The Spices, Western Imperialism and the Changes of Maritime Power in the Indonesian Archipelago

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Abstract

This article discusses the spices, Western imperialism and the changes of maritime power in the Indonesian archipelago. Through historical literature, this article finds that spices from the Indonesian archipelago entered the global market along with the development of sea trade routes between India and China in the early century AD. However, spices are commodities that have been traded long before AD. People in ancient cultural centres such as Egypt, India, Greece and Rome used spices for various purposes, including cooking spices, preserving mummies, health and to overcome disease outbreaks. Apart from India, in 16th and 17th, the archipelago is one of the important spice producing regions in the world, which was driven by the maritime power of the archipelago at that time. As an important and expensive commodity, spices have become legendary items that encourage various parties to master them, including Europeans. In the Western world, spices are seen as a trading commodity because of their expensiveness, rarity and efficacy. Economic, cultural and political dynamics in Europe have encouraged ocean exploration to gain direct access to spice producers in the Eastern world, including the archipelago. This also resulted in the birth of Western imperialism and colonialism in Asia, especially the archipelago. In the 18th century, Western domination changed the map of maritime powers in the archipelago, marked by the significantly declining role of indigenous maritime powers.

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Introduction

Spices have had a huge influence on world history. Spices are not only a trade commodity, but have also become certain symbols in culture in many regions of the world (as medicine, preservatives, religious ceremonial tools, sexual pleasure enhancers and so on) so that spices are called the fruit of heaven (Turner 2011). In various historical periods, spices were as valuable as gold and silver. In 1498, Vasco da Gama arrived in Calicut after the first direct sea voyage from Europe, a sea route connecting Venice to Southeast Asia via Arabia. The formation of this route, which was mostly used for the spice trade, was known as the "Spice Route." The spice route has driven the world economy from the late Middle Ages through the "Modern Age." The spice route had moved Western nations across oceans and between continents, and the driving force was the search for ways to reach the major spice supply areas. In modern times, spice routes are not only global, but also intra-national (Rajkumar 2012).

For the Indonesian archipelago, the important spice producing region is Maluku. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Maluku played an important role in inter-regional connectivity in the archipelago. Traders came from all over the world in search of spices. Several Indonesian commodities are important in international trade. In the 16th century, many Europeans entered the Indonesian trade network, driven by the high demand for spices (Abbas 2022). Apart from Maluku, another important region in eastern Indonesia is Buton. Apart from its strategic location connecting Makassar to North Maluku and Central Maluku as well as spices as commodities transported via this route, Buton has its own trade commodities, such as slaves and iron tools (knives, machetes). Although there were not many in number, cloves originating from Buton were also targeted by the Verenigde Oost-Indishce Compagnie (VOC). As a central port of collection, Buton plays a role in a network of "feeder point" ports such as Raha and the Tukangbesi Islands (now Wakatobi), with its entry point, Makassar. After Makassar fell into the hands of the VOC, Buton contributed more as a supplier. Even though Buton was an ally of the VOC as marked by a contract signed in 1613, in several cases there was resistance, both overtly such as the Buton War in 1755, and rebellions against the ban on clove planting (extermination) and illegal trade (*sluijkhandel*) (Zuhdi 2018).

Apart from spice producing areas outside Java, Java Island also has a significant role in the spice trade map. Regions such as Demak, Tuban and Gresik are said to have become an important part of the spice network that connects Maluku, Banjarmasin, Makassar, Palembang, Jambi and Malacca (Mufrodi 2022). These coastal cities, as well as other coastal cities in Southeast Asia, have formed an important political power through maritime diplomacy (Susilowati, Sulistiyono and Rochwulaningsih 2018), although in the end, it had to submit to western powers. Based on historical processes, relations between Java and Outside Java are equal. Therefore, to realize Indonesian Maritime Fulcrum, it is necessary to change the perspective that no longer considers Java as the centre, and areas outside Java as the periphery (Sulistiyono and Rochwulaningsih 2013; Ali and Sulistiyono 2020). Understanding the maritime world of the past through spices can reaffirm the maritime paradigm or maritime insight as the identity of a maritime nation (Sulistiyono 2016). In this context, this article wants to prove that changes in the map of maritime power in the Indonesian archipelago cannot be separated from spices on the one hand and Western imperialism on the other.

Spices Route: The Journey of Fruit from Heaven

Spices have been used widely in various parts of the world since the time of the Pharaohs until today. When he died on July 12, 1224 BC, his servants stuffed the Pharaoh's nostrils with pepper seeds. It is not clear whether the use of pepper on corpses was intended for preservation in the context of making mummies or just to eliminate unpleasant odors temporarily before the corpse was buried. However, there is a high possibility that the use of pepper was related to the preservation of corpses, which was a tradition for the Pharaohs in Egypt. This tradition even influenced Roman culture. In 565 BC, the Byzantine poet Corippus recorded the anointing of the emperor Justinian with balsam, incense, honey, and hundreds of other wonderful spices and ointments in order to preserve the holy body forever (Turner 2011, 151). Of course, the discovery of the use of spices in Egypt is the oldest documented evidence found by researchers. Spices are said to be used primarily to preserve stomach contents (See Abdel-Maksoud and El-Amin 2011). However, it is possible that in the future even older evidence will be found, because it turns out that pepper harvesting in India was carried out thousands of years earlier. In fact, scientists have discovered an old recipe for making Indian curry that dates back 2000 years (Lu 2023).

Perhaps Indian spices (especially pepper) could have reached Egypt via trade routes between India and Egypt. It is known that India and Egypt are two ancient cultural centres that have likely had trade since thousands of years BC. Death for the ancient Egyptians was a very important and sacred event. Death is not the end of everything, but rather a transition process. People who had extensive knowledge regarding matters of belief, namely priests and embalmers, were tasked with carrying out the mummification process in order to preserve the body so that the essence of the Pharaoh's soul could return after going through a transition period. Even though the Egyptians believed that the essence of the soul (*ka*) was eternal, they also believed that a physical body was still needed so that the *ka* would not float around forever in the afterlife. Therefore, it is necessary to preserve the bodies of people who have died. Seeing how important the function of pepper is for Egyptian religious purposes, this has become a highly sought after commodity. It has also produced many studies on mummies and the mummification process (See Ragai and De Young 2016; See also Ikram 2012).

