



The Stimulus of Islam on the Rise of Banten in the 16–17th Century

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Purpose

This article analyzes the relationship between the dynamics of regional maritime networks and the Islamization of Banten during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It explores three aspects: the growth and development of the Banten Sultanate, Banten's efforts to promote the spread of Islam, and the transformation of Banten into a thriving international port city.

Method

This study used the historical method, which consists of four stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. The data were derived from both local and foreign sources.

Results/findings

Banten's growth was directly influenced by the Portuguese conquest of Malacca in 1511. Under the leadership of Sunan Gunung Djati, Banten capitalized on these shifting trade dynamics by establishing itself as a major port and sultanate on the western edge of Java. As a result, Banten flourished into a cosmopolitan international port city. The sultanate reached its peak during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, whose rule was strengthened by the support of Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari.

Conclusion

This historical process highlights the pivotal roles and influence of Sunan Gunung Djati and Sheikh Yusuf in Banten's expansion and resurgence. These findings reinforce the study's hypothesis that Islam served as a driving force behind Banten's revival during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Keywords

Sultanate of Banten, Islamic stimulus, world port city, maritime networks

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Abstrak

Tujuan

Artikel ini menganalisis hubungan antara dinamika jaringan maritim regional dan proses Islamisasi di Banten pada abad ke-16 hingga ke-17, dengan mengeksplorasi tiga aspek: pertumbuhan dan perkembangan Kesultanan Banten, upaya-upaya Banten dalam melakukan Islamisasi, serta perkembangan Banten sebagai kota pelabuhan internasional.

Metode

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode sejarah yang terdiri atas empat tahapan, yaitu heuristik, kritik sumber, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Data penelitian diperoleh dari sumber lokal dan sumber asing.

Hasil/temuan

Pertumbuhan Banten dipengaruhi oleh penaklukan Malaka oleh Portugis pada 1511. Di bawah kepemimpinan Sunan Gunung Djati, Banten memanfaatkan perubahan tersebut dengan membangun dirinya menjadi pelabuhan dan kesultanan besar di bagian barat Pulau Jawa. Hasilnya, Banten berkembang menjadi kota pelabuhan internasional yang kosmopolitan. Banten mencapai masa kejayaannya pada masa Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa yang memperoleh dukungan penuh dari Syekh Yusuf al-Makassari.

Kesimpulan

Proses sejarah ini menunjukkan peran dan pengaruh penting Sunan Gunung Djati dan Syekh Yusuf dalam ekspansi dan kebangkitan Banten. Temuan ini memperkuat hipotesis penelitian bahwa Islam menjadi stimulus kebangkitan Banten pada abad ke-16–17.

Kata kunci

Kesultanan Banten, stimulus Islam, kota pelabuhan dunia, jaringan maritim

المخلص

الهدف

يحلل هذا المقال العلاقة بين ديناميكيات الشبكات البحرية الإقليمية وعملية أسلمة "بانتن" خلال القرنين السادس عشر والسابع عشر. ويتناول المقال ثلاثة جوانب: نمو وتطور سلطنة بانتن، وجهود بانتن في تعزيز انتشار الإسلام، وتحول بانتن إلى مدينة ميناء دولية مزدهرة.

الطريقة

اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج التاريخي، الذي يتألف من أربع مراحل: جمع المصادر (الهيورستيقا)، ونقد المصادر، والتفسير، والكتابة التاريخية. وقد استُمدت البيانات من مصادر محلية وأجنبية على حد سواء.

النتائج

تأثر نمو بانتن بشكل مباشر بالفتح البرتغالي لمدينة ملقا عام 1511. وتحت قيادة "سونان غونونغ جاتي"، استثمرت بانتن هذه الديناميكيات التجارية المتغيرة لترسيخ مكانتها كميناء رئيسي وسلطنة هامة على الطرف الغربي لجزيرة جاوة. ونتيجة لذلك، ازدهرت بانتن لتصبح مدينة ميناء دولية تتسم بالتنوع والانفتاح العالمي. وقد بلغت السلطنة ذروة مجدها في عهد السلطان "أغينغ تيرتاياسا"، الذي تعزز حكمه بفضل دعم الشيخ "يوسف الماكاساري".

الخلاصة

تُبرز هذه العملية التاريخية الأدوار المحورية والتأثير الكبير لكل من "سونان غونونغ جاتي" والشيخ "يوسف" في توسع بانتن ونهضتها. وتدعم هذه النتائج فرضية الدراسة القائلة بأن الإسلام كان بمثابة قوة دافعة وراء إحياء بانتن وازدهارها خلال القرنين السادس عشر والسابع عشر.

الكلمات الرئيسية

سلطنة بانتن، المحفز الإسلامي، مدينة ميناء عالمية، الشبكات البحرية.

INTRODUCTION

The eminent Southeast Asian historian Reid (2015) writes that monsoon-driven navigation facilitated the development of intermediary ports across Southeast Asia. These ports served as vital hubs where sailors and merchants could await seasonal wind shifts or the arrival of their trading partners. During their stay, they populated urban settlements, enlivened local markets, and actively participated in various rituals. These intermediary ports were strategically located at key maritime crossroads, offering sheltered stopovers in the Andaman Sea, the Gulf of Thailand, the Java Sea, and, most notably, the Strait of Malacca.

Pasai and Malacca served as key intermediary ports in the Strait of Malacca from the 13th century to the early 16th century, providing a safe and thriving hub for sailors and merchants from various parts of the world. However, this stability was drastically disrupted when the Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511. Seeking to dominate maritime trade routes in the Strait of Malacca, the Portuguese imposed control, prompting Muslim sailors and merchants particularly to seek alternative routes. As a result, many traders opted for overland caravan routes across the Malay Peninsula or navigated along the west coast of Sumatra toward the Sunda Strait and the Java Sea. This shift in trade dynamics led to the rise of new intermediary ports in Aceh, Banten, Johor, Tenasserim, Ayutthaya, Patani, and Pahang, which emerged as significant commercial centers in the region (Hamid, 2018; Lombard, 2014; Reid, 2015).

