

# Maritime Indonesia and the Archipelagic Outlook

## Some reflections from a multidisciplinary perspective on old port cities in Java

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### ABSTRACT

The present paper reflects on Indonesia's status as an archipelagic state and a maritime nation from a historical perspective. It explores the background of a multi-year research project into Indonesia's maritime past currently being undertaken at the Humanities Faculty of Universitas Indonesia. The multidisciplinary research uses toponymy, epigraphy, philology, and linguistic lines of analysis in examining old inscriptions and manuscripts and also includes site visits to a number of old port cities across the archipelago. We present here some of the core concepts behind the research such as the importance of the ancient port cities in a network of maritime trade and diplomacy, and link them to some contemporary issues such as the Archipelagic Outlook. This is based on a concept of territorial integrity that reflects Indonesia's national identity and aspirations. It is hoped that the paper can extend the discussion about efforts to make maritime affairs a strategic geopolitical goal along with restoring Indonesia's identity as a maritime nation.

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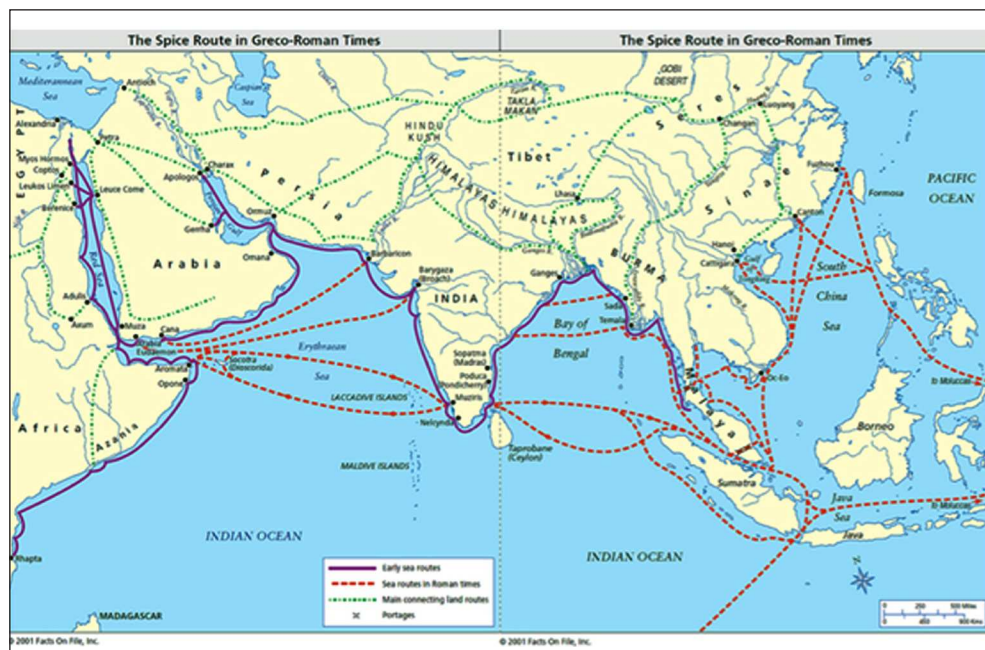
## KEYWORDS

Maritime nation; Archipelagic Outlook; old port cities; toponymy; epigraphy; philology; linguistics.

## INTRODUCTION

Anyone who looks for the first time at the map of Indonesia will be struck by the unique complexity of arrangement of islands of all sizes spread across the seas of Southeast Asia. This is the Indonesian archipelago, forged by ancient geological processes (Putrohari 2015). How long have we stared at these maps and tried to memorize the patterns of islands and seas and wondered about the people who inhabit them, a personalized world of cartographic imagination (Dodge et al. 2009; Garfield 2012; Turchi 2004; Wood, Fels, and Krygier 2010).

The Indonesian archipelago perhaps reminds us of the islands of the Aegean Sea. The word “archipelago” was in fact a place name during the middle ages, the Italian name for the Aegean Sea, lying between Greece and Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) and only later, by transference, came to refer to any spread of water containing many islands. In the early period of western exploration in Southeast Asia, we find reference to the Indonesian archipelago in H. Cogan Pinto’s *Voyages*, Volume X. (1663) 32 “The seas of China, Sunda, Banda, and the Molucques, that great Archipelage” (Simpson and Weiner 2002).