Apart from Egypt, the use of spices for religious mummification and spiritual matters was also found in Ancient Greek society. In Ancient Greek society which had high spirituality in the worship of polytheism, spices were not spared in their use in ceremonial offerings to the Gods. Apart from scenting worship incense, cinnamon, for example, is used to burn corpses. The world of gods is synonymous with fragrance. In this case, spices have a very important position. The same thing also happened to Roman society before the development of Christianity. This is what allows the demand for spices, especially Indian pepper, to continue. Some scientists even believe that Jesus' body was wrapped in linen and anointed with spices as was the Jewish tradition for burial (see Fanti 2019). Thus, when the Romans used Christianity as their state religion, the tradition of using spices for death ceremonies still continued.

The use of spices outside of matters dealing with corpses and death was also found in Europe in almost the same period. It is even possible that cultivating pepper to make food more delicious was the initial motive for using pepper in India itself. In Europe too, evidence of the use of pepper for cooking purposes is much older than for preserving corpses. Several ruins of the former Roman army headquarters in Lippe dating from the XI to the VIII century AD have left traces of kitchen ruins which include the remains of olive seeds, coriander seeds and black pepper. There are indications that Roman soldiers were accustomed to dishes that used spices from Asia. This is different from the barbarian menu without spices in the form of grilled meat and porridge. However, initially, pepper originating from India was only consumed by a limited circle of people. This is related to the price which is still relatively high because trade flows are still limited (Turner 2011, 62).

However, in the early centuries AD trade with India began to develop rapidly in line with the progress of the Roman empire to the west and the Chinese empire to the east. Apart from that, the shift of trade routes from land to sea (maritime) has also become a driving force for the development of trade between west and east. In this case, during that period India was able to create large ships capable of carrying 1000 tons of goods (Turner 2011, 63). For the Romans, trade with Asia became increasingly developed because they were able to include Egypt as part of this empire in the period leading up to the AD century after Cleopatra committed suicide (30 BC). The conquest of Egypt provided strategic significance for the Romans to expand trade to the east to approach the source of the very expensive spice commodity in Europe. Many ports were built along the coast between Egypt and Rome. Relations between Rome and India also became closer. Roman emperors routinely received Indian ambassadors (Turner 2011, 67).

With the closer relationship between India and Rome and the increasing volume of trade, spices became increasingly popular. In the first century AD, for example, there is

information that Roman cosmopolitan tastes had reached such a high level that there were tastes for Egypt, Crete, Cyrenaica, India and so on. However, this does not mean that spice commodities are getting cheaper. The higher the demand, the higher the price, even though at that time the volume of spice trade to Europe was greater, demand was also higher. In this connection there is a saying that: 'pepper is the savings of the rich' (Turner 2011, 72). With such high prices, spices are not just merchandise but have turned into symbols that convey elegant, exclusive taste and wealth (Turner 2011, 79).

The use of spices is not only related to protecting dead bodies but also to protecting living human bodies. Spices are not only used to create flavour in dishes, but also for health purposes. At least since the fifth century AD, namely the end of the Western Roman Empire, there have been documents describing various variations in the use of spices for medical purposes. Pepper, for example, is prescribed for a large number of ailments; dripped into the ear to treat earache and paralysis; for sore joints and drainage problems; for inflammation in the mouth and throat; for teeth that are porous, black, or painful. There are many more diseases described in the document. In short, there is no disease that cannot be treated with pepper (Turner 2011, 167). At the beginning of the 8th century, the Bishop of Milan named Saint Benedict Crispus wrote several medical texts that mentioned spices, for example people suffering from gout could drink a mixture of cloves, pepper and cinnamon. For a weak heart, he recommends consuming pepper. Canker sores can also be cured with pepper. It even says that the high bishop of York gave a recipe with spices to treat canker sores. Likewise, Theodore of Tarsus, high bishop of Canterbury (669-690) claimed that pepper mixed with rabbit gallbladder could relieve dysentery (Turner 2011, 167-168).

Even though the Roman empire collapsed in the 6th century AD, the exclusive and exotic image of spices continued to be entrenched in Roman culture. Demand for spice commodities continues to persist even though it is certainly experiencing a decline. Eastern Roman (Byzantine) traders, consisting mainly of Jews and Arabs, began to play a very important role. In this period, the idea of spices became even richer and more abstract than just pepper. Locally produced spices are not included in the concept of spices. Besides pepper, the concept includes cloves, cinnamon and nutmeg. Some archaeological evidence shows spice trade between the Romans and the Islamic world (see Van der Veen and Morales 2014).

The expansion of Islamic power posed a threat to the old trading groups. In line with Islamic political and military power, many trade and merchant routes began to be taken over by Muslim traders. Islamic traders sailed both west and east to Maluku and China. In the 8th century AD, Arab traders had their own business pockets in Canton. While on a pilgrimage to India, a Chinese priest named F-Hsien witnessed that where there are spices, there are Muslims. The supply of spices to Europe was under the control of Islamic traders with the exception of a few Jewish traders. Meanwhile, Europeans in the Mediterranean Sea also took on the role of retail traders. Likewise, traders from the Iberian Peninsula also became retailers for the Northern European region. One interesting thing is that even though these two giant powers were later involved in the Crusades, trade still continued. In fact, this war was ultimately not solely a religious matter, but the fighters were able to see the economic meaning of the bloodshed. Spices are still a guarantee and marker of prestige even though their circulation is also becoming wider in line with the very rapid development of the European economy in line with the discovery of various mines and other natural resources (Turner 2011, 97).

Apart from socio-cultural and economic factors, the use of spices for medical purposes is also growing. The effectiveness of spices in fighting disease was tested when Eastern Rome under the emperor Justinian was hit by a bubonic plague epidemic known as the black death between 1348-1350. This plague destroyed around 30 percent of Europe's population

and even up to 50 percent in some cities. Roman physicians had little to do except their belief that aromatics and spices played an important role in preventing plague (Turner 2011, 185).

The Spices and Western Imperialism

During the Middle Ages, the role of spices became increasingly important. Apart from being used for various purposes related to religion and death, spices also have medicinal properties for cooking, health, male stamina, and even for the treatment and prevention of disease outbreaks. Likewise, the demand for spices came not only from the noble class but also from wider segments of society in line with increasingly improving economic development in the late Middle Ages. This kind of condition, along with the discovery of shipping and weaponry technology, encouraged Europeans to try to find their own sources of spices in the Eastern world, which at that time was still very mysterious. At that time, spices were still a very valuable commodity due to their scarcity and high level of difficulty in obtaining them. Due to the very long trade chain (which is dominated by Muslims) from producing areas to consumers in Europe, the price of spices can reach 1,000 percent and sometimes more than that. With such costs comes an aura of luxury, danger, long distances and abundant profits (Turner 2011, 5).

