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# *Garwe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*

## **Contribution of local knowledge to the expansion of the Banten Sultanate on the Nusantara spice route**

RISMAWIDIAWATI, WURI HANDOKO, RONI TABRONI,  
ABD. RAHMAN HAMID, AND MUH. SUBAIR

### ABSTRACT

So far, the trade and spice route historiography has focused on social, political, and economic aspects. This discussion is also fragmentarily or is part of another focus. No studies have discussed the relationship between local knowledge practices, spice routes, power networks, and Islamization. However, the spice trade and Islamization are two intersecting events important for their connection with the local culture. This article assumes that there was a local knowledge used as a strategy by the Banten rulers as a response to trade, Islamization, and power networks in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It finds that Sultan Maulana Yusuf's policy, known as "gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis", was a local knowledge that continued to be used by Banten rulers throughout the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. This local knowledge was transformed from its literal meaning of "building cities and fortresses from bricks and corals" into a metaphor representing development that considered the duality of Banten's potential. This local knowledge became the foundation stone for the strategies of Banten's rulers until Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa to respond the challenges posed by the trade, power network, and Islamization. This application of the local knowledge carried the Banten Sultanate to its peak of advancement during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1651-1682). In his sponsorship of this local knowledge, the ruler of the Banten appears as a technocrat, trader, scholar, leader, and ruler who paved the way for the expansion of the Banten Sultanate. This local knowledge was passed down from generation to generation and remains the local knowledge of the Banten people today. This study reconstructs the historiography of the existing spice route by according local knowledge (*gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*), the leading role in shaping the expansion of the Banten Sultanate in the century of the spice trade and the extension of the spice route.

### KEYWORDS

Islamization, local knowledge, power, spice route, trade.

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## INTRODUCTION

Spices such as sandalwood, mace (*fuli*), and cloves are endemic plants which grow only in Nusantara. Tomé Pires writes:

The Malay merchants say that God made Timor for sandalwood and Banda for mace (*fuli*), and the Moluccas for cloves and that this merchandise is not known anywhere else in the world except in these places (A. Cortesão 1944; A. Reid 2014).

Acting on this information, Asian and European traders came searching for spices in Nusantara and created more spice routes; a spice route was one of the trade networks which has connected the western and eastern hemispheres of the world over the last 4,500 years. This network covers the globe from the west coast of the Japanese Archipelago, across the Indonesian Archipelago, through India, mainland Middle East, the Mediterranean region, and Europe. If this route is measured by distance, it spanned more than 15,000 km and is challenging to traverse even today (M.N. Ririmasse 2017: 49). Traders from India, China, and Arabia initially traced the route in pursuit of spices. Early in the present era, Claudius Ptolemy (circa AD 90-168) provided important information in his work written around 150, *Geographic Hypegesis* (Guide to Geography), about the route to the Nusantara (F. Rahman 2019: 350). Until the thirteenth century, Chinese traders were the key conduit of the spice trade, of which the Moluccas was the centre. From Banda, they moved west through Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Java, and then across the Straits of Malacca, sailing to India to the spice markets in Malabar. From there, ships from Arabia carried spices across the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. In the fourteenth century, spices finally reached the hands of Europeans through the spice route (Rahman 2019).

By the thirteenth century, the Islands which would become the Netherlands East Indies were the scene of a thriving trade in spices (J.W. Parry 1955: 198). Spices are used not only as medicinal ingredients but also as condiments, preservatives, and softeners. Spices such as nutmeg, cloves, sandalwood, turmeric, and ginger, began to be used in various European dishes (P.W. Sherman and J. Billing 1999). At that time, alongside opium and silk, spices were one of the most sought-after commodities and their prices were very high (P. Freedman 2005; M. Loewe 1971). Searching for spices by sailing to Nusantara was a popular undertaking among European rulers and traders because of the high demand for spices for everyday life. The increasing demand for spices pushed up prices in the market, making the trade even more profitable. This effort to find spices as a trading commodity led to encounters and interactions between traders worldwide. It also automatically created cultural, scientific exchanges, and facilitated the propagation of religions. Another impact was to encourage the expansion of kingdoms in Nusantara, which became hubs of the spice route. These kingdoms, such as Banten, Aceh, Makassar, Palembang, and Ternate, grew into trading and Islamic religious centres (R. Rusli and M. Subair 2022).

So far, the historiography about the expansion of kingdoms in Nusantara and trade along the spice routes has focused solely on social, political, and economic aspects such as “Karaeng Pattingalloang and the advancement of Makassar in the seventeenth century” (Rusli and Subair 2022), “The story of spices” (Parry 1955), “The spice trade” (B.G. Stone 1964), “The shift in political and economic power in the Indonesian Archipelago in the sixteenth and seventeenth century” (B.J.O. Schrieke 1960). So far, no studies have specifically discussed the contribution of local knowledge to the expansion of kingdoms along the spice route. This fact throws sharp light on the statement of Daniel Patrick Moynihan that culture and not politics determines the success of a society (L.E. Harrison and S.P. Huntington 2006: xv). Therefore, this paper will elaborate on the expansion of the Banten Sultanate with the support of its local knowledge which is part of local culture harnessed by the ruler and the local community as a strategy to advance the Banten Sultanate.

In the local context of this paper, the expansion of the Sultanate of Banten peaked under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. During this period, the port of the Banten Sultanate grew into an entrepôt and a stopover for traders from a variety of countries. Its territory extended to the southern parts of Sumatra and Kalimantan. The advancement of the Banten Sultanate was not something which happened overnight but had been being pioneered since Malacca had fallen to the Portuguese in 1511. The advancement of the Banten Sultanate continued throughout the reign of Maulana Hasanuddin down to Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1552-1682) (H. Djajadiningrat 1983; H.O. Untoro 2007; M. Wijayati 2011).

The historiography of the Banten Sultanate in the maritime field, especially in the spice trade era, can be divided into three stages. Firstly, studies which see trade factors as the cause of the expansion of sultanates such as Banten in 1678 (C. Guillot 1993), “Kota kosmopolitan Banten pada masa kejayaan Jalur Rempah Nusantara abad XVI hingga abad XVII” (The cosmopolitan city of Banten in its heyday of the Spice Route of the Archipelago from the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries) (G.A. Ariwibowo 2021). Secondly, studies which look at Islamization or trade, including “European-Southeast Asia encounters with Islamic expansionism, circa 1500-1700; Comparative case studies of Banten, Ayutthaya, and Banjarmasin in the wider Indian Ocean context” (K.R. Hall 2014), “The first Islamic States of Java 15th and 16th centuries” (T.G.Th. Pigeaud and H.J. de Graaf 1976), *Perdagangan internasional Kesultanan Banten akhir abad XVI-XVII* (International trade of the Sultanate of Banten late XVI-XVII century) (I. Sholehah 2019), “Religious specificities in the early Sultanate of Banten (Western Java, Indonesia)” (G. Facal 2014). Thirdly, studies examining the correlation between spices, Islam, and trade, such as “Rempah dan kosmopolitanisme Islam; Koneksi spritual-intelektual Palembang, Banten, dan Demak dibalik perdagangan global abad XV-XVI” (Spices and Islamic cosmopolitanism; The spiritual-intellectual connection of Palembang, Banten, and Demak behind global trade of the XV-XVI century) (J. Wahyudi and A. Suaedy 2022). Fourthly, studies which look at Banten from an archaeological

perspective, such as “Paths to power in the early stage of colonialism; An archaeological study of the Sultanate of Banten, Java, Indonesia, the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century” (K. Ueda et al. 2016). Fifthly, studies which examine the history of Banten in manuscripts like “Surat-surat Sultan Banten koleksi Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia” (Letters of the Sultan of Banten collection of the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia) (T. Pudjiastuti 2004), “Letters of the Sultans of Banten in the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia” (Pudjiastuti 2005), *Tinjauan kritis tentang sajarah Banten; Sumbangan bagi pengenalan sifat-sifat penulisan sejarah Jawa* (A critical review of the history of Banten; A contribution to an introduction to the characteristics of Javanese historical writing) (Djajadiningrat 1983). This literature provided a starting point for the authors to write this article. However, none of these five studies examines the contribution of local knowledge to the expansion of the Banten Sultanate in heyday of the spice trade.

