



Banten's Karangantu Port as the Maritime Axis of Southeast Asia in the 16th-18th Century

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Abstract: This article aims to analyse the socio-economic dynamics and the role of the sultanate in developing Karangantu Port as an international trade centre in Java. During the 16th-18th centuries, Karangantu Port played a role in replacing Malacca as the centre of trade in Southeast Asia. This study employs historical methods, including the heuristic, verification, interpretation, and historiography stages, supported by a socio-economic historical approach. The results of the study show that the strategic location of Karangantu Port and its well-organised infrastructure attracted foreign traders, making it a cosmopolitan trading centre. The rapid growth of trading activities at this port was supported by sultanate policies, such as free trade, infrastructure development, and diplomatic relations with other kingdoms. The livelihoods of the people of Banten, including farmers, fishermen, craftsmen, and traders, contributed to the port's economic growth. Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa's efforts to expand Banten's influence and prevent Dutch monopoly, although ultimately unsuccessful due to internal conflicts, demonstrate the port's importance in the regional maritime trade network. Banten's rise as an economic centre, facilitated by the growth of Karangantu Port, benefited the pepper trade as a major commodity, attracting foreign merchants. The development of this port was also influenced by the fall of Malacca to the Portuguese in 1511, which diverted the spice trade route through the Sunda Strait. The role of Karangantu Port as an international transit port allowed traders from various countries and cultures to participate in trading activities, shaping the socio-economic landscape of the Sultanate of Banten from the 16th to 18th centuries AD.

Keywords: Banten; Karangantu port; Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa

Abstrak: Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dinamika sosial-ekonomi dan peran kesultanan dalam mengembangkan Pelabuhan Karangantu sebagai pusat perdagangan internasional di Jawa. Selama Abad 16-18 Pelabuhan Karangantu memiliki peran untuk menggantikan Malaka sebagai pusat perdagangan di Asia Tenggara. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode sejarah, yang meliputi tahap heuristik, verifikasi, interpretasi, dan historiografi, didukung oleh pendekatan sejarah sosial-ekonomi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lokasi strategis Pelabuhan Karangantu dan infrastruktur yang terorganisir dengan baik menarik pedagang asing, menjadikannya pusat perdagangan kosmopolitan. Aktivitas perdagangan yang berkembang pesat di pelabuhan ini didukung oleh kebijakan kesultanan, seperti perdagangan bebas, pengembangan infrastruktur, dan hubungan diplomatik dengan kerajaan lain. Mata pencaharian masyarakat Banten, termasuk petani, nelayan, pengrajin, dan pedagang, berkontribusi pada pertumbuhan ekonomi pelabuhan. Upaya Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa untuk memperluas pengaruh Banten dan mencegah monopoli Belanda, meskipun pada akhirnya gagal akibat konflik internal, menunjukkan pentingnya pelabuhan dalam jaringan perdagangan maritim regional. Kenaikan Banten sebagai pusat ekonomi, yang difasilitasi oleh pertumbuhan Pelabuhan Karangantu, menguntungkan perdagangan lada sebagai komoditas utama, menarik pedagang asing. Pengembangan pelabuhan ini juga dipengaruhi oleh jatuhnya Malaka ke tangan Portugis pada 1511, yang mengalihkan rute perdagangan rempah-rempah melalui Selat Sunda. Peran Pelabuhan Karangantu sebagai pelabuhan transit internasional memungkinkan pedagang dari berbagai negara dan budaya untuk berpartisipasi dalam aktivitas perdagangan, membentuk lanskap sosio-ekonomi Kesultanan Banten pada abad ke-16 M hingga ke-18 M.

Kata Kunci: Banten; pelabuhan Karangantu; Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa



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Introduction

As an Archeological site, Karangantu Harbour is located on the coast of Old Banten, about 10 km north of Serang city (Untoro, 2007; Djajadiningrat, 1983). At that location there is a village called Karangantu Village, which is located in Banten Village, Kasemen Subdistrict, Serang City, Banten. When the VOC arrived in Banten in 1596, the town of Banten was described as lying on an empty plain at the foot of the hills, about 25 miles a voyage between Sumatra and Java. On both side of the city flows a river that passes through the center of the city, and its size was described as being as large as that of ancient Amsterdam. The city was said to have walls thicker than a man's height, made from bricks. Within the city there were only three straight roads: one to the coast, one to the land gate inhabited by the king's servants and slaves, and one to the mountain gate (Kemendikbud, 2017; Guillot, 2011). Karangantu Harbour became the centre of the economy during the Sultanate of Banten under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa in Southeast Asia. Unlike other trade-based sultanates such as Malacca or Cirebon, Banten always implemented a policy of food self-sufficiency for export. Throughout the 16th century, Banten became an exporter of foodstuffs (Reid, 2011).

