

Slave-Trade Syndicates: Contestation of Slavery between Local Rulers, Europeans, and Pirates in Nineteenth-Century Timor

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Abstract

This article analyzes the contestation of slavery activities in nineteenth-century Timor. The slave trade cannot be separated from contestation between three forces, namely the local authority (*raja*), colonial entities residing in Timor, and pirates. The *raja* fought each other on the battlefield to decide which of them is worthy of a “gift” of the war, which were women and children as merchandise for sale. Meanwhile, colonial complaints about the limited human labor to be employed in various types of work not only encouraged in purchasing of slaves in distant places but also at the same time fostered slave-trading activities, both sponsored by the Dutch and Portuguese. One of the main causes of the slave trade was piracy at sea. Three actors were pioneering slave raiding, namely the *Balanini/Ilanun* from Sulu, Makassar, and Ende pirate. By applying the historical method, this research questioned why locals, Europeans, and pirate contested to obtain slaves in Timor? The rise of capitalism was marked by the demand for cheap labor in the nineteenth-century. Consequently, slave commodities were mobilized to meet the need for labor in plantations or companies owned by the colonial government.

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Introduction

Slavery is not necessarily a new discourse topic, especially in East Nusa Tenggara. Scholars such as Needham (1985), Hädregal (2012), Parimarta (2002) have paid considerable attention to trade and political activities holistically in this region. Slaves were valued as variables in trade which were considered significant in addition to other commodities such as horses from Sumba, sandalwood from Kupang, and others (Parimarta 2002). Besides the above-mentioned, the contribution of James Francis Warren in the book entitled *The Sulu Zone* confirmed the relationship between piracy and slavery in Southeast Asia (Warren 2007). In his 390-pages book, Warren constructed the idea about the Sulu Zone, where *Iranun* and *Balanini* kidnapped, killed and sold humans in the Southeast Asian and Chinese markets. *The Sulu Zone* was present as a pattern of historical construction and phenomena that occurred along the Philippine coast, Borneo, Sulawesi, and the Malay Peninsula (Warren 2007). However, slave narratives explored in previous studies did not examine the core issue, especially regarding the contestation between local and European forces. Therefore, the research question in the present article is why locals, Europeans, and pirates contested to obtain slaves in Timor?

Slavery activities in Timor cannot be separated from contestation between three forces, namely the local authority (*raja*), colonial entities residing in Timor, and pirates from Makassar, Ende, and Sulu. Before the English *interregnum* (between reigns) in Java (1811-1816), slaves who were previously exported to Batavia were mostly from Timor. The slaves were carried off from Timor reached thousands in a year. Furthermore, the slave trade was abolished by the British when

they took control of Timor. This regulation was followed by the Dutch by announcing a ban on slavery. This issue was regulated in *Regelingreglement* (regulation/RR) in 1818 and the rules of slave registration through *Staatsblad* (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia/Stb) in 1819 no. 58. However, slavery activities remained unstoppable and some rulers in Kupang were known to be still involved in slave trade.

G.W. Earl, a British ethnologist, in 1848, observed that a well-known king residing in Timor have more than 600 slaves. These slaves could not be exported since they were “unregistered” slaves. In Timor, a king bought slaves for the purposes field cultivation and domestic work. In addition, in times of war they were frequently mobilized to the battlefield. However, at certain times when kings or lords were too lazy in working on plantations, the slaves could have been released, in order to avoid the costs of slave treatment (Earl, *The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, October 26, 1848, 4). In addition to practical uses, within the social construction of Timorese society, power, influence, and prestige of a king or a wealthy person could be indicated by the numbers of slaves they had (*Strait Times Weekly Issue*, January 11, 1893, 8). As for the Dutch, they normally exploited slaves as worker on plantation, sailors, housekeepers, and also to raise the social status. The Dutch used to resettle East Timorese slaves to work on nutmeg plantations in Banda during nineteenth century (Thalib and Raman 2015; Thosibo 2002; Rundjan 2015)

