



MUSLIM TRADE ON THE GRESIK COAST AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE POLITICS OF THE DEMAK SULTANATE IN THE XV–XVI CENTURIES

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Abstract

Penelitian ini mengkaji umat muslim di Gresik pada abad 15 hingga 16 M. tidak saja berdagang dan berdakwah. Mereka juga memainkan peran politik yang signifikan. Penelitian sosiologis historis ini mencoba menggambarkan kompleksitas ekonomi politik umat muslim di Gresik. Dengan teori sistem dunia, penelitian ini menganalisa peran masyarakat muslim di Gresik yang berada di pinggiran dalam kontestasi ekonomi politik di pusat kekuasaan. Penelitian ini menemukan: pertama, Gresik adalah wilayah perdagangan sejak era Hindu-Buddha hingga Islam. Pelabuhan Gresik menjadi titik simpul perdagangan di Nusantara maupun Asia. Kedua, para pedagang di Gresik mayoritas adalah muslim. Beberapa tokohnya adalah Sunan Giri dan Sunan Gresik. Ketiga, pedagang muslim Gresik membangun kekuatan yang dinilai mengancam kekuasaan Majapahit. Setelah Majapahit runtuh, Kesultanan Demak memberikan otoritas kepada muslim Gresik untuk mendirikan Giri Kedaton. Para ulama sekaligus penguasa Giri Kedaton tidak saja menjadi sumber legitimasi agama tetapi juga aktor politik, terutama dalam melegitimasi suksesi kekuasaan di Kesultanan Demak.

Keywords: Perdagangan; Muslim Gresik; Politik suksesi; Kesultanan Demak.

Abstrak

This study examines Muslims in Gresik in the 15th to 16th centuries AD. They not only traded and preached but also played a significant political role. This historical sociological study attempts to illustrate the complexity of the political economy of Muslims in Gresik. Using world systems theory, this study analyzes the role of the Muslim community in Gresik, which was on the periphery, in the political economic contestation at the center of power. This study found: first, Gresik was a trading region from the Hindu-Buddhist era to Islam. Gresik Port became a trading hub in the archipelago and Asia. Second, the majority of traders in Gresik were Muslim. Some of these figures were Sunan Giri and Sunan Gresik. Third, Muslim traders in Gresik built a power that was considered a threat to the power of Majapahit. After Majapahit's collapse, the Demak Sultanate authorized Gresik Muslims to establish Giri Kedaton. The scholars and rulers of Giri Kedaton served not only as a source of religious legitimacy but also as political actors, particularly in legitimizing the succession of power in the Demak Sultanate.

Kata Kunci: Trade; Gresik Muslims; Succession politics; Demak Sultanate.

INTRODUCTION

The Demak Sultanate was the first Islamic monarchy in Java. This sultanate played an important role in ending the Hindu-Buddhist dominance in the Majapahit Kingdom (1293-1527). However, the Demak Sultanate inherited and continued the maritime civilization of the Majapahit Kingdom. Slamet Muljana said that the strength of the Javanese maritime fleet was still very large until the era of the Demak Sultanate. Under the leadership of Patih Yunus (reigned from 1518 to 1521), this fleet was able to move 100 warships with a load of 5,000 personnel from Jepara and Palembang. The maritime fleet of the Demak Sultanate also moved to attack Malacca in January 1513. In the first attempt, Demak led by Patih Yunus failed to achieve victory. The next attempt

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was made by Patih Yunus when Malacca fell into the hands of the Portuguese in 1521. In the second attack, Patih Yunus was killed in the encounter, so that power fell into the hands of his brother-in-law, Sultan Trenggana¹.

The weakness of the Javanese maritime fleet during the Demak Sultanate, particularly under the leadership of Patih Yunus, was due to economic factors. The Hakluyt Society notes that after Patih Yunus's defeat, the Javanese navy was no longer in the hands of kings but rather businessmen who controlled ports. Gresik was a wealthy city with a bustling port. However, Gresik split into two hostile factions: one under Patih Yusuf and the other under Zainal. These two rulers fought each other. In addition to failing to control Gresik as an economic center, Patih Yusuf was also prohibited from trading or sailing to Malacca after his defeat by the Portuguese. Furthermore, the Demak Sultanate was prohibited from producing ships. Instead, ships were produced in Pegu (Bago, Myanmar). The Pegu people sold not only merchandise but also ships. Since then, Java no longer had a formidable shipyard at sea².