This article delves into the intricate details of one local knowledge practised by the sultans of Banten in the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries. The focal point of this distinct local knowledge is *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*, meaning ‘building cities and forts with bricks and coral’. Studying the *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* provides valuable insights into the role of local knowledge in advancing kingdoms along the spice routes. Analysing the interpretation and implementation of this local knowledge helps us understand how cultural values, traditions, and local wisdom had contributed to the development of kingdoms and trade in the past. This offers a fresh perspective complementing previous research which has predominantly focused on political and economic aspects.

Furthermore, tracing this history allows us to appreciate the rich cultural heritage and examine how policies and practices associated with this local knowledge influenced the social and economic lives of the Bantenese community at that time. This article will hopefully contribute significantly to enriching academic discourse by incorporating the dimension of local knowledge into the context of Nusantara history and civilization. Gaining a deeper understanding of this local knowledge can also inspire and educate modern society about the importance of preserving and harnessing local wisdom in the face of changing times.

One article which does explain the same local knowledge as that of our focus, is entitled “*Gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis; Sebuah konsep historis dan simbolis*” (*Gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis; A historical and symbolic concept*) (T.U.S.H. Wibowo 2018). Taking a sociological approach, Wibowo explains that *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* is one outcome of the policy of Sultan Maulana Yusuf (1570-1580) to build urban infrastructure using bricks (*bata*) and coral (*kawis*). This policy manifests a harmony between a natural substance (coral) and a manufactured substance (brick), expressing the geopolitical status of the Sultanate of Banten as a maritime kingdom. Nowadays, this policy is still used by the police and army in Banten as their motto. The motto is evidence that this local knowledge has been transmitted down the generations with another meaning. However, in his article, Wibowo

does not examine how other rulers used this local knowledge at different times and for other purposes. He tends to situate his article in terms of defence and urban planning. Therefore, the present article fills in the blank space in Wibowo's article by explaining the relationship between local knowledge and the expansion of the Banten Sultanate in the seventeenth century (the spice heyday), especially in trade, Islamization, and power relations.

Trade and Islamization at the height of the spice period are two intersecting events and should be discussed in a single piece of historiography. These two events mutually influenced each other and stimulated the expansion of some kingdoms in Nusantara, but Islamization and trade in this period are always written about either separately or only fragmentarily. Our reading, albeit not extensive, has turned up only a few articles combining Islamization and trade, such as "Perniagaan dan Islamisasi di wilayah Maluku" (Commerce and Islamization in the Maluku region) by W. Handoko (2013) and "Rempah dan kosmopolitanisme Islam; Koneksi spiritual-intelektual Palembang, Banten dan Demak dibalik perdagangan global abad XV-XVI" (Spices and Islamic cosmopolitanism; Spiritual-intellectual connections Palembang, Banten, and Demak behind the XV-XVI century global trade) by Wahyudi and Suaedy (2022).

The Sultan utilized the local knowledge in Banten to expand power, trade, Islamization, and shore up defence policies, a fact well recorded in European archives and manuscripts. These pre-emptive efforts were undertaken to be able to withstand attacks from other regions which wanted to control Banten and curb the sultan's attempts to expand trading ties and propagate Islam at the zenith of the spice trade. This paper analyses how the local knowledge was used by the sultans to improve the status of Banten in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This research was conducted in Banten. In the period in question, the Sultanate of Banten referred not only to present-day (2023) Banten province but included most of Banten and the Lampung (E. Supriatna 2020; Wijayati 2011).

This paper adopts a qualitative research approach utilizing the historical method. Written sources were sourced from both local and foreign origins. Local sources include manuscripts such as *Surat-surat Sultan Banten* (Letters of the Sultan of Banten) (Pudjiastuti 1997) and *Sadjarah Banten; Suntingan teks dan terjemahan disertai tinjauan aksara dan amanat* (History of Banten; Text editing and translation accompanied by script and mandate reviews) (Pudjiastuti 2000). Foreign sources consist of travel reports by European missionaries and traders.<sup>1</sup> In this study, these various sources contribute to our understanding of

<sup>1</sup> For instance: *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires and the book of Francisco Rodrigues* (Corteseo 1944), "Beschrijving van Bantam en de Lampongs" (J. de Rovere van Breugel 1856), *De opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag in Oost-Indie; Verzameling van onuitgegeven stukken uit het Oud-Koloniaal Archief* (J.K.J. de Jonge 1862), *Dagh Register gehouden int Casteel Batavia Anno 1624-1629* (J.E. Heeres 1896), *Dagh Register gehouden int Casteel Batavia Anno 1640-1641* (Heeres 1900), "Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der Lampong" (H.D. Canne 1862), "Bijdrage tot de kennis der geschiedenis van Lampongs" (J.E.H. Köhler 1874), "D'eerste boeck; Historie van Indien vaer inne verhaelt is de Hollandtsche schepen bejehent zijn" (W. Lodewycksz 1598).

the motor behind the expansion of the Banten Sultanate. Ancient drawings and maps obtained offline from the National Library and online from the websites of the Atlas of Mutual Heritage (<https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/>) and the digital collections by The University of Leiden (<https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/>) have served as valuable resources in constructing the narrative. Pertinently, oral traditions relating to the spice route have also been crucial in accumulating the data. To support these sources, interviews were conducted with religious leaders, cultural experts, archaeologists, historical observers/experts, and philologists specializing in the research topic. These interviews have also aided in the analysis of tangible relics of the spice route era, including ports, forts, tombs, mosques, royal palaces, and inscriptions. Our team includes an experienced archaeologist who has assessed the dating of these remains.

Furthermore, we collaborated with knowledgeable staff from the Banten Cultural Reserve Preservation Center. Field observations played a vital role in identifying material sources which could potentially preserve traces of the past. They have also facilitated in verifying information mentioned in written sources, such as archives and manuscripts, by comparing them with the conditions observed in the field. This process has served as a source criticism, enabling us to proceed to the next steps of interpretation and historiography.

This paper also complements the historical approach by taking anthropological and archaeological perspectives. The anthropological approach has delved into local cultural practices, power networks, religious, trade, and defence mechanisms along the spice route; the archaeological approach in analysing data from relevant archaeological sites. By adopting this multidisciplinary approach, we aim to critique the historiography which has often been biased by the political contexts serving the interest of those in authority. Our choice to combine different methods enhances the completeness of historiography and exemplifies the authors' freedom to present facts about the past in an unbiased and responsible manner.

#### THE EARLY MEANING OF *GAWE KUTA BALUWARTI BATA KALAWAN KAWIS*

The early meaning of local knowledge *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* can already be traced in the Banten Chronicle or *Sajarah Banten* (Djajadiningrat 1983; Pudjiastuti 2007). This local knowledge was embodied in the construction of a defensive wall to improve the security of the city – an effort to realize a fortified city (*kuta baluwarti*). The resources required for the construction of the fortified city were obtained from Banten itself, including coral (*kawis*) and bricks (*bata*). This is clearly stated in the pupuh 22 in *Sajarah Banten*:

Hasanuddin reached the age of one hundred (*sirna ilang iku tuwan ingkang yuswa kangjeng gusti*). His son, Maulana Yusuf, succeeded him. Maulana Yusuf had great physical strength. He built a stronghold (*gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*) and constructed villages, rice-fields, canals, and dams. Around him, he gathered people who were both pious and heroic.<sup>2</sup>

The construction of a defensive wall to protect the city is clear evidence of the policy pursued by Sultan Banten Maulana Yusuf who was determined to improve both infrastructure and defence, as maritime activity was rapidly increasing at that time (Wibowo 2018: 69-80). Sultan Maulana Yusuf began to organize his city's defences after it became obvious that his realm was obviously attracting more attention from outside traders. A proper layout of the city was needed in the framework of defence and, tangentially, also reflected an effort to promote the Sultanate of Banten, especially after the sultanate's administrative centre was transferred to the coast (Wibowo 2013; Karma 2017).