These factors seemed to be the impetus for the start of ocean exploration which became the embryo for the birth of European imperialism and colonialism. This desire was also encouraged by a number of traders in the Mediterranean region and on the northern coast of Europe who enjoyed profits as distributors of spices in Europe. They have succeeded in raising capital to carry out major maneuvers in the world of commerce. Among European nations, the Portuguese and Spanish initially had the enthusiasm to discover spice producers. They were spice traders for a long time and suffered losses after Constantinople, which was one of the important doors to Asia-Europe trade, was captured by the Turkish Caliphate in 1453. Since then, the Ottoman Turkish Caliphate has regulated trade administration, even in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in the XVI century (Casale 2006).

On October 10, 1487, King John II of Portugal appointed Bartholomeus Diaz as leader of an expedition around the African continent to find a shipping route to India outside the control of Muslims. Diaz was a knight from the Portuguese court who served as supervisor of the royal warehouses and as well as a sailor who became Captain of the Saint Christopher fleet on that expedition. Bartholomeus Diaz followed the west coast of Africa, then rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1487. However, he had to return to Portugal because he was blocked by a typhoon and part of his ship's crew rebelled. Ten years later Diaz's pioneering work was continued by Vasco da Gama. Da Gama's efforts during his two years of sailing were quite satisfactory. He returned to Lisbon with samples of goods from India and a strategic plan to seize Indian port cities by force. On his first voyage, Diaz was able to estimate that the Arab traders who were protected and respected by local authorities would be powerless to face the terrifying power of the Portuguese marines and it was the task of the next expedition to carry out this idea. On March 8, 1500, King Manuel (1495-1521) sent 13 ships with thousands of mighty crews on the second expedition. If the mandate given to Vasco da Gama was to carry out reconnaissance, then the second expedition was assigned to build an empire in India (Estado da India). The fleet was led by Pedro Alvares Cabral and assisted by Bartholomeus Diaz (Chaudhuri 1985, 63-79).

Arab, Gujarati, Jewish and Armenian traders who had established positions as traders there were considered infidels and at the same time enemies. The Portuguese claimed that the sea areas they crossed belonged to them in the name of God. The actions taken by the Portuguese were God's mandate. However, Muslim sailors who had controlled trade routes in the Indian Ocean for centuries did not want to just give up their position to Portuguese

sailors. Battle could not be avoided. The port city of Calcutta was bombarded by the Portuguese so that its rulers fled inland. Ships belonging to Muslims were seized or sunk, while traders were hanged or burned alive in front of their own families (Turner 2011, 22). With better skills and more modern weaponry, the Portuguese fleet captured strategic Muslim ports. Due to this victory, the Portuguese appointed Afonso de Albuquerque as Governor of India in 1509-1515. Arab domination in South Asia ended after Albuquerque cannons conquered the ports of Calicut, Ormuz, Goa and Malacca. Through this position, Afonso de Albuquerque is also said to have become a channel for intensive cultural exchange between Europe and Asia, which had not happened before (See Moás 2016).

Meanwhile, the Spanish were able to finance their ocean exploration after Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand succeeded in uniting the small kingdoms in the region. The Catholic rulers reduced the power of the nobles, streamlined the government bureaucracy, and eliminated those who undermined power, namely Muslims and Jews. The Spanish Empire became very strong, so in order to find sources of spice production, Queen Isabella prepared an exploration expedition by entrusting three of her ships under the leadership of Christopher Columbus. The three ships, namely the Santa Maria, Pinta and Nina, anchored in October 1492 on an island in the Caribbean. Columbus named it San Salvador. He thought the island was part of India. For 10 years Columbus made 4 voyages. During that time, he discovered Haiti, which he called Dominica, then San Salvador, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Cuba, Trinidad and Honduras in Central America (for more details on Columbus's journal, see Columbus, 1893; see also Turner 2011).

Columbus's voyage was very useful for subsequent voyages. Columbus and his friends also succeeded in Christianizing the population of the areas they controlled. Although Columbus brought back a few treasures, his fleet paved the way for further exploration. In 1519, King Charles V sent Ferdinand Magellan to find a direct way to the Spice Islands (Maluku). Magellan crossed the Atlantic to Brazil. The voyage continues south to circle the tip of the American continent. Then, his fleet sailed the Pacific to the Philippines. The name Philippines was used to mark the success of King Philip II, after the islands were conquered in 1560. Magellan was killed, but the voyage was continued by Juan Sebastian del Cano. The fleet sailed from Maluku, then to Timor, across the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope. Finally, they returned to Spain after sailing the west coast of Africa. This voyage proved Copernicus and Galileo's theory that the earth was round, even after that they knew that the earth was wider than they had imagined. When del Cano's fleet reached Maluku, they met the Portuguese and then they had a misunderstanding, accusing each other of violating the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas between Spain and Portugal. However, in the end their disputes and armed conflict were resolved through the Saragosa Treaty in 1529, which, among other things, contained the distribution of 'lots' to the Portuguese to control Maluku and Spain to control the Philippines (Turner 2011, 22-39). However, beyond these political matters, the voyages of Magellan and Elcano have become a way for the emergence of European awareness that all the seas are one and the disappearance of previous limits on human mobility (Salonia 2022).

Ocean exploration carried out by the Portuguese and Spanish marked a new era in Asia and especially in Indonesia as an era of imperialism and colonialism (on Portuguese and Spanish rivalry in Asia, see Boxer's 1946). The Western powers uncompromisingly divided the territories they visited according to their own interests. They did not take into account that the area had been inhabited and owned by local residents for centuries. Therefore, violence after violence appears in the name of God which is carried out with acts of greed. The success of the Portuguese and Spanish immediately invited other European nations to join in the hunt for spices. At the end of the 16th century, Protestant countries, especially England and the Netherlands, appeared in Asian waters. They were better organized and

more uncompromising than any trader who ever penetrated the waters of Asia. They fought against Catholic nations (Portuguese and Spanish) and they even killed each other among the Protestant nations themselves and against all competitors from Southeast Asia. Apart from that, in the following period, competition between maritime powers in Southeast Asia not only involved trade on the one hand, but also religious competition, namely Islam on the other (see Andaya 2016).