Economic problems as a factor in the weakness of the Demak Sultanate during the Patih Yunus era have received little attention from historians. Jiri Jakl, for example, only conducted a philological study of Javanese literature using a socio-cultural approach to the maritime environment. According to Jiri Jakl, Javanese literature is less extensive than Malay literature in capturing the lives of maritime communities. However, the beauty of the sea, the lives of fishermen, the bustling harbors, ships, and wrecks are still depicted metaphorically in many Kakawin³.

Jan Wisseman Christie provides more comprehensive information than Jiri Jakl about ports and ships in the Java Sea. According to JW Christie, ports and ships in the Java Sea reached their peak between the early 10th and mid-13th centuries. Trade was vibrant, connecting the seas of Southeast Asia with the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. As a result, the domestic Javanese economy grew rapidly, transforming agricultural practices, domestic marketing patterns, regional trade, and even the tax and monetary systems. Javanese consumption patterns also changed, accompanied by competition for imported commodities from China and India⁴. However, JW Christie does not explain the development of ships and the sea in the 15 and 16 centuries.

Meanwhile, M. Nur Rokhman et al., examined the collapse of the Demak Sultanate due to a violent succession conflict following the death of Sultan Trenggana (1521-1546). Sultan Trenggana's son, Sunan Prawata, killed Prince Sekar Seda ing Lapen. After that, Sunan Prawata moved the center of power to a more inland area, which caused a slight decline in the maritime economy⁵.

This murder invited a storm of prolonged conflict, so that Sunan Prawata's son was killed by Arya Penangsang, the son of Prince Sekar Seda ing Lapen⁶. Arya Penangsang was also defeated and killed by Jaka Tingkir, who later took the title Sultan Hadiwijaya, who ruled in Pajang from

¹ Slamet Muljana, *Runtuhnya Kerajaan Hindu-Jawa dan Timbulnya Negara-negara Islam di Nusantara*, (Yogyakarta: PT LKiS Pelangi Aksara, (2005), 70.

² The Hakluyt Society, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires and The Book of Francisco Rodrigues*, edisi ke-2, (Canada: McGill University Library, 1944), 195.

³ Jiří Ják, "The Sea and Seacoast in Old Javanese Court Poetry: Fishermen, Ports, Ships, and Shipwrecks in the Literary Imagination," *Archipel: Études Interdisciplinaires sur le Monde Insulindien*, Vol. 100 (2020), 69-90.

⁴ Jan Wisseman Christie, "Javanese markets and the Asian sea trade boom of the tenth to thirteenth centuries AD." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 41, no. 3 (1998): 344-381.

⁵ Siti Rukayah, Fariz Addo Giovano, and Muhammad Abdullah, "The Lost of Old Demak Sultanate City Pattern," *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism* 47, no. 2 (2023): 146-162.

⁶ M. Nur Rokhman, Lia Yuliana, and Zulkarnain, "The Emergence and Development History of Demak Bintoro Kingdom," *Journal of Social Studies (JSS)* 12, no. 2 (2016), 43-51.

1549 to 1582. Sultan Hadiwijaya moved the center of power from the coast of Demak to the interior of Pajang, and since then Javanese maritime power has completely declined⁷.

Since Sultan Hadiwijaya founded the Pajang Sultanate, the era of Javanese maritime glory has completely ended and been replaced by a dark age. Javanese kings were unsuccessful in reviving military power and maritime trade. The Islamic Mataram Sultanate ruled from 1586 to 1755, replacing the Pajang Sultanate. However, the Mataram era was marked by the construction of small-scale boats. Furthermore, the European trading company (VOC) was reopened in 1630. Naval battles between native rulers and foreign traders were inevitable. The VOC in Batavia dispatched eight ships and 693 crew members, carrying orders to destroy Mataram's ships and supply stores along the north coast of Java. However, the VOC fleet's voyage eastward from Batavia to confront Mataram was less successful.

From 1629 to 1634, Mataram's raids on Company ships were almost continuous, rendering the waters between Banten and Batavia unsafe for the Company. Mataram managed to overwhelm the Company. Mataram's war strategy, small but continuous attacks, often ended in draws. Naval battles were sometimes initiated by the VOC to sever political networks and communications between the rulers of the archipelago. In 1642, for example, the VOC felt that the positions of Jambi and Palembang threatened the Company's security. The return of the King of Palembang from Java to Sumatra, aboard a Mataram boat, raised concerns among the VOC. Therefore, the VOC fleet was mobilized to intercept 80 small Mataram boats, which were on their way home to escort the King of Palembang⁸.