In 1552, Banten, which was only a duchy, was elevated to the status of a sultanate with the inauguration of Maulana Hasanuddin as ruler. Obeying his father's instructions, Maulana Hasanuddin moved the royal capital from Banten Girang to Banten Lama in Surosowan city (Guillot 1993: 92-93). The relocation of the centre of government was a signal that the Sultanate of Banten had changed its orientation from agrarian to maritime. The Sultanate's choice of Old Banten position on a maritime axis instantly turned the region into a world trade route.<sup>3</sup> The position of the city on the maritime route was designed to intensify trade and, for protection, was provided with fortified buildings which could serve as part of the defence network (Rusli and Subair 2022). This stimulus behind this layout was derived from an idea of Sunan Gunung Jati, who had ordered his son to build a city on the coast and decreed where the palace, the market, and main square should be (Reid 2015: 91).

When the Surosowan Palace was built in 1552, it was not situated within a fort, even though the city was built facing the sea so that all incoming traders could enter unhindered. Aware of this weakness, Maulana Yusuf immediately built a fort to defend the city from threats and attacks from both pirates and Europeans who wanted to occupy Banten and control it. The fort was created to protect the people inside and as a centre for community activities and interaction. Therefore, a minaret was also built. Bricks were the primary

<sup>2</sup> The original text: *Hasanuddin mencapai usia seratus tahun (sirna ilang iku tuwan ingkang yuswa kangjeng gusti). Ia digantikan oleh puteranya, Molana Yusup. Molana Yusup mempunyai tenaga jasmani yang besar. Ia membangun sebuah kubu pertahanan (gawe kuta bulawarti bata kalawan kawis) dan membuat kampung-kampung, sawah-ladang, terusan-terusan, dan bendungan-bendungan. Sekitarnya dikumpulkannya orang-orang yang saleh dan bersifat pahlawan.* (Djajadiningrat 1983; Wibowo 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Banten's transformation into a staging post on a world trade route can be attributed to several factors. One key factor was its strategic geographical location in the Indonesian Archipelago. Situated on the northwest coast of Java, Banten had access to major sea routes connecting the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. This advantageous location made it a natural hub for maritime trade (A. Adeng 2010).



construction material, and pieces of coral were burned to make lime for mortar. (Based on the interview with AY, November 2022).

The zigzag fort was a unique building and is thought to have nothing in common with any other fort anywhere else in the world. It turned out to have many functions which benefited the Sultanate of Banten and were much needed at that time. Importantly, this fort was built to strengthen the existing walls, making them more substantial. In a nutshell, the design and construction of the fort's walls were intended to ensure increased durability and resilience. The unique zigzag shape of the fort's walls offered various advantages in terms of defence capabilities. Firstly, the zigzag pattern created multiple angles and corners, making it more difficult for attackers to approach the fort and breach it. This design made it challenging for besieging forces to maintain a direct line of sight for cannon fire and launch a direct attack on the walls. Secondly, the zigzag design increased the overall thickness and depth of the walls. By incorporating multiple angles and corners, the walls were thickened and made more layered, providing additional structural integrity and making it harder for attackers to penetrate or damage them. The increased thickness and depth of the walls made them more resistant to various forms of assault, such as cannon fire or battering rams.

Strategically, the zigzag shape of the fort's walls allowed for a better distribution and absorption of impact forces. When projectiles or cannonballs hit the walls, the angles and corners created by the zigzag design helped to disperse and dissipate the energy, reducing the concentrated force on any single point. This force dispersion made it more difficult for the walls to be breached or to collapse them. Overall, the unique zigzag design of the fort's walls provided enhanced defensive capabilities, increased thickness and depth, and improved impact resistance. These factors contributed to the perception that the walls of the zigzag fort were more substantial, offering the Sultanate of Banten excellent protection at the time it was built. In addition, the wall surrounding the city also functioned as a dividing line between the town and the settlements inhabited by foreign nations. Ships entering the city of Banten had to pass through the fort gate and were subject to taxes/mooring fees (Supriatna 2020).

The Surosowan Palace was built with market facilities and a square. In the Dutch engraving (Figure 1), which depicts activities in the market of Banten town around 1600, the market is crowded with a motley collection of visitors. The market, located on the seafront right, was a hub of lively commerce, a mixture of retail trade, foreign and domestic daily foodstuffs, and other products from abroad. Every morning, merchants from various nations, such as the Portuguese, Arabs, Turks, Chinese, Keling, Pegu, Malays, Bengalis, Gujaratis, Malabar, Abyssinians, and every region in the Indies were always easy to spot in this bustling centre (Lodewycksz 1598: 110).



Figure 1. The state of the market in Banten in the 1600s (source: <https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/>)

Banten city continued to develop, reaching various stages in peak development. Market development is one of the indicators of the growth of Banten. Banten city is said to have had three large markets. The first was in the eastern region called Karangantu. The second was situated close to the square called Pasar Temanggung, and third, the centre of the Chinese population in the west, was called Pasar Kapalembangan. The largest market was located east of Karangantu Market (S.D. Hutama 2003: 187). An overview of the market positions can be seen in Figure 2.

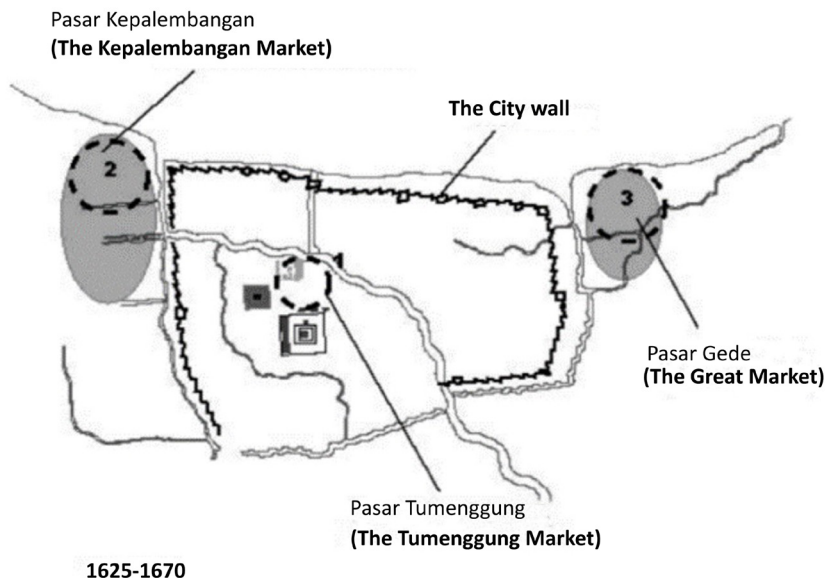


Figure 2. Banten market (Hutama 2003: 187).

Figure 3 is a picture of Surosowan City as it looked in 1596, when Cornelis de Houtman, a Dutch envoy in search of spices, anchored his ship in Karangantu Harbour. The map made by Willem Lodewijcksz in 1596 is drawn from the sea (north) towards the land to the south. It shows Banten

surrounded by a zigzag-shaped high wall (fort). To the west of the city are small settlements and mountains. To the east are rice-fields and the Cibanten River, which cut through the palace and residential areas. In the city centre, houses appear to have been lined up neatly and surrounded by a perimeter wall, and some facilities are considered to have been mosques. The following were the boundaries of Surosowan City based on the map in Figure 3:

- North : the Java Sea and two clusters of seaside settlements;
- East : there are buildings presumed to be mosques, long stall (*los*), and vacant land;
- West : fenced settlements on the northern, western, and southern sides;
- East : water from the Cibanten River flows into the settlement;
- South : not visible on the map (Juliadi et al. 2019: 83).