Method

The methodology of this research is based on historical research, consisting of four steps, namely *heuristics* (source collection), criticism, analysis or synthesis, and historiography (writing historical research). Since slavery was banned in 1818, the official Dutch colonial reports rarely highlight the existence of slavery on this island. However, the government tended to conceal the reality in Timor. Correspondence from British newspapers published in Singapore became an authentic source in completing the evidence of slavery in Timor. The rivalry between British and the Dutch was also considered beneficial in revealing the slave narratives, the Dutch colonial policy could be portrayed from another perspective. Explicitly, from the British perspective, slave raiding was still flourishing in Timor until the last decade of nineteenth century.

Contestation of Slavery among Local Authorities

Slave trade in Timor is closely related to the contestation among local authorities. Some of ethnic groups which were individually independent, competed against each other in a war to decide which of them was worthy of a “gift”, which were women and children as merchandise for sale (*Straits Times Overland Journal*, July 22, 1876, 2). People from the lower class (*ata*) was contested in this activity. Furthermore, when slave demand became bigger in the market and *rajah* needed money, this situation encouraged inter-tribal warfare, power domination in the islands which was often referred to as slave raiding (Parimartha 2007, 132-133). This human robbery was usually carried out by a larger, richer and more powerful kingdom against small, politically fragmented kingdoms. As evidence, in 1765 Kupang people robbed as many as 45 people in Sumba and made them slaves (Parimartha 2002, 132) According to Needham, Sumba had become a classic region that was vulnerable to social conflict and insecurity (Needham 1985). In certain condition, this situation served as an opportunity for other kingdoms to forcibly confiscate residents of the region.

Some slave supplying areas such as Sumba, Rote, Sawu, and Solor were frequently faced problems with *rajah*. There were two conflicting responses regarding slaves, some of which in Dutch side while others in opposition. At some point, this conflict resulted in the acquisition of large numbers of slaves to be sent to Batavia (Hägerdal 2012, 24).

Apart from the acquisition of war, the *rajah* in Timor also deliberately awarded the judicial slaves (who had been convicted of certain violations) to the Dutch. This practice was later

suspended in 1834 after the Dutch banned the sale of slaves who were “unregistered”, both those owned by indigenous people and kings. These slaves could not be sold or taken out of the country (ANRI. K. 43, Timor: 51). This policy was implemented after the official abolition of the slave trade in the Dutch East Indies. Travelers who had stayed in Timor insisted on their argument that the life of Timorese slaves was relatively well treated. Perhaps this view was based on a negative image of slavery in the Atlantic world that was closely related to persecution. For example, famous anthropologist, Henry Forbes stated that in the 1880s that Timorese slaves were treated relatively well and could be released at any time through a fixed amount of compensation. Despite such convenience, slaves rarely wanted their legal freedom. Slaves with a poor economic background chose to stay with their master on the grounds of guaranteeing a better life (Forbes 1884, 417). Timor slaves were usually serving domestic work at home, during the harvest period. They were also mobilized to work in the cornfield (Hägerdal 2012).

However, we cannot use Forbes's observations as a standard view of slavery. There were also cases of violence and murder committed by employers against their slaves. As described by Hans Hägerdal, as cited in the 1692 *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) report, a Christian woman named Susanna, the daughter of a Timorese regent, complained to trade representative (*opperhoofd*) Willem Moerman about two men who tied a slave woman who was employed in his house. The slave was viciously assaulted to death. *Opperhoofd* conducted a further investigation, but the Timorese showed no sympathy. After a series of investigations, Susanna's brother told the Dutch that the two perpetrators had no intention of killing their slave. The action was carried out as a spontaneous reaction because the slave attempted to escape, so the employer gave him a “lesson” as a deterrence effect to other slaves who tried to escape. Willem Moerman, who was unsatisfied with this answer, then summoned the East Timorese regents and asked what punishment was suitable for this heinous act. Timorese answered that such actions did not have legal implications. Anyone could treat whatever they wanted to their slave. They also asserted that the life or death of a slave was in the hands of their master. Finally, after listening to the argumentations of the regents, Moerman released the two perpetrators of the murder (NA, VOC 1531, 1692, in Hägerdal 2012, 35).