Maritime Power in Indonesian Archipelago before the Arrival of Europeans

Before maritime trade via the Spice Route developed in the early century AD, spices from the Indonesian archipelago had not yet become a global trade commodity. The spices consumed by the early Egyptians, Greeks and Romans certainly did not come from the Indonesian archipelago but came from other regions such as pepper from Gujarat (India) and cinnamon from Sri Lanka. In the early century AD, Europe's economy improved following the establishment of Pax Romana. This also conditions an increase in demand for various trade commodities from overseas countries. India may no longer be able to meet demand for the European market. Moreover, spices from India are incomplete because they only provide pepper. In this case, the Indonesian archipelago produces all kinds of spices, including pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves. So, the first maritime transportation revolution in the archipelago occurred in the early century AD when trade routes changed from land routes (silk roads) to maritime routes (spice roads). This change in global trade routes was also triggered by unsafe land routes through Central Asia and also the increasing demand for spice products which can also be produced in the archipelago. Since then, the spice trade has become very spectacular. The spice trade has been a driving force for trade and shipping activities in general for centuries. Maritime trade has had an impact on the birth of various emporiums in the archipelago such as Sriwijaya, Majapahit, Demak, Ternate, Tidore, Makassar, and so on (see Sulistiyono 2016).

The Portuguese, Spanish and other European nations arrived in the archipelago when the great maritime empire (and at the same time agricultural empire) in the Indonesian archipelago had collapsed. Duarte Barbosa, a writer and Portuguese official in Cannanore (India) who had stopped in Java in the first quarter of the 16th century, said that apart from having junks for ocean voyages, the Javanese also had ships that were 'well-built light vessels' propelled by oars' which is usually used for piracy activities (Colles 1975, 132). The ability of the Majapahit trading fleet cannot be doubted to navigate the seas in the archipelago but also the open ocean in international trade. Another Portuguese named Tome Pires who came to Java at the beginning of the 16th century said that a hundred years before he came, Java had enormous power where its ships sailed until they reached Aden and Majapahit had major trade relations with the Keling Kingdom (India), Bengal, and Pasai (Sumatra) (Colles 1975, 138).

The Majapahit Kingdom developed not only from an agricultural economic basis but also from the development of shipping and trade activities as a maritime country. Maritime trade is not only carried out between one region and another in the archipelago, but also international trade with wider areas. Pigeaud believes that imported goods were known to the people of Majapahit inland, such as textiles from India and goods from China such as currency, glassware and precious stones (Pigeaud 1963, 500). Chao Ju-Kua testified that Chinese commodities purchased by Javanese traders included gold, silver, silk, lacquer, and porcelain. The purchasing power of Javanese traders grew so much that the Chinese Empire banned trade with Java because it caused Chinese currency to be siphoned off to Java through the spice trade, especially pepper (Colless 1975, 138).

Anthropological research in Kelantan (Malaysia) has proven how the magical influence of Majapahit power was very large in this region. In this area, many 'Javanese amulets' or 'Pitis Semar' are found which are still believed to have supernatural powers and have the power to cure various diseases (Rentse 1936, 300-304). It should be remembered that Tome Pires, who visited ports in Java at the beginning of the 16th century, heard with his own ears that the greatness of Majapahit was already circulating among many people at that time. Apart from Kelantan, Java is also said to have "controlled" the Maluku region on the east side for quite a long time (Cortesao 1944, 74; See also Colless 1975, 124-161 and Wertheim 1969, 52-53).

The decline of Majapahit as a result of the struggle for power between the royal families resulted in its inability to control the areas it controlled. Palembang itself, as the former centre of the Sriwijaya Kingdom, is said to have become a nest of Chinese pirates after 1377 (See for example McRoberts 1986, 73). In line with the development of Islam in the ports controlled by Majapahit, internal destruction prompted these ports to separate from Majapahit. They, such as Tuban, Demak, Surabaya, Cirebon, Banten, Makassar, Ternate and Tidore, gained new vitality from the spirit of the Islamic religion (Kartodirdjo 1988: 20). Even though national political entities in the archipelago were destroyed in line with the destruction of Majapahit at the end of the 15th century, trade networks continued to develop precisely because of this centrifugal process of political power. In this relationship, the centrifugal process in political entities is actually followed by a process of economic integration.

Tuban, for example, is an example of the process of change from a port city that was very important since the time of the Hindu kingdoms in East Java to a port that was also important at the beginning of the development of the Islamic kingdoms on the north coast of Java. This function as an international port is what allows Tuban to become a cosmopolitan city. Foreign nationalities who arrived in Tuban included North Indians, South Indians, Sri Lankans, Burmese, Cambodians and Champa. According to the story in the Tuban Chronicle, Aria Wilatikta was the son and successor of Aria Tejo, a cleric of Arab descent who succeeded in convincing the King of Tuban, Arya Dikara, to convert to Islam. Because of his services, he was married to his daughter. Aria Teja's Arabic name is Abdurrahman. This is in accordance with Tome Pires' testimony that the ruler of Tuban around 1500 was the grandson of the first Islamic king in the city of Tuban (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 226).

During Demak's heyday, Tuban's attitude was ambivalent. Apart from recognizing Demak as an Islamic sultanate, Tuban also still maintains good relations with Majapahit. This can be understood because Tuban is not that far from Majapahit so there is still a possibility that Majapahit will destroy it if Tuban puts up frontal opposition as happened to Juana. After Majapahit was destroyed, Tuban still recognized the Sultan of Demak as Maharaja. In fact, when Sultan Hadiwijaya moved his palace to Pajang, Tuban also recognized it. However, after Pajang was overthrown by Mataram, Tuban tried to stand on its own as an independent country. Tuban was a power on the north coast of Java that opposed the conquest of Mataram. Tuban was attacked several times by Mataram since the reign of Senopati, namely in 1587, 1598 and 1599. However, it was only in 1619 that Tuban truly submitted to Sultan Agung of Mataram. After that, the Tuban regents were appointed by Mataram (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 232; de Graaf 2020a, 204-207; de Graaf 2020b, 75-82).

