

## Singhasari Kingdom (1222 – 1292)



Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Singhasari\\_Kingdom\\_en.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Singhasari_Kingdom_en.svg)

### Quick Facts:

<b>Capital</b>	Tumapel, later called Kutaraja Singhasari (currently a modern outskirts of Malang city in East Java)
<b>Languages</b>	Old Javanese, Sanskrit
<b>Religion</b>	Kejawen, Hinduism, Buddhism, Animism
<b>Government</b>	Monarchy
<b>Kings</b>	
1182–1227	Ken Arok
1227–1248	Anusapati
1248	Tohjoyo
1248–1268	Ranggawuni
1268–1292	Kertanegara

Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singhasari](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singhasari)

- Sadly, not much remains of the once powerful 13th century East Java kingdom of Singosari was found—one of the reasons is that much of the statues and relics were brought into the Netherlands during Dutch occupation of Indonesia.



This is what left of the Singosari Kingdom. This temple called *Candi Singosari* is located in Candirenggo village, the present day Singosari, about 10 km from downtown Malang city, East Java.

Now, let's go back into a more layered history about this kingdom-→

- The kingdom of Singosari was founded in 1222 by **Ken Arok**. Story has it that he married princess Ken Dedes of Janggala after murdering her husband. He then defeated Kediri Kingdom and established Singosari.
- The most famous king in Singosari that a lot of Indonesian people (especially Javanese) know and learn at school is Kartanegara. He succeeded in developing the rich agricultural region along the Brantas river as well as the maritime trade along the Java Sea. In 1275 and 1291 **king Kartanegara** attacked the maritime kingdom of Srivijaya in South Sumatra and gained control over the maritime trade in the Java and Sumatra seas.

**Now, let us review some historical events that worth-knowing about this kingdom in its heyday**, especially about *Singosari under King Kertanegara* and about 2 expeditions conducted by Singosari that changed its historical landscape.

- (a) This is a historical account that most Javanese students learn through their history textbook. It is a story about a daring act of Kertanegara. The story goes like this: Singosari kingdom was **so powerful** that the mighty Mongol emperor **Kublai Khan** regarded it as an important kingdom. He then sent his envoy to Singosari to demand that King Kertanegara personally submit allegiance to the emperor. But, surprisingly, Kertanegara **cut off** one of the Kublai Khan **envoy's ears** as a message to Kublai Khan that he would not surrender to foreign order.
- (b) In 1275, King Kertanegara launched an expedition northward towards the Srivijaya Kingdom in Sumatra to help secure the kingdom from the Ceylon (the present day Sri Lanka) pirates as well as to help Chola kingdom from being invaded. The expedition was

named **the Pamalayu expedition** (1275 – 1292) was led by Admiral Mahesa Anabrang to the Malaya region, and was also intended to secure the Malayan strait, the ‘Maritime Silk Road’ against potential **Mongol invasion**. → *As a result, the Malayan kingdoms then pledged allegiance to the king.*

**Why did King Kertanegara do all these?**

**It was learned that he had dreamed of surpassing Srivijaya as a regional maritime empire, controlling sea trade routes from China to India.**

- (c) The 2nd expedition that worth-knowing about Singosari is **Pabali expedition** to Bali, which integrated Bali into the Singosari kingdom’s territory. The king also sent envoys to other nearby kingdoms such as the Sunda-Galuh kingdom, Pahang kingdom, Balakana kingdom (Kalimantan/Borneo), and Gurun kingdom (Maluku). He even also established an alliance with the king of Champa (Vietnam).

**In short, it can be seen that King Kertanegara totally erased any Srivijayan influence from Java and Bali in 1290.**

**However, the expansive expedition turned out to use up most of the Kingdom’s military forces and this led to King Kertanegara’s unsuspected murder.**

King Kertanegara was killed by Jayakatwang (from Kediri Kingdom) in 1292 → which ended the history of Singosari.

**And these are what makes it interesting →**

- (1) **Do you remember** the first king of Singosari, Ken Arok?

→ Yes, he rose to the throne because he overthrew Kediri Kingdom (Jenggala) and established Singosari. Ironically, Singosari was terminated by the death of King Kertanegara at the hands of former Kediri’s lineage, e.g. Jayakatwang.

- (2) Now, **do you also remember** a story about Kublai Khan envoy whose ear being cut off by Kertanegara?

→ It turned out that the Mongol fleet attempted to wage revenge over it and sent its troop to Singosari but they did not know that Kertanegara had already been dead! At the same time, Kertanegara’s son-in-law, Prince Vijaya, was able to oust the Chinese fleet from Java (Singosari) → which led Prince Vijaya (Raden Wijaya) to become the king of the newly found Kingdom—Majapahit Kingdom.

\* Now, some of you may have a question, IF Jayakatwang was the one who killed the last king of Singosari—Kertanegara, why did Prince Vijaya become the first king of Majapahit

Kingdom?