The view that slaves were valued as goods becomes clear in this case. Local residents also did not consider as *taboo* acts of violence committed by masters against their slaves. A society which is exposed to inter-tribal conflicts usually tends to be apathetic and allows forms of violence (NA, VOC 1531, 1692, in Hägerdal 2012, 35). In addition, the perspective which states that slavery *taboo* system is based on the assumption that Timorese society at that moment (1800s) had not been penetrated by the awareness of the values of western humanism.

The above case shows that local authorities exaggerated their power over the lives of slaves and the people in exchange for securing the territory. Furthermore, even though the legal rules always showed the importance of slaves, both as a social category and wealth, in reality punishment for those who committed abuses against their slaves had not yet been carried out in Timorese society. This helped to strengthen the Timorese slave trade, even facilitating the expansion of the slavery network. The slave trade was also initiated by local authorities. It is proved by the testimony of a woman and her child who became victims of the slave trade by the *liurai* of Maunura. They were the only victims who attempted to escape from the bondage. The victims were from the remote area of Ende, they were sent to Sumba to become slaves. Kaka Ende (the initials mentioned by the victims) and their accomplices were the village heads of Maunura who were alleged to have taken part in this action. Finally, the Timorese demanded the slaves to be taken back to them and to punish the pirates as well. They also demanded a fine of 2,000 *rix* dollars (*rix* is a kind of coin worth 1 *rix* dollars = 100 cents) in compensation for this illegal act (*The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, October 6, 1849, 6).

According to Van Hogendrop as quoted by Parimatha, this kind of chaos often occurred in Timor. Timorese kings were poor, they had little money or clothing, living with a lot of disturbance and extortion. The society was often threatened by paying fines of up to 500 *rijksdaalder*. Therefore, slave raiding was one way of getting money. In the 18th century Timor, the small population in such a broad territory could also indicate the existence of a major war, or the export of large numbers of slaves which reduced the population (W. Van Hogendorp, 1779/1780, in Parimatha 2002, 132-133).

Besides the wars, other brutal actions included human sacrifice and head-hunting as offerings to the God. Besides their heads, their bodies were dried and then eaten (*Straits Times Weekly Issue*, March 22, 1884, 9). This kind of tradition is a manifestation of Paganism that had been adopted long before the arrival of Europeans. Even the practice of head hunting continues for quite a long time. The native population was very superstitious and had developed a *taboo* (rituals) system that was fairly complicated. They believed in the existence of natural forces which were considered as representations of gods who always protected the village and its family (*Straits Times Weekly Issue*, March 22, 1884, 9). Slavery traditionally constructed in Timorese society eventually led Timor to be the axis of the classical slave trade, supported by all the potential commodities of Timor, namely sandalwood and beeswax.

Contestation of Slavery among Europeans

There are strong indications that slavery institutions have been well-established in Timorese society when Europeans arrived. Humans become a strategic commodity since the VOC era. In medieval times, Europeans often made Christians slaves. In this period, the principle of slavery was hardly questioned, as what also happened to traditional Muslim societies. Sandalwood, which was the reason for interference on this island, was almost unavailable in the Netherlands. This means that other sources of profit must be sought, namely slaves. Since the role of the allies weakened in the field of labor and the Portuguese tended to dominate much of the territory of Timor, the VOC had to find another place to get the human cargo. Slave hunting activities were expanding to the islands around Timor, including Sumba, Sawu, Rote, and Ende.