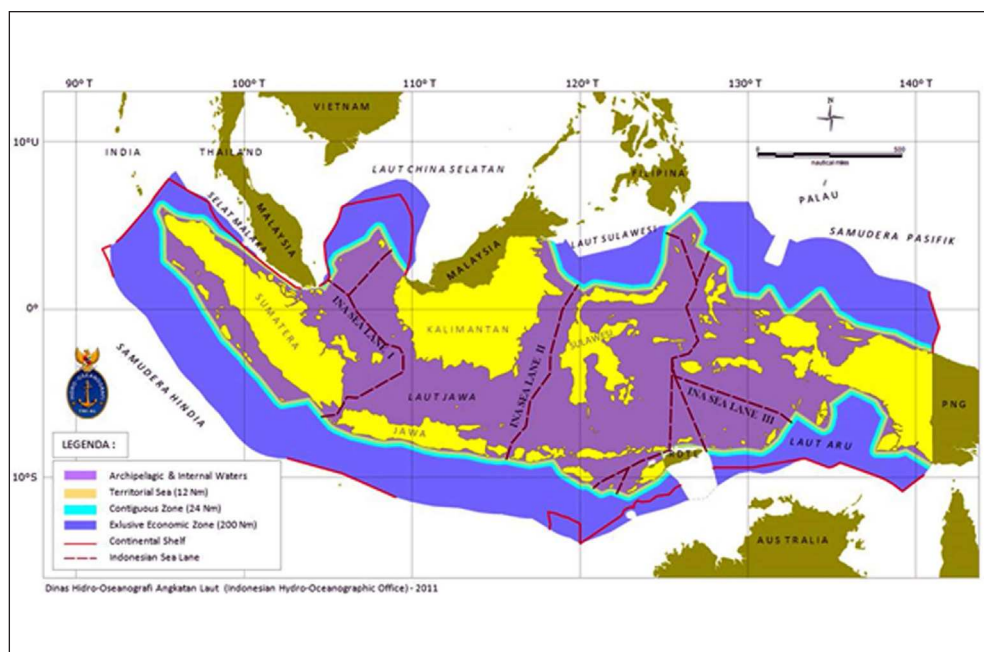


Map 1. The sea and land spice trading routes in Greco-Roman Times (Facts On Files 2001).

Indonesia's thousands of islands, spread over three-time zones, its huge bio- and cultural-diversity, and equatorial location make this a unique country. And it is the oceans, seas, straits, and gulfs, as much as the islands that fascinate with their evocative exonyms such as those for seas: Andaman, Arafura, Bali, Banda, Celebes, Ceram, Flores, Halmahera, Java, Molucca, Savu, South China, and Timor. See Ormeling (2006) on the issue of exonyms.

This archipelagic region has been a source of fascination for Europeans for centuries, with its stories of great natural wealth and, in particular, its spices. European adventurers came by sea to explore and exploit these resources and take control of trading routes around the region and beyond. These were sea trading routes that had existed for centuries, millennia even, before the colonizers arrived (Map 1).

Indonesia's present day borders are drawn in those seas and now delimit a territory much greater than that during the colonial period when the sea territory extended only 3 km from the shoreline and beyond that the sea was considered open to international shipping. The Djuanda Declaration of 1957 and the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (United Nations 1982) changed that and now give legal and political support to Indonesia's territory as consisting of both the islands, the intervening seas, and the wider economic zone around the edges. This has been of huge significance for the state and has ramifications for its present and its future (see Map 2).



Map 2. Indonesian territory (Indonesian Hydro-Oceanographic Office 2011).

Indonesia has done an excellent job of negotiating contested claims over borders with its neighbouring countries (Forbes 2014). This has given Indonesia

the right to the natural resources that are part of the seas within these borders. Indonesia has used maritime diplomacy to establish cooperative regional relationships in order to ensure its security and to demonstrate leadership in mediating interstate boundary disputes. Diplomacy is seen as a wise proactive alternative to a state that lacks sea power to project its maritime interests and secure its borders, an approach that supports its claim to regional leadership (Sebastian et al. 2014: 69).

Maritime resources include not only fisheries, wave power, the attraction of coral reefs, and the myriad species that live there, but also the geological resources under the sea bed. This includes oil and gas and this has been of great importance to the Indonesian economy over many years.

However, resources such as oil, gas, coal, and palm oil have been dominated by conglomerates (Lewis 2007). The huge amount of money generated from these activities and resources has not demonstrably been invested in development or making people's lives better. These resources are not sustainable, and the economic sectors are powerful and difficult to reform. They thus represent wasted opportunities in Indonesia's development.

However, Indonesia still has a number of resources that have the potential to play a big part in future development and in improving people's livelihoods. These are plentiful sunlight that could be put to use for developing renewable energy from solar power, fertile volcanic soils that are capable of producing a wide variety of agricultural products, and an extremely large area of territorial seas and ocean. In addition to these, Indonesia still is home to a huge array of biological species and has great cultural and linguistic diversity as well. Indonesia's land area is approximately 1.3% of the earth's land, but it contains 17% of the world's flora and fauna. If you take into account the species living in its seas, then Indonesia can be considered the greatest area of mega biodiversity in the world (Jenie 2004: 4-5).

Further, its demographic makeup, in particular the balance between younger, working-age people and older, retired people, could be exploited to maximize efforts at improving the country's economic growth and people's welfare. Indonesia will be able to take advantage of this condition which is referred to as a demographic dividend. This is a demographic condition that occurs when the size of the non-productive population is much smaller than the working-age population. Populations move through a sequence of stages that do not repeat themselves, so this dividend can happen only once (ADB 2011; Bloom et al. 2003; Dyson 2010). For Indonesia, this window of opportunity is going to open in the period 2020-2030. This period is nearly upon us and so we need to be prepared to take advantage of it (Adioetomo 2005).

Since 2014, Indonesia has been led by President Joko Widodo and his Vice President Jusuf Kalla. Before their election, they set out their Vision and Mission statement and action plan (Widodo and Kalla 2014). The document reflects a pragmatic description of Indonesia's condition but at the same time points to the highly complex, social, and cultural factors that affect

development. In the document, the authors put forward a number of their strategic goals. The first of these concerns national security, in particular developing the country's capacity to detect and respond to threats to its territorial integrity, developing economic independence through securing its maritime resources, and reflecting the personality or identity of the country as an archipelagic state.

*Mewujudkan keamanan nasional yang mampu menjaga kedaulatan wilayah, menopang kemandirian ekonomi dengan mengamankan sumberdaya maritim, dan mencerminkan kepribadian Indonesia sebagai negara kepulauan* (Widodo and Kalla 2014: 6).

This interesting connection between national security, maritime affairs, the economy and national identity as a maritime nation is pursued in the following nine strategic goals which are referred to as *Nawa Cita*. *Nawa Cita* is Javanese, *nawa* means 'nine' and *cita* means 'aspiration, goal, or desire' (Widodo and Kalla 2014: 6–12).

