut ketiganya maka maka jatuhlah ke dalam laut. Maka dibuat hasil (...), maka di suruh Cati Bilang Pandai maka dilihatnya mangkuto itu sudahlah di palaut (...) (...). Maka kembali Cati Bilang Pandai maka tiadalah diatas perahu maka di dapati daulat yang dipituan dengan seorang ialah bernama Sri Maharaja Diraja. Maka berpekara Cati Bilang pandangpun melihat emas sejati, maka diperbuat mangkuto sudah tukang babunuh tidak boleh di tiru lai. Maka heranlah raja nan baru itu, maka merentaklah akan berlayar nan surang Maharajo Alif, nan pai ka banda Ruhum, nan surang Maharajo Dipang nan pai ka Nagari Cino, nan surang Maharajo Dirajo manapek ka pulau ameh nan ko. (So the King had three children: one named Sultan Maharaja, another child named Sultan Maharaja Diraja, and another named Sultan Maharaja Dipang. So until his third puberty, then he looked at the ruler who was dipituan/dipertuan to the masyriq about it (...) everything, then he looked to the South about it (...) everything, then he looked at the plain about it all. So the three of them agreed on where to go, so they went to sunset and a fire rose between the highest Siguntang Hill, which was in the South Sea. Then one of them wanted to mangkuto for real, so the three of them fought over each other, and then they fell

into the sea. So the result was made (...), then he told Cati Bilang Clever, so he saw that the mangkuto was already in palaut (...) (...). So again, Cati Bilang Pandai was off the boat and found the sovereign, who was married to Sri Maharaja Diraja. So Cati said that even if you look at it, you see real gold; what a murderer has done to a mangkuto, he must not imitate it. So the new King was amazed, so he set sail to Surang Maharajo Alif, Nan Pai to Banda Ruhum, Nan Surang Maharajo Dipang, Nan Pai to Nagari Cino, Nan Surang Maharajo Dirajo Manapek to Pulau Ameh Nan Ko).

c. The story of Sulan Maharajo Dirajo's arrival to Marapi:

Maka berlebur Sultan Sri Maharaja Diraja ke Pulau Jawa orang serta serta pengiring Anjing Mu'alim, seekor Kucing Siam, seekor Harimau Campa, seekor Kambing Hutan. Maka (...) perahu kayu jati, maka berlebur dari sananya, maka tibalah di pucuk Pulau Emas maka pecah perahu di Gunung Sinarung. Maka mufakat (...) karena takut pada titah raja, maka berpikir Cati Bilang Pandai akan perbaiki kayu perahu itu. Maka minta daulat yang dipituan kepada aku ambilah jadi menantu maka segala isi perahu itu apabila baik perahu itu kembali kepada tempatnya, maka aku ambil lah engkau jadi menantu. Maka mari marilah segala yang berakal dalam perahu maka di perbaiki kayu perahu itu maka kembali kepada tempatnya. (So Sultan Sri Maharaja Diraja merged with the people on the island of Java and was accompanied by Mu'alim's dog, a Siamese cat, a Campa tiger, and a forest goat. So (...) the teak wood boat melted from there, then arrived at the top of Gold Island and the boat broke apart on Mount Sinarung. So they reached a consensus (...) because they feared the King's order. Cati Bilang Pandai thought he would repair the boat's wood. So ask the sovereign given to me to take you as my son-in-law. If all the boat's contents are reasonable, it will return to its place, and then I will take you as my son-in-law. So come, let everything that has sense in the boat repair the wood of the boat and return it to its place).

Maka heranlah raja itu, maka Allah ta'ala kasih akan raja itu, maka jadikan Allah anak cu Adam empat orang manusia, lima dengan anak raja maka berlayarlah raja maka berlayarlah raja ke Pulau Jawa, maka berbalik dari pada nan Negeri Jawa kembali kepada Gunung Marapi sinar berasa. Maka anak itu sampai bilangnyanya maka dinikahkan anak itu lima orang perempuan serta lima orang laki-laki nan perbaiki kayu perahu tadi... Menjadikan Manusia Kambing itu, mengadakan manusia seorang Harimau Campa itu, mengadakan manusia seorang Kucing Siam, mengadakan manusia seorang maka perempuan, Raja mengadakan manusia seorang. (So the King was amazed, then Allah loved the King, so Allah made four human children from Adam, five with the King's children, so the King sailed, then the King sailed to the island of Java, then he turned from the land of Java back to Mount Marapi. The light feels. So the child said that the child was married off to five women and five men who repaired the wood of the boat. He made a Goat Man; he made a Campa Tiger; he made a Siamese Cat; he made a woman, and the King made a)man.