This study is inspired by two earlier works on Banten. The first study, by Djajadin-ingrat (1983), employs a philological approach to critically examine the traditional historiography of Banten. According to him, the history of Banten began with Faletihan (Sunan Gunung Djati), a diaspora from Pasai. After conquering Sunda Kelapa (1527) and Pasuruan (1546), he expanded the influence of the Demak Sultanate to the western tip of Java Island, subsequently establishing the Sultanates of Banten and Cirebon. However, this study does not examine how broader global factors, particularly the geopolitical rivalry between Islam and Christianity, influenced the emergence and development of Banten.

The second study, by Untoro (2007), uses an archaeological approach to investigate the early stages of indigenous capitalism in Banten, from the reign of the first Sultan of Banten, Maulana Hasanuddin (1522–1570), the son of Sunan Gunung Djati, to Sultan Abunnasar Abdulkahar (1672–1684), when Banten attained full sovereignty and became a powerful center of authority in West Java and an international trade hub. His study highlights the significant influence of trade in the development of Banten as a major trading state; however, it pays insufficient attention to the role of Islam in this process.

There are four recent studies relevant to this research. The first study by Ariwibowo (2021), found that Banten's success as a cosmopolitan city in Nusantara was primarily due to its openness to all trading vessels from various regions in the archipelago and Asia. Banten succeeded in attracting foreign merchants and wealthy individuals, creating cultural diversity within its trade. The second study by Ali (2021), discovered that Banten's trade network with Manila enabled it to send its merchant ships to destinations such as Siam, China, Gujarat, Pegu, Coromandel, Madraspatnam, Surat, Macau, Vietnam, Persia, Mocha, and London. The third study by Rismawidiawati et al. (2023), identified the local knowledge of "*gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*" as the foundation for Banten's development in the spice trade routes of the Nusantara, addressing challenges in trade, political power, and Islamization. However, these studies overlook the contribution of Islam to the development of Banten. Finally, the study by Hamid (2024) on the dynamics of Lampung's pepper trade found that Banten's rise as the primary spice entrepot was closely linked to Lampung's role as the main supplier of pepper to Banten.

Existing studies have not adequately examined the reciprocal relationship between maritime networks and Islamization. Instead, they tend to treat maritime trade networks and the spread of Islam as separate phenomena, rather than investigating how these pro-

cesses mutually reinforced and shaped one another during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To address this, the study will explore several key aspects: the growth and development of the Banten Sultanate, the efforts made by Banten to promote the Islamization of Java and its surrounding regions, and the evolution of Banten as a thriving international port city along the Nusantara spice trade route.

METHOD

This study employs a historical method (Madjid, 2021; Sager & Rosser, 2015) utilizing both local and foreign sources. The local sources include the *Hikayat Hasanuddin* (Edel, 1938) and *Sajarah Banten* (Pudjiastuti, 2010). A key challenge in using local sources is the lack of precise chronological details, making it difficult to reconstruct events based solely on these materials. However, local sources provide an "insider" perspective on the events examined in this study. While this perspective offers valuable contextual insights, it may also reflect limited critical distance. To address this limitation, the analysis incorporates external sources to complement, balance, and corroborate the local narrative. Among these, the *Suma Oriental*, written by Tome Pires in Malacca between 1512 and 1515 (Pires, 2014), serves as a valuable contemporary foreign account, although its chronological coverage is limited to the early sixteenth century. To facilitate analysis of these sources, earlier works relevant to this research are also consulted, especially those by Fruin-Mees (1922), de Graaf & Pigeaud (1985), Djajadiningrat (1983), and Untoro (2007). These works help construct a historical narrative that is both imaginative and chronological, ensuring causal relationships are established to answer the research questions formulated in the conclusion of the introduction (Renier, 1997).

RESULT/FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The Formation of Banten Sultanate

The formation of the Banten Sultanate was stimulated by both global and local dynamics. The global dynamics refer to the impact of maritime navigation and the spread of Islam and Christianity in Southeast Asia, while the local dynamics pertain to the political restructuring and expansion of the Demak Sultanate in Java, following the decline of the Majapahit Kingdom, with the pivotal role of Sunan Gunung Djati in establishing the Sultanate of Banten.

The Impact of Conquering Malacca

The Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean at the end of the 15th century had far-reaching consequences not only in the political and military spheres but also in the economic and religious domains. Politically and militarily, the Portuguese used maritime power to control trade routes in the Indian Ocean by seizing strategic points and maintaining dominance through armed ships. This strategy was closely linked to their economic objectives. By redirecting the flow of spice trade from Asia to Portugal via the Cape of Good Hope, the Portuguese effectively cut off trade routes between Asia and the Mediterranean (Roelofs, 2016).

After conquering Goa (1510) and Malacca (1511), and gaining control over Calicut and Hormuz, as well as dominating the Red Sea and Gulf of Cambay, the Portuguese expanded their influence along the eastern coast of Africa. The Portuguese quickly established and fortified their bases in the region. This effort was supported by two main factors. The first was their advanced maritime techniques and tactics, honed through extensive exploration of the African coastline. The second was their navigational knowledge, developed from scientific studies, which complemented their practical experience (Roelofs, 2016).

According to Schrieke (2016), the Portuguese expansion should be seen as a continuation of the jihad (holy war). Their arrival in India created two opposing groups. On one side, there were the Muslims, who had held a dominant role in trade across the Indian Ocean for centuries. On the other side, there were the Portuguese, who viewed all Muslims as enemies to be eradicated from the world. They plundered Muslim ships and goods wherever they could find them (Azra, 2002).