Two important ideas are at the top of their list of priorities: a maritime Indonesia and the development of the national character (*jati diri bangsa*). This is to be pursued by a "mental revolution" that includes government-led educational programs that will help to shape the character of the new Indonesians who will be capable of building this vision, well qualified, dedicated, and eschewing corruption.

*Nawa Cita* is a response to three challenges: the threat to state authority, the weakness at critical points in the state's economy, and intolerance and a crisis of national identity. Meanwhile, the main aspect of the *Nawa Cita* vision is the realization of an Indonesia that is secure, sovereign, independent, democratic, and free of corruption, and whose character or identity is founded on mutual cooperation. The Archipelagic Outlook is an integral part of Indonesia's geopolitical outlook and is based on a concept of territorial integrity that reflects its national identity and aspirations (Sebastian et al. 2014: 69).

The vision and mission statement document acknowledges the crucial role that culture and social factors must play if the vision is to be realized. It has been suggested elsewhere that culture is an important factor that can help explain the different levels of success on the path to development (Grondona 2000; Harrison and Huntington 2000). Culture has also been seen as a major influence in the establishment of civilization. "A civilization is a cultural entity" (Huntington 1996: 32). Culture is important because it shapes identity and this describes the limits of action.

However, which countries consider themselves maritime nations and what does it mean to be a modern maritime nation? In March 2015, the UK Minister for Shipping and Ports, John Hayes, wrote the preface to a report on the state of Britain as a maritime nation. He stated "Britain is a maritime nation. Maritime industries have shaped our past as well as our future, are an engine for growth, and are a vibrant, dynamic element of our economy" (UK Department of Transport 2015: 1).

The basis for the UK to call itself a maritime nation lies first in economic

indicators such as direct contribution to the economy, the volume of freight travelling through the country's ports, the gross tonnage of trading vessels registered to the country, the number of people employed in the maritime sector, the number of people who travel in and out of the country by sea, the number of sea cruises, and the dead weight of shipping managed or direct owned in the country. Another indicator is the skills and expertise in maritime affairs. This includes investment in education and training for officer cadets and other skill building and education. It also includes the number of new officer trainee entrants, the total number of seafarers active at sea, the number and quality of training and education institutions, academies, and schools. There should also be a good financial and business climate for the development of the maritime sector. Finally, there is the historical dimension. Does the country have a long association of seafaring and maritime activity, a proud tradition as a maritime nation and (former) sea power (Morriss 2011)? Seafaring has also played a part in shaping civilization (De Souza 2002) as well as being a source of imagination, inspiration, and identity. Artefacts from the maritime past, such as the restored nineteenth-century tea clipper ship *Cutty Sark* now a museum ship and tourist attraction in London, still have the power to inspire pride in a seafaring past.

Indonesia has its own maritime history (Supangat et al. 2006). However, if Indonesia wishes to become a leading maritime nation in the present then it must deal with a range of important issues that come under the heading of maritime and coastal studies. These include such things as:

- the law of the sea, territorial disputes, diplomacy (Forbes 2014; Koo 2009; Le Mière 2014; Sebastian et al. 2014; United Nations 1982);
- shipping, navigation, trade, sea lanes (Pinder and Slack 2004);
- maritime security and crime, piracy, smuggling, illegal migrants, refugees, and human trafficking (Forbes 2014; Koo 2009; Sebastian et al. 2014);
- maritime economics (Grammenos 2013; Talley 2012);
- the law of the sea and exploitation of natural resources including oil and gas and fisheries, environmental issues (Gezelius and Raakjær 2008; Hall 2000; Strati et al. 2006);
- sea ports, mega-hub ports, immigration laws, port management, trade laws (Blussé 2008; Lloyd's Register 2005);
- coastal zones, lagoons, wetlands, mangroves, environmental conservation, pollution, coral reefs, biodiversity (Chu et al. 2010);
- global warming, climate change, sea level rise, extreme weather, flooding, salination, population displacement, agriculture in coastal areas (Chu et al. 2010);
- coastal cities, port cities, urban planning and management, human well-being (Hein 2013); and
- historical and heritage coastal city sites, conservation, tourism (Shurland and Jong, 2008).

All of these issues are complex and challenging, involving legal, political, security, economic, administrative, geophysical, environmental, social, and

other dimensions. The goals that President Joko Widodo has set out for developing the maritime sector and making Indonesia into a modern maritime nation are certainly ambitious. However, there are grounds to think that making maritime affairs a strategic goal makes sense. This is because Indonesia has had a connection with the sea and with maritime affairs for much longer than many people know. Improving our familiarity with Indonesia's maritime past has the potential to reawaken the community's communal memory of being seafaring people.

This paper is intended to provide an introduction to the background and intended outcomes of a research project currently underway at the Faculty of the Humanities at Universitas Indonesia. It is run by lecturers from a range of disciplines who have a shared interest in exploring Indonesia's maritime tradition. The research is intended to provide a contribution to present efforts by the government to develop Indonesia as a modern maritime country by bringing to light the nature of Indonesia's maritime past. As the work is ongoing, the information presented is still in a preliminary stage. We envisage that the findings of such research could contribute to Indonesian geopolitical issues as it addresses both the maritime and the Indonesian identity dimensions that have been highlighted as central to the government's goals.