The colonial complaints about the limited human labor to be employed in various types of work not only encouraged in purchasing of slaves in distant places but also at the same time fostered slave-trading activities, both sponsored by the Dutch and Portuguese. These people had control over the supply of slaves. Slaves or trafficked prisoners became the main source of labor mobility. They could be described as people who moved from fragile and politically fragmented societies to richer and stronger societies (Thosibo 2002).

The insatiable demand of the Dutch for slaves was one of the causes of the rise in human trafficking. Although the Dutch officially bought slaves for their own use, there were also private purchases by Dutch officials for the purpose of trading. While at the local level, Dutch ships came to remote areas to buy people or sue them as part of tribute or political distribution while at a more centralized and broader level also directed to the Netherlands. Dutch ships bought large numbers of slaves from indigenous markets. Dutch involvement in the slave trade had even taken root since the VOC era. In 1652, a total of 600 slaves were sold to Batavia, 25 of whom were from Timor (Niemeijer 2012, 43).

According to Kniphorst as mentioned by Parera, during the time of Resident Ter Horbruggen (1761) in Kupang, there was an *adat* (custom) regarding slave raiding. An officer wishing to go to Batavia for a business, then first roamed through the villages or small islands around Kupang with his dog, the officer hunted and capturing humans. The captives were then taken to Batavia as a present for superiors and acquaintances and relatives, while the rest were sold (Kniphorst 1885 in Parera 1994, 82).

Dispute between the Portuguese and the Dutch regarding border territories since the mid-nineteenth century also contributed to tensions between the Timorese population, the situation also triggered new contestations between Portuguese and Dutch followers. This conflict was discussed in the "de Locomotief" daily. There were many indigenous people who collaborated with the Portuguese to fight criminal acts such as murder and looting (*Leeuwarder Courant*, September 20, 1913).

The contestation between the Portuguese and the Dutch was also seen in the accusations levelled against each other regarding the mastermind of slavery in Timor. In 1844, the Portuguese Margarida ship was confiscated in Batavia and the captain was sentenced to five years in prison after being found guilty of involvement in the slave trade. A few months later, this case was published in newspaper in The Hague to impress on the public that the Portuguese were also actively involved in the slave trade. The news suddenly became a rumor in the Hague palace. However, the Portuguese immediately reacted violently and judged that the case was only an excess of maritime trade (*The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, May 28, 1846, 2).

The Portuguese in turn accused the Dutch of being the true mastermind behind the massive slave trade. This accusation was backed by the fact on July 25, 1845 the Makassar-flagged fleet (known as the "Makassar Prows") operated freely on the eastern islands carrying slaves to Dili. While two other ships under the Dutch flag fled with 30 slaves belonging to King Larantoeke, the captain of the ship was captured, and other prisoners admitted to the involvement in the slave trade trafficking. According to the confession, they had won permission to sail from the Dutch Governor in Makassar and carried out slave-trading activities. The slaves said that they were bought from Flores and Timor (*The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, May 28, 1846, 2). These Makassar boats, in the following years, continued to carry out large-scale slave trade, from Bali to Timor.

The case of Makassar Prow fleet which sailed to the eastern waters with the fluttering of the Dutch flag eventually led to two arguments. First, the Netherlands was considered to have collaborated with Makassar seafarers by facilitating slave shipping traffic, namely by giving sailing permits, these document contained a shipping permit signed by the Dutch Governor in Makassar and given to ships or boats that are willing to trade in areas under Dutch influence. As for the fleet of ships with no travel passes, they were considered smugglers (Sulistiyono 2003).

Even though the pass did not explicitly allow the captain of the ship to carry slaves, it would allow them to bring indigenous people from Timor and Flores as unpaid laborers on Makassar plantation or sell them to Dili. Second, the slaves who were brought could have consisted of freed slaves or *mardijkers*. However, the second argument is considered irrelevant because it turned out there was a high need for labor.