At that time, the Portuguese realized that Malacca was the primary spice market. More ships arrived there than at any other place in the world. A vast quantity of spices and other goods was brought there. However, Malacca was not a trading city in the modern sense. Goods were exchanged in markets held periodically at the major ports. Malacca became the central marketplace. If they could seize Malacca from the Moors, then both Cairo and Mecca would face financial ruin. Similarly, Venice would no longer be able to obtain spices unless purchased by their merchants in Portugal. The taxes from Malacca could provide sufficient funds for the city's administrative and security needs, thus significantly increasing the profits from trade (Furnivall, 2009).

The spirit of the Crusades was deeply ingrained in Albuquerque. He captured and plundered all Muslim ships he encountered between Goa and Malacca. Albuquerque fought the Moors while also serving the commercial interests of Portugal. On August 10, 1511, he led a fleet of 19 ships, manned by 800 Portuguese sailors and soldiers, successfully capturing Malacca. The Sultan, along with palace officials and his forces, managed to escape. From that point on, Malacca became a Portuguese city. Albuquerque built a Portuguese fortress in Malacca using materials taken from the graves of the Muslims (Vlekke, 2008).

The Portuguese turned the Nusantara into a battleground against Islam. Their conquests were accompanied by missionary activities. The Muslim merchants who were expelled from Malacca eventually migrated to Aceh. As a result, by the mid-16th century, Aceh grew into one of the most important trade transit hubs between West Asia and the Islamic states of India and the Nusantara. In this context, Portuguese sought to establish relations with the Majapahit Kingdom, but the Muslims were already one step ahead. The Muslim rulers along the northern coast of Java, led by Raden Patah, succeeded in conquering Majapahit (Schrieke, 2016).

Repelling the Portuguese in Java

The Portuguese conquest of Malacca in 1511 not only triggered the Muslim diaspora to Aceh and Java but also sparked a reaction from Javanese traders who had long supported the maritime trade in Malacca, particularly Raden Patah, the founder of the Demak Sultanate. Prior to 1511, his father had managed to assemble 40 *junk* ships from Java, carrying rice and provisions to support the Malacca port. Pati Unus of Jepara gathered 90 *junk* ships and 12,000 troops, equipped with locally made cannons, and with assistance from Palembang, aimed to recapture Malacca (Fruin-Mees, 1922).

When Pati Unus's forces attacked Malacca, his army consisted of 30,000 Demak soldiers and 10,000 men from Palembang, with around 100 ships sailing toward Malacca at the end of 1512. They arrived in front of Malacca on the first day of 1513. Pati Unus launched an attack on the Portuguese after refusing to pay homage to the Portuguese captain in Malacca. However, his naval forces were repelled by the Portuguese, forcing him to leave the Strait of Malacca aboard a large junk and return to Java. While the effort failed, the Portuguese praised the bravery of Pati Unus (aged 25), giving him the title "Pangeran Sabrang Lor." Five years later, Unus succeeded his father, Raden Patah, as the second Sultan of Demak (1518–1521) (Fruin-Mees, 1922; Pires, 2014).

Nine years later, the Governor of Malacca, Jorge d'Albuquerque, sent Henrique Leme with gifts for King Saiman (Sang Hyang) to establish trade relations. Upon arriving in Sunda Kelapa, Leme was warmly received by the King of Sunda, who sought Portuguese assistance in dealing with the Muslims and advancing trade interests. On August 21,

1522, a treaty was signed (see image 1), which stipulated that the King of Sunda granted the Portuguese permission to build a fort. The King also agreed to supply ships loaded with cloves as per Portuguese needs. Furthermore, it was emphasized that once the fort was constructed, the King would present 1,000 sacks of cloves annually to the King of Portugal. After the stone monument was erected at the mouth of the river near Calapa, Leme returned to Malacca, and d'Albuquerque sent the details of this agreement to the King of Portugal, who received the initiative favorably (Djajadiningrat, 1983; Krom, 1956).



Figure 1 Replica of the Sunda-Portuguese Treaty of 1522
at the Fatahillah Museum, Jakarta. (Doc. Hamid, 17/7/2024)

The Portuguese did not immediately implement the agreement. It was only in 1527 that they arrived at Sunda Kelapa, but by then, the port and the capital city (Pakuan) had already been taken over by Muslims under the leadership of Faletihan, assisted by the King of Jepara, Pati Unus (Krom, 1956). The struggle for the port was intense. Given the significance of the conflict for the Muslim community, the city was later named Jayakarta (the city of victory), or Jakarta (De Graaf & Pigeaud, 1985). Although the Portuguese were unable to settle in Sunda Kelapa, they continued to stop by Banten to manage the trade of pepper (De Graaf & Pigeaud, 1985).

The Role of Sunan Gunung Djati

A year before the King of Sunda made an agreement with Henrique Leme, Portuguese forces had attacked and occupied the city of Pasai, Faletihan's homeland (Hamka, 1976). This event remained etched in Faletihan's memory. After studying the *Naqsyabandiyah* and *Syattariyah* Sufi orders in Mecca for two to three years, he was given the title Said Syekh Nurullah. He experienced the hostility between Islam and Christianity during his travels to and from Mecca. For this reason, instead of returning to Pasai, which had been destroyed by the Portuguese, he sailed to Java to spread Islam. He arrived at the port of Jepara, which was then under the Sultanate of Demak (Arifin & Masykuroh, 2023; Hamid, 2021).

This information is valuable for analyzing its impact on Nurullah's efforts under the Sultanate of Demak, which eventually led to the formation of the Sultanate of Banten. From the outset of their presence in Malacca, the Portuguese brought with them the spirit of the Crusades, prompting Muslim traders to avoid the port of Malacca. Instead, they navigated the Indian Ocean along the west coast of Sumatra to the Java Sea, passing through the Sunda Strait. This was the same route Nurullah took when returning from Mecca. Additionally, he recognized the significant potential of the Sunda Strait network and advised his son, Hasanuddin, to establish the center of the Sultanate of Banten near the coast and the Sunda Strait.