Small battles between Islamic Mataram and the Dutch East India Company (VOC) dwindled and became rarer in the 18th century, when Mataram split into the Kasunanan Surakarta and the Sultanate of Yogyakarta through the Giyanti Treaty, February 13, 1755. Boats and ships continued to be converted from combat tools to mere means of trade transportation. The Kasunanan and Mangkunegaran, for example, had twenty-four (24) river boats, which operated from 1830-1870. These river boats departed for Gresik Harbor to transport salt and other marine products. In addition to being a means of transportation in internal areas, boats also functioned as a symbol of the greatness of the Javanese Kingdom. One example is the Royal Boat named Kiai Rojomolo. The royal boat was made during the reign of Pakubuwono V (December 1784-September 1823), and is now part of the collection of the Radya Pustaka Solo Museum. The Kiai Rojomolo boat was not a river merchant boat, but rather a royal boat⁹.

Therefore, this research is crucial to further examine how the glory of the Javanese naval fleet since the era of Patih Yunus of the Demak Sultanate was closely linked to economic factors, particularly trade among the Muslim community on the coast of Gresik. This research focuses on analyzing how the complex economic background, particularly among the coastal communities of Gresik, contributed to the decline of military and political power in the Demak Sultanate. Therefore, the findings of this study provide an answer to why the revival of the Javanese naval fleet never revived in subsequent periods, from the Pajang period to the Islamic Maratam period.

⁷ Chinanti Safa Camila dan Hudaidah, "Sejarah Kesultanan Pajang Masa Pemerintahan Sultan Hadiwijaya (1549-1582)," *Sindang: Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah dan Kajian Sejarah* 4, no. 1 (2022), 58-65.

⁸ Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro dan Nugroho Notokusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia: Zaman Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan Kerajaan-Kerajaan Islam Di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2008), 381.

⁹ Subur Tjahjono (ed.), *Ekspedisi Bengawan Solo: Kehancuran Peradaban Sungai Besar, Laporan Jurnalistik Kompas*, (Jakarta: Kompas, 2008), 63.

RESEARCH METHOD

Historical sociology approach¹⁰. Historical sociology is an interdisciplinary study that combines sociological and historical methods to understand the past and how society developed, as well as how this impacts subsequent developments, including the present¹¹. This historical sociology approach, according to Leonard Seabrooke, is essential, especially in the study of political economy. Leonard Seabrooke criticized perspectives that were considered inappropriate, namely: the present understood as something natural, history as something that is blatantly path-dependent, and history as something driven by "great men." However, according to Leonard Seabrooke, political, social, and economic change should not be limited by policy imagination. Complexity must be considered, because only complexity makes an event unique. This complexity will be visible if life is understood as a deliberate rationality and social mechanism¹².

To examine the complexity of historical sociology, the researcher felt it was necessary to use a theory relevant to this study. The researcher used Immanuel Wallerstein's World-System Theory, which explains that the modern world is formed within a global economic system divided into a center (core), semi-periphery (semi-periphery), and periphery (periphery)¹³. By dividing world-systems analysis into these three main areas, Wallerstein highlights the historical development of the modern world-system, particularly since the emergence of global capitalism in the 16th century. Wallerstein also examines the contemporary crisis in the capitalist world economy, which shows signs of structural instability and the potential for major changes in the global system. Finally, Wallerstein also critiques the structure of knowledge, namely how modern science is shaped by the forces and interests within the world system.

One of Wallerstein's key insights is his rejection of the term "Third World." He argues that the world is not divided into distinct categories, but rather a single world interconnected through a complex network of economic relations. Within this system, resources are systematically redistributed from the periphery to the core. Core countries benefit from the exploitation of the periphery, while semi-peripheral countries act as intermediaries, sometimes exploiting and sometimes being exploited¹⁴.