The Governor of Dili, Afonso de Castro (1859-1863) adopted the element of the Cultivation System (*Cultuurstelsel*) which had been introduced by the Dutch on Java. The consequences of implementing this system led to the large need for large-scale manual laborers to be employed on plantations. It is important to note that during the second half of the 19th century, coffee cultivation took place as negotiations between the Portuguese and the *liurai*, the Portuguese had little direct control of land and labor. Finally, local authorities forced or persuaded their people to grow coffee. It was in this condition that the slave class was also mobilized to meet the need for labor in coffee plantations spread over Portuguese territory in Dili. They were usually obtained from head hunting and slave raiding (Roque 2010; Hicks 2004).

Since the beginning of the 19th century, coffee plantation in Dili began to be intensified, especially from the 1860s under the rule of Afonso de Castro (1859-1863); not infrequently, residents are forced to plant coffee by colonial rulers or customary rulers; at other times, they do it voluntarily with an awareness of the economic benefits of this plantation (Shepherd and McWilliam 2013, 326-361). The need for labor is increasing, especially when there was a significant increase in

exports of coffee. There was an increase in coffee exports from 22 tons in 1860 to 145 tons in 1865 (Shepherd and McWilliam 1936, 330). The success of coffee plantations in Castro's time finally encouraged Governor José Celestino da Silva (1894-1908) to follow Castro's initiative and work on a larger scale coffee plantation area. This means that the demand for slaves continued growing.

In relation to the exploitation of plantation labor, Timorese slaves along with those from other regions, such as Java, Makassar, Ambon, Seram, Kei were also imported to work on nutmeg plantations. Since the 18th to 19th centuries, the exploitation of human labor on nutmeg plantations placed Banda as a barometer of slavery in Maluku, where slaves carried out the orders of the gardeners to plant nutmeg trees which were endemic plants and were classified as the main export plants of Banda Islands (Thalib and Raman 2015, x).

Contestation of Slavery among Pirates

The Dutch colonial had banned the activities of the slave trade in 1818, but the slave trade continues to persist. One of the main causes of the continuing slave trade was piracy at sea. Since the ban on the slave trade was declared, pirates were carried out their execution in secret to avoid the monitoring of the colonial government. Consequently the volume of the Timor slave trade could not be calculated precisely. The examples below illustrate that Timor Island was noted as a vulnerable zones for slave-trading. One of the reasons for consistent slave trade in Timor was the lack of resistance from the population in this archipelago. The *raja* in the Timor and neighborhood cities encouraged and facilitated piracy activities rather than taking repressive actions to protect people and stop slavery. This habit was rooted systemically within the social structure of Timorese. Why piracy seem legitimate to Timorese? This actually relates to the “piracy” perspective that was understood by Timorese people. For most the traditional Timorese, piracy were not labelled as an outlawed, indeed looting of goods from stranded ship considered as part of *adat*. Therefore, they were immune to legal action (*Straits Times Overland Journal*, June 14, 1873, 4).

The looting and destruction of stranded ships were massive phenomenon throughout the archipelago. In Pulau Penang, this activity was classified by the British as “petty theft”, even often accompanied by the murder of the crew (*Straits Times Overland Journal*, June 14, 1873, 4). The Kingdom of Bali was also recognized the rights of *Tawan Karang*, namely the privileges for king to seize a stranded ship and its goods in its territory.

While in a broader context, most of the islands of Southeast Asia viewed piracy as a respectable profession supported by regional heads and sultans. *Iranun* and *Balanini* are classic examples of groups who believed that piracy was “a way of life” in the social, economic and political structures in the Sulu region. Local people hardly referred to pirates as deviants. In fact they were often regarded as heroes because the loot were distributed to members their community (Warren 2007).