Tuban's reputation as a trading city on the north coast of Java persisted until the 16th century when Islam gained a strong foothold in cities along the north coast of Java. At the beginning of the 16th century, Tome Pires revealed that Tuban was one of the important cities in Java, apart from Gresik and Surabaya (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 225). Tuban's

trade network covered areas from Malacca to Maluku, possibly including Makassar, Banjarmasin, Palembang, and Jambi. That Tuban had trade relations with Maluku can be seen from a Dutch record which states that a local Tuban nobleman routinely sent junks to Banda, Ternate and the Philippines (See Reid 2015, 145). This means that Tuban has established regular trade relations with Maluku and Malacca, even the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the Demak Kingdom was at the peak of its glory when the Portuguese arrived in Indonesian waters, although this did not last long. According to Tome Pires, the grandfather of the king of Demak who ruled in 1513 was a slave from Gresik who had served in Demak when he was still a vassal of Majapahit. In his career, he was appointed captain and trusted to lead the expedition against Cirebon, so that it was successful in 1470 (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 59). Geographically, Demak has a very favourable location for both trade and agriculture. At that time, the Demak Kingdom was a maritime kingdom, namely a kingdom whose economy was based more on the trade and shipping sectors. This is based on the geomorphological conditions of Demak in the 15th century, which was located on the coast and had a port visited by traders from various countries. According to chronicles from East Java and Central Java, Raden Patah's successor was Prince Sabrang Lor. The name apparently came from the area where he lived in the north, namely Jepara, an area which at that time was still separated by a strait from Demak. Meanwhile, according to Tome Pires, the second ruler in Demak was Pate Rodin Sr. He had a fleet consisting of 40 junk ships (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 67).

Demak's most important strength is the port city of Jepara, which is the largest sea power in the Java Sea and also the main supplier of rice to Malacca. During the time of Sultan Trenggana, he attempted to lead an Islamic coalition that might destroy the last major Hindu-Buddhist kingdom centred in Kediri. He did not seize an established Javanese kingdom, but after he returned to the centre of his power in Demak, Sultan Trenggana continued to attack a number of enemies who still embraced Hinduism. The title of Sultan which he has traditionally held since 1524 with the right (authorization) brought by Sunan Gunung Jati from Mecca is an indication that Demak is a new kingdom in Java. This description shows that Demak was truly a significant power in Java in the 16th century. During the time of Pati Unus or Prince Sabrang Lor, to be precise in 1512 and 1513, Demak attacked Malacca which at that time was controlled by the Portuguese using a combination of all the navies of the Javanese and Sumatran cities but ended with the destruction of the Javanese navy (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 68-70).

According to Tome Pires's testimony, the port of Demak was visited by many Persian, Arab, Gujarati and Malay traders. With their trading activities they have become a rich social group. They built mosques and built Islamic solidarity and carried out mixed marriages with the local community. As the main port in the archipelago, Demak's shipping network covers almost the entire archipelago from Maluku to Malacca. In fact, the arrival of foreign traders as mentioned above means that the Demak trade network has also reached the area west of the Malacca Strait to the Arab world (Reid 2015, 48-49). In line with the transfer of the centre of power from the city of Demak to Pajang and the process of ecological change in the "Muria Strait" which means that Demak is no longer a port city, Demak's maritime life is in decline. Demak's function was replaced by Jepara until the VOC shifted trading activities from Jepara to Semarang in the 17th century. As a result of this situation, the sea port of the city of Demak became less important at the end of the 16th century. However, as a producer of rice and other agricultural products, the Demak area has long had an important position in the economy of the Mataram Kingdom (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 171-172).

In Banten, the development of Muslim commerce made a very significant contribution to the process of formation of Islamic political power. The combination of the development of trade and political power ultimately placed the kingdom as a large emporium in the Sunda

Strait region which based its economy on shipping and trade. Banten has a very strategic geographical position as a port city. The city of Banten, which is located at the western tip of the island of Java and at the entrance to the Sunda Strait, can be said to function as the western gateway to the Indonesian archipelago. The conquest of Malacca by the Portuguese in 1511 can be said to be a blessing in disguise for Banten. Since then, Muslim traders who previously used to trade in Malacca moved the centre of their activities to Banten which ultimately caused Banten to develop into a transit port for commodities traded by Islamic traders. Tome Pires also came to Banten between 1512-1513. In his notes, he described Banten as a busy port. Many Chinese junk boats are anchored at this place. He stated that the commodities traded in Banten were rice, food ingredients and pepper. The relationship between Banten and Demak is very close. The Islamization process carried out by Sunan Gunung Jati and his son was able to succeed because it was assisted by military power from Demak. In the mid-16th century, it can be said that Demak was able to gather political power that stretched along the coast of western Java, namely from Cirebon, Sunda Kelapa to Banten (See de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 200-201).

The pepper trade made Banten an important port city. Chinese, Indian and European trading ships stopped and traded in Banten. In carrying out trading, Banten applies an open trading system. This means that all traders from various nations are free to trade in Banten. In fact, the Banten Sultanate is said to have used spices as part of their diplomacy with foreign traders (Faizin 2023). Even though the Portuguese did not succeed in settling in Banten, they still stopped in Banten as traders, for their pepper trading activities. It seems that the pepper trade, carried out mainly by Chinese, was an important activity in Sunda Kelapa harbor and later Banten. In fact, Banten boats sometimes sailed to the Maldives (west of Sri Lanka Island), to pick up slaves and women who were then sold in Java (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 204).

The Islamization and Islamic political formation in Cirebon were not much different from Demak and Banten. It's just that traditional sources suggest an elegant transfer of power from Hinduism to Islam in a process of continuity. Local traditional sources say that the founder of the Cirebon dynasty, Syarif Hidayatullah (Sunan Gunung Jati), was not from Pasai but was the grandson of the king of Siliwangi from Pajajaran and the son-in-law of Walangsungsang, a ruler of the port of Muara Jati. It was under the leadership of Syarif Hidayatullah that Cirebon, which was already Islamic, broke ties with the Galuh Kingdom, which was still Hindu, under the protection of the Demak Kingdom. In this way, the Islamic kingdom of Cirebon was established, which based its economy on commercial activities. Only after that period was the expansion of the power of the Cirebon Kingdom carried out (de Graaf and Pigeaud 2019, 186-192).

Before being annexed by the VOC, the port of Cirebon played a role as a fairly large trade centre. This port has trade relations with Batavia. The goods unloaded in Batavia originating from Cirebon were rice, paddy, pepper, teak wood, brown sugar, tobacco, coconut oil, fish, salt, shallots, coconut garlic, areca nuts, cotton, cattle, goats, leather buffalo, deer skin, pottery, rattan, and so on. However, in the following period, after the VOC monopoly, Cirebon's economic life worsened (See Susanti 2018).