This is an important point as a historical reflection of the spirit of food self-sufficiency. When the VOC came, Banten was already an important trading centre until the end of 17th Century in Java, it's better than VOC at Batavia (Baihaqi A. F., 2018). It is said that in Banten city there were three daily markets where they sold goods. The first market was located in the alun-alun to the east of the city. In the morning, one of the sights that can be seen are traders from various nations such as Portuguese, Arabs, Turks, Chinese, Qwilin, Pegu Melayu Bengal, Gujarat, Nalabar, Abesenia, and India doing trade. The second market was the customs selling all necessities, and the third market was the pacinan, which was held before or after the other markets (Ijzerman, 1915). During the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1651-1682 AD), Islam flourished, in political and diplomatic relations, the Sultan tried to maintain trade relations with Arab businessmen from Mecca, as well as maintaining political relations with the Ottoman Turks (Wibisono, 1995). Although known as a maritime kingdom, the main source of livelihood for Banten natives was agriculture. Agriculture was carried out in irrigated rice fields, rain-fed rice fields, and dry land (ladang). Some Banten residents also earn a living as traders, fishermen and artisans. It is said that the sultanate, led by Muslim conquerors from Demak and Cirebon, used new farming techniques on a large scale. Sawah Negara is the oldest rice field and is generally regarded as sultanate land. Sawah Negara is profitable to cultivate and in return for their labour, they cultivate and pay tribute to the sultan of one-tenth of the harvest (Untoro, 2007).

As a trading centre, the local food and craft industries experienced rapid development in the old urban area. By the 16th-17th centuries, Banten society had developed into an urban settlement, where residents were involved in craft production and value addition, as well as controlling the flow of production and distribution. Fired clay processing developed mainly to fulfil daily needs. Similarly, the metal industry, marked by archaeological finds of coinage, showed that industrial activities had flourished in the old town. Although the Sultanate of Banten once produced its own currency, its role as a legal tender is not much highlighted in transactions. The production of currency by the Banten Sultanate shows that the government acted as a producer of means of payment and at the same time legitimised its power. It is not

certain whether the currency was produced in accordance with the principles of printing payment instruments as they exist today. As a producer, the government is thought to have also acted as a distributor or a party that circulated the money to various parties (Michrob, 1993; Kemendikbud, 2017).

Demographically, the settlement of both natives and migrants led to the emergence of neighbourhoods. Foreigners were placed within the city walls, in Pekojan village to the west of Karangantu Market, Pacinan village next to the Great Mosque was reserved for the Chinese, Panjuan village, a settlement of anjung (pottery, stoneware, balangah, and so on) craftsmen. Kepadean village became a place for blacksmiths, carving places for carvers, Pegongan a place for making gongs and gamelan, Sukadiri a place for casting metal and war weapons, as well as there were metals and weapons, as well as a place for certain bureaucratic groups (Nayati, 1985). The arrangement of the city was not only for tidiness, but also to maintain security for the people living around the palace. The economic life of the Bantenese people as farmers is evident from the existence of rice fields or fields, where most of the population shifted their activities to rice, pepper, sugar cane and vegetables. During the time of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, the people of Banten achieved prosperity because Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa focused on agriculture and pepper exploration in Karangantu Harbour, which had become a regional to international commercial port, in order to meet the needs of the community and the progress of development in Banten (Guillot, 2011). The novelty of this paper compared to previous publications is that it views Karang Antu from a Southeast Asian perspective as the largest port city, unlike Pires (Cartesao, 1944) or Han (Haan, 1922), Knapp (Knapp, 1996) and Guillot (Guillot, 2011), who only looked at the Javanese aspect and lost out to the VOC in 17th Century.

As a maritime hub in Southeast Asia, Karangantu Port was socially dominated by foreign traders as major investors and middlemen, which was common in port cities (Baihaqi A. F., 2025). The capitalists who ruled the western part of the city were predominantly East Asians, namely Chinese, while the eastern part of the city was dominated by major traders from West Asia, such as Arabs and Indians. As a maritime hub in Southeast Asia, Karangantu Port was socially dominated by foreign traders as major investors and middlemen (Guillot, 2011). The capitalists who ruled the western part of the city were predominantly East Asians, namely Chinese, while the eastern part of the city was dominated by major traders from West Asia, such as Arabs and Indians. Even though the Sultanate's political conflict due to the coup d'état of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa Banten was considered to have brought down the city centre, the economy in the coastal area continued to thrive in this port (Irfani, 2020).

Research Method

The scope of this research covers the maritime history of the West Coast of Java in the 16th to 18th centuries, more specifically Port of Banten. The author applies the Critical History method, which involves the stages of heuristics, verification, interpretation and historiography (Abdurrahman, 1999; Kuntowijoyo, 2003). The research was conducted in depth by tracing colonial sources from National Archive, and the National Library, both in print and digital formats. To strengthen the analysis, we used a socio-economic history approach. Like the views of maritime historian J.C. van Leur, who emphasised the importance of looking at colonial Indonesian History from a broader perspective, not just from the stern of the ship (van Leur, 1967). Although the issues discussed here are dominated by events related to the struggle for economic space and social transformation, the author considers the development of the rise and fall of Banten's Karang Antu Port to be a study of socio-economic fragmentation due to political power. This framework analyses the social structure of power relations and merchant

groups that are considered to have a significant role in the growth of the global city (Lloyd, 1993; Burke, 2016), as well as the political forces in the process of resistance to the hegemony of the superstructure, namely the VOC company masters in the new Port of Batavia.