A controleur named S. Roos was considered to have a significant contribution in opposing the practices. Thanks to his influence on the tattooists in the Timor residency, this practice gradually stopped. The effectiveness of Roos's approach was considered successful, as evidenced by the case of the stranding of Chinese and British ships. In July 1872, three Lahloo ships with valuable cargo from China departed for London. However, at night, the ships were stranded on Nusa Mau towards East Sumba. The crew who were stranded were given food and shelter by local residents and were also allowed to leave the next day. The sympathy shown by people in Sumba had never happened (*Straits Times Overland Journal*, June 14, 1873, 4). The following piratical were a series of attacks carried out by three ethnic pirates, namely the *Balanini* and *Ilanun* from Sulu, the Bugis and Makassar, and Ende.

Balanini and Lanun/Ilanun Pirates

It turned out that the operating target of the Sulu pirates (in this case the *Balanini*) were not limited to local people, but also Europeans. This fact is described in detail by Owen Rutter in *The Pirates Wind* (1986), piracy attacks on British merchant ships illustrate how sophisticated the method of attacking ships was carried out by *Balanini* pirates.

On May 19, 1843, the British whaler, The Sarah and Elizabeth (Captain Bellinghurst), anchored in a bay near Kupang. There were two boats containing 14 men, who were assigned to look for wood and clean water. They only had axes and there were no firearms. While they were cutting wood, five large *Balanini* boats and a number of smaller boats followed them emerging from the entrance to the bay. *Balanini* pirates immediately sent several people to host Europeans hostage and ask for ransom. The *Balanini* usually let their hostages live and take advantage of them. In contrast, the *Illanuns* often executed their captives. When landing, the *Balanini* encountered John Adams, who tried to defend himself with his ax, but was finally subdued. Subsequent victims were Ebenezer Edwards and Thomas Gale while other sailors fled to the forest (Rutter 1986, 45-47).

In this period, pirate captives consisted of two types, the first being the native inhabitants of the region and the second was being the subjects of civilized countries, both European and Asian. Most local people were taken captive and sold as slaves or forced to work in their settlements on land. While on board, a group of prisoners were distributed to each pirate. Anyone who appeared weak or seriously injured and no longer able to pull the oars was immediately thrown into the sea while the rest were tied in pairs using *rattan* and beaten with a piece of *bamboo* on the elbows, knees and muscles of the arms and legs so that they could not swim or run away. The sail usually lasted for months. Prisoners were forced to work day and night. The pirates put pepper in the eyes of their prisoners or wounded their bodies with knives and sprinkled pepper into their wounds to keep them awake. Prisoners were usually taken to one of the slave markets, such as in the Sulu Islands, Marudu or Achin (Aceh). If these slaves were sold on the open market, of course, the fate of their lives depended on the master.

Based on the case of the Sarah and Elisabeth ship piracy, the courage of Sulu pirates to attack European ships was part of an organized action, the motive of which was purely financial. Negotiations regarding the amount of ransom were usually part of the business deal that involved complicated bargaining. In some cases, they went on to release hostages even though the amount requested was not fully paid. Hostages held were not injured because they were used as the main bargaining chips in the negotiation, apart from the ship and its valuable cargo which can potentially be converted into cash in the case of the negotiation failed.

Ende Pirates

Slave trade that occurred in the Timor residency was related to the activities of Ende pirates. Ende is a small village located southwest of Flores. In 1839, the population of Ende was estimated 3,000 to 4,000. They were descendants of Bugis traders and pirates. Ende had become hotbed of slaves, with the perpetrators once punished by the Dutch East Indies Government. The Ende tribe chief had promised to stop slave trade after being warned by the Dutch East Indies government. However, the abundant benefits of this activity were unable to resist the flow of the slave trade (*Straits Times Overland Journal*, July 22, 1876, 2).

The Ende people were a seafaring community that established trade relations with neighbouring countries, especially Singapore. Some of their boats also docked in southern Flores and Cendana Island (Sumba). They bought slaves from local kings (native *rajahs*). These slaves were then taken to a depot located on a small island in Ende Bay. The merchants went there and bought as many as 30 or 40 slaves at a time. The slaves were then transported to Sumbawa and Lombok, where they were sold.