In this historical sociological study, the research data is qualitative and interpretive, as the primary focus is on understanding social processes within a historical context. Two primary techniques frequently used in this research are literature analysis as a data collection technique and narrative analysis as a data analysis technique. Literature analysis is a data collection method conducted by examining scientific works, social theories, and previously written historical narratives. Through this technique, researchers not only understand the content of the text but also compare interpretations of a historical event or phenomenon. The goal is to capture the complexity of meaning and the various perspectives that emerge in the writing of social history¹⁵.

Meanwhile, in the data analysis process, historical sociology uses narrative analysis. This technique reconstructs a series of social and historical events in the form of a structured narrative,

¹⁰ George Lawson and Julian Go (eds.), *Global Historical Sociology*, (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

¹¹ John Scott and Gordon Marshall (eds.), *A Dictionary of Sociology*, (Oxford University Press, USA: 2009).

¹² Leonard Seabrooke, "Why Political Economy needs Historical Sociology," *International Politics* 44 (2007), 390-413.

¹³ Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *World-systems Analysis: an Introduction*, (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004).

¹⁴ Cosma Sorinel, "Immanuel Wallerstein's World System Theory," *Annals of Faculty of Economics* 1, no. 2 (2010), 220-224.

¹⁵ Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, Nancy L. Leech, and Kathleen MT Collins, "Innovative Qualitative Data Collection Techniques for Conducting Literature Reviews/Research Syntheses," *The Sage Handbook of Innovation in Social Research Methods*, (New York: Sage Publications, 2011), 182-204.

with a primary focus on the causal flow and the socio-political context that influenced the course of events and the actions of social agents. Through this approach, researchers can understand how social dynamics form and change over time, as well as how social structures influence human actors in society¹⁶.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Gresik, Trade Center

The capital of the Majapahit Kingdom is believed to have been located at the Trowulan Site, Trowulan Village, Mojokerto Regency, East Java Province. This is because in the village there are many archaeological remains found in the form of building structures such as brick walls, building remains such as roof tiles, memolo, and bricks, remains of household utensils, and other artifacts. Although Trowulan is located inland, access to the sea and maritime trade routes is very easy. The most important access for Majapahit was via river¹⁷.

In the Majapahit region there are two large rivers, the Bengawan Solo and the Brantas River, which are very strategic for navigation. The Brantas River, which originates on the slopes of Mount Penanggungan, is very wide, has gentle banks, and a calm and stable current. Therefore, the Brantas River is navigable by boat to the interior. The right branch of the Brantas River is the Porong River. This river flows southeast and empties into the Surabaya and Bangil areas. The left branch is the Kali Mas River, which flows northeast, through the city of Surabaya and empties into the Madura Strait.

The Bengawan Solo originates in the southern hills of Surakarta and is very wide. It flows through Sukowati, Jagaraga, Madiun, Jipang, Blora, Tuban, and Sedayu, and empties into the coastal areas of Gresik. Like the Brantas River, the Bengawan Solo's condition allows small and medium-sized boats to navigate far inland. Along the river and along its estuaries on the coast, villages emerged that later developed into cities, centers of trade, shipping, and inter-regional ferry services¹⁸.

Gresik is a vital port city on the north coast of Java, having flourished since the 14th century. Its strategic location—right on the shores of the Madura Strait and supported by the Bengawan Solo River to the south—made Gresik a vital maritime and river trade hub of its time. Since its inception, Gresik has been a destination for foreign merchants and sailors, including those from China. These Chinese traders are recorded as the first inhabitants of the region. One of the earliest known figures was a Chinese sailor who settled and helped shape the early life of this port city¹⁹.

As a port city, Gresik served not only as a place for loading and unloading merchandise, but also developed into a center for cultural interaction and the spread of religion. This historical legacy makes Gresik a crucial region in the development of the maritime economy and culture in the archipelago. The expansion of Majapahit's territory not only impacted political and military aspects but also had a significant impact on the development of interregional trade. This expansion encouraged increased trade relations between the kingdom's center and the coastal regions under

¹⁶ Kevin Fox Gotham and William G. Staples, "Narrative Analysis and the New Historical Sociology," *Sociological Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (1996), 481-501.

¹⁷ Wulan Kurnianingtyas dan Cucu Hayati, "Telisik Pola Perdagangan Desa Trowulan Abad XII-XV sebagai Landasan Pembangunan di Mojokerto," *Jurnal Pengembangan Wiraswasta* 24, no. 2 (2022), 107-122.