Results and Discussion

Overview Karangantu as a Harbour City

The settlement of both natives and migrants led to the emergence of settlements of foreigners placed within the city walls, such as Pekojan village to the west of Karangantu Market, Pacinan village next to the Great Mosque reserved for the Chinese, and Panjuan village, a settlement of anjung (pottery, stoneware, balangah, and soon) craftsmen. Kepadean village became a place for blacksmiths, carving for carvers, Pegongan for making gongs and gamelan, Sukadiri for metal casting and war weapons, and a place for certain bureaucratic people. Urban planning was not only aimed at tidiness, but also to maintain the security of the people living around the palace (Yugaswara, 1987). The economic life of the Bantenese people as farmers is evident from the existence of rice fields or fields, where most of the population shifted their activities to rice, pepper, sugar cane and vegetables. During the time of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, the people of Banten achieved prosperity because Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa focused on agriculture and pepper exploration in Karangantu Harbour, which had become a regional and international commercial port, to fulfil the needs of the people to international, in order to fulfil the needs of the community and the progress of development in Banten (Djajadiningrat, 1983).

According to Cornelis de Houtman, the size of Banten city at that time was said to be equivalent to the size of Amsterdam. This allows us to compare the two cities, considering that Amsterdam at that time was already the most important port in the VOC. Banten's 1596 city sketch depicts the city centre, kraton, mosque and market. Jeans Kaerel, one of the captains who joined Houtman's fleet and visited Banten on 6 August 1596, noted that foreign ships coming to Banten had to obtain permission from Sheikh Bandar. To enter Banten city from the harbour, the ships had to pass through the Tolhuis or toll gate, which functioned as a tax collection point (Ijzerman, 1915; Haan, 1922). According to De Houtman, the goods brought and traded by Chinese traders included silk, laken, velvet, thread, gold, cloths, bronze vessels, cast and forged pots, mirrors, combs, glasses, sulphur, Chinese swords, fans, Chinese roots, and umbrellas.

Ceramics, on the other hand, were a specialised trade item because they had their own place (Roelofsz, 1962). Other traders, such as the Pegu people, brought rice, jars, lacquer, clappers, precious stones, silver, foodstuffs and musk. Indian merchants sold glass, ivory, gems, cloth, butter, jerky, foreign meat, rice, gandrums, sugar oil, shellac, copper, silk, handkerchiefs, and talcum powder. Traders from Siam brought rice, tin, copper, carved chests, and Chinese-made goods. Meanwhile, traders from the Middle East, consisting of Arabs and Parsis, brought medicines and gemstones (pomegranates), as well as textiles of no less than 20 types. The first European traders to come to Banten were the VOC in 1596 in search of spices. They also brought merchandise such as woven clothing, similar to other European traders such as the Portuguese (Tjandrasmita, 1984; Reid, 2011). Although pepper was Banten's main product, chillies from America were used as a substitute for pepper by Banten's rulers. Records of the first fleet to arrive in Banten also record the abundant stock of honey in Banten's market from Palembang and Timor supplies. The important centres of life in Southeast Asia were rich in herbs and medicines. At least, the first VOC men to land in Banten witnessed at least 50 types of herbs and spices being sold at specialised counters in the Banten market (Ijzerman, 1915).

Community Livelihoods

Activities in Karangantu Harbour involved trade that appeared to be governed by market mechanisms. According to Willem Lodewyksz, in 1596 Banten had three markets that served as local and international trading places, namely Karangantu market located in the east of the city, two Paseban markets located near the square, and three Pacinan markets located near Pacinan village (Valentijn, 1724; Cartesao, 1944). One of the efforts of the Bantenese people to increase agricultural production was to cultivate various types of plants, both to fulfil domestic needs and to be sold outside the Sultanate. This reflects the existence of two types of agricultural activities: subsistence farming and trading farming. It is recognised that both activities have been known since two thousand years ago (Untoro, 2007).

Farmers, as producers who manage land to grow crops, play an important role as producers of traded commodities. In this context, producers control the means of production, including labour, before they are transferred from the hands of primary production to other groups such as traders and government officials (Wibisono, 1995). Farmers hand over their agricultural surplus to the "ruling" group, who then use the surplus to support their own level of living and distribute the rest to non- agricultural groups in society. Thus, there was a functional division of labour between farmers, traders, and rulers. In addition, farmers also need to replace funds for production and consumption equipment, such as machetes, hoes, sickles, as well as consumption needs such as clothing and other goods, which are a necessity for them. The higher the level of agricultural production, Banten farmers initially still relied on the garden system, part of the traditional agricultural economic system characterised by the use of huma land. However, the sultanate did not remain silent in expanding and advancing agriculture in Banten by building rivers to irrigate rice fields, so that agriculture in the sultanate of Banten was increasingly abundant (Untoro, 2007; Ricklefs, 2005).