Nurullah served the Sultanate of Demak. After marrying the sister of Sultan Trenggana, he was tasked with expanding Demak's influence and mission to West Java. With the help of 2,000 soldiers from Jepara, he successfully thwarted Francisco de Sa's attempt to establish a Portuguese fortress at Sunda Kelapa in 1527 (Djajadiningrat, 1983). Afterward, Nurullah, also known as Susuhunan Gunung Djati, began preparing for the establishment of the Sultanate of Banten. In the *Sajarah Banten* (Pudjiastuti, 2010) it is mentioned that Susuhunan instructed his son, Hasanuddin, along with two of his disciples, to journey along the coast toward Banten Girang. Upon reaching the shoreline, Hasanuddin saw a stone that radiated light (*watugilang*) in the middle of the sea. He approached it, prayed on it, and then continued his journey to Banten Girang. When they reached the Tembaga cave, ascetics emerged from the cave and declared their conversion to Islam before Susuhunan. From there, they proceeded to the peak of Gunung Karang, where Hindu ascetics led by *Pucukumun* resided. These ascetics refused to accept Islam, believing in their own spiritual powers.

Hasanuddin's efforts to Islamize the ascetics and Pucukumun were conducted peacefully, using a spiritual approach through a cockfighting contest in an open area, a tradition commonly practiced in Sundanese (Javanese) culture. The agreement was that the losing party would follow the will of the winner. After Pucukumun lost, he surrendered all of his followers to embrace Islam under the guidance of Hasanuddin. Fifty ascetics, led by Ki Jong and Ki Jo, then journeyed with Hasanuddin to Banten Girang. Seven years later, Susuhunan invited Hasanuddin to embark on a pilgrimage to Makkah to perform the Hajj.

Their sailing route (**Figure 2**) passed along the western coast of Sumatra to Mecca, and on their return to Banten, they followed the same route to avoid the Portuguese in the Strait of Malacca. Upon returning from Mecca, they stopped in Minangkabau, where the local king presented a *kris* to Susuhunan. Upon arriving in Banten, the kris was handed down to Hasanuddin (Edel, 1938). Fifty hermits came to Hasanuddin at Banten Girang and then traveled together to Surosowan to clear the forest using machetes, kujang, and bendo. They built the Banten palace. Susuhunan returned to observe the condition of the land under Hasanuddin's leadership (Pudjiastuti, 2010).

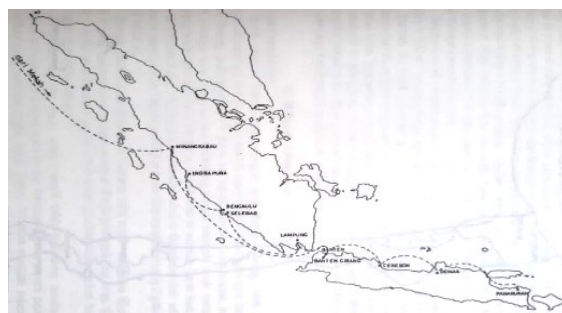


Figure 2. The Hajj Journey Route of Sunan Gunung Djati and Maulana Hasanuddin. Source: Guillot et al., 1996.

The story shows that Hasanuddin began his reign as Sultan of Banten at the Surosowan palace, after performing the Hajj in Makkah with his father. Hasanuddin was crowned on the *watugilang* stone (**Figure 3**), which is rectangular in shape, measuring 121 cm in width, 190 cm in length, and 16.5 cm in thickness. It now stands to the north of the Surosowan fortress and became the site for the coronation of subsequent sultans of Banten (Juliadi et al., 2019). Locals believe that Sunan Gunung Djati advised that the *watugilang*, located in front of the palace, should never be moved, as shifting it could lead to the collapse of the kingdom (Djajadiningrat, 1983).



Figure 3. *Watugilang* to the north of the Surosowan Fortress
(Doc. Hamid, 1/6/2024)

The above explanation shows that Sunan Gunung Djati diligently prepared his son to become the leader of Banten. He then focused on spreading Islam and governing the Sultanate of Cirebon until his death. He was buried at Gunung Djati, where he became widely known as Sunan Gunung Djati.

The Islamisation of Banten and its surroundings

After the establishment of the Sultanate of Banten under the leadership of Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin (1552-1570), Banten embarked on efforts to expand its religious outreach and political influence in West Java, Sumatra, and other regions. The strategies and efforts will be explained in the following paragraphs.

Pakuan Pajajaran

Maulana Hasanuddin made the Islamization of the Kingdom of Pakuan a priority agenda. Before this initiative was carried out, Ki Jongjo and his two brothers from Pakuan came to serve Hasanuddin and embraced Islam (Saepudin et al., 2026). With their help, Hasanuddin succeeded in conquering Pakuan, and its people converted to Islam. Later, when Hasanuddin moved to Banten Girang, some of the religious leaders were asked to remain in Mount Pulosari (Edel, 1938), above highlights the significance of Mount Pulasari as a sacred center that needed to be inhabited by spiritual leaders (ajar). Prior to the Islamic era, Mount Pulasari was considered part of Brahmana Kandali, home to 800 spiritual leaders under the leadership of Pucukumun. The mountain was identified as Mount Kailasa, the residence of Lord Shiva, and thus regarded as sacred by the people of Banten Girang (Guillot et al., 1996; Fadillah 2021). It shows the Islamization of Banten was carried out adaptively, preserving the existing cultural and spiritual systems of West Java if they supported the local ecosystem.

During the reign of Maulana Yusuf (1570–1580), Banten successfully reconquered Pakuan in 1579 as part of its efforts to expand the spread of Islam. This success was aided by an insider from Pakuan, Ki Jongjo, who led 500 people to open a path into the capital of Pakuan, while Banten's forces laid siege from the outside, ultimately capturing the city. After this event, the whereabouts of the King of Pakuan, Prabu Seda, his son Pucukumun, and their military leaders remained unknown (Edel, 1938; Pane, 2019).