It shows once again a common bloodshed that characterizes the succession of Javanese kingdoms in the 13th century. It turned out that Prince Vijaya had made a pact with Mongol to oust Jayakatwang. And it succeeded. Jayakatwang surrendered and executed. Once the mission to get rid of Jayakatwang accomplished, Prince Vijaya made a sudden attack against the Mongol fleet→ which then forced them to leave Java.

**With the death of King Kertanegara and Jayakatwang**→ Prince Vijaya soared to the throne, Singosari Kingdom lost its glory and there emerged a newly founded kingdom called **Majapahit Empire** in 1293—whose influence encompass the present day Indonesia as far as today's Malaysia and Thailand. *—but, that's a different story.*

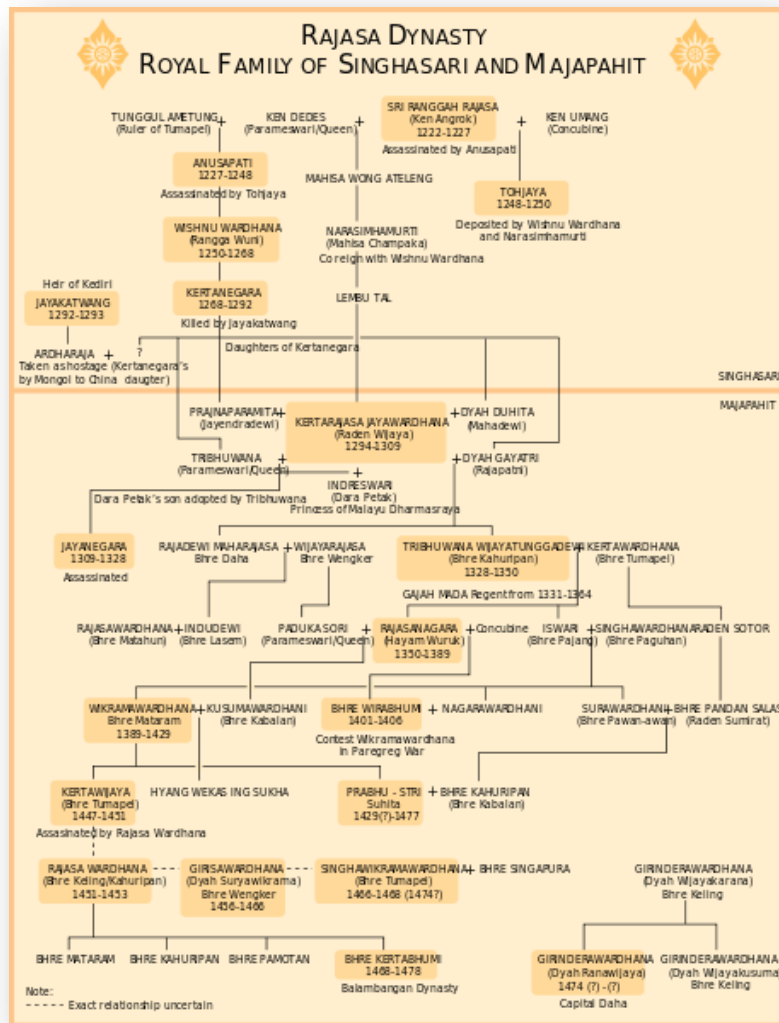
Although there is no concluding remark on this presentation, we would like to end our presentation by outlining 2 more unique features about Singosari:

- (1) – (1227) Ken Arok (1st King) was killed by a messenger Anusapati (Ken Arok's stepson).
  - (1248) Anusapati (2nd King) was killed by Tohjoyo (Ken Arok's son)
  - (1248) Tohjoyo (3rd King) was killed by Ranggawuni (Anusapati's son)
  - (1268) Ranggawuni (4th King) **died peacefully**. Kertanegara (his son) rose to the throne.
  - (1292) Kertanegara (5th King) was killed by Jayakatwang.

### **What does this tell us?**

It seems that Ranggawuni is THE ONLY king who died naturally, instead of being murdered like other four kings! What does this tell us more? Blood seemed to 'color' the shift of power in the 70-year long history of Singosari Kingdom—with the exception for Ranggawuni King.

(2) It is about the genealogy of Singosari Kingdom all the way up to the Majapahit Empire. We will not explain how it goes but at least it will give us an insight about how this kind of record helps us understand the intertwined relation of the past glories.



Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rajasa\\_Dynasty.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rajasa_Dynasty.svg)

Thank you. *Kamsahamnda*.

For further reference:

Indonesia and the Netherlands co-joint project on Singosari:

<http://www.digitalheritage2013.org/singosari/>

More on Singosari:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singhasari>

Temple Ruins of Singosari:

<http://www.indonesia.travel/en/destination/489/singosari-temple>