Apart from agriculture, the livelihoods of the population in the Sultanate of Banten include fishermen, traders, craftsmen, and farmers. This caused the Bantenese people to have a free spirit and be more open, allowing them to interact with traders from various nations. Many traders settled and established villages in Banten, such as Keeling, Pekoyan (Arab), Chinatown (Chinese), as well as occupation-based villages such as Kampung Pande (blacksmith), Kampung Panjunan (crocery maker), and Kampung Kauman (cleric) (Untoro, 2007; Surya, 2022). The development of Banten community agriculture advanced the livelihood of the Banten Sultanate's population from the agricultural sector in the form of pepper. In addition, farmers also cultivated rice, vegetables, and fruits. Banten's history records that during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, there was a desire to inspect the pepper fields and seserangan rice fields and build a large economic barn in the alun-alun. In addition, from the fishing sector, Banten residents look for fish because the location of the city of Banten is on the coast of the sea, so many Banten residents make fishermen their livelihood. The results of the fishermen then brought Banten residents closer to Surosowan Palace, and many of them settled in a village called Kampung Penjarinagan. Other livelihoods of Banten residents are as craftsmen or artisans, such as the manufacture of pottery, pepper mills, craftsmen of tools from coconut shells, embroiderers, makers of goods from bamboo, paper makers, and others (Djajadiningrat, 1983).

In the Banten community around Karang Antu Harbour, the *hinterland* sector derived from pepper farming experienced significant development. Pepper, as a locally produced trade commodity, was exported outside Indonesia and even entered the world market. This situation was inseparable from agriculture in the Sultanate of Banten, which at that time was the only region in Java that was able to export pepper as a local product (Untoro, 2007). The trade route

was diverted to the Sunda Strait, where Karangantu Port Banten began to develop and play an important role, especially in the field of trade. Banten's Karangantu Port functioned as an international port visited by traders from Arabia, Persia, Gujarat, Burma, China, France, England and the VOC (Djajadiningrat, 1983). Most of the Arab traders settled in Banten, either temporarily or permanently, and some of them were allowed to live in houses in the city centre. The traders who played a role in Banten came from various ethnicities. For the record, These Islamic Arab traders also had different tarekat or religious sect backgrounds, which later influenced Sufism in Java (Baihaqi A. F., 2025).

European traders, including Portuguese traders, generally obtained foodstuffs at Banten's Karangantu Harbour market. Some of them, numbering 6-8, settled in Banten and each year sent four ships to Malacca, each with a capacity of about 40 tonnes, to transport spices and sandalwood. In return, they sold woven cloth of relatively higher quality compared to the woven cloth brought by the VOC. The Chinese can be considered the most influential traders in Banten, especially in their role as buyers and transporters of pepper for distribution (Baihaqi A. F., 2024; Knapp, 1996). Gujarati traders also brought clothing materials in exchange for pepper in Banten. However, by the end of the sixteenth century, there are records that the transport volume of West Asian traders from Banten was smaller than that of Chinese traders.

To illustrate, in 1508, 18,000 sacks of pepper were transported by Chinese ships, while in the same year, Gujarati traders transported 3,000 sacks and the VOC no more than 9,000 sacks. According to VOC sources, the Chinese ships that came to Banten each year numbered between 8-10 ships, each with a maximum carrying capacity of 50 tonnes. Other reports mention 5-8 Chinese ships with tonnages of up to 100 tonnes coming annually. In addition, records from French sailors state 3-6 Chinese ships with a total tonnage of up to 300 tonnes. Furthermore, J.P Coen's records (1614) mention that no less than 6 Chinese ships arrived in Banten each year and brought back a cargo of goods worth 300,000 real (Guillot, 2011; Roelofs, 1962). The intensity of the presence of Chinese traders in enlivening trade in Banten was accompanied by migration and a fairly high frequency. Thomas Besr reported a Chinese colony in Banten with a population of no less than 300, while at the same time British ships were only allowed to anchor in the harbour. These Chinese migrants bought pepper from farmers at much cheaper prices, and then resold it to Chinese traders who travelled from mainland China by ship every year.