The conquest of Pakuan by the Sultanate of Banten marked the final chapter of the Hindu Kingdom in West Java. This conquest was also influenced by Banten's growing trade interests at the time. The presence of Pakuan was seen as a threat to the trade routes of natural resources to Banten's port (De Graaf & Pigeaud, 1985). After capturing Pakuan, Maulana Yusuf focused on the development of Surosowan as the center for governance, trade, and the spread of Islam (Untoro, 2007).

Based on the previous explanation, it is clear that the Islamization by the Sultanate of Banten was carried out with military force, particularly targeting the rulers and inhabit-

ants of the Pakuan Kingdom's center. After the kingdom was conquered, the people were encouraged to embrace Islam without coercion. Banten also demonstrated a high level of tolerance towards the Badui people. They were allowed to remain in their territories and maintain their traditional beliefs, as was the case with the *abdi* (servant) communities within the Sultanate (Raffles, 2014). The Sultanate of Banten became a protector of all communities and faiths in West Java.

Lampung

The spread of Islam to Sumatra began with Maulana Hasanuddin. Islam's presence in Lampung was shaped by the pepper trade, which established Banten as a major global port visited by ships from China, India, Arabia, and Europe. Between the 16th and 18th centuries, Banten exerted considerable influence over Lampung's governance and culture (De Graaf & Pigeaud, 1985).

According to *Hikayat Hasanuddin*, Banten's expansion into Lampung was led by Maulana Hasanuddin, who arrived with his troops, nobles, ministers, and commanders. The people of Lampung embraced Islam, either through conflict or voluntarily, including Raja Balo, who converted of his own will. Hasanuddin then advanced to Indrapura, where he entrusted the people of Sulebar, Wates Bangsa Hulu, and elders to the Raja of Indrapura. He later returned to Banten with new followers from Lampung and Palembang (Edel, 1938).

According to Raffles (2014), a year after becoming sultan, Hasanuddin traveled to Lampung with Prince Balo, ruler of Tulang Bawang. In Indrapura, he married a local princess, and the Bencoolen River (Bengkulu) was designated as Banten's territorial boundary. Upon returning, he recruited men from Lampung and Palembang into Banten's forces for the war against Pakuan. *Hikayat Hasanuddin* notes that Lampung nobles led Banten's troops in the attack on Pakuan (Edel, 1938).

Banten's presence in Lampung was not solely for its own interests but also at the request of Abung customary leaders. Rivalries among them led Menak Paduka and Menak Kemala Bumi to seek Hasanuddin's support, recognizing his authority over Tulang Bawang. However, Hasanuddin declined, as Raja Balau, his former ally in Lampung and Bengkulu, still ruled there. Dissatisfied, both leaders later coerced Raja Balau into marrying his daughter to Menak Kemala Bumi. Seizing an opportunity, they killed Raja Balau and offered his family and wealth to Hasanuddin. In return, Hasanuddin granted them noble titles—Patih Jurumbang for Menak Paduka and *Patih Prajurit* for Menak Kemala Bumi. Both converted to Islam in Banten, performed the Hajj, and actively spread Islam in Lampung (Djajadiningrat, 1983; Funke, 2018).

Banten's presence in Lampung reflected not only its economic and political dominance but also Lampung's desire to expand its pepper trade internationally. As Banten relied heavily on Lampung's pepper supply, it appointed nobles and officials to oversee production and trade. Their role extended beyond commerce, as they also promoted Islam and sent religious teachers from Banten to Lampung. Some Banten officials married into local noble families and settled there, serving the spiritual needs of the community. Additionally, many Lampung leaders visited Banten to seek recognition of their status and deepen their understanding of Islam (Untoro, 2007).

The expansion of Banten's influence into Lampung was well-received by Lampung's leaders, who sought external support to strengthen their positions. This reflects the strategic acumen of both parties in navigating the era's dynamics, allowing them to derive mutual benefits. Banten propagated Islam in Lampung, while Lampung supplied pepper to Banten, fostering a symbiotic relationship that proved advantageous for both regions.

The Role of Syekh Yusuf

Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari (1626–1699) arrived in Banten in 1672 after performing

Hajj and spending 25 years studying and teaching Islam in the Arab world. At that time, Banten was ruled by his close associate, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. Yusuf was recognized as the first scholar and Sufi to introduce the Naqshbandi Sufi order in the Nusantara (van Bruinessen, 1994). Pilgrims from Banten observed his esteemed position among scholars in Mecca. In response, Tirtayasa invited him to return to Banten to assist in resisting Dutch colonial forces (Hamid, 2005).

Yusuf's presence was highly valued by Sultan Ageng in spreading Islamic teachings among the people of Banten (Manyambeang, 2014). Sultan Ageng followed the Khalwatiyah Sufi order, taught by Yusuf, to strengthen his faith and resolve in leading Banten. Yusuf educated the Sultan's children in Islamic teachings, including his eldest son, Pangeran Gusti, who was to succeed him as Sultan of Banten. Gusti was sent to Makkah to perform the Hajj and deepen his religious knowledge, ensuring he would have a strong character when he ascended to the throne. After completing the Hajj, Gusti became known as Sultan Haji (Hamid, 2005).

Yusuf married the Sultan's daughter, Syarifah, to strengthen the ties between the two parties. The *Lontaraq Gowa* recounts that their wedding ceremony was extraordinary, accompanied by dhikr, the sound of rebana drums, and a fragrant scent filling the streets, all seen as blessings from Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. Yusuf was then appointed as the Mufti and Raja Muda of Banten. In his latter role, he was tasked with strengthening Banten's relations with Muslim countries in the Middle East, particularly Suriah and 'Utsmaniyyah (Azra, 2002).

After several years of preaching, Yusuf gained fame among the Muslim community in Banten and its surroundings. His reputation spread to Makassar through Banten's trade networks with the region. Many people from Makassar and Bugis came to Banten to study with Yusuf, including 200 Makassarese who had been exiled by the Dutch to Batavia, who then came to Banten to become Yusuf's students. Despite settling in Banten, Yusuf continued to nurture the growth of Islam in Makassar (Hamid, 2005).