Maka lamalah antaranya sebulan jo dua bulan sampai empat. Sudah itu nikahi maka bertanya minantu tadi, maka berapalah lamanya apabila ada engkau (...) adalah bicara hamba. Maka sudahlah ditanyakan semuanya, maka berbagai jawabnya melainkan seorang (...) dan (...). Maka raja itu ia nya berfikir dalam hatinya maka (...) antaranya maka laupun menyentak kering. Maka ditambahkan Allah jua dia kerah Tanah Datar dan sajurai ke Luak Agam dan sajurai ke Ranah Lima Puluh. maka disuruhkan lima orang tadi, seorang ke ranah tanah datar ialah anak (...) namanya, ke luak agam ialah harimau namanya, seorang ke ranah lima puluh ialah anak kambing namanya, seorang ke koto laweh ialah anak kucing tadi. (So the length is between a month and two months to four. If you're married, ask your son-in-law how long it will be if you are there (...)? That's what I am talking about. So, after asking everyone, there were various answers except one (...) and (...). So the King thought in his heart, so (...) the sea suddenly dried up. So Allah also added him to the realm of Tanah

Datar and sajurai to Luak Agam and sajurai to the realm of Fifty. So five people were sent, one to the land of the plains was the child (...)’s name, one to the realm of the land was the name of the tiger, one to the realm of the fifty was the goat’s name, one to the Koto Laweh was the kitten).

Maharadja Diradja and his advisor Cati Bilang Pandai traveled from India and stopped in the South China region, in accordance with the *Deutero-Malay* Austronesian wave distribution theory. It is possible that during this stopover, Mahardja Diradja’s entourage made contact with matrilineal tribes in Southern China, such as the Zhuang tribe, which has a culture similar to the Minangkabau. It is possible that Maharadja Diradja’s entourage assimilated into the matrilineal society in Southern China and then adopted their culture. Then they moved south, near the Indochina region, where Mahardja Diradja expanded his entourage by recruiting a group of people from that area. The *Tambo* mentions the names of four bodyguards from Siam and Champa (Vietnam). Namely Mualim Dog, Siamese Cat, Forest Kambiang, and Champa Tiger. They continued their journey towards the archipelago through the Strait of Malacca. They entered the Minangkabau mainland via the East coast of Sumatra (Siak and Kampar Route in Riau), which was later nicknamed East Minangkabau in traditional Minangkabau concepts. Upon arrival at Mount Marapi, the settlers cleared land and founded a new community named Nagari Pariangan. This settler began the ‘true’ civilization of the Minangkabau ancestors.

The abovementioned theory shows that Maharaja Diradja’s entourage was mixed with matrilineal tribes in Southern China, such as the Zhuang tribe, and they adopted their local wisdom. This theory is based on the concept of cultural acculturation. According to Rangkuti and Hasibuan (2002), acculturation is the process of meeting two cultures, where there is a process of contact and cultural borrowing while maintaining the characteristics of each culture. Koentjaraningrat (2009) defines cultural acculturation as a social process that occurs when two groups come into contact with their respective cultures. This foreign culture is gradually accepted and adopted into its own culture without eliminating the previous culture.

According to this explanation, the Minangkabau ancestors were immigrants from outside the Indonesian archipelago who mixed with Southern Chinese society and adhered to matrilineal culture and descent, and mixed with Austronesian society who lived in the Indochina region (Champa and Siam). Genealogically, the Minangkabau tribe and the Anak Dalam (Kubu) tribe have different ancestral paths. The interaction process between the Minangkabau migrant community and the interior indigenous communities, especially the Anak Dalam Tribe, runs smoothly in their respective regions. This peaceful coexistence can be linked to using the same family lineage, namely matrilineal.

Until the birth of the kingdom era in the land of Minangkabau, such as Pagaruyung, ‘Orang Asli’, including the Anak Dalam tribe, were sheltered by the Pagaruyung Kingdom as part of the Alam Minangkabau community. However, they finally separated from the Minangkabau world after a traditional revolution led by the Padri movement, which integrated Minangkabau customs with Islamic teachings. The Minangkabau script was replaced by the Malay Arabic script (Jawi Arabic) during the intensive Islamization of the Minangkabau world. The Anak Dalam tribe, which was affected by the chaotic Padri conflict and the Dutch invasion, decided to leave Pagaruyung’s authority because they wanted to maintain the beliefs of their ancestors (Pratama & Auliahadi, 2019; Auliahadi & Pratama, 2023).

As the great civilization of the Minangkabau people was formed, they were recognized as one of the 19 largest tribes in the archipelago (Van Vollenhoven in Koentjaraningrat (2009)). The Minangkabau tribe also has ties with Chinese civilization. In this new era, the civilization in question may no longer be the traditional tribal society of Southern China. Instead, it may refer to interactions with the mainland Chinese state, which established an enormous hegemony and had powerful dynasties that took turns leading mainland China and dealing with other foreign states. The Minangkabau tribe also took a similar approach by naming their traditional headdress after the shirt, which is known as the baju *guntiang cino*.