Economic and Trade Dynamics

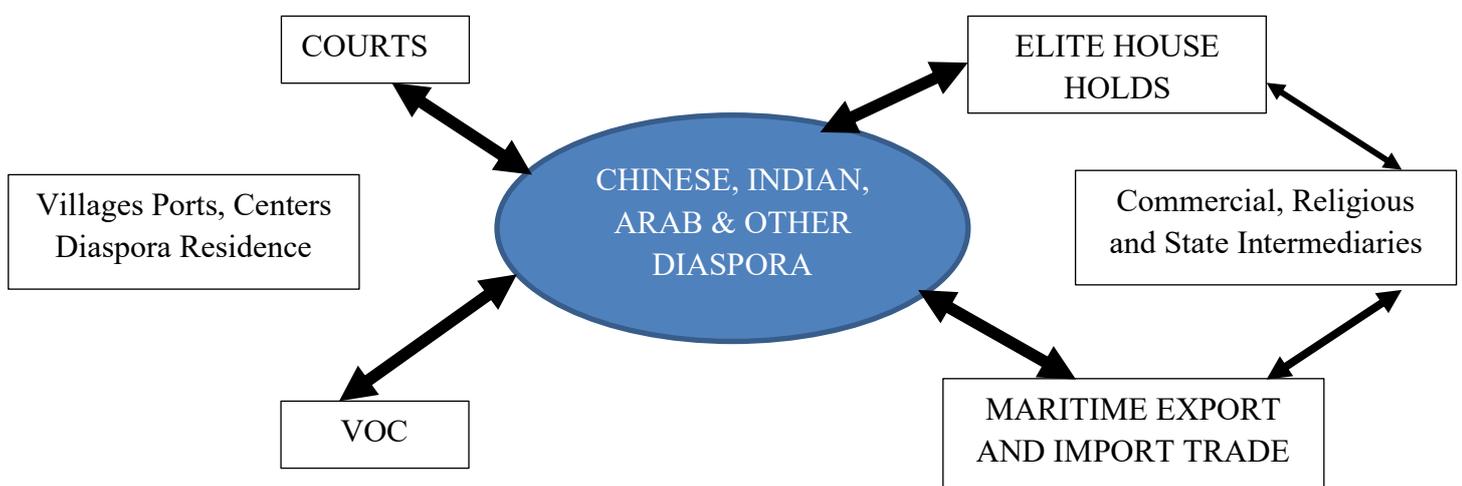


Figure 1. Seventeenth century Southeast Asia Maritime Trade flows

Reference: Kenneth R.Hall. (Hall, 2014)

The image above illustrate the dynamics of cross-ethnic trade flows that play an important role in Southeast Asian coastal areas in 17th century. The Port of Karangantu in Banten occupies a strategic position for trade in the southern region of Southeast Asia. Karangantu Harbour is a safe harbour from big waves, so it can operate all year round. To illustrate this bustling trade, it is said that in Banten there were three markets that were open every day. The largest market was located in the eastern part of the city (Karangantu), where many foreign merchants from Portugal, Arabia, Turkey, China, Quilon (India), Pegu (Burma), Malay, Banggala, Gujarat, Malabar, and Abyssinia could be found (Michrob, 1993; Hall, 2014).

Before entering the jetty, there are coral reefs surrounding the harbour, making the waves less powerful. The harbour is also well organised with sellers from various countries, as well as a place to store and sell trade goods. After Sultan Maulana Hasanudin took control of Banten, it became the main port in West Java, replacing Sunda Kelapa. By the 16th century, Banten controlled the market along the north coast of Java (Hall, 2014). By 1596, Banten became the largest and most profitable port. Unfortunately, few publications discuss Banten during the first 70 years of its development as an Islamic capital until the arrival of the first European ship at Karangantu Harbour. The geographical location of Karangantu Harbour was very strategic for the spice trade (Djajadiningrat, 1983).

Banten became a major port after Malacca fell to the Portuguese, moving trade from the Malacca Strait to the Sunda Strait. In 1652, under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Banten succeeded in controlling the port of Sunda Kelapa, so much trade moved to Banten (Haan, 1922)(Haan, 1922). Banten became the maritime centre of Java and was famous abroad, attracting many migrants from various countries (Baihaqi A. F., 2024). Foreigners who came through Karangantu were welcomed with food by Kangjeng Sultan Ageng and the local people (Lubis, 2004). Under the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Banten's trade flourished. Banten attracted European traders such as the British, French, Danish and Portuguese, who competed with the VOC. Banten ran a free trade system, not a monopoly like the VOC. Banten also developed trade with Persia, Surat, Mecca, Koromandel, Bengal, Siam, Tonkin and China, which the VOC considered a serious threat to their trade in Batavia (Lubis, 2004; Hall, 2014).

Historical data shows the existence of trade relations between Banten and Europe, India and China, as evidenced by the discovery of a map made by Colodius Ptolomens in 165 AD. This map is based on the writings of Geograph Starbo (27-14 BC) and the writings of Pinius (Late First Century AD). The map depicts a shipping route from Europe to China via India, Vietnam, the northern tip of Sumatra, then along the west coast of Sumatra, Panaitan Island, Sunda Strait, and continues through the South China Sea to China (Yugaswara, 1987). Tome Pires, who visited Banten Harbour in 1523, stated that the harbour had not been significant before the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. Pires also said that Banten had become the most important port after conquering Sunda Kelapa. As the second port after Sunda Kelapa, Banten had become a rice and pepper exporting port. A more detailed record states that from Banten's harbour one thousand bahars of pepper were exported (Der, 1881). This signalled community activities related to the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of goods and services (Mills, 1987).