¹⁸ Lisda Meyanti and Titi Surti Nastiti, "Maritime in Textual Data during the Majapahit Period," In *Proceedings of The 5th International Conference on Linguistics and Cultural Studies 5 (ICLC-5 2024)*, vol. 916, p. 191. Springer Nature, 2025.

¹⁹ Ulum Fasih, "Sarana Islamisasi di Jawa Abad XV Menurut Babad Gresik," *Batutah: Jurnal Sejarah Padaban Islam* 1, no. 2 (2022), 83-99.

its influence. Merchants from the northern coastal areas of Java, particularly from Tuban and Gresik, played a crucial role in this trade network. They actively established trade contacts with various regions across the archipelago, such as Aceh in the west, Ternate and Ambon in the east, Banjar in Kalimantan, and even the Philippines. This activity demonstrates the breadth of the maritime network established during the Majapahit era.

In the early 16th century, Portuguese explorer Tomé Pires noted a port he called The Jewel of Java. Surprisingly, however, this nickname was not intended for Batavia, Cirebon, or Lasem, but rather for the port city we now know as Gresik. In his famous work, *Suma Oriental*, Tomé Pires describes Gresik as a prosperous and bustling port. Traders from all over the world were constantly coming and going. Large ships docked at its docks, carrying luxury commodities from faraway lands—fine porcelain, soft silks, precious fabrics, gold, silver, pearls, and even ivory from China and other parts of Asia.

Gresik's glory at that time was no accident. Its location on the north coast of Java, facing Madura, made it a harbor protected from the rough seas. This geographical location allowed ships to anchor safely and opened up strategic routes to major trading centers in Southeast Asia. Gresik stood at the center of two key points in the global spice trade: the Maluku Islands to the east, the spice producers, and Malacca to the west, the gateway to international trade. This position propelled Gresik into a vital hub in inter-island and inter-national trade networks. Gresik is thought to have reached its golden age in the 15th century. At that time, its warehouses were filled not only with spices but also with luxury goods, symbols of past economic and cultural glory²⁰.

Islam and Muslim Traders in Gresik

The Babad Gresik contains important information about the early spread of Islam in the 14th century through trade. In the 15th century, Islamization changed its pattern, namely through marriage, pioneered by Sheikh Maulana Ishaq. The reason was because the port of Gresik lost its existence, making the expansion of Islam ineffective if it relied on trade methods²¹. Next was Raden Rahmat, also known as Sunan Ampel. Upon his first arrival in Java, Sunan Ampel also anchored in the Gresik area, where he was welcomed directly by Sheikh Maulana Kubra²². Later, Sunan Ampel also became the son-in-law of the Majapahit ruler.

One proof of the presence of Islam in Gresik is the old tombstone of Fatimah binti Maimun located in Leran Village, Gresik. This tombstone is thought to be related to the migration of the Lor Tribe from Persia in the 10th century. Another piece of evidence is the tomb of Sunan Gresik, also known as Sheikh Maulana Malik Ibrahim, from the 14th century²³. In spreading Islam, Sunan Gresik used trade methods. Sunan Gresik himself was a trader. He traded in an open harbor, now called Romo Village, Manyar. Trade brought Sunan Gresik into contact with kings and nobles, who at that time acted as shipowners, financiers, or even the actual transaction actors²⁴.

Besides Sunan Gresik, Raden Paku, also known as Sunan Giri, also marked the presence of Islam in the Gresik region. Sunan Giri is believed to have preached in Menganti Village, Gresik, by establishing a mosque and teaching Islamic sciences such as fiqh, tafsir, hadith, and the science of tools. From Giri, Sunan Giri had many students or followers from Madura, Lombok, Makassar,

²⁰ Noor Fatia Lastika Sari, R. Achmad Sunjayadi, dan R. Ahmad Ginanjar Purnawibawa, *Permata di Pesisir Utara Jawa: Gresik dalam Jaringan Perdagangan Maritim Nusantara*, (Buleleng: Satu Jengkal Indonesia, 2025), 58-117.

²¹ Ulum Fasih, *Sarana Islamisasi Di Jawa Abad XV Menurut Babad Gresik*, 84.

²² T. W. Arnold, *Sejarah Dakwah Islam*, (Jakarta: Penerbit Wijaya, 1981), 332.

²³ Agus Sunyoto, *Atlas Walisongo*, (Tangerang: Pustaka IIMaN, 2016), 62.