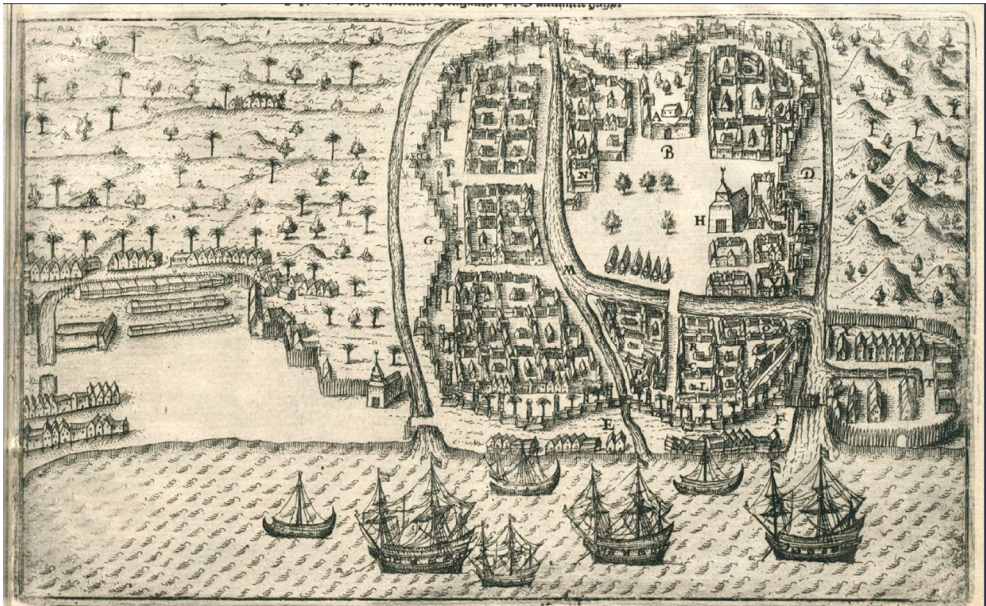


Figure 3. Early Banten city map 1596 (source: <https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/>).

The construction of the fort clearly reveals the meaning of the adage encapsulating local knowledge *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*. At the time of Maulana Yusuf, this concept was still interpreted literally, namely the building of urban infrastructure and defences using the primary raw materials: bricks and coral. These materials were also used for the construction of the Surosowan Palace (Figure 4), the expansion of the Great Mosque of Banten, the development of markets and ports, irrigation networks, access to clean water, and the construction of the Rante Bridge to serve as the primary link between Surosowan and the outside world. This bridge was constructed over a tributary of the Old Town of Banten River, which functioned as a “tax toll” for foreign merchants’ cargo-carrying boats entering the royal city. This

development strategy focused on building urban infrastructure, population settlement, regional security, trade, and agriculture (Djajadiningrat 1983).



Figure 4. One corner of the remaining Surosowan Palace fort showing the walls built of coralstone (photograph by Rismawidiawati, 2022).

The utilization of building materials which can be found around the Banten area did not stop at using bricks and coral. For the sake of economics and efficiency, efforts were made to utilize other raw materials available around the coast of Banten. It was discovered that very durable andesite was a good building material and was easy to obtain. Andesite was used in the construction of various kinds of infrastructures and buildings, commencing with the harbour-works at Bandar Banten. It was also a suitable raw material for household requirements and tombstones (Wibowo 2018). The use of raw materials, including coral, clay, and andesite is also still visible in the remains of the Great Mosque of Banten.

From the fourth Sultan of Banten, Abdul Mufakir bin Abdul Kadir (1596-1651), the implementation of *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*, underwent an expansion in meaning. At this stage of city development, the meaning was still limited to utilizing local Banten materials. Nevertheless, when the splendour of the building required an increase in human resources who were more capable of achieving it, the local knowledge of *gawe kuta* developed into a concept of life for the rulers and people of Banten. *Bata* and *karang* were then translated as natural and unnatural potential (human resource creativity), which had to be combined to build a strong Sultanate of Banten.

Brick was interpreted as a human product (unnatural), and coral had natural potential. Therefore, brick was considered an innovation and coral as a cultural root. To build a strong city, we must still combine innovation and cultural roots (the past). (Based on the interview with AY, November 2022).

During the reigns of Sultan Abdul Kadir and his successor, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1651-1683), Maulana Yusuf's policy was expanded by developing it to meet the existing conditions. *Gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*, which means building the city and fort (*gawe kuta baluwarti*), changed. It no longer referred just to making using bricks and corals. This local knowledge required a broader interpretation, especially as it had to overcome the challenges posed by VOC (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie), which expanded its power during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. The policy was formed by considering the duality of both the unnatural potential (bricks) and natural potential (coral) to which the Sultanate of Banten had access. Development during the reign of the next ruler was limited not only to physical development, the construction of cities, forts, and towns which used building materials (bricks and coral), but, considering the duality of other potentials available in the Sultanate of Banten, the local knowledge was broadened to encompass the construction of city forts. One of the translations of the two potencies of *bata* and *kawis* (bricks and coral) is the combination of modernity (the development of the times) and the potential of existing traditions in the community (Wibowo 2018).

During the time of Sultan Abdul Mufakir Mahmud Abdul Kadir the concept of *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* was emphasized by intensive use of its symbols:

*Iku wong banten kudu ngagaguwat tapak leluhur aje sampe ujan dulu baru elmu wong salah malah kaprah wong bener malah lumrah.*

The Bantenese people must go back to trace the events which happened in the past, lest we today present teachers from various disciplines, with some people are acting more and more appallingly and others who do good but are increasingly undirected. (Based on the interview with AY, November 2022).

As the Sultanate of Banten pursued its policy to build forts on land, it turned its attentions to the coastal defences. This development was run in tandem with the strengthening of the land defences. The upshot was the building of a palace, waterways to the palace, repairing bridges, making irrigation channels for agriculture, and building settlements which could accommodate approximately 5,000-6,000 people in 1660 (U. Tjandrasmita 1976: 25-28). To ward off the dual danger of any naval assaults or Dutch attacks, the sultan strengthened the sea fleet and defences in the coastal areas. These could also be useful in promoting trade. The construction of this sea fort shows the sultan's acumen and skill in dealing with problems within the Banten Sultanate. Guillot points out the efforts the sultan made in spatial politics, turning wasteland into productive agricultural areas, increasing food sources, moving the population, and maintaining the security of the country bordering Batavia (Guillot 2008: 170-199).

Clearly, the sea defences, consisting of the palace and the port facilities, were a first line of defence for the land forts. Wisely, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa also established a strong sea fleet to maintain his control over marine resources.

The strength of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa's fleet can be seen from the security which prevailed in his territorial waters, which often intersected with the routes used by the VOC. One such encounter was recorded in a Dutch report dated 11 December, 1656. The report states that a ship from Jambi was carrying two letters for VOC officials named Daam Pieterse Lelij and Louis Philibert Vernatti, detained by the Koninklijke Marine (Royal Netherlands Navy). This ship was seized by a Bantenese patrol boat in the Sunda Strait. The Bantenese released the ship on 12 December, 1656 (Heeres 1896, 1900). So, the strengthening of Banten's navy was a continuation of its policy towards its army, which was renowned for its battle-hardiness; it had demonstrated a remarkable ability to use European cannons. The cannons were placed along the coast in the vicinity of the capital to ward off enemies trying to penetrate Banten Bay.

The efforts to build a fort utilizing its local knowledge helped Banten to make great strides during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. This advancement can be seen on the map in Figure 5, showing Banten city in 1665-1668. This European map shows a view of Banten from above. This map reveals that, at that time, the Sultanate of Banten appears to have been a cosmopolitan, densely populated city with strong fortifications. This cosmopolitan city was a part or node of a transnational network formed by economic and trade activities which created various interactions and exchanges of culture, ideas, and human activities (B. Yeoh and W. Lin 2012: 208).