Makassar provides a case example of how traditional rulers were able to respond intelligently to developments and business opportunities in the shipping and trade sectors during the early development of Islam in this region. In fact, until the end of the 15th century, Makassar was not a trade centre in Eastern Indonesia. Hall noted that before the arrival of European nations, Makassar was not yet the centre of a trade network. At that time there were several trade networks or trade zones in Southeast Asia and its surroundings, namely: the Bay of Bengal Network (covering the coast of South India, Sri Lanka, Burma, the north and west coast of Sumatra), the Malacca Strait Network, the Gulf of Tonkin Network

(covering: the east coast of the Peninsula Malaya, Thailand and South Vietnam), the Zulu Sea Network (covering the west coast of Luzon, Mindoro, Cebu, Mindanao and surrounding areas), and the Java Sea Network (which includes Java, Kalimantan, South Sumatra, Bali, Nusa Tenggara, South Sulawesi, even to Maluku (Hall 1985, 24).

This port was only a rendezvous for Javanese traders who were traveling to the Maluku islands and surrounding areas in search of spices. Major changes immediately occurred in the 16th century when there was an exodus of Muslim traders from Malacca which was captured by the Portuguese in 1511 and headed to Makassar. The settlement of Muslim traders in Makassar was the foundation for the development of maritime political and economic power in Makassar (Sutherland in Broeze 1989, 100). The small kingdoms of Goa and Tallo were ultimately able to seize this opportunity by organizing them in order to make Makassar a centre for the collection and distribution of spices. To make the immigrants feel at home in Makassar, they received a written guarantee of safety and security from the authorities. Unlike before, which only stood idly by waiting for traders to come, the Goa-Tallo Kingdom also sent its people to Maluku to trade and barter with spice producers directly (Curtin 1998, 160).

This trade network was a clear threat to the Portuguese who had the ambition to control the spice trade route. However, in the 16th century the Portuguese lacked the power to impose a monopoly because they lacked ships and a navy to patrol the vast waters of the archipelago, especially in the waters around Maluku. In fact, in 1641 Malacca, which was controlled by the Portuguese, was captured by the Dutch. It is very interesting that once again Makassar acted as a reservoir for refugee traders as when Malacca was captured by the Portuguese in 1511. At that time, it was the Portuguese traders who fled to Makassar. No less than 3000 Portuguese refugees then settled in the port of Makassar. Likewise, many Indians settled here and became one of the main groups of moneylenders and traders in this city. Several sovereign kingdoms in Asia also sent their representatives to Makassar, such as from Aceh and Golconda (India) to help their citizens who traded in this city. Makassar quickly grew as a rich trading city based on an open policy to foreign traders like the Malacca Kingdom in the previous two centuries. Malay, Portuguese, local traders, Danish and British traders were all actively involved in the Indian textile trade with Maluku spices which had to deal with the VOC monopoly system (Curtin 1998, 160).

The foundations of Makassar's economic progress at that time did not only lie in its strategic position as a trade gateway connecting the Java Sea, Makassar Strait, Sulawesi Sea, Banda Sea and other local trade networks as well as being closely connected with long-distance trade with China, India and even Europe, but also as a producer of important trade commodities such as rice. The reach of its trade network has reached almost the entire archipelago, Northern Australia, the Philippine archipelago, Macao, China, and several port cities on the Malay Peninsula (Poelinggomang 1991, 37-39).

Aceh is a maritime kingdom that does not appear to have a historical basis as a strong pre-Islamic political and cultural power. Based on local historical sources, namely the Acehnese Customary Book, it is said that in 601 Hijriyah Aceh was Islamized by someone named Sultan Johan Syah who came from "the land above the wind." Simultaneously with the Islamization process, the first sultan was appointed with the title Sultan Johan Syah. At around the beginning of the 16th century, the Aceh Sultanate grew bigger after successfully uniting the small Islamic kingdoms in the surrounding area. Under the reign of Ali Mughayat Syah (r. 1514-1530), Aceh launched an expedition along the east coast of Sumatra, which was a producer of gold and pepper. In the following period, in the context of competition for power supremacy, Aceh went to war with Johor (Ricklefs, Lockhart, Lau, Reyes, Aung-Thwin, 2013, 169-170).

After Malacca fell into Portuguese hands in 1511, Islamic traders who usually visited Malacca to trade began to avoid the port city. One of the closest ports with the most potential to be used as a replacement port as a trading destination in the Malacca Strait is Aceh. Since then, Aceh has become the main trading port for Islamic traders who brought cloves and nutmeg from Maluku and Banda as well as pepper from South Sumatra and Aceh itself to the Red Sea in West Asia. From the Red Sea the merchandise was transported to Europe. In Aceh there are various natural products that are traded, such as; kerosene, sulfur, lime, frankincense, and gold. A commodity that is quite reliable besides pepper is silk. The traders who have been trading in Aceh for a long time are Arab and Indian traders. They like to trade in Aceh because this sultanate adheres to Islam, the same religion they believe in. Indian traders brought commodities such as pottery, iron, steel, cotton and diamond. In Aceh, they bought frankincense, lime from Barus, pepper and porcelain from China. There are also many Chinese trading boats (junk) in Aceh. Apart from trading porcelain, the Chinese introduced the Acehnese to silk cultivation. Apart from them there were also traders from Turkey, Siam, Java and Europeans consisting of Portuguese, French and British (Muhzinat 2020).

One of the important areas in the context of shipping and trade in Kalimantan is Banjarmasin. Banjarmasin only began to appear on the historical stage at the beginning of the 15th century. There is evidence that around 1400 there was a Hindu community settlement in this area. Banjarmasin has ties with the Majapahit kingdom in Java. At that time, Banjarmasin recognized Majapahit's power, which was cemented by the marriage relationship between the ruler of Banjarmasin and a princess from Majapahit. At the beginning of the 16th century, the influence of Islam entered Banjarmasin, which was spread by preachers from Demak. At the beginning of the 16th century, a new chapter began in the history of Banjarmasin with the arrival of the Dutch in this Sultanate. In 1606 the Dutch first arrived in Banjarmasin and expressed their desire to establish trade relations with the Banjarmasin Sultanate. The Dutch bought pepper, gold ore, rattan and various forest products. At first trading went normally. However, in the end the Dutch succeeded in infiltrating the Banjarmasin Sultanate after internal divisions emerged. After involving themselves in the Banjarmasin war (1859-1862) against Prince Antasari, the Dutch finally succeeded in controlling Banjarmasin (See Noor 2016).