²⁴ Rizem Aizid, *Sejarah Islam Nusantara*, (Yogyakarta: Diva Press, 2016), 152.

and Ternate²⁵. Sunan Giri was also a trader, who chose to preach Islam through trade at the suggestion of his adoptive mother, Nyi Ageng Pinatih. At that time, Sunan Giri was only 23 years old. Another goal of trading was to earn a living for himself and his family. In trading, Sunan Giri was accompanied by Abu Hurairah, a businessman from Cambodia, who later traded in Banjar, Kalimantan. Sunan Giri and Abu Hurairah brought batik cloth, sugar, and agricultural products from Java to Banjar. Sunan Giri also provided interest-free loans to the Banjar people for 10 days²⁶.

Political Relations between Gresik and the Demak Sultanate

When Raden Fatah was still an official of the Bintara Duke under the Majapahit Empire during the era of Brawijaya V, the Demak region was infertile, frequently flooded, and swampy. Trade centers and major cities were still located in Surabaya, Gresik, and Jepara. After Raden Fatah ascended the throne as Sultan, the Demak Sultanate was transformed into a center of Islamic education (Pesantren Glagahwangi), so that trade and economic activity also flourished. Raden Fatah built irrigation canals, expanded agricultural land, developed agricultural products, and improved security on transportation routes. The Demak region transformed into a center of rice granaries and a gathering point for agricultural products from surrounding areas. Raden Fatah also increased the importance of Jepara port as the Sultanate's most important trading center, by sending special troops to ensure the security of traders. Jepara port produced rice, kapok, copra, and wood, even becoming a trading hub with various cities in Java, Aceh, Malaysia, Kalimantan, and Maluku.

The Demak Sultanate gained additional benefits when Malacca was conquered by the Portuguese in 1511. Muslim traders began to hesitate to dock in Malacca. They preferred the island of Java as a center of trade, particularly the ports of Jepara, Tubah, Gresik, Surabaya, Cirebon, Banten, and Sunda Kelapa. Trade in Gresik became increasingly vibrant, having been a center of international trade from the beginning. Similarly, trade in Surabaya reached its peak in the 16th and 17 centuries²⁷. Meanwhile, Sunda Kelapa was better known as an important center for the pepper trade. In addition to these Javanese ports, Muslim traders also moved their activities to Johor under the reign of Sultan Manshur Syah, Samudera Pasai, and Brunei Darussalam²⁸.

The relationship between Gresik and Demak has been volatile. During the conflict between Demak and Majapahit, Raden Fatah attacked the Majapahit palace and found it empty. On the advice of Sunan Ampel, Raden Fatah returned to Demak, and Sunan Giri was appointed King of Majapahit for 40 days to neutralize Hindu-Buddhist influence before handing over the throne to Raden Fatah. When Raden Fatah became Sultan of Demak, Sunan Giri was appointed king in Giri Kedaton in 1487. Sunan Giri was also recognized as the highest mufti in Java. Since then, the relationship between the Demak Sultanate and Giri Kedaton has become very close²⁹. From then on, the relationship between Demak and Giri has become even closer.

Sunan Giri and the people of Gresik's support for Raden Fatah's side has long historical roots. During the Majapahit era, the Gresik area was not only a major port and trading center, but

²⁵ M. Syamsu, *Ulama Pembawa Islam di Indonesia dan Sekitarnya*, (Jakarta: PT Lentera Basritama, 1999), 49.

²⁶ Imam Subchi, *Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam Madrasah Aliyah Kelas XII*, (Semarang: Toha Putra, 2016), 45.

²⁷ Pantai utara Jawa, yang terkenal dengan nama *Pasisir*, mengalami perkembangan pesat sejak abad ke-13. Sejak masa pemerintahan Kertanegara, dan bahkan lebih lagi pada masa Majapahit, pelabuhan-pelabuhan di Jawa Timur, terutama Surabaya, Gresik, dan Tuban, mulai membuka diri terhadap perdagangan skala besar dengan Sumatera dan Maluku. Lihat: Denys Lombard, "Le Thème de la Mer dans les Littératures de l'Archipel Insulindien," *Archipel* 20, no. 1 (1980), 317-328.

²⁸ Abdul Wahid Hasyim, "Demak Sultanate: The Fortress of Islamic Greatness in the Middle Ages Java Island," *Buletin Al-Turas* 27, no. 1 (2021), 1-16.