Significant Role of the Sultanate

In the 17th century, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa implemented a free trade policy. He opened unhindered trade in goods, capital and labour at Banten's Karangantu Port. Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa restored international trade by building water facilities in Pontang and Tanara. This allowed ships to anchor and irrigate the surrounding area, making it a food-producing region in Banten. This policy began in 1660, as mentioned in the 16 August 1600 letter from the Governor-General and Council of the Indies to the VOC (van Leur, 1967). The construction of the aqueduct was not completed for two to three years. On 27 August 1663, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa and his people made an aqueduct from the Cikande river to Pasilian, completed in 1663. In 1670, the aqueduct from Tanara to Pontang was dug, and this activity continued until 1678. This aqueduct was not only for the international port, but also for the main trade in Karangantu harbour. During the time of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, trade was the main economic activity in the harbour. Sultan Ageng advanced the harbour with a focus on raw materials, manufacturing of quality goods, local, regional, and international distribution, as well as consumption of goods within the sultanate of Banten and by migrants. The trading process involved the distribution of raw materials and finished goods (Der, 1881; Haan, 1922).

The market plays an important role in the economic structure of the sultanate, especially for the trading economic actors. The port city of Karangantu Bandar Banten functioned as the palace city as well as the centre of the market network, ranging from the highest market to the middle market. Outside the Bandar city and palace, there were also local markets in rural areas. Thus, the Karangantu Port network hierarchically connects the centre of economic activity with the periphery, reflecting the reciprocal economic relationship between the city of Bandar and the palace with the rural areas. Bandar and the palace with the rural areas that built the economy in Banten's Karangantu Harbour. Markets can symbolise the power of a ruler. Market activity indicates that the area is safe to conduct large sales transactions (Wibisono, 1995).

Willem Lodewycksz described the bustling trade in the Sultanate of Banten, where there were three markets open every day. The first market was located to the east of Karangantu Town, where many foreign traders from Portugal, Arabia, Turkey, China, India, Pegu, Malay, Banggala, Gujarat, Malabar, Absenia, and the entire archipelago came to buy and sell at the Karangantu Harbour market. The second market was located in the square near the Great Mosque, which was open until midday and even late afternoon. This market traded pepper, fruit, keris weapons, spears, knives, small cannons, sandalwood and more. This second market is so large that it almost ends with the first market at Karangantu Harbour. The third market was located in the Chinatown area and was open every day until night. In carrying out the interests of the ruler or king and his government, the sultan's intervention in promoting the market was not merely for material gain, but also concerned property rights and the protection of contracts between them and traders in the market (Ijzerman, 1915; Peacock, 2015). Thus, there was a relationship of reciprocal interests between sellers and buyers and the ruler. As the centre of the economy in the Sultanate of Banten, the implementation of market days is certainly inseparable from the factors that influence it. The goods traded, both from the surrounding areas of the city, would affect the timing of market days. Goods from various countries brought by merchant ships to Indonesia also depended on the season which was adjusted to the wind currents that allowed departure and sailing (Wibisono, 1995; Sutjipto, 1983).

The trading system implemented by Sultan Ageng was free trade, supported by Banten's strategic position for domestic and international traders. Banten managed to control the port of Sunda Kelapa, so that many trading activities in the port were moved to Banten. Countries such as England, Denmark, Mecca, Coromandel, Bengal, Siam, Tonkin and China participated

in this trade. Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa cooperated with these countries, and his efforts in trade succeeded by making Banten's Karangantu harbour an international port. Import-export activities with Europeans and others show that trade was a significant capital investment activity in traditional sultanate society. The nobles and rulers also had capital investments, and the Banten sultanate's income came not only from customs duties on trade goods, but also from the markets that daily provided profits for the state treasury (Wibisono, 1995; Nayati, 1985).

The sultanate's intervention in the market as a trading centre was expected to bring income to the sultanate, in addition, all the needs of the market were left to the sultanate, including the protection of security and order of the traders in the market. According to Chinese news from 1618, the income coming in from market customs duties was quite significant (Notosusanto, 2009). The development of Banten's Karangantu port under the leadership of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa was favourable for traders of pepper, sugar, rice and other spices as the main commodities. This attracted foreign traders to conduct trade transactions. However, the trade monopoly run by European nations resulted in conflict with the Sultanate during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (Kartodirdjo, 1990). Banten's relationship with the Europeans deteriorated due to the blockade that harmed Banten during Sultan Ageng's reign, many Chinese trading boats that came to Banten were seized and taken to Batavia, this resulted in the economy being disrupted and declining after the Europeans disrupted the economy in Banten. Sultan Ageng was a big enemy of the VOC when Banten did not hand over trade monopoly rights to the VOC, the Sultan issued a policy to expand Banten's territory. Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa pursued an economic policy of open free trade and expelled the VOC from Batavia. This policy was carried out in the same way as some countries that embraced the free trade system as in Banten with other countries (Kosoh, 1979; Untoro, 2007).