Figure 8. Minangkabau Traditional Leader's *Guntiang Cino* Clothes

The Minangkabau people have close relations with China, this is reflected in various traditional proverbs that describe Chinese people as brothers, inspiration and competitors. Several Minangkabau proverbs highlight the Chinese influence in the carvings of their rumah gadang (Agustina, Marthala, & Efrizal, 2010):

"The gadang basandi stone house, atok ijuak baukia walls, like a bakilau star. Agarwood poles with sandalwood floors, tarali gadiang strung, bubuang burak ka tabang, paran ula ngiang images. Various kinds of Cino carvings, batatah and aia ameh, salo manyalo and aia silver. The story of karo bajuntai, anjuang batingkek baalun-alun, tampek paranginan puti there. Lumbuang bajaja in the yard, rangkiang Tujuhah babarih, sabuah sibayau-bayau, for panolong nan nan trade, sabuah sabuah lauik, for panolong korong jo kampung, lumbuang nan a lot to feed kamanakan children" ("The traditional house is made of stone, the roof is thatched, the walls are carved, like sparkling stars. Agarwood pillars, sandalwood floor, ivory trellis strung. Burak-like ridges will fly, paran with images of snakes ringing. Various Chinese carvings, inlaid with gold water, interspersed with silver water. Stories like dangling monkeys, terraced platforms in a square, a place where princesses stay. The barns are lined up in the yard, seven in a row, one is the bayau-bayau, to help the children of traders who pass by, another is the sea turtle, to help the village people, there are lots of barns to feed the children of their children)."

Rumah gadang displays carved motifs known as *aka cino* motifs . This motif has a Chinese name (*cino*) and is a symbol of the strong tradition of wandering adhered to by both Chinese and Minangkabau tribes. This motif reflects the persistence of the Minangkabau people in their merantau culture. Therefore, this motif was given the name *aka cino* to honor the perseverance and resilience of the Chinese people during their migration. A traditional Minangkabau proverb explains the philosophical meaning of this *aka cino* motif:

"Ukia aka induak carvings, depictions of life and nature of nangko. aka nan is filled with fruit, nan without aka bapiuah is like nan ayahai, traditional clothing jo limbago. At the beginning of the maso, the first cino became the size, aka labiah bicaro sharp, baguru barajo maso, painted with sabilah wood, figuratively pilin aka cino." ("Carvings of the main root are

carvings, depictions of the life of nature, the roots that are the fruit, the twisted roots visible, figures like those worn, traditional clothing and institutions. In the early days, China was the comparison; the mind was sharper, and learning was a king at that time, painted on one piece of wood, a symbol of the twisting roots of China)."



Figure 9. *Aka Cino* motif

The tenacity, toughness, hard work, and steadfastness of the Chinese tribe during their migration journey were immortalized by their Minangkabau ancestors in the form of a motif of roots that spread and intertwine with each other. Even though the roots spread everywhere, the roots and tubers remain unbroken. Likewise, ethnic Chinese have migrated far and wide but have not been cut off from their cultural roots, traditions, and inherited language. The *aka cino* motif symbolizes this unbreakable connection (Agustina et al., 2010).

IV. Conclusion

Explanations regarding the history of the Minangkabau tribe are generally still based on Tambo sources. However, the use of Tambo as a primary historical reference is limited due to the presence of myths and the need for literary interpretation. Tambo Minangkabau indirectly gives the impression that Minangkabau ancestors were immigrants from outside the archipelago. This figure, named Maharadja Diradja, is believed to have come from India. His journey continued through Southern China and Indochina, where he recruited bodyguards from the local area. According to a literature review, prehistoric South China and North Vietnam were inhabited by tribes who adhered to a matrilineal family system, such as the Lạc Việt and Zhuang tribes. The Zhuang tribe compared in this article inherited the matrilineal system from its parent tribe, the Lạc Việt tribe and formed another identity in the form of respect for buffalo. The Mahardja Diradja group experienced assimilation and adopted this system through interaction with the native population of South China. He took this culture with him on his journey until he reached the Minangkabau area, where he developed it further into the Minangkabau culture of today.

It is hoped that the theoretical implications of this research will elevate Tambo's position, which is often "sidelined" because it is considered too fictional to be used as a source of scientific reference. Understanding tambo in tracing Minangkabau history can be used with historical research methods using cultural theory and anthropology. The recommendation for this research is that works of traditional historiography, oral literature, or other works of local wisdom, both oral

and written, can be used as sources of scientific research by using analysis using relevant scientific theories.

This research has limitations in its analysis because it is only based on literature findings related to cultural and anthropological approaches. To increase accuracy, research on a society's history should also include laboratory research using genetic samples.

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VI. Author Contributions Statement

FSP was responsible for conceptualization, design, data source collection, analysis, and writing. NIH was responsible for source data collection, transliteration of the Tambo manuscripts used, and analysis.

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