In 1876, the profit earned for each slave was 40 dollars. Upon returning from Sumbawa and Flores, they brought rice and silver dollars. After the sale was completed, these slave traders returned to the island of Sumba and made a contract with a slave agent to supply slaves for the following season. Sometimes they sailed to Kupang to sell rice. Being enterprising, Ende merchants plied their slave trade secretly, even pretending to be angry when the Dutch accused them of conducting an illicit business (*Straits Times Overland Journal*, July 22, 1876, 2).

However, the Dutch did not remain silent after seeing the reality of slavery in Timor. In June 1878, the Dutch deployed the HNM steamboat *Semarang*, with Captain De Wys sailing with the Timor Resident to Ende bay on Flores, to investigate kidnappings in Manggarai and some rural areas in Flores. The culprits were the Ende pirates, who took slaves and merchants hostage on their ships. These slaves were often killed by pirates for health reasons or trying to escape (*Straits Times Overland Journal*, October 31, 1878, 3).

Bugis-Makassar Pirates

Bugis and Makassar traders also dominated the slave trade in Timor. Politically, the involvement of Makassar and Bugis pirates in Timorese waters could be seen as an attempt to resist the policies of the colonial government, which monopolized their traditional shipping and trade routes. The paths controlled by the colonial government were remnants of the territory of the archipelago that they once ruled. Thus, it was necessary to understand that slave hunting by Bugis and Makassar traders was probably part of the pattern of adaptation because they were marginalized by the Dutch colonial presence.

In addition, Dutch regulations that imposed various taxes on traders who stopped at Kupang port also strengthened friction between local communities and the Netherlands. As mentioned by Kruseman in Parimatha, these traders had to pay various levies, including tax on animal slaughter, head tax, berth tax, sailing permit tax (*passen gelden*), and most importantly passes for ships or boats conducting trading in areas under Dutch influence (ARA 1824, in Parimatha 2002, 176).

In 1848, the Bugis boats were said to ship around 500 to 1,000 slaves each year. About 100 slaves were purchased in the same period by residents on Serwatty Island. The slaves were mostly prisoners who lost wars or people who were accused of criminal acts, while the remaining were kidnapped children. Bugis boats transported slaves to Sulawesi, Borneo, even Siam. The price of a slave in Dili was around 10 dollars. Children were also valued at the same price as adults (*Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, October 26, 1848, 4).

Reflection of Slavery Contestation

Why slaves were contested? Pre-feudal society is identical to the type of community that is still communal, has a strong community in developing the village, a system of mutual cooperation that is maintained. This culture of togetherness made the patterns of labor bonds less developed. Only when a military group took power over a community, they proclaimed themselves as the ruling elite who claim authority over groups that are considered to have authority over the security of a region. These rulers then demanded loyalty from their people to involve in the system and power they cultivated. They complete it with a strong bureaucracy and solid security. If it is based on the Marsian view, the situation was rife with economic interests. For example, the structure of feudalism in Java that solid and used to secure economic assets. The system was controlled by the king.

With the bureaucracy, they sought to ensure that the process of asset mobilization could run well, like the village head who was in charge of tax collection. When society develops into an industrial society, it starts from capitalism which determines capital. The capital owners must mobilize the workforce to drive production. So, simply using primordial bonds was no longer possible. Especially in the industrial period, the idea of the *kaula-gusti* has declined. Hence, in

Europe the labor-relationship relationship that developed was no longer built on primordial values, cultural ties, but had begun to shift to a rational economic view.

Conclusion

The rise of capitalism was marked by demand for cheap labor in the 19th century. Slavery was initially considered a reasonable and legal social system and was not viewed negatively, and even seen as prestigious in Timorese society. The demands of capitalism developed and market demand of labors were increased. The “adventurers” take advantage of the loopholes to do something which despite having traditional legality bases but has other interests, namely human commercialization.

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