Figure 5. Map of Banten 1665-1668 (source: <https://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/en/page/2516/map-of-bantam>).

Like other cities in Nusantara which became international ports in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Banten did not expand haphazardly but with a relatively good urban layout. Some sources mention that between 1651-

1683 Banten was described as almost the same as a small Dutch town with houses neatly arranged along the canal (B.H.M. Vlekke 2008: 96). Residential space was divided between the nobles, their followers, and migrants. The city wall which protected the inner part of the city of Banten emphasized the separation of settlements. Outside the city wall, there were merchant settlements with extensive market facilities and a harbour (Juliadi et al. 2019).

The success of Banten's development can be seen in the increasing prosperity of the community. The measure of this prosperity is best seen in its economic fulfillment and security. During the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, there was fluid of integration of people from various ethnicities, especially traders. The presence of the merchants gave rise to villages clustered around the core of Banten city. The settlements of foreign traders were outside the fort city. The settlements of foreign traders were outside the fort city. Meanwhile, the settlements of the local population were inside the fort city (Hutama 2003: 187). An overview of the settlements around Banten city can be seen in Figure 6.

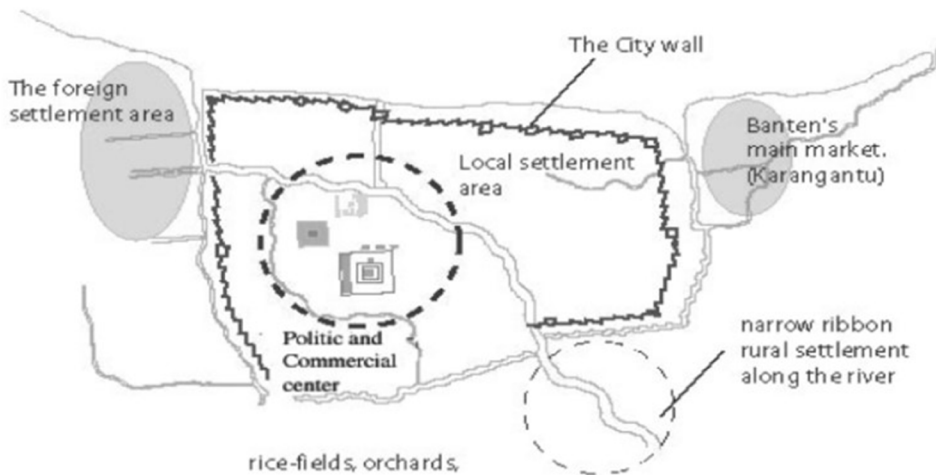


Figure 6. Two settlement areas in Banten in the seventeenth century (Hutama 2003: 187).

Banten grew as an advanced, cosmopolitan city in which many people from various cultural backgrounds settled, including merchants from various nations who brought with them their respective cultural backgrounds. The use of the concept *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* which emerged from the reign of Maulana Yusuf to Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa could be used to create a sense of security within an organized city infrastructure, creating a liveable city for residents and traders who stopped and settled in Banten.

GAWE KUTA BALUWARTI BATA KALAWAN KAWIS IN THE CONTEXT OF ISLAMIZATION, TRADE, AND POWER NETWORKS

*Gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* is one of the local bases from which to understand Banten's local knowledge in building defences and accumulating power. This local knowledge was not restricted to the literal sense of "building a fortress city, with bricks and corals". It was also imbued with the symbolic local knowledge of "*kebantenan*" culture. *Gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* during the reign of Sultan Maulana Yusuf was mainly employed in the form of creating defences, but it was also increasing power in the geopolitics and geoculture of Banten at that time. The *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* local knowledge also led to the founding of villages, and the construction of rice-fields, canals, and dams (Djajadiningrat 1983; Wibowo 2013). This concept also meant that the Sultan held the authority as the mandate holder of Banten power. The Sultan thought out strategies to develop the Sultanate, paying constant attention to *bata kalawan kawis* as a duality of potential or taking the duality of unnatural (the meaning of *bata*/brick) and natural potential (the meaning of *kawis*/coral) into account.

The rulers implemented policies that harnessed both of these potentials of Banten, even though the specific local knowledge of *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* had yet to be formally introduced by Maulana Yusuf. In reality, this practice of the local knowledge had long been in use by the Sultan of Banten. Earlier Sunan Gunung Jati and Maulana Hasanuddin (1552 - 1570) who Islamized Banten also paid attention to the duality of Banten's potential expressed in the concept of *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*. At that time, Islam was considered an unnatural potential, and local wisdom was natural. The rulers of Banten still accommodated local culture as a resource to strengthen the development of religious teachings and the spread of Islam. Gradually, Banten became an Islamic society without erasing its local wisdom. The development of Islamic culture did not automatically erase existing local wisdom/knowledge in Banten (S.R. Pudjiastuti et al. 2021).

Another strategy used by Sunan Gunung Jati to spread Islam was by marrying Bantenese women. Marriage made the acceptance of Islam in the community easier. One reason for this derived from the cultural context and societal dynamics of the time. In many traditional societies, including Banten, women often played a central role in transmitting cultural values, including religious beliefs, to the next generation. By encouraging marriage to Bantenese women, Sunan Gunung Jati was strategically manipulating women's influence and social status within the community. Bantenese women exercised significant influence over family affairs, child-rearing, and the preservation of cultural traditions. Their acceptance of Islam and subsequent practise of the faith would profoundly impact the overall acceptance and adoption of Islam in the community. When a prominent figure like Sunan Gunung Jati, who was highly respected and revered, married a Bantenese woman who embraced Islam, it sent a powerful message to the community. It signified that Islam was compatible with the local culture and a source of



empowerment and social prestige. This endorsement by influential figures helped dispel any misconceptions about or resistance to Islam and created a positive perception of the religion among the Bantenese people. Marriages between Sunan Gunung Jati and Bantenese women also helped bridge cultural and religious divides. They provided a platform for interfaith dialogue and understanding, allowing for the gradual assimilation of Islamic practices into the existing cultural fabric. Through his marriages to Bantenese women, Sunan Gunung Jati demonstrated a level of cultural sensitivity and respect, which fostered a sense of trust and openness in the Bantenese population. It also demonstrated his commitment to the community and its values. It showed that Islam was not an external force seeking to impose itself on the local culture, but rather an integral part of the community's development and progress. This alignment of Islamic teachings with local customs and traditions made the acceptance of Islam more palatable and appealing to the Bantenese people (Prabowo 2003). The acceptance of Islam by the Bantenese community can also be attributed to the long process of its introduction by traders without the exercise of coercion. According to AY:

If we look at the books of Ibn Batutah and the local manuscripts in Banten, they had already embraced Islam in 1220 but did not practise the Sharia. Sunan Gunung Jati married the daughter of the governor of Banten, and the governor was already a Muslim. (Based on the interview with AY, November 2022).

The presence of Islam is confirmed by Hall, who said that the Muslim communities, one of which was composed of Chinese, had existed since 1525 in Banten (Hall 2014). Gabriel Facal has said the Chinese were already in Banten in the sixteenth century. They had their own neighbourhoods, markets, and even built the distinctive Pacinan Mosque (Facal 2014: 97). Chinese merchants were one of the groups of merchants most involved in the pepper trade. They moved their village from the Dermayon of High Chinatown to a place closer to the hinterland, Pamarican, so they could easily intercept the boats carrying pepper and buy their entire cargoes. Profits had doubled by the time the pepper arrived in town. The Chinese were also involved in pepper cultivation in the inland of Banten (M.A. Fadillah et al. 2022; Untoro 2007). Leonard Blussé explains the presence and influence of the Chinese. He states that the presence of Chinese people in Banten in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had contributed to the development of the realm, and was especially beneficial to trade (Blussé 1975: 26-75).