To make the case for Indonesia being a maritime nation, we need to go back in time. The origins of sea travel in the region can be traced back to antiquity. The present-day Indonesians, according to evidence from linguistics, anthropology, archaeology, and genetics, share a common ancestry and are known collectively as the Austronesians (Bellwood et al. 2006). The Austronesians' homeland has been established as being in present day Taiwan about 5 thousand years ago. It was their seafaring ability that allowed them to move from island to island, spread across the archipelago, and further across the "great ocean", the Pacific as far as Hawaii, Easter Island, New Zealand, and also to Madagascar. The Austronesians had "A mastery of the sea and a predisposition to spread from island to island with maritime cultures" (Horridge 2006: 144). The migrations of the Austronesians spread not only their seafaring ability, but also their language and culture (Poelinggomang 2015). The ancient or proto-language these people spoke, their knowledge of agriculture and seafaring, and their culture, form the basis for the language and culture of all of the Austronesian people presently living in the Indonesian archipelago (Bellwood 2007). This is acknowledged to be hugely diverse, with as many as 719 languages recorded in Indonesia (M. Lauder and A. Lauder 2015).

The history of Southeast Asia shows that people were travelling by sea for exploration, for trade and diplomacy during the Greco-Roman period when spice and other goods were shipped as far as the present-day Middle East. The different routes were part of the Sea Spice Route which existed in parallel with the Silk Road (Beckwith 2009; Keay 2006). China and Indonesia have had contacts for many centuries. The early Indonesians were engaged in trade and were part of the maritime spice trade routes that linked China,

Southeast Asia, India, Africa, and the Middle East (Hall 2011; O'Reilly 2007; Ricklefs et al. 2010; Tarling 1992).

Before the Europeans arrived and imposed their colonial rule on the peoples of the archipelago, there were thriving ports, both major ports and minor ones. These were the centre of a complex network of trading routes, bringing goods from the interior down rivers and connecting these with sea ports that linked across the region and beyond (Blussé 2013). But with the arrival of the Europeans, these networks were shut down and the Portuguese and Dutch took over the trading routes, monopolizing the profits from the sale of spices and other products to Europe. Huge profits drove their national economies. At the same time, Indonesians were forced to take up farming. As a result, the previously prosperous coastal towns become impoverished and the Indonesians lost their memory of being sea-going people (Tanudirjo 2006).

This study stirs the lost memories of former excellence in maritime activities back to consciousness partly to fill in the historical record, but primarily to provide a complimentary line of argumentation to politicians who wish to recreate the Sea Spice Trading routes and build a network of new, modern, well-run ports as a strategic component for Indonesia's resurgence. Marine resources, properly understood, cared for, and managed, could make a great contribution to improving the people's welfare, in strengthening the economy and in helping to fill in some of the blanks in the arguments about the Indonesian identity. It is hoped that the research findings will be of relevance to contemporary maritime issues as well as broadening our understanding of the past.

#### RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA

The purpose of this study is to conduct a multidisciplinary study of the ancient ports in Java through various written sources of the past related to maritime to obtain a more complete picture of the maritime tradition in Java as part of maritime culture in Indonesia. This research will attempt to:

1. identify references to ancient port cities in Java from old manuscripts and stone inscriptions, in particular searching for new data;
2. map the position of old port cities whose location may not be clear;
3. explore descriptions of historical maritime activities in old manuscripts and stone inscriptions and use these to clarify and expand on existing descriptions;
4. explore and describe a number of historical port cities and selected historical and archaeological sites there;
5. interpret and explain maritime activities and affairs based on the textual and archaeological data, in particular attempting to throw light on the network of sea routes and connections that were centred on ports in Java and beyond and how they bound together different geographical and political centres into a larger civilizational entity; and
6. make connections between these findings and the meaning that Indonesia's



maritime past has for the nation's present identity and character. The research is multidisciplinary with contributions from epigraphy (Bacus et al. 2008), philology (Pollock et al. 2015), and linguistics (Bowerman and Evans 2015; Hale 2007). Experts from each of these disciplines will work together to explore Indonesia's maritime tradition. The research team brings with them expertise in the old languages used in the manuscripts which form part of the textual data, old Javanese, classical Chinese, old Portuguese, and old Dutch. The ability to go to original manuscripts rather than translations is a plus. The team also includes archaeologists with expertise in the exploration of ancient sites. They are all at the Faculty of the Humanities, Universitas Indonesia. They include lecturers and also masters and doctoral students. All members of the team share an interest in toponymy. The research team are all members of the newly formed organization Komunitas Toponimi Indonesia, known informally as KOTISIA, which was founded on 15 January 2015.

Toponymy is the study of place names (Kadmon 2000). Place names provide evidence that people in one country were aware of the existence of other countries and this suggests the possibility of contacts between countries or civilizations. The methodology of toponymy can help reveal the original meaning of place names. It uses methodologies that combine information that may be in different languages in old texts with field work (Taylor 2016). The study of place names is of use in a number of fields, such as historical linguistics, archaeology, geography, history, and other subjects (Hough 2016).

This is a multi-year research that is planned to run from 2015 to 2019 and the schedule is organized around the site visits in each year. The site visits cover the major islands of Indonesia. In 2015, the focus was on old port cities along the north coast of Java. These included: Banten, Jakarta, Cirebon, Jepara, Tuban, and Sumenep. Further site visits to other old port cities in other regions will occur over the remaining years as follows: 2016 - Bali, Lombok and Nusa Tenggara; 2017 - Sumatra; 2018 - Kalimantan and Sulawesi; and 2019 - Maluku and Papua. In each year, the focus will be on the particular geographical locations it is planned to visit. In addition, the literature review and the study of inscriptions and manuscripts that pertain specifically to each site will be pursued.

