

## John Crawfurd an Wilhelm von Humboldt, 16.05.1831

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|125r| I have received your Excellency's letter in the French language, but from my want of familiarity with that idiom, and my knowledge of your intimacy with ours I take the freedom of answering in the latter. I lose no time in complying with your Excellency's wishes as far as lies at present in my power. Along with this letter you will receive a vol: of Manuscripts in which I trust you may find something to answer your purpose. The first paper in it is an [Essay on the grammar of the Javanese language](#) in my own hand-writing and a mere sketch. The second is the outline of an Essay on the languages and literature of the Indian islands which contains some extracts and translations that may be useful to your Excellency. This is also my own composition. The third paper is the draft of a [dictionary of the Javanese language /English and Javanese/](#), and the fourth of a Malay *|sic|* |125v| Malay dictionary (Malay and English)<sup>[a]</sup>. I have also a dictionary of Javanese explained in English and another in Javanese itself. Both of these are copies & consisting of thirteen or fourteen thousand words each, and should they be of any use to your Excellency, it will give me great pleasure to transmit them. With the Vol which I have above referred to I send the vocabularies of five languages. Two of these [the Burman](#) and Talaing or [Peguan](#) were taken down in my presence by the American missionary [D<sup>r</sup>. Judson](#) and their accuracy may I think be entirely relied on. The other three are languages of the Indian islands, the Mangarai and Endé being two out of five languages spoken in the island which Europeans call Flores, and the Malanao one of the innumerable dialects of the great island of Borneo. These were taken down by myself from Natives of the respective countries, whom I saw in 1824 at Singapore when charged with the civil administration of that place. – These are but feeble contributions to your great work, that many |126r| of my manuscripts I am sorry to say are at present at a distance and not accessible to me. Whenever I can lay my hands on them it will give me pleasure to make further contributions, and to fulfill my engagement to offer some oriental manuscripts to your Excellency. Among the latter will, I think, be a copy of the [Brata Yuda](#). The

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a) |Editor| Eventuell sind damit Vorarbeiten zu Crawfurds 1852 erschienener [A grammar and dictionary of the Malay language with a preliminary dissertation. In 2 volumes](#) gemeint. [FZ]

Vocabularies are accurate copies made expressly for your Excellency, and as to the Vol: I beg you will make what extracts from it you think proper, and return it at your entire convenience. – I am truly sensible of the liberality with which your Excellency has judged of my labours, and for the pains I once took, considering myself well rewarded by each distinguished approbation. But I rejoice that the task has now fallen into far abler hands, and look with pleasure and satisfaction to the completion of your great undertaking, while I shall be proud if any opinion or contribution of mine will tend to [126v] facilitate your progress. I place myself therefore at your Excellency's service for this purpose, and will, at least, give a prompt and ready answer to any communication you may think proper to make to me. It is more than ten years since my other avocations have enabled me to bestow any large share of attention on the subject, but it still continues, notwithstanding, deeply to interest me. – Before concluding I would <beg> to mention that there will be found in a Vol: of the Batavian Transactions [a specimen of Kawi which I furnished](#), to the best of my recollection, in 1814 or 1815. I would also suggest that some of the English Missionaries have made themselves masters of some of the languages of the South Sea islands and published grammars & I think dictionaries of them – a reference to which might be satisfactory.

I remain your Excellencys most obedient & faithful servant.

JCrawford.

Atheneum Club.

Pall Mall London.

May 16<sup>th</sup> 1831.