The presence in and influence of Chinese people on Banten society is also a sign of the success of the sultanate's accommodation to the needs of foreign traders, and the policy of tolerance it pursued. The ruler of Banten accommodated foreign traders, including the Chinese, giving them a degree of freedom to conduct their business, and allowing them to settle in Banten. The intense interaction between the indigenous people and the Chinese gave birth to a cultural exchange whose traces can still be seen today. The influence on the two cultures was reciprocal. On the one hand, many Chinese adopted

the local culture, taking Javanese or Malay names. On the other hand, some Chinese-influenced culture also emerged, for instance, the many Chinese loan words which were transmitted orally (D. Lombard 1990). Chinese Muslims such as Ki Jongjo, a prominent civil servant in the city in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, also achieved positions of trust (C. Guillot, L. Nurhakim, and S. Wibisono 1997).

The influence of Ki Jongjo himself can be seen in his role in helping Sunan Gunung Jati and Maulana Hasanudin to conquer the hinterland of Banten. One of his roles was the selection of Islamized territories. The Hindu-Buddhist religious centres were given top priority for peaceful Islamization; an indication the Islamization strategy of Sunan Gunung Jati and Maulana Hasanudin had a cultural base. Instead of a military-based, expansive Islamization, the approach taken was reconciliation with local Hindu traditions (Ota Atsushi 2010). One of these was to Islamize areas in which ascetic practices were important (Asceticism is a teaching which encourages its followers to strengthen religious values and belief in God by spiritual exercises and practices controlling the body and soul). Areas such as Gunung Karang, Aseupan, and Pulosari, where Pucuk Umun, the last ruler of the Banten Girang kingdom, practised asceticism, received significant attention. In these areas, they converted 800 ascetics, and Sunan Gunung Jati introduced Maulana Hasanudin to some of the esoteric knowledge of Islam (Djajadiningrat 1983). After this success, Sunan Gunung Jati returned to North Banten to take up political duties, assigning Maulana Hasanudin to continue to spread Islam in the southern region.

Besides spreading Islam in Banten, Maulana Hasanuddin organized government and trade there after the Portuguese had taken control of Malacca. Consequently, as Banten began to grow into an international port, it was ready to take part in the world of trade and maintain the supply of pepper. At that time, the main priority of the Banten ruler was to control the pepper-producing areas. Banten pepper was obtained from across the Sunda Strait: Lampung, Palembang, Jambi, and Selebar (Bengkulu). However, the pepper flow from the latter three regions did not last long, as they managed to break away and become independent fiefdoms (Untoro 2007). From the second half of the sixteenth century, Lampung became Banten's primary source of pepper. In the seventeenth century, Lampung contributed approximately 90 percent of the pepper to the port city of Banten (H.J. de Graaf and Th. Pigeaud 2001; Guillot 2008; J. Talens 2004).

According to us, the description of the domination, optimization of cultivation, development, and marketing of pepper in Lampung by the Banten ruler indicates the implementation of a strategy based on *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*. From this perspective, the territorial growth of the Banten Sultanate by the domination Lampung was direct attempt by the Banten ruler to expand his territory. For this reason, the Banten ruler optimized the duality of unnatural and natural potential, referred to by the local knowledge. Pepper represents natural potential; the management, development, and marketing of this crop utilizing local culture is the unnatural potential. Banten's rulers used both these potentials to gain control of Lampung.

In the world of trade, the Nusantara traders cannot be said to have stood independently because it is impossible to discount other rulers or nobles. These kings and their families played a leading role in conducting trade, as in the case with the spice trade in Banten. When Sultan Gunung Jati held power in Banten, Lampung still adhered to Animism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Consequently, the control of Lampung was motivated not only to gain control of pepper as a trade commodity; it was also religiously inspired: the propagation of Islam. Ultimately, Lampung could be controlled and Islamized along three paths: marriage, culture, and trade. The marriage of Sultan Gunung Jati to Ratu Darah Putih was the beginning of Banten's control over Lampung (N. Junaidah 2008).

By juggling these three factors, Lampung emerged as the central region for maintaining the availability of pepper and rice as trade commodities under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. The cultivation of pepper in gardens in Banten was duplicated on fertile land in Lampung, and there was massive rice cultivation around the Pontang and Tanara areas (F. Colombijn 1989). Guillot states that rice was transported by *getek*, a type of raft for river transportation. (Guillot 2008). To supervise this operation, the Sultan of Banten placed four representatives with the title *jinjem* in four areas: Menggala (Tulangbawang), Semangka, Seputih, and Telukbetung. They were tasked with ensuring that the people took good care of the pepper and that the pepper supply was not smuggled elsewhere, but arrived safely in Banten's trading ports. The *jinjem* could not interfere in domestic affairs, as Lampung had its own political and customary institutions (Canne 1862; A. Gonggong, M.S. Kartadarmadja, and M. Ibrahim 1993). The inhabitants were obliged to sell all their pepper to Banten at a predetermined, low price (TNI 1862). The Sultan of Banten required everyone to plant 500 pepper-vines to increase pepper production. Lampung provided the arable land and the necessary human resources for all pepper-processing activities (Guillot 2008).

To maintain Banten's power, the Sultan of Banten granted people various government titles, including Pangeran, Arya, Kyai, Tumenggung, Ngabehi, and Dalem. People who earned these titles did whatever it took to maintain their power. Sometimes the title could only be obtained by merit, but bribery could also not be ruled out. These titles could be given to anyone who could supply the Sultan of Banten with large quantities of pepper (Canne 1862; Köhler 1874). A title was accompanied by a *piagem*<sup>4</sup> engraved on a bronze plate for the clan head and gifts of crises, *kopiyah*, clothes, umbrellas, and spears for all. Under certain conditions, *piagem* became an item of trade. For example, if the position of clan head became vacant, the matter of his successor was left to the sultan or his deputy. The candidate for clan head who could present the most pepper would emerge the winner. However, if all the candidates provided the exact same amount of pepper, they were only given *piagem*. Faced with this challenge, people would compete to bring as much pepper as they

<sup>4</sup> A *piagem* refers to an engraved bronze plate which served as a symbol of recognition or honour given to individuals who had been awarded certain government titles in the Sultanate of Banten (Canne 1862).

could to Banten because that was the only way to could achieve their goal. In turn, this incentive spurred on copious pepper production in Lampung (Canne 1862).

Banten's ability to control the production and distribution of pepper and rice emphasized the Sultan's strategic position in expanding the pepper trade network and power to Lampung. In 1619, Banten's ruler decreed that foreign traders could only buy pepper through the palace (M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs 2012: 254). Likewise, the transportation of pepper from Lampung to the port of Banten had to be authorized by the Sultan of Banten. If anyone ignored these provisions, he was sanctioned by the Sultan of Banten. These measures had a double effect; in addition to benefiting Banten in obtaining pepper from Lampung, they also protected power over Lampung by Banten in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A time when Banten was a significant political player, a primary political representation in the western tip of Java (De Graaf and Pigeaud 2001).

The rulers of Banten expanded the cultivation of pepper not only in Lampung but also pioneered the cultivation of the spice inland, in the mountains of Pandeglang and across Leuwiliang to the east and north to Malimping to the west. Pepper in Gunung Karang Pandeglang was harvested twice a year. The first, larger harvest, commonly called Panen Raya (large crop), was between October and March; the second smaller harvest was in April and September (W. Marsden 1999: 97-98). The pepper was transported manually by *pikulan* (carried by coolies) to coastal rivers, such as the Cisadane, from where it was sent to the Cisadane estuary on small bamboo craft called *getek* (rafts). These boats stopped at pepper-processing locations before arriving at the primary pepper market at Karangantu Harbour (F. Irfani 2020). The arrival of the pepper boats was eagerly awaited by traders who competed to obtain large quantities (Untoro 2007).