People respected Yusuf not only for his position as the mufti and advisor to the sultan but also for his noble character, which aligned with his profound knowledge, as well as his commendable conduct and behavior. Therefore, the sultan and his companions requested that he compile his teachings into reading material and guidelines for his followers, to prevent them from being influenced by other Sufi teachings that could cause division. Among the writings Yusuf produced were *Bidayatul Muftadi*, *Muqaddimah*, *al Fawaaid*, and *Zubdatut Asrar* (Hamid, 2005; Tujimah, 2005).

In addition to his missionary work, Yusuf also fought to preserve Banten's sovereignty. After Sultan Ageng was captured by the Dutch in 1682, Yusuf, along with Prince Purbaya and Prince Kidul, led 5,000 Banten troops against the Dutch for a year in the interior of West Java. The Dutch Governor-General offered a reward of 1,000 ringgit to anyone who captured Yusuf, alive or dead. However, Dutch commander van Happel struggled to confront Yusuf's forces. Local residents even joined the guerilla efforts alongside Yusuf, deeply respecting his renown and piety (Hamid, 2005).

The Dutch used deceit to capture Yusuf. On December 14, 1683, van Happel disguised himself as a Muslim along with Yusuf's daughter, Asma, to enter the defense stronghold in Kampung Karang (Aji Karang). With Asma's help, Happel was able to persuade Yusuf to travel to Cirebon and then board a ship to Batavia. Meanwhile, his troops from Makassar and Bugis were sent back to Makassar on a Dutch ship. Yusuf's capture effectively ended the Banten-Dutch war. In Banten, Yusuf was hailed as a great hero for resisting the Dutch. Seeing the situation, the Dutch exiled Yusuf to Sri Lanka (March 22, 1684) along with his two wives, several children, 12 students, and a number of female servants. Ten years later, Yusuf and his followers were moved to Cape of Good Hope (South Africa) where he spent the rest of his life until his death in 1699 (Azra, 1999; Tujimah, 2005).

The above description shows that Sheikh Yusuf was a prominent mujaddid in the history of Islam in the Archipelago. Unlike many other Sufis who distanced themselves from worldly affairs, he was politically active within the Sultanate of Banten. When Sultan

Ageng was captured, he even led Banten's forces in resistance against the Dutch in West Java. However, like scholars in the international network, Yusuf did not use the *tariqa* to mobilize the masses for the purpose of war (Azra, 1999).

Banten as a Global Port City

The arrangement of a Muslim City

The efforts of Sultan Banten III, Maulana Yusuf (1570-1580), to develop the port city of Banten are recorded in the *Sajarah Banten* poem 22, which mentions the creation of canals and the damming of rivers to protect the city. Yusuf initiated the construction of city fortifications using bricks and coral, known as "*gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawah kawis*" (Figure 4). The goal of this development was to safeguard the city and its inhabitants from maritime security threats, as it was a coastal city located along international trade routes (Pudjiastuti, 2015; Rismawidiawati et al., 2023).



Figure 4. The construction of the Surosowan Fortress from bricks and coral (Doc. Hamid, 1/6/2024)

The city of Banten was described by early 16th-century Portuguese sailors as a city located in the middle of a bay, with a width of 3 miles and a length of 850 fathoms. Along the seaside, the city stretched 400 fathoms or more. At the edge of the city stood a fortress made of bricks, with a width of seven men's hand spans. Meanwhile, Dutch sailors arriving in Banten in 1596 noted that the city was situated on flat land at the foot of the hills. The city's layout resembled that of ancient Amsterdam, surrounded by thick brick walls. Inside the city, there were only three main roads: one leading to the sea from the *paseban*, one leading to the land gate along a road inhabited by the king's servants and slaves, and the third leading to the mountain gate (Wibisono, 1995).

Along the coast, there were rows of houses belonging to the Malays, Bengalis, Gujaratis, and Ethiopians. The Chinese had their own settlement called *Pecinan*, located to the west, where they mingled with the Portuguese. The Dutch houses were surrounded by strong fences facing the mainland. There were also groups of Arab, Pegu, Turkish, and Persian traders. Merchants from various regions of the archipelago, such as Maluku, Banda, Banjar, Selor, Makassar, Sumbawa, Jaratan, Gresik, Pati, Juwana, Sumatra, and Borneo, also traded here. Each group had their own resting place either inside or outside the city's fortifications (Hamid, 2022; Tjandrasmita, 1995; van Leur, 2016).

The main market was located in the square to the east of the city (Karangantu), outside the city gates. From morning until afternoon, this market was bustling with merchants from Portugal, Arabia, Turkey, China, Quilin, Pegu, Malaysia, Bengal, Gujarat, Malabar, Ethiopia, India, and others. Various types of goods, both local and imported, could be found here. All networks of Western European trade converged in Banten (van Leur, 2016). In addition to the main market, there was also a market in Paseban, where daily necessities were bought and sold throughout the day. During the daytime, commercial activities also took place in the Pecinan market (Untoro, 2006).

The merchants who settled in Banten not only sent their capital to China for trade but also engaged in similar activities in other regions. On a larger scale, merchant nobility from China provided capital through the *commenda* system for trade in the archipelago. The wealthy Chinese in Banten were involved in money lending and usury, as well as collecting taxes and duties. Additionally, there were Indian nobles, Maluku Chettys, who owned palaces in the city, along with armies and trading ships. There were also Keling merchants, such as Andamoin, who owned palaces. Persians, Turks, and Arabs held important positions in large enterprises, although there is no information regarding their settlements. They were likely Muslim traveling merchants within the global maritime trade network (van Leur, 2016).