Research using different sources and sites will normally include a number of steps. The research will normally begin by identifying place names which are known ports or which may be ports. The location of ports, where not yet known, will be established or at least an attempt made to do so. This will build up a basic register of ancient ports and some details about them. A toponymic study will be done to establish the etymology of the name and other linguistic features such as morphology, and other senses or uses. This involves phonotactics, morphology, semantics, and other disciplines. Historical and linguistic data will be used to identify as accurately as possible the site of ancient ports in today's landscape. Subsequently, further analysis will be done using epigraphy to build a more detailed descriptive picture of people, places, and processes and these findings from textual evidence compared and

linked to the physical evidence from site visits. The end result should be an integrated and coherent description of maritime affairs and life in and around the ports in different historical time periods.

Elaborating from the main research objectives, it is hoped that the findings can provide evidence for researchers which throw light on several issues: (1) geographical scope of trading activities, whether local, regional, or international; (2) location of the ports along with their physical and social features; (3) ships and shipping, types and description of ships, size of fleets, ownership of fleets; (4) products being traded, their point of origin and destination, and the volumes being traded, quality and prices; (5) regulation on trade, tariffs, levies, and taxes on local and foreign traders and any bureaucratic procedures; and (6) culture, language and identity arising from the interactions between locals and foreigners in the course of maritime trade and travel.

A variety of textual sources where the subject matter includes references to ports and maritime affairs will be used as data. These include stone inscriptions, manuscripts, and news reports, written in a number of languages and scripts from different historical periods, as follows:

1. *Inscriptions written in old Javanese script*, including the Telang Inscription 823 Saka / 902 AD; Kubu-kubu Inscription 827 Saka / 905 AD; Gulung-gulung Inscription 851 Saka / 930 AD; Sarangan Inscription 851 Saka / 930 AD; Lingasuntan Inscription 851 Saka / 930 AD; Wimalasrama Inscription c. 851–943 Saka / 930–1022 AD; Cane Inscription 943 Saka / 1022 AD; Baru Inscription 952 Saka / 1030 AD; Kamalgyan Inscription 959 Saka / 1037 AD; Patakan Inscription c. 959–1015 Saka / 1037–1093 AD; Manajung Inscription c. 959–1015 Saka / 1037–1093 AD; Turunhyang Inscription c. 959–1015 Saka / 1037–1093 AD; Kambang Putih Inscription 1015 Saka / 1093 AD; Hantang Inscription 1057 Saka / 1135 AD; Jaring Inscription 1103 Saka / 1181 AD; Cangu Inscription 1280 Saka / 1286 AD; and Tuhanyaru Inscription 1245 Saka / 1323 AD.
2. *The old Javanese “Nagarakertagama” manuscript* from the Majapahit period, written on lontar in 1365. In the form of a poetic eulogy the monarch Hayam Wuruk, it provides an excellent description of palaces and temples and ceremonial observances.



Figure 1. The *Nagarakertagama* manuscript [<http://wilwatiktamadani.blogspot.com/2011/05/kitab-nagarakertagama-jadi-memori-dunia.html>].

3. *Texts written in Middle Javanese, using the Pararaton script.*
4. *Texts in classical Chinese, from a number dynastic periods:* Song Shu 宋書 (History of the Early Song Dynasty), chapter 97; Jiu Tang Shu 舊唐書 (Old History of the Tang Dynasty), chapter 197; Xin Tang Shu 新唐書 (New History of the Tang Dynasty), chapter 222, part 2; Hou Han Shu 後漢書 (History of the Eastern Han Dynasty), chapter 116; Song Shi 宋史 (History of the Song Dynasty), chapter 489; Zhufanzhi 諸蕃志 (Records of Foreign Barbaric Countries), “Java”, by Zhao Rukuo 趙汝适; Zhufanzhi 諸蕃志 (Records of Foreign Barbaric Countries), “Sucitan”, by Zhao Rukuo 趙汝适; Daoyi Zhilüe 島夷志略 (Brief Records of Savage Islanders), “Java”, by Wang Dayuan 汪大淵; Daoyi Zhilüe 島夷志略 (Brief Records of Savage Islanders), “Gelang Island”, by Wang Dayuan 汪大淵; Yuan Shi 元史 (History of the Yuan Dynasty), chapter 210, “Java”; Dongxiyang Kao 東西洋考 (Research on the Eastern and Western Ocean), “Bantam”, by Zhang Xie 張燮; Dongxiyang Kao 東西洋考 (Research on the Eastern and Western Ocean), “Secikang”, by Zhang Xie 張燮; Ming Shi 明史 (History of the Ming Dynasty), chapter 324, “Java”; Ming Shi 明史 (History of the Ming Dynasty), chapter 324, “Sucitan”; Yiyuzhi 異域志 (Records of Foreign Countries), “Java”, by Zhou Zhizhong 周致中; Yingya Shenglan 瀛涯勝覽 (The Survey of the Ocean’s Shores), “Java”, by Ma Huan 馬歡; Qiu Xuanyu (邱炫煜, 1995, *Ming Diguo yu Nanhai Zhufanguo Guanxide Yanbian* (明帝國與南海諸蕃國關係的演變)). An illustration of one of Hou Han Shu is given in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Hou Han Shu, [[http://theme.npm.edu.tw/exh103/books\\_archives/en/photo11.html](http://theme.npm.edu.tw/exh103/books_archives/en/photo11.html)].