In light of this, the philosophical meaning of *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* can also be understood as a symbol of the optimization of Banten's resources on land and sea. *Bata* is a land product, and *kawis* is its marine counterpart. Both potentials were used simultaneously to build the fort and city facilities. In addition, agricultural resources, such as pepper, were traded by river and sea. We came to a conclusion that this step was also a physical translation of the duality of land and marine potential which the ruler of Banten used to secure Banten a leading position in the spice trade. Banten's control of the sea was a strategy to expand its commodity distributing or trade network. Management of agricultural land to produce superior commodities, which were marketed to various countries along the spice route, also seems to have automatically strengthened the position of the Sultanate of Banten, assisting in the expansion of its power. This included the process of Islamization.

The power network, Islamization, and trade are also testified to by the establishment of a Lampungese settlement in Cikoneng Banten (now Cikoneng Village, Anyer District, Serang Regency). This began with the assistance of Lampung people (Tulangbawang) under the leadership of Minak Sengaji

to assist Sultan Banten Maulana Hasanuddin to expand Banten's territory and spread Islam in West Java. Impressed by their dedication, the Banten ruler allowed the Lampung people to choose a place to live in the Banten Sultanate. They initially occupied the Priuk area, but upon their arrival, they were startled by the loud boom of the cannon Ki Amuk from the Surosowan Palace. Therefore, they moved to second place, Sirih. It turned out that the gun, though virtually inaudible, could still be heard, so they finally moved to Cikoneng. This place was deemed appropriate because it was neither too far nor too close to Surosowan so they decided to live there permanently. (Based on the interview with Nikmatullah, 23 November, 2022.) The presence of these Lampung people bears witness to the success of the network of power, Islamization, and trade built by the Banten Sultanate.

Banten's prominence as a leading market player in Nusantara was further strengthened by its ability to obtain even more pepper supplies from both Bengkulu and Ambon (Irfani 2020). This role as a pepper supplier also had implications for its regional expansion policy. Various places which became known as pepper-producers, such as Silebar, Bengkulu, and the small areas around them, were drawn into the orbit of the government of the sultan of Banten (L.Y. Andaya 2000). The regions through which ships from Banten could enter either the Indian Ocean or the southern route to the South China Sea were secured by either treaty or conquest. Trade route security agreements were signed with Jambi, Palembang, Pasai, and Melaka. However, areas such as Bangka, Belitung, Batam, Bintang, West Kalimantan, and the eastern part of Java were occupied by force (M. Ali and Badruddin 2020).

As it built up its control of the trading networks, the Sultanate of Banten also influenced the process of Islamization. The trade routes under Banten's control were used by Islamic proselytizers who spread to various regions in the Nusantara. Trade and Islamization along the spice routes systematically worked in tandem. Many Muslim traders ventured to new places to trade and spread Islam. Banten experienced its heyday under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. Banten's expansion was plain to see in the economic field (trade) and the spread of Islam, politics/government, defence, urban planning, society, and culture. This was the time that Banten also emerged as a supplier of pepper to China. The Dutch (1596) and the British (1602) made Banten their trading hub in Southeast Asia (Reid 2011).

In the mid-seventeenth century, ships from China, India, Portugal, Spain, France, Denmark, England, the Netherlands, India, Gujarat, Bengal, Persia, Arabia, Abyssinia, the Mughal empire, Turkey, Siam, Sri Lanka, Japan, Taiwan, Macao, the Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam, Johor, Brunei, Burma, Champa, Yemen, Armenia, Patani, Aceh, Malacca, Ternate, Jambi, Mataram, Palembang, Goa, Makassar, Banda, Sumbawa, Selor, Ambon, Kalimantan, Juwana, Cirebon, Pati, and Bima were recorded. Banten's success in establishing global trade relations meant it could build up substantial foreign exchange reserves, allowing the government to play the role of banker, offering loans to merchants. In short, it was as an institution which functioned as a monetary controller and a lender of credit (Ali 2021).

In 1673, the regnant Sultan of Banten made trade agreements with Macao, Coromandel, Masulipatnam, Madras, and Surat in India, Mocha, and Persia. Banten ships sailed to Japan, Taiwan, and Tonkin. In 1675, the Sultan of Banten ordered four new ships from the shipyard in Rembang. Two were to be sent to Surat in India, one to Coromandel, and one to Manila. In addition to ordering new ships, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa also bought a second-hand ship, *De Claverblad*, a Dutch ship, owned by Ina Marcka, an Indian, Muslim, sea captain. The Sultan asked Ina Marcka to remain as captain of the ship (Ali 2021).

One proof that the Banten Sultanate was going places is the emergence of its port as one of Southeast Asia's most significant economic and trade centres which could compete on an even footing with Batavia (Guillot 2008). Tomé Pires, a Portuguese explorer, who had set foot in Banten in 1513, mentions that the port was the most crucial port at that time.

The kingdom of Sunda has its ports. The first is the port of Bantam. Junks anchor in this port. it is a trading port. There is a good city on the river. The city has a captain, a very important person. This port trades with the Maldives islands and with the island of Sumatra on the *Panchur* side. This port is almost the most important of all; a river empties there by the sea. It has a great deal of rice, foodstuffs, and pepper. (Corteseo 1944).

As a centre of economy and trade, Banten became a meeting point for domestic and foreign traders, such as the British, French, and Portuguese. The primary objective of the foreign traders who came to Banten was to obtain spices, rice, and other necessary supplies. Nevertheless, as traders, they did not come empty-handed; they also sold the merchandise they brought from their home countries. Some traders also brought merchandise from the regions through which they passed, such as India, China, Arabia, Persia, and Turkey. Another group of traders might come from England, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark, Taiwan, France, Japan, Manila, Macau, Siam, Sri Lanka, Burma, Vietnam, and other kingdoms in Southeast Asia such as Brunei, Sulu, Ternate, Bone, Gowa, Johor, Bima, Mataram, Banjar, and others (Ali and Badruddin 2020). Cooperation agreements were also established with foreign countries and local kingdoms. These agreements enabled Banten to have some control of the spice markets in Asia, Europe, China, and the Middle East.

*Gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* strategy was also used by the Banten authorities in their diplomatic dealings with foreign traders. Since Sultan Abdul Mufakir Mahmud Abdul Kadir (1596-1651), equestrian events had been held every Saturday in the squares of the cities and towns (Djajadiningrat 1983: 44-207).

There are so many performances, such as equestrian events, swordplay, and so on, even dances and games recorded in oral histories and manuscripts. These games even involved foreign traders living in Banten, such as Chinese, Arabs, Indians, and traders from Europe, plunged front stage in the community entertainment. (Based on the interview with AY, 2022).

As time passed, these performances became more highly developed. Equestrian events and games or performances held on Saturdays were called *sasapton*. They were not hierarchical and could be played by the nobility, the people, and even foreign traders. The Banten Sultanate responded to the presence of foreign traders by utilizing local culture to draw them into the fold. The *sasapton* performance was a yet another the manifestation of *kawis* (coral), and, as an innovation, foreign traders were a manifestation of *bata* (bricks). This policy meant that, by combining these two potentials, the rulers had a powerful tool to deal with the foreign traders who entered Banten during the spice-trading season. This did not mean that the ruler neglected his subjects, with whom he maintained a harmonious relationship. *Sasapton* was a powerful medium of cultural diplomacy for the Banten rulers in establishing cooperative relations with such distant countries as Turkey, England, France, and Denmark. One proof of the Sultanate's relationship with foreign countries is the presence of Banten ambassadors in the Port of London on 28 April, 1682. William Granger says their visit was related to trade between the two rulers (W. Granger 1804). This claim is supported by a letter from the sultan to the king of England, Charles II, dated 1675. The letter talks about the gift of black pepper as a gift (Pudjiastuti 2007).