The Grand Mosque, as a prominent feature of Muslim cities in the archipelago (Tjandrasmita, 2000), includes a designated space for women (*pawestren*) that was constructed during the reign of Maulana Hasanuddin. The mosque is surrounded by verandas on all four sides. The southern veranda was used for burial purposes, with 15 graves arranged in no specific pattern. The eastern veranda, the largest of the four, was built during the time of Maulana Yusuf, with a separate roof and a two-tiered limasan design. The western and northern verandas are located beneath the main roof. The mosque itself has a five-tiered roof, marking its distinction as the main mosque. On the eastern side of the courtyard, there is a 23-meter-tall tower used for the call to prayer (*adhan*), while on the southern side, there is a *Tiyamah*, a gathering place for discussing religious and social matters, which was built under the order of Sultan Haj (Juliadi et al., 2019).

Within the Chinese settlement area stands the Pacinan Tinggi Mosque. This mosque was originally built by Sunan Gunung Djati and later completed by his son, Hasanuddin. The foundation is made of bricks and coral, while the walls are constructed with bricks. The main structure of the mosque is also equipped with a mihrab wall. On the front left side, there is a square-shaped tower (Figure 5), also made of bricks, with the lower foundation constructed from coral stone (Juliadi et al., 2019; Untoro, 2006). This mosque is the origin of the Muslim Chinese *syahbandar*, who played a significant role in advancing Banten's maritime and trade activities in the 17th century.



Figure 5. The Tower of the Pacinan Tinggi Mosque
(Doc. Hamid, 1/6/2024)

The Role of Syahbandar

One important characteristic of the history of ports and trade in the Indonesian archipelago is the position of the *syahbandar* (harbor master), which was generally held by foreigners who played a crucial role and came from the majority merchant groups in a port. This position was free from nepotism with the sultan. It was never held by indigenous people or members of the sultan's family. For example, the chief *syahbandar* of Malacca was of Gujarati descent, and the *syahbandar* of Makassar was of Malay descent. Similarly, the two *syahbandar* of Banten, Kiyai Ngabehi Kaytsu (1657–1674) and Tantseko Kiayi Ngabehi Cakradana (1677–1680), were of Chinese descent. All *syahbandar* were Muslims and came from foreign merchant groups who had designated settlements in their assigned ports.

Before serving as *syahbandar*, Kaytsu was an assistant to the chief *syahbandar* of Banten, Abdul Wakkil. He owned several junks used for pepper trade between Banten and South Sumatra, particularly with Silebar and Pariaman. Every year, two of his large junks sailed to Macau and Japan. His smaller vessels traded within the archipelago, transporting rice, pepper, various Indian cotton fabrics, as well as fruits and vegetables. Kaytsu's ships explored key ports in Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Macau, Nagasaki, Siam, Vietnam, and Cambodia (Rantoandro, 1999).

In 1657, Kaytsu replaced Abdul Wakkil as the *syahbandar* of Banten. His role was not limited to managing port administration and customs but also involved formulating trade policies and foreign relations for Banten. Additionally, he was known as the minister of foreign trade. Interestingly, although he had embraced Islam, Kaytsu did not adopt an Arabic name but retained his traditional Javanese title, *Kiyai Ngabehi* (Rantoandro, 1999). He played a significant role in managing trade and navigation. After Sultan Ageng decided to handle his own affairs in 1659, Kaytsu formed a trade fleet to establish connections with Manila, frequently visited by Spanish ships carrying silver from Mexico. This fleet consisted of various types of ships purchased from the English, Dutch, Indians, and some junks built in Rembang. Junk ships were more durable and suited for trade compared to European ships. Sultan Banten owned 12 trading ships, with almost all of the crew being Chinese, English, Indian, and only a few Javanese (Rantoandro, 1999).

Kaytsu made efforts to protect Banten's trading fleet. During the conflict between England and the Netherlands, the presence of English sailors on Banten's ships could pose a problem as they were at risk of being detained by the Dutch. To address this, Kaytsu traveled to Batavia to inform the Governor-General that the English sailors on Banten's ships should not be detained, as they were working for Sultan Banten. Kaytsu was also responsible for organizing the fleet's journeys, including managing the cargo at the time of departure and overseeing the distribution of goods from Surat, Coromandel, and Manila. Banten's trading fleet often carried capital from foreign traders in Banten (Rantoandro, 1999). Kaytsu successfully positioned Banten in the international trade arena. After his death in 1674, Sultan Ageng ordered that he be buried in the complex of the Grand Mosque and subsequently appointed Cakradana as his successor (Guilot, 2008).

Before becoming the *syahbandar* of Banten, Cakradana was the *syahbandar* of the Chinese district and the head of customs, working under Kaytsu's supervision. Upon assuming this position, he was granted the title of Kiayi Ngabehi. To anticipate tensions with Batavia, Cakradana strengthened the city's defenses by constructing a fortress along the coastline. This project began in early 1677 and continued through 1678, stretching from the mouth of the main river in the west of the city towards the direction of Pacinan (Guilot, 2008).

Cakradana constructed a defensive fortress in Karangantu, which was completed in 1679. The walls were incredibly thick, made of stone coated with lime mortar. Coral stone blocks were sourced from islands in the bay for its construction, with the lime produced from the same coral stones. The lime-burning process took place in the Pacinan area. The fortress walls were reinforced with several defensive towers, with four towers positioned along the northern side. This architectural project was an extraordinary

achievement, unmatched in the Nusantara during its time. When Sultan Ageng and Syekh Yusuf left the Tirtayasa palace due to the Dutch attack, Cakradana also left Banten for Cirebon. There, he became the syahbandar and engaged in small-scale trade until his death in the late 1680s (Guillot, 2008).

Global Trading Network

Before the establishment of the Sultanate of Banten, the port of Banten had already established connections with the Bay of Bengal through the Tamil (Keling) people from the Coromandel Coast. According to the treaty document between the King of Pajajaran and the Portuguese (1522), it is known that the syahbandar (harbor master) of Banten was Bemgar from Bengal, who held the title Raja Madyliar. A few months after Banten was taken over by Muslims in 1527, Francisco de Saa met with the Sunda syahbandar from Keling, Moleiquere. Their discussions revolved around the state of trade in the region (Guillot, 2008).