5. *Modern and old maps.*
6. *Other texts and manuscripts in old Dutch and old Portuguese, and other languages or scripts, including texts from the VOC period on maritime trade and ports written; and texts from the Islamic period on ports and maritime affairs (Figure 3).*



Itinerario Voyage ofte Schipvaert van Jan Huygen van Linschoten naar Oost ofte Portugaels 1596, [https://www.kb.nl/themas/geschiedenis-en-cultuur/koloniaal-verleden/jan-huyghen-van-linschoten-1563-1611.]



Nautico Pedro Alvares Cabral, Portugis sixteenth century. *Memória das Armadas que de Portugal passaram à Índia, Livro das Armadas, pormenor*. [Academia das Ciências de Lisboa - ACIENL, [http://purl.pt/162/1/brasil/iconografia/armada/28\\_barco\\_cabral/index.html](http://purl.pt/162/1/brasil/iconografia/armada/28_barco_cabral/index.html).]

Figure 3. Dutch and Portuguese sea expeditions.

## SELECTED LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

A number of issues are presented here, which are intended to provide some perspective on the topics the research is involved with at present. They are derived from different aspects from a developing literature review, along with some observations from studies of source texts and also reports of things learned on some of the site visits in Java during 2015.

These are still in a somewhat fragmentary stage. They are intended not so much as a research report but rather a sequence of selected ideas and impressions, based on field work, early examination of inscriptions and manuscripts, and so on. They are intended to convey the “flavour” of the general intention of the work to bring together sources on Indonesia’s maritime past in a relatively coherent way which can, when completed, be seen as a whole.

Achieving this will require careful consideration of historical, geographic, political, and cultural dimensions. We have to deal with historical periods in different places, such as Indonesian kingdoms and sultanates, as well as Chinese dynastic periods; and we need to consider geographical location and distribution. There is not yet enough material to organize things along multiple dimensions. We will also need to consider the language of the textual sources and their contexts. While we cannot yet do justice to all these things, what we have attempted to do here to make the exposition easier to follow is to organize things first thematically and then organize these more or less chronologically. However, it should be noted that the themes may take place over relatively short or much longer time periods, so the overall report will have themes whose time periods overlap.

*Early contacts with China (200 BC to 200 AD)*

Java is mentioned in an important Chinese series of records known as the *Siku Quanshu* (四庫全書). References to Java in it can be found from as early as the Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD) to the Ming (1368–1644). These records are abundant and provide information about a variety of aspects of life in Java at those times. These include political conditions, natural resources, customs and habits, and cultural achievements. The *Siku Quanshu* has been translated into English by Sinologists and these translations have been used by Indonesian scholars. However, studies are now appearing based on the original Chinese texts which should prove extremely useful in reconstructing the history of Indonesia’s earliest contacts with China (Wuryandari 2014). One of the important skills needed to explore these is to be able to match the old place names in Java written in classical Chinese with the historical names in Javanese or other languages.

King Airlangga ordered construction of a port in Gresik that could be used for international trade. Old Chinese and Indian records tell us that there had been reciprocal sea trade between India, the Malay kingdom in Sumatra and Java, and China since the beginning of the second century. Meanwhile, in the *Hou Han Shu* 後漢書 (History of the Eastern Han Dynasty), we find evidence

that supports claims that Javanese sailors first arrived in China in the year 131 AD (Wuryandari 2014).

*Evidence for the development of the sailing boat from the earliest times (Pre-history to twelfth century)*

The boat and the ship have been developed by man to explore, exploit, trade, communicate and wage war (Woodman 2012). Histories of the sailing ship have tended to focus on Europe and the Mediterranean (R. Anderson and R.C. Anderson 2012; Chatterton 2015). However, a history of the ship, both its technical and cultural development would not be complete without the story of the ship in archipelagic Southeast Asia. Some of the earliest depictions of boats appear in very early rock art or cave painting in different parts of the archipelago, demonstrating the importance of boats and sailing in Indonesia's prehistory (Oktaviana 2012).

A number of written sources in old Javanese provide some detail about maritime activities from the ninth century including mention of different kinds of boat. The *Wimalasrama* Inscription c. 851–943 Saka contains information about several types of boats that were used in maritime trade.

*... kunang ikang langkapān wlah galah, kalima tunḍan, parahu panawa kalima tundan, parahu pakbowan sawiji kapat tundan, parahu jurag, parahu panggagaran, parahu pangnganayan, parahu pawalijan, parahu pangngayan, mwang apadaganga ...* (Brandes 1913: 245)

In addition to this, there are 11 depictions of different types of boat on the Borobudur Temple reliefs. Dutch scholars have classified them in different ways. Van Erp (1923) distinguishes three types of boat:

1. Simple canoes or sampans carved from a hollowed out tree trunk;
2. Canoes built from wood sheets or planks, but without an outrigger;
3. Canoes built from wood sheets or planks, with an outrigger.

Meanwhile, Lopian (2008) distinguishes four kinds of boat: sailing boats with a single upright mast; sailing boats with a single slanting mast; sailing boats with two masts and an outrigger; and sailing boats with a single mast and an outrigger (Sedyawati and Djafar 2012: 165).

The different constructions suggest that boat building and use had evolved to the extent where different kinds of construction had developed for different purposes or places. For example, we know that river boats were constructed differently from sea-going boats and that different boats might have been used for carrying livestock and vegetables. We expect that this would be reflected in the lexicon, with an expanded lexicon to distinguish such kinds of differences. This could be followed up in the original sources to confirm whether the lexicon reflected the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, also known as linguistic relativity (Pütz and Verspoor 2000).