Mastery of the maritime trade network also increased Banten's domestic and foreign commodity exchanges. Willem Lodewycksz (1596) reports that Persians and Arabs sold various rubies. Persians also exchanged medicines. Many Arab and Persian merchants traded by water from one town to another, buying goods from Chinese merchants and taking on goods from the surrounding islands. They bought pepper and resold it to Chinese merchants (Lodewycksz 1598). As a means of exchange, the Sultanate issued a currency fashioned from iron or tin inscribed in Arabic script, known as *wang sawe*, *wang bribil*, *wang cepeng* (Chinese), *wang goweng* (0.1 gobang). The currency was issued during the reign of Sultan Abdul Mufakkir (1624-1561) (H. Rafi'uddin 2016: 58). Archaeological studies have shown that local Banten currency could be round without holes, round with hexagon holes, round with round holes, and round with rectangular holes. The coins could be minted from copper, lead, and bronze. This currency, called *natural*, was used in conjunction with other foreign currencies. The creation of Banten currency, demonstrating that Banten was a producer of means of payment, was another legitimization of its power (Untoro 2007). The use of local currency suggests a fusion of modernity and locality - a form of fusion which is another implementation of *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*.

The world's trust in the stability of safe and peaceful trade put Banten and foreign cooperation on a firm footing. The growth in good relations in trade was followed by the community's acceptance of the religious missions brought by migrants. In the seventeenth century, Banten was already active in the religious network which had developed in the Indian Ocean region. This activity can be seen in establishment of the Banten and Mecca network (De Graaf and Pigeaud 2001; M. Laffan 2015). Inevitably, this Banten-Mecca

network or Meccan Connection shaped the cosmopolitan style of Islam in Banten. Its formation can be seen in the opening of the Banten embassy in Mecca. Martin van Bruinessen, a Dutch scholar of Iranian and Kurdish studies and an anthropologist of Islam, says the embassy recruited scholars in Mecca to teach religion in Banten and perfect the formulation of Islamic law in the Sultanate (Van Bruinessen 1995). Michael Laffan, an Australian historian specializing in Southeast Asian history, suggests that this Banten-Mecca network also contributed to the Sultanate's legitimacy. The Banten and Mecca network also had implications for Banten's relations with other areas on the spice routes, such as the Maldives, Coromandel, and Jeddah. In these places, Banten emissaries established relationships with scholars from various Islamic countries such as Gujarat, Ottoman, Egypt, and Persia (Laffan 2015). These relationships made another contribution to the forming of a cosmopolitan style Islam in Banten. In a nutshell, in the seventeenth century Banten emerged as the home of Islamic teachings and the centre of the spread of Islam to various regions in Java and other areas of the Nusantara (A. Azra 2004: 95).

Until the seventeenth century, Banten seems to have been a cosmopolitan city which attracted the presence of European merchants. Nevertheless, the city also continued to build on a solid Islamic foundation. To the best of his ability, the ruler implemented policies prioritizing religion but never losing sight of local factors. The expansion of Banten was propelled by the combination of cosmopolitanism and local culture or a practice of the duality of the potential owned by the Sultanate of Banten. This is very clearly stated in the policy that those entrusted with the authority as sultanate administrators must be Muslim (Guillot 2008; Wahyudi and Suaedy 2022). One example is Kiahi Angabehi Cakradana, the *sabandar* or *syahbandar* of Banten under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. Cakradana was originally a non-Muslim Chinese merchant named Tantseko who worked as a blacksmith (Guillot 2008). Before he was appointed *sabandar*, he had to convert to Islam (Wahyudi and Suaedy 2022).

The spirit of the local knowledge of *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* also emerged in the process of Islamization, at that time a part of the modernization the country was experiencing. As stated, the Sultan boosted this by decreeing that all sultanate officials had to be Muslims. The Banten Sultanate also had several local policy-making bodies as part of its government system, for instance, the Supreme Judge or Qadi administrative system. The qadi or *kadi* of the Banten Sultanate was known as Kiyahi Peqih Najmuddin. The word "*peqih*" is derived from the Arabic word *faqih*, a person who is an expert in Islamic law/*fiqh*. Najmuddin honours the founder of the Kubrawiyyah order, Najmuddin Al-Kubra (d. 1221). The Peqih Najmuddin had the authority to appoint religious officials in the villages. These officials became known as *pengulu*, *karta*, *jaksa*, and *paliwara* (A.U. Yakin 2015: 471). The duty of these officials was to assist and represent the Peqih Najmuddin in the villages. One of the most famous Peqih Najmuddin was Sheikh Yusuf Makassar, who was appointed *qadi* under Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. Sheikh Yusuf became known not only as a *qadi* but also as an advisor to the sultanate. He was later entrusted



with the education of Sultan Ageng's son, Abun Nasr Abdul Qahhar, the later Sultan Haji (Van Bruinessen 1995). As further acknowledgement, the Sultan also married his own daughter, Siti Syarifah, to Shaykh Yusuf (A. Hamid 2005; N. Lubis 2005).

The locality can also be seen in the adoption of customary law (*dirgama*) as a source of law. Yakin (2015), a Banten philologist, claims this adoption should be considered an individual effort and personal interpretation (*ijtihad*) to support the two primary sources: the Qur'an and the Hadith. This *ijtihad* shows that the *qadi* of Banten had experts in Islamic legal theory to guide him. In Islamic law, there is a theory which uses the concepts of '*urf*' and '*adat*', decisions or law-making based on customary law. The adoption of customary law can be seen in Ayang Utriza Yakin's research on Banten's Undhang-Undhang. In the study, one of the sultans of Banten, Zainul Arifin, established a locality-based law on divorce. This was an agreement between husband and wife called *the promise of the earth*. A wife was allowed to divorce a husband if the husband broke *the promise of the earth* (Yakin 2015). The use of locality in this Islamization suggests a fusion of modernity and locality. A form of fusion which is an implementation *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis*.

## CONCLUSION

The expansion of the Banten Sultanate reached its peak during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. It was marked by its ability to build a large entrepôt port to rival the port of Batavia. This success in port development had implications for Banten's economic progress, which increased rapidly from year to year. The improvement in the economy of the community enabled growth in the social, cultural, religious, and political aspects of the seventeenth-century Banten Sultanate. The position Banten established for itself as an essential post in the world spice trade was supported by using local knowledge as an official policy of the Sultanate of Banten in the seventeenth century. The culture referred to in this study is the local knowledge of Maulana Yusuf, *gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* 'building a fort city from bricks and coral'. This expression, the basic concept behind Banten's development, combined two local potentials derived from the land and the sea. Stone on land and coral in the ocean are two materials which were readily available in the sultanate. Both materials were used in the construction of city infrastructure and defences. The construction of urban infrastructure and fortifications using the primary basic materials of brick and coral demonstrates the ability to use local resources to provide comfort and security for the sultanate and for the traders who settled in there in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

*Gawe kuta baluwarti bata kalawan kawis* continued to be consciously practised by the rulers of Banten. As time passed, this concept underwent expanded in meaning under subsequent Banten rulers. It no longer only meant bricks and corals but was translated into various interpretations such as: 1) the embodiment of the duality of unnatural and natural potential as resources of the Sultanate of Banten. As the result of human intervention,

*bata* (bricks) were interpreted as unnatural potential, and *kawis* (coral) was a natural potential. The duality of potential continued to be interpreted by the Banten ruler, and the two potentials were interrelated and connected in implementing every policy issued by the Banten ruler. They later contributed to the fields of trade, power, and Islamization. 2) In the field of trade and control of pepper production in Lampung, this concept translated into a combination of strengthening and managing land and marine resources. 3) In trade, Islamization, and power networks, this concept was translated into combining modernity and locality. Using these meanings, the rulers of Banten could present themselves as technocrats, traders, scholars, leaders, and rulers who paved the way for the sultanate's expansion in the heyday of trade on spice routes where these intersected with Islamization. The findings show that the local perspective is essential in explaining the active role of Banten in advancing trade, Islamization, and power networks during the Nusantara spice period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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