After the establishment of the Sultanate of Banten, particularly during the reign of Maulana Yusuf, the syahbandar of Banten, Kiayi Wijayamanggala, was a Tamil merchant from Mailapore. He served as syahbandar for approximately 20 years and resided in a grand residence near the sultan's palace within the fortified city. Additionally, two other Tamil figures held high-ranking positions: the Prime Minister and Andamohi Keling. In the trade sector, affluent Tamil merchants invested capital in cargo ships and facilitated the distribution of imported goods from China. Alongside the Tamil community, there were also Bengalis and Pegu traders from the Bay of Bengal. Ships from Pegu were dispatched annually from Banten to Bengal. However, in February 1609, due to civil war, 7,000 people were forced to leave Banten for Jakarta, marking the end of the era of free trade under the strong influence of Tamil, Bengali, and Pegu merchants. Following this period, the position of syahbandar in Banten was exclusively entrusted to Chinese merchants. Banten's trade network with the Bay of Bengal was later restored in the 1630s through the efforts of English and Danish traders. However, at that time, Banten was not yet capable of absorbing large quantities of goods from Danish merchants, serving instead as a temporary stopover for voyages en route to Makassar (Guillot, 2008).

After the Dutch conquest of Makassar in late 1667 and the subsequent enforcement of restrictions on Portuguese, English, and Danish ships, Banten's syahbandar, Kaytsu, encouraged Sultan Ageng to develop Banten as a major entrepot (Heng, 1990). In response, the Sultan strengthened Banten's naval fleet with the assistance of European sailors and expanded maritime trade routes to Manila, China, India, and Persia. A significant number of foreign and local merchants migrated from Makassar to Banten, revitalizing its commercial network. To support the rapidly growing trade, Sultan Ageng also introduced Banten's own currency, ensuring a stable medium of exchange within the expanding economic system (Burger, 1962; Guillot, 2008).

Banten successfully outmaneuvered Batavia, VOC's trading hub in the Nusantara. Indigenous, English, and Danish ships departed from Banten to Persia, Surat, Mocha, Coromandel, and Bengal. Additionally, through the Chinese trade network operating in Siam, Manila, Tonkin, China, and Japan, ports in East Java were regularly supplied with textiles and opium. In Banten, these goods were both imported and later sold to Batavia, leading to the popular saying, *Bantam is de haven van Batavia geworden*—"Banten has become the port of Batavia" (Kielstra, 1916).

Banten officials purchased ships from independent merchants (*vrijburgers*) and the English East India Company (EIC). Within five years, Banten had acquired more than ten trading vessels, an achievement that greatly impressed European trading company officials. A French observer in Banten even referred to it as the "Kompeni Banten." These ships were dispatched as far as Surat and the Red Sea. In 1669, a Danish vessel arrived from Tranquebar carrying textiles, iron, and medicines, which were then loaded onto a Banten-owned ship bound for Manila. This vessel was notably filled with a significant

number of Portuguese traders of African descent, commonly referred to as “*kulit hitam*” (Guillot, 2008).

The Banten trade network experienced a decline due to internal conflict between Sultan Ageng and his son, Sultan Haji. In this struggle, Sultan Ageng received support from the English, Danish, and Portuguese, while Sultan Haji was backed by the Dutch. Ultimately, Sultan Haji emerged victorious. A decade later, Sultan Ageng passed away as the last independent ruler of Java (*hij was de laatste der onafhankelijke vorsten van Java geweest*). Following his victory, Sultan Haji expelled the English, French, Danish, and Portuguese from Banten (Kielstra, 1916; Pudjiastuti, 2007). From that point onward, Banten fell under Dutch control, which imposed a trade monopoly, marking the end of Banten’s independence and sovereignty as a sultanate

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Banten’s rise as a major port city and sultanate during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries resulted from the interaction between local political transformations and broader regional developments, rather than from a single determining factor. The expansion of the Demak Sultanate facilitated the establishment of Banten under Sunan Gunung Djati, while the Portuguese conquest of Malacca in 1511 fundamentally reshaped regional commercial networks by diverting Muslim merchants from the Malacca Strait to the Sunda Strait. Rather than creating an entirely new trading system, Banten capitalized on this regional realignment by positioning itself as an alternative *entrepôt* for merchants and sailors seeking new commercial routes.

Banten’s subsequent development was closely linked to its ability to secure access to strategic resources, particularly pepper from Lampung. The incorporation of Lampung into Banten’s political and commercial sphere strengthened the sultanate’s position within the international spice trade. At the same time, it illustrates the extent to which Banten’s commercial prosperity depended on maintaining political authority over an external production region. Its economic success, therefore, rested not only on maritime trade but also on the effective integration of production areas, trade networks, and political authority.

The prosperity achieved during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa was supported by effective leadership and the contributions of prominent Islamic figures, including Sunan Gunung Djati and Sheikh Yusuf al-Makassari. However, these figures should be understood as operating within broader political, economic, and religious structures rather than as the sole architects of Banten’s success. Their leadership was effective because it enabled Banten to capitalize on existing commercial opportunities, strengthen political institutions, and reinforce the regional and international networks that underpinned its economic and political development.

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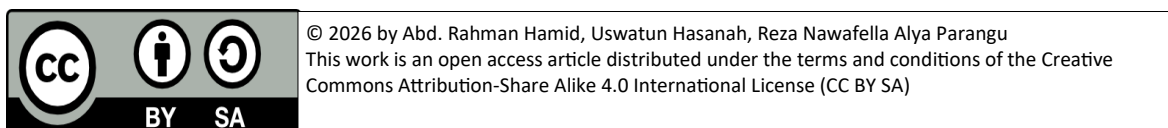
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