During the Kadiri Kingdom in the twelfth century, a water management system was developed for both irrigation and water transportation. A specialized position in the bureaucracy, called *Senapati Sarwajala*, for the purpose of managing this system was created. The first mention of such a position in the Kadiri kingdom is found in the Jaring Inscription 1103 Saka / 1181 AD. Another specialized occupation connected with maritime affairs was *undahagi lancing*, a craftsman who built boats (Sedyawati and Djafar 2012: 198).

#### *Mataram in East Java (Tenth and eleventh centuries)*

International trade along sea routes began to flourish in Java from around the tenth century. This spurred the growth of ports along the coast which were capable of handling international trade and those on river estuaries which handled regional trade.

From an inscription on King Balitung during the old Mataram period, the Kubu-kubu Inscription 827 Saka / 905 AD tells us that the King attacked the east which we take to be the present day East Java. At that time, Mataram's capital was in Central Java, although later it was to move to East Java. It is very likely that the invasion was motivated by economic concerns, in particular to look for a strategic location to build sea trade. Mpu Sindok (929-948 AD) was the first Mataram King to rule East Java. There is a general agreement that the shift of the capital was motivated by a volcanic eruption which did great damage to the capital of Mataram in Central Java, thought to be in the area of present day Kedu. However, it is possible that the volcano was not the only factor, the other being economic.

Mpu Sindok was a figure who planned to build the kingdom's economy, and the creation of an international trading port would have been a way to project the kingdom's influence out into the international arena through maritime trade. Mpu Sindok moved the capital to somewhere between the Bengawan Solo and Brantas rivers, and this site became the nerve centre for maritime trade (Susanti 2010: 124-125).

The maritime trade established by Mpu Sindok was continued by his grandson, King Airlangga (1019-1043 AD). Airlangga was the last king of the old Mataram kingdom. He instituted reforms in four aspects of the kingdom's polity, namely politics, economics, religion, and society. For economics, Airlangga spurred the growth of international maritime trade through the development of Kambang Putih Port. Although he did not succeed in completing construction of the port by the end of his reign, the Kambang Putih Inscription tells us that his work was continued by his successor, King Garasakan, and describes the inauguration of the port (Boechari 2012: 135-154).

It is thought that the Kambang Putih Port was located somewhere between Tuban and Lamongan. The river Brantas was also employed for trade. Hujung Galuh Harbour was developed for improving regional, inter-island trade. Hujung Galuh is thought to have been located near Tropodo village in Sidoarjo, in the Brantas river basin. The Kamalagyan Inscription states that the regulation of the river was much welcomed by traders from other islands

who could now sail all the way to Hujung Galuh (Casparis 1958: 20).

Other evidence concerning the development of international maritime trade through ports concerns the lists of foreign envoys which are found on three inscriptions of King Airlangga, namely the Cane Inscription 943 Saka/1022 AD, the Patakan Inscription c. 959–1015 Saka/1037–1093 AD and the Turunhyang Inscription c. 959–1015 Saka/1037–1093 AD. The states mentioned are Keling, Aryya, Singhala, Pandikira, Drawida, Campa, Khmer, and Remen. They are included among groups of people in society who are taxed according to their profession. There have also been archaeological finds near the Tuban waterways of fragments of ceramics which originated in the Khmer kingdom, the Middle East and China (Susanti 2010: 221). Tuban and its environs was the site of an international port which had been important since the eleventh century near the end of the old Mataram kingdom.

### *Origins of the name “Cirebon” (Tenth century)*

One of the site visits in 2015 was to Cirebon. The team surveyed places of historic interest there that were connected with the city’s maritime history. They were also able to interview the Sultan Kasepuhan Cirebon, PRA Arief Natadiningrat, who has taken a special interest in developing Cirebon’s maritime status.

Some work has been done to determine the etymology and the meaning of the place name Cirebon. The name appears with variant spellings in a number of old manuscripts. There is more than one explanation of its origins and we present some of them here.

The toponym Cirebon village (*Dukuh Cirebon*) appears in the text *Babad Tanah Sunda* (1447). Also, the name appears with the variant spelling *Cheroboam* in a Portuguese text by Tomé Pires called *Summa Oriental* (1513–1515) (Pires and Rodrigues 1990). In the text *Sejarah Cirebon*, it explains that the meaning of the village named *Cairebonan* is derived from *cai/air rebon* or shrimp paste broth, possibly referring to a cooked dish consisting of small shrimp (*rebon*) boiled in a broth and reduced down (*air rebon yang diberi bumbu petis*).

The name *Cirebon* appears in the manuscript *Carita Purwaka* (1720 M)<sup>1</sup> which suggests that the name evolved through a process of sound change from *Carbon* and then *Caruban*.

An example of a Chinese exonym for Cirebon can be found in the book *Shun-fêng hsiang-sung’* (A good wind as a companion) which describes sea voyages between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries from China to *Shun-t’a* (Sunda) with one going via *Che-li-wen* (Cirebon).

We know from archaeological evidence from a sunken ship that the name Cirebon goes back to at least the tenth century. The names *Cěrbon* and *Charabao* appear on fourteenth century maps written in Javanese and on fifteenth century maps in Latin. We can conclude that these place names were known at that time as far away as Europe and that *Cirebon* was also an international

<sup>1</sup> This date comes from the appendix in *Pelabuhan Muara Jati Cirebon*.



harbour during the period from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries (Ricklefs 2001: 104).

During the team's interview with the Sultan Kasepuhan of Cirebon, PRA Arief Natadiningrat, we learned that Cirebon is the site of the oldest Chinese temple and oldest mosque. The Chinese temple was used as a place where the crew of Chinese admiral Cheng Ho repaired their boat. The oldest mosque in Cirebon is as old as the Demak Mosque and still retains much of its original structure including its main beam (*soko tatar*) which was constructed by Sunan Kalijaga. The Sultan noted that during Cirebon's golden age, in the fifteenth century, it was one of the important ports of call on the sea routes for the spice trade and silk road.