Ternate emerged on the historical stage as one of the trading ports in the North Maluku islands, closely related to increasingly intensive interactions between port cities in Southeast Asia as a result of the emergence of a network of emporiums in the region. In the 15th century, there were four clove trade centres in North Maluku, namely Ternate, Tidore, Bacan and Jailolo (Halmahera). Other islands that produce cloves are gradually connected to the trade network through one of the four trade centres. The emergence of four trade centres is closely related to the traditional structure of North Maluku society. The system of four rulers in North Maluku was institutionalized into a traditional concept called "Maluku Kie Raha" or Maluku Four Mountains. This concept refers to the existence of a peaceful federative relationship between the four main political forces in North Maluku for the benefit of the clove trade (Pudjiastuti 2018).

Before the arrival of Europeans in the 16th century, Ternate traded cloves with traders who came from Java, Malay, Makassar, Bugis and Banten. The first Europeans to arrive in Ternate were the Portuguese. They first arrived in 1512 under the leadership of Francisco Serrao. At first, the Sultanate of Ternate took advantage of good relations with the Portuguese, marked by the construction of a fort there. Meanwhile, Ternate's rival, Tidore, has also begun to establish relations with Spain. However, relations between Ternate and the Portuguese were not always good. This was not only caused by the greedy Portuguese people, but also because of Christianization (Rickelfs 2010, 45). The peak of the conflict

occurred in 1570, when a battle broke out between Ternate and the Portuguese which resulted in the Sultan of Ternate Hairun being killed. Sultan Hairun's successor, Sultan Baabullah continued the leadership of Ternate which was very Islamist and anti-Portuguese (Ricklefs 2010, 46). During the reign of Sultan Baabullah, Ternate reached its heyday. The Ternate boat fleet, known as kora-kora, carried out military expeditions to expand the kingdom's territory. The area that Ternate can control stretches from North Maluku to the islands of Buru, Seram, North Sulawesi and several places around Tomini Bay. Conquered territories were required to pay annual taxes to Ternate and their residents were required to help Ternate if war occurred at any time. On this basis, the era of Sultan Baabullah is said to be the golden era of the Ternate Sultanate, characterized by a neatly arranged taxation system (Assagaf, Sukoharso, and Baridwan 2020).

On May 22, 1599, two Dutch ships (Amsterdam and Utrech) with 560 crew members under the command of Captain Warwijk first arrived in Ternate. This visit was warmly welcomed by Ternate. The Sultan and a fleet of 32 kora-kora carrying rowers and singers circled the Dutch ships while singing Ternate songs and dancing. After a warm welcome, trade transactions went smoothly. The next visit of the Dutch to Ternate under the leadership of Admiral Jacob van Neck also went smoothly. The Dutch grip through the VOC trading company strengthened in Ternate, after February 23, 1605 the Dutch fleet under the leadership of Admiral Steven van der Hagen succeeded in capturing the Portuguese fort in Ambon. Next, Steven van der Hagen and his successors received orders from the VOC headquarters in Amsterdam to occupy all of Maluku and control the clove trade. Based on this order, various VOC efforts began in Maluku to implement a monopoly system for the clove commodity (See also Hasim, Abdullah, and Muhammad 2022).

Europeans Monopoly and the Changes of Maritime Power in Indonesian Archipelago

Maritime traditions in the archipelago view the sea as a neutral area. Until the arrival of Western nations, local rulers in Indonesia tended to implement a free seas policy which in Western terms is called mare liberum. In facing a trading system like this, European nations thought of dealing with a sales monopoly with a purchasing monopoly. This means that Western nations want to be the only buyers of spice products. Thus, the kings and nobles and local traders had to sell it to Western nations. This meant that the sales monopolies held by local rulers and merchants were meaningless in the face of European sales monopolies enforced with cannons. If this purchasing monopoly is not enforced, the supply of spices on the market will be abundant and as a result the price of this commodity in Europe will also fall, while the price of the commodity in the producer market will rise due to increased demand. The discovery of the origin of spices by Europeans broke the trade monopoly previously determined by the Arabs, followed by the Romans, Muslims and Portuguese. In 1605-1621, the Dutch were able to expel the Portuguese from the spice islands and succeeded in establishing a monopoly on the spice trade (Mrad 2005).

The Dutch, through the VOC, were very enthusiastic about enforcing a purchasing monopoly in producing areas even though it had to be done by means of war, both against other Western nations and with local rulers and traders. Even when people continued to produce and sell to other foreign traders without their knowledge, the Dutch carried out cleaning operations on spice plants to stabilize supplies and prices in the market known as the Hongi Voyage. So naval warfare in this period was a war over monopoly. Without a monopoly they would go out of business because freedom of trade is not yet guaranteed by international law. Trade can justify any means. It is also still difficult to differentiate between piracy and trade.

An interesting example of this problem can be seen in the case of the tense relationship between Makassar and the VOC at the beginning of the 17th century. In 1616, the VOC in Ambon sent a delegation to Makassar who prohibited Makassar people from shipping and trading with the Maluku islands. The Makassar authorities opposed this ban. According to their beliefs, God has divided the earth equally among all nations, but the sea is given to all humans without distinguishing their nationality. Therefore, it was unacceptable for the Makassar people if the Dutch forbade them to sail to Maluku, which they had done for centuries before. The VOC ban meant raising the war flag (See Villiers in Kathirithamby-Wells and John Villiers 1991, 156). After the VOC was able to subdue Makassar by force, Makassar trade was tightly controlled by the VOC (See Andaya 1981, 100-101). However, they usually have a monopoly on trading certain commodities. The rulers used their power and facilities to take an important part in trade. Therefore, when Western nations arrived, they faced difficulties in obtaining the merchandise they needed without having to deal with local authorities because they monopolized sales. Moreover, if there is a lot of demand, these monopoly holders will arbitrarily raise the price of goods so that traders experience losses or only make small profits.