During the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, the shipping sector experienced rapid development, which became one of the main factors of prosperity. Banten's beautiful and safe harbour allowed international trade to flourish. Ships from various parts of Indonesia, Asia, and even Europe, stopped at Karangantu harbour. Banten, along with Lampung, Salabar, and Bengkulu, was known as a pepper producer that was famous in the European market (Guillot, 2011). In 1600, Banten managed to export around 50,000 bales of pepper to Europe, making it the most important pepper producer in Indonesia at that time. Other spices such as nutmeg and cloves exported from Banten's Karangantu port mostly came from Eastern Indonesia, such as Ambon and Ternate. In his agreements with the Company, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa always emphasised freedom in shipping and trade. Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa endeavoured to restore Banten's position of political, economic, shipping and cultural freedom in the eyes of Indonesian and world sultanates (Tjandrasmita, 1984).

Attempts by other foreign companies or nations to instil a monopoly were always strongly resisted. Banten, with its Karangantunya harbour, by the VOC. Therefore, it is not surprising that the company tried hard to gain the support of its financiers and shareholders, as well as finding ways to gain the favour of some of Banten's impressionable nobles (Nayati, 1985). Banten's Karangantu harbour was visited by ships from many countries, including Persia, India (Hindustan), Arabia, China, Southeast Asian countries, Japan, and the Philippines, as well as large European ships from Britain, the VOC, France, Denmark, and others. These ships carried goods needed by the people of Banten and other Indonesian populations, which were generally exchanged for Indonesian crops and forests, especially spices which throughout the centuries were a source of profit in the European market. However, amidst the bustle of trade and shipping, the VOC had ambitions to monopolise trade with Banten, but Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa always opposed the foreign investment

(Tjandrasasmita, 1984).

Recalling Banten as a maritime sultanate that focused on trade and shipping, both political and economic power was held by the nobility who dominated trade as financiers or sometimes as participants. Oversight of trade and shipping were the cornerstones of their power that enabled the sultanate to generate the correct tax revenue. Karangantu became a place of settlement for foreigners (Arabs, Turks, Malaysians, etc.). It was also a market port and centre of fishermen's activities. The port was very favourable for pepper trading as the main commodity. This has become one of the attractions for foreign traders to conduct trade transactions at Southeast Asia's busiest port. (Tjandrasasmita, 1984; Untoro, 2007).

Karangantu Harbour is a place that plays a role, both as a harbour and as a market to increase the buying and selling of trade goods, such as textiles and other daily necessities. In Banten city, there were several types of buying and selling according to the function in old Banten as written in Babad Banten. Local trade within the town was found in markets according to time (daily market, weekly market and seasonal market). There were also stalls and shops that formed separate formations. Building Infrastructure Constructing a Pier Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa is recorded in various written records to have built a lot of infrastructure such as a pier. It was located about 10 kilometres inland on the banks of the Cibanten river, while coastal Banten was already a port at that time (Michrob, 1993).

When the VOC arrived in Banten in 1596, they noted that the city lay on an empty plain at the foot of the hills, about 25 sailing miles between Sumatra and Java. On both sides of the city ran rivers, and a third river passed through the centre of a large city comparable in size to ancient Amsterdam. The city of Banten is said to have walls thicker than the span of a man's hand, made of brick. Along the roads leading to the two land gates, there were residences for the king's servants and slaves, while the third road led to the mountain gate. By the time of the VOC's arrival, Banten had become an important trading centre, giving an idea of the city's situation as a trading centre (Djajadiningrat, 1983; Hall, 2014). Market societies and products and prices are carefully recorded, describing the situation of Banten's Karangantu harbour. It is recorded that in Banten city there were three daily markets where various goods were sold. The first market is described as being in a square to the east of the city in the morning, where traders from various nations such as Portuguese, Arabs, Turks, Chinese, Quilin, Pegu, Melau, Bengal, Gujarat, Malabar, Abesenia, and India conducted trade the second market, Pabean, was located where all necessities were sold, and the market in Pacinan was held before or after the other markets (Ijzerman, 1915).

Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa also played an important role in building the fleet. This is revealed by the contents of the agreement made between the king of Sunda and Henrique Lem, the envoy of the Portuguese king. In return for Portuguese help against their enemies, the Muslims, the Portuguese were allowed to build a fort and given guarantees, including a route to Banten from Aur Island to Banten. The third branch was a long voyage from Banten to the east via the north coast of Java, Madura, Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa, Flores, Sumba (Mills, 1987). The starting point begins with a description of the location, conditions and situation of Karangantu as recorded by Tome Pires, who, among other things, travelled the north coast of Java from west to east. The Sunda Kingdom had a very important harbour, the Karangantu Port in Banten. This port was very important because here there were traders who sold the needs of migrants from various regions who had a variety of spices, foodstuffs, clothing, and so on that fulfilled the needs of the migrants. In addition, in the city of Banten there are rivers that run for sultanate transport that can deliver to Karangantu Port or Banten market with various needs (Cartesao, 1944). Banten harbour established trade relations with ports in the Maldives Islands located in the Indian Ocean south of India, which could be reached in five

days each way, and on the island of Sumatra, including Pancur (Barus), a rich sultanate on the west coast of Sumatra that was visited by traders from India (Gujarat, Keling, Bengal), Persia and Arabia (Roelofsz, 1962).

Cirebon, Demak, Tuban, Gresik on Java Island, in addition to Gujarat, Persia, Bengali, and Arabia outside the archipelago. There are Asian sea trade routes connecting West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia, in the archipelago itself. And there is a sea trade route that connects the eastern region with the western region, among others through the north coast of Java Island. The Nusantara trade route is part of the Asian trade route and the Asian trade route is an international trade route that connects the Asian continent with the European continent. This trade route had an important position because the eastern part of the archipelago produced a very large amount of spices, which were merchandise that sold well in the international market, especially the European market (van Leur, 1967). The city of Banten and the Karangantu Port of Banten were very strategic with a neat city layout, the market needed by migrants was present and complete, besides being safe from various threats and actions. Given that trade activities as a means of support in the archipelago and Asia and the position of goods with spices in the international market increased along with the arrival of European traders to this region, the Sunda Strait became the main entrance to the eastern archipelago via the west coast of Sumatra for Muslim traders. After the fall of Malacca to the Portuguese in 1511 and later for European traders coming from the far south.

Banten's Karangantu harbour played an important role in international trade, with merchant ships travelling across the Bangka Strait to the northwest. Shipping and trading activities in this region did not decline, but rather increased, thanks to the strong tradition and motivation of Muslim traders at that time. The dominance of Muslim traders along the north coast of Java and the archipelago's waters was recognised by the King of Sunda, who even limited the number of Muslim traders entering the ports (Roelofsz, 1962). Banten's Karangantu harbour functioned as an international transit port, allowing traders from different nations and cultures to operate there, as long as they complied with the regulations. Despite an armed conflict between Fatahillah and the Portuguese in Kalapa Harbour, in the following years, the Portuguese were able to move freely in Banten Harbour, as were traders from England, Sweden, France and the VOC. In fact, in the interests of trade, 40 Portuguese joined the Banten fleet to attack the remnants of Majapahit forces in aid of Demak. In 1619, the English helped Banten expel the VOC from the region for violating Banten government policies. The port city of Banten also became a place of residence for residents from various regions in the archipelago and outside nations, such as Malay, Ternate, Banjar, Banda, Bugis, Makasar, Java, Gujarat, Pegu (Bima), Siam, Parsi, Arab, Turkish, Bengali, and Chinese (Sutjipto, 1983).

Along with the increase in market activities that supported the economy and prosperity of the state, the Sultanate gradually expanded its territory to areas that were considered economically favourable and potentially dangerous to the existence of the state. At the same time, the Sultanate established good relations with countries that could increase economic activities and protect Banten from interference from other countries, such as Aceh, Arabia, Makassar, Jambi and Banjar. Under the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1651-1684), Banten attempted to expand its influence and power into the Priangan region, Cirebon, and around Batavia to prevent Mataram's expansion that had started since the early 17th century and to avoid the VOC's trade monopoly over Banten. However, this endeavour ended in failed due to internal conflict in the Banten Palace between Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa and his son, Sultan Haji (Ricklefs, 2005).

Conclusion

The emergence of Banten as an economic centre, supported by the growth of Karangantu Port, was highly beneficial for international trade after the fall of Malacca to the Portuguese in 1511. The first conclusion in the closing of this article is that large investors from both Western and Eastern Asia, namely Persia, India, and China, competed for trading posts with new traders from Europe, marking the bustle of this port city as the maritime hub of Southeast Asian trade. This was due to Portuguese policies that sought to impose a monopoly on merchants who were accustomed to a free trade system. To avoid this unfavourable situation, traders sought alternative routes without permission, namely through the Sunda Strait, and found the most strategically located port in Banten Bay, which was none other than Karangantu Port. Secondly, the support system from the interior marked the most populous city in Southeast Asia as having self-sufficient capital in food commodities, which greatly supported the economic activities of the Port of Karangantu on the coast. Thirdly, the growth of Batavia as a new major port did not diminish the popularity of Karangantu Port as the economic centrepiece of the western coast of Java. Fourth, the common perception that the prosperity of trade activities at Karangantu Port in Banten only flourished from the reign of Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin until the peak of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa's reign, marking the port's decline, is not entirely accurate. This is because the port remained an attraction for foreign traders until the 18th century.

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