Figure 4. Klenteng Talang<sup>2</sup>

The Vihara Khongcu Bio Temple in Cirebon was built in 1577 (Moerthiko 1980: 171). Local people referred to it as Klenteng Talang after the name of the street where it is found. During that time, many Chinese settled in the three villages of Sembung, Srindil, and Talang in Cirebon. It is reported that these three villages were given the task of assisting the Chinese fleets sent under the Ming dynasty to build trade relations and diplomatic ties (Moerthiko 1980: 168).

#### *A water transport network (Twelfth century)*

In the twelfth century, there was a network that linked riverine towns, with coastal ports. It allowed goods to be transported from the interior along rivers to larger ports or coastal entrepôts where goods would have been

<sup>2</sup> Source <http://www.disparbud.jabarprov.go.id/wisata/dest-det.php?id=220&lang=id>.

shipped to different small kingdoms around the archipelago, linking many islands, or to other countries. The impact of this was not only in economics, but also was a network that brought cultures and languages together. As maritime technology such as ship building and navigation developed, and communication improved, and this led to the period being described as a maritime era (*zaman bahari*) (Abdullah and Lopian 2012: 317-318).

*Archaeological places as evidence of the ancient port cities (Fifteenth to nineteenth centuries)*

During the site visits, apart from finding tangible archaeological evidence of the old ports, it was discovered that there were a number of old buildings and structures which were connected to the old maritime culture. The most common were old mosques, pagodas or temples and, lesser in number, forts and churches. Many of these old buildings are still in use. They were places where people engaged in maritime activities in the past came. The different types of buildings served different, and sometimes multiple purposes. This included commercial, religious, and social functions. Some of them also place where foreign traders would gather. The mosques were places where local Moslems and also traders from the Middle East gathered together to worship.

The site visits also revealed that the Chinese temples (*klenteng*) on the other hand had multiple functions. They were of course for worship, and the part of the temple for this was usually in the front. However, the buildings had other spaces behind this also reserved for a number of other specific functions such as temporary accommodation, training in language and culture in Java, and a section for arranging financial assistance.

The churches were frequented primarily by the Europeans who had come to Java. These consisted primarily of Portuguese and Dutch worshipers. Separate churches were built to meet the separate needs of the worshipers from the two large branches of the Christian faith, Catholic and Protestant. The distinction between Catholic and Protestant lasts to this day throughout Indonesia, with the two being seen as two different religions in the country's religious policy and culture.

It is common to find old forts in the old port cities. There are both natural and man-made forts from the colonial period. They are reminders of the power and security aspect of colonial rule. They were built to promote and enforce the dominant role the Europeans establish in politics and trade.

Based on this selective literature review and discussion of observations from site visits, we can see that even this preliminary evidence from ancient inscriptions, old manuscripts or archaeological sites provides firm evidence that the old port cities in Java were very important and that seafaring and international contacts and trade were established at least as far back as two millennia ago. We can also get a glimpse of the fascinating and complex world of interactions between civilizations that has existed all of this time.

*Dutch maritime power (Nineteenth and twentieth centuries)*

The KPM (Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij 'Royal Packet Navigation Company') was a Dutch shipping company (1888–1966) in the Netherlands East Indies. This company was instrumental for the Dutch in maintaining control over the islands of the Indonesian archipelago and preventing rebellion, which they referred to as the *Pax Neerlandica*. The Dutch colonial empire was built on the realization of sea power (Zuhdi 2014: 74).

## CONCLUSION

The research is timely in being able to fill in the blanks in the government's goal of developing Indonesia as a maritime nation. Revealing the maritime tradition can be motivating for present efforts and also help to more clearly define Indonesia as a maritime nation. We hope to produce descriptions of activities in and around the ports that provides as much relevant detail as possible about different dimensions of port activity and maritime trade and diplomacy at different times.

One of the research goals is to make connections between these findings and the meaning that Indonesia's maritime past has for the Indonesia's present identity and character as a maritime nation. While the research uses historical data, it has implications for present day maritime issues and is intended to be relevant to the Archipelagic Outlook. The Archipelago Outlook has garnered a great deal of support, but it has its critics in the field of geopolitics and security. "Despite all of its acclaims and accolades, the Archipelago Outlook is an inherently inward-looking concept" (Sebastian et al., 2014: 74). Sebastian et al. (2014: 75) suggest that the Archipelago Outlook goal of maintaining national unity "reflects a sense of fragility and vulnerability" towards the possibility that outer island may want to secede from Jakarta's control. They claim that it is not up to the job of keeping up with the rapidly evolving pace of factors in the regional maritime strategic environment such as the rise of maritime powers, and has little chance of influencing these things. They state that Indonesia's strategic planners will succeed by proactively managing their maritime environment to deal with emerging issues such as: rapid economic growth in the region and increases in military spending; rising nationalism and deficits of trust in managing simmering historical grievances over territory; the impact of a rising China on regional stability; emerging security threats from piracy and sea robbery, terrorism, smuggling, and pollution; the increasing connectedness of Indonesia's economy with international networks and the threat to this stability from the potential vulnerability of sea routes to disruption.

We are confident that Indonesia will be up to the task of dealing with these challenges. We also believe that present day problems need present day solutions. However, information from the past can provide some very valuable lessons for the present day. We hope that this research will be able to do just that.

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