Although the intervention of Western powers against local powers was very complex, this did not actually change the most basic trade patterns. The conquest of Malacca in 1511 gave rise to Islamic trade centres such as Aceh, Johor, Brunei, Makassar, and so on. At the same time, Portuguese militancy in religion also encouraged the development of several emporiums along the north coast of Java such as Demak, Banten, Cirebon, Surabaya, and so on following the collapse of the Majapahit kingdom in the interior of Java. It should be noted that the presence of the Portuguese as the main competitor of Islamic traders in Southeast Asia indirectly encouraged the revival of the Javanese after the collapse of Majapahit at the end of the 15th century. The economic growth of the coastal kingdoms along the north coast of Java was viewed with suspicion not only by the Portuguese in Malacca but also by Mataram, who claimed to be the heir to Majapahit (See Ricklefs, Lockhart, Reyes, Aung-Thwin 2013, 166-171).

Mataram began to expand into the northern coastal cities of Java at the beginning of the 17th century with the exception of Banten. Mataram destroyed almost all the economic resources of these coastal countries. This has resulted in an exodus of traders to various ports outside Java such as Makassar and Banjarmasin (de Graaf 2020). The impact of this destruction was so extraordinary that it was difficult for the port cities on the north coast of Java to recover except. All trading cities on the north coast of Java were very weak when the VOC began to expand into this area in the 17th century. By the mid-17th century, the Dutch had controlled almost all the port cities east of Batavia.

Other major trading ports also suffered tragic fates. The war marked the destruction of the supremacy of the Makassar Kingdom in South Sulawesi which was conquered by the Dutch in 1667. In 1669, Sultan Hasanuddin signed the Bongaya Agreement, as a result of Gowa's defeat against the King of Bone, Arung Palakka who was assisted by the Dutch (Abdullah 2017). By the Dutch, Makassar was seen as the most dangerous enemy in eastern Indonesia in order to enforce its monopoly. Several decades earlier, the VOC had succeeded in establishing its monopoly over the Maluku islands such as Ambon and Ternate in 1605 and 1606 (Ricklefs 2010, 52-53).

Malacca, the main port on the Malay Peninsula, was then captured by the Dutch from the Portuguese in 1641 (Ricklefs 2010, 123). At first the VOC actually wanted to control the Malacca Strait as a traditional gateway for trade between East and West, but the Portuguese power that was already entrenched there was an obstacle for the Dutch. Therefore, the VOC then tried to control Malacca's trading partners by weakening them. The Maluku Islands, which are the main producers of spices, and then the port cities in Java and other ports

outside Java, became the VOC's main targets for control. In almost every trade centre, the VOC built forts to protect their business interests. In line with increasing competition among Western nations and between the Dutch and local populations, the VOC took further steps to control trade networks and producing areas in the Indonesian archipelago. Apart from that, they also tried to reduce the role of neutral trading ports by placing them as part of the VOC trade network system. In many cases, the Dutch attempted to conclude treaties that served to guarantee their monopoly profits in production and trade. Aceh's role as a trading partner in the Malacca Strait in the 17th century was also harmed by the presence of the VOC. Their sea power eventually dominated the main trade routes in the Indonesian archipelago. The Dutch were able to control shipping traffic in the Malacca Strait and Sunda Strait because they had controlled Batavia (in the Sunda Strait area) and Malacca (Malacca Strait) as the main gateways to Europe and to the Maluku islands as the main producer of spices.

The Dutch imposed a monopoly on other Europeans and on native peoples. Apart from that, the VOC also imposed purchasing rights on traders and farmers. Thus, there is no free market where farmers can sell their products at higher prices. In this case, VOC is a compelling force in determining the sales price of local products. The VOC prohibited the sale of spices to other Europeans under threat of punishment. In this way, the VOC impoverished areas outside Java, destroying local trade without reviving it. Spices and forest products from outside Java were sent to ports in Java to be shipped to Europe by the VOC. So, in this way the VOC reorganized the trade network in the archipelago to suit the global shipping network (Nagtegaal 1996, 21).

In this position, Java developed as an entry port for imported goods to be sent outside Java. In terms of import trade, the VOC only opened the port of Batavia for foreign ships to unload imported goods. With special permission, Semarang and Surabaya can also be accessed for import trade provided that they must first process all documents related to imports. They are not permitted to dock at other ports. Thus, trade relations between Java and outside Java appear to be forced. The destruction of indigenous trading centres forced indigenous traders to respond to new situations, thereby making the waters of the archipelago even more dynamic. This also forces native traders to adapt to new situations (see Sulistiyono and Rochwulaningsih 2013, 115-127).

If initially the VOC wanted to make Batavia and Malacca the centre of its trade network in Southeast Asia, at the end of the 17th century its attention tended to be focused on Java. Since then, the Dutch have been involved in many conflicts over the throne in Java. By exploiting internal conflicts among the nobility, the Dutch were able to take advantage of reducing the power of native rulers so they were dependent on the Dutch. Until the last quarter of the 18th century, the Dutch had gradually succeeded in placing Mataram, Banten, and to a certain degree Cirebon under the "protection" of the VOC, after most of its territory fell into its hands. More than that, the VOC has also controlled very productive areas in Java, thereby receiving tax payments and various handovers and direct control of several areas. VOC also introduced new crops that sold well on the international market, such as coffee. Because it was very profitable, there was a tendency for the VOC to make Java as the centre of its power based on the exploitation of Java's natural sources of wealth and fertility, meanwhile maritime power over areas outside Java (including Malacca) declined until the destruction of this trading partnership in 1799 (Cowan 1968, 10; Gaastra and Bruijn 1993, 178; see also Gaastra 2002, 57–65).

Conclusion

Spices are commodities that have been traded long before AD. People in ancient cultural centres such as Egypt, India, Greece and Rome used spices for various purposes, including cooking spices, preserving mummies, health and to overcome disease outbreaks. In the Western world, spices are seen as not just a trading commodity, but because of their expensiveness, rarity and efficacy, spices have become legendary items that encourage various parties to master them. It is thought that spices from the Indonesian archipelago only entered the global market along with the development of sea trade routes between India and China in the early century AD. Economic, cultural and political dynamics in Europe have encouraged ocean exploration to be able to directly access spice producers in the Eastern world, resulting in Western imperialism and colonialism in Asia being born. Western imperialism and colonialism have changed the map of maritime powers in the archipelago, characterized by the significantly declining role of indigenous maritime powers in maritime affairs in the archipelago as a result of the domination of western powers. In the archipelago, the VOC had succeeded in holding a monopoly on the spice trade. However, the VOC's decision to place Java as the political and economic centre brought its destruction at the end of the 18th century.

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