²⁹ Amimanyu Soedjipto, *Babad Tanah Jawi*, (Yogyakarta: Laksana, 2017), 306.

also served as a gateway to the inland Majapahit capital. Many foreign traders stopped in Gresik for the purpose of preaching and trading. Muslim traders gathered in Gresik, posing a threat to Majapahit³⁰. Many students studied in Giri, Gresik, causing the Majapahit Empire to view the Muslims of Giri as a threat to its power. Hostilities between Majapahit and Giri grew, reaching a peak in the 16 century³¹.

The closeness between Giri and Demak did not last long and ended after the death of Sultan Trenggana in the era of Arya Penangsang. After Sultan Trenggana died in 1546, a power struggle occurred between Sunan Prawata, the eldest son of Sultan Trenggana, and Arya Penangsang. Sunan Giri sided with Sunan Prawata more than Arya Penangsang, and appointed him as the 4th ruler of Demak with the title Sultan Syah Alam Akbar Jiem Boen Ningrat IV. Sunan Prawata had the ambition to Islamize the entire land of Java like the Sultan in Turkey. From here, Arya Penangsang rejected Sunan Prawata's leadership over Demak, because Sunan Prawata had killed Arya Penangsang's father, Prince Sekar Seda Lepen alias Prince Surawiyoto, also known as Sultan Trenggana's older brother³².

In the conflict between the two brothers, Arya Penangsang succeeded in killing Sunan Prawata by sending a Pajineman Surengpati soldier named Rungkut³³. However, Arya Penangsang's reign did not last long. In 1554, Queen Kalinyamat, widow of the Jepara Duke, Pangeran Hadiri, who was murdered by Arya Penangsang, mobilized the dukes to fight back. Ultimately, Arya Penangsang was killed by Jaka Tingkir, assisted by Kiai Gede Pemanahan, Bagus Dananjaya, Ki Penjawi, and Juru Mertani. Sunan Giri immediately crowned Jaka Tingkir as King of Pajang with the title Sultan Hadiwijaya³⁴.

CONCLUSION

Gresik is not just a port city on the north coast of Java, but a vital hub in the Indonesian archipelago's trade and religious dissemination networks since the 14th century. Its strategic location—directly connected to the mouth of the Bengawan Solo River, situated between the Maluku spice shipping route and major ports like Malacca—allowed Gresik to rapidly develop into a maritime economic and cultural center. During the Majapahit era, Gresik served as a gateway to international trade and a distribution route for agricultural products from the interior to global markets. Its prosperity was recognized by Portuguese explorer Tomé Pires, who dubbed it "The Jewel of Java." Its docks housed foreign ships carrying luxury goods from all over the world.

Gresik also played a crucial role in the spread of Islam in Java. Preachers such as Sheikh Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Sunan Ampel, and Sunan Giri used trade routes as a means of preaching, establishing Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), and expanding Islamic networks beyond Java. Archaeological evidence such as the tomb of Fatimah bint Maimun and the Giri Kedaton complex demonstrates that Gresik was one of the earliest centers of Islamic civilization in Indonesia. Gresik's relationship with major political powers such as the Demak Sultanate demonstrates how this port was also part of the dynamics of power. Gresik was not only a witness but also a crucial actor in the transformation from a Hindu-Buddhist kingdom to an Islamic sultanate in Java, including the succession of power within the Demak Sultanate. Thus, Gresik is a historic city that marks the intersection of trading power, political influence, and the spread of religion. As a trading center, a

³⁰ De Graaf, *Kerajaan-kerajaan Islam di Jawa*, (Jakarta: Temprint, 1985), 173.

³¹ De Graaf, *Kerajaan-kerajaan Islam di Jawa*, 180.

³² Slamet Muljana, *Runtuhnya Kerajaan Hindu-Jawa dan Timbulnya Negara-negara Islam di Nusantara*, 120.

³³ Suparman Al Fakir, *Lajer Glagahwangi*, (Ponorogo: Uwais Inspirasi Indonesia, 2023), 426.

³⁴ Habib Mustopo, *Sejarah*, (Jakarta: Yudhistira Ghalia Indonesia, 2005), 22.

strategic port, and a center for Islamic propagation, Gresik deserves to be remembered as one of the main foundations of the Indonesian archipelago's maritime civilization.

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