

In examining the power structure of Java and Gresik, we will first deal with the separation of the political from the ideological realms. During Majapahit times Gresik was a province of this hinterland kingdom. Exactly how the port was governed, and by whom, is not known with certainty. It may be, as Hall suggests, that authority to collect taxes was in the hands of several agents who themselves were traders and ship-owners, rather than under control of a single *pati*. We do know that one such agent of the monarch was Njai Ageng Pinatih, a Chinese<sup>1</sup> woman originally from Kambodja<sup>2</sup> (San fu ch'i or Palembang) and a large and wealthy ship owner. It may be that she was in fact the only agent of the monarch in Gresik, though it should be mentioned that a certain Raja Pandita (Priest-King) was given permission to establish himself in Gresik also.<sup>3</sup> His name was Raden Aliutama and he was from Tjempa (Champa).<sup>4</sup> The function of such royal agents was to collect harbour dues, customs duties and taxes on goods entering the market place of the port.

This situation is altered with the coming to age of Raden Paku, the foster child of Pinatih. Paku hitherto has been a student of Islam at Ngampel/Surabaya and at Melaka. He has returned home to Gresik and, after practising *tapa* and praying on the mountains overlooking Gresik, he decides to

1. See the argument regarding the identity of this lady in Tan Yeok Seong, "The Chinese Element in the Islamization of South East Asia", Proceedings, South Sea Society Journal, 1963.

2. BIG, pp9-10.

3. BIG, pp7-8.

4. Ibid.

found a holy centre on the mountain. The babad of Gresik gives a clear account of the emergence of the holy centre on the hills overlooking the port of Gresik. However, the babad describes this event in terms suggestive of Weber's charismatic form of society emerging. Moertono and the Weberians could reap a rich harvest from the babad. According to the babad, Paku achieves unity with God in his meditation and asceticism<sup>5</sup>; this experience eventually leads to his acquisition of Power and he finds himself with a number of followers.<sup>6</sup> They then set to work building a *kedaton*, a seat of government and residence of the ruler.<sup>7</sup> This is done without the permission of the King. Attacks on Paku by agents of the King wither in the face of Paku's charismatic authority.<sup>8</sup> Paku takes the title of *Sunan* whose meaning is "King" (but see the discussion of its meaning above). We are presented with a picture that seems to contradict the idea of a separation of functions. Paku is a holy man who takes on the role of political leader. Do we not have, then, what Moertono refers to as the collapsing into each other of the political and the religious?

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the *kedaton* was not the usual one to be found in Java. The babad says that one half of it was used for sleeping and the other half for prayer.<sup>9</sup> This *kedaton* functioned like a Mosque. To be sure, Mosques were in fact meant to be seats of government,

5. BIG, p29.

6. BIG, pp37-38.

7. BIG, pp38-39.

8. BIG, p40.

9. BIG, p38.

according to Islam, for as Schacht and others have pointed out there was no distinction between politics and religion, church and state, nor is Islamic law separate from religious duties.<sup>10</sup> The babad refers to the shifting of the Mosque to Girigadjah (ie Giri) where it is now.<sup>11</sup> Yet there is no previous reference to the Mosque other than the above mentioned place of sleep and prayer, the *kedaton*. It would seem that, in Gresik, the Mosque was in fact also the seat of government. This is supported by the fact that just outside the *kedaton* (which space is now occupied by a simply constructed Mosque of plain features), there is a kind of *sitinggil* which Indonesian curators have called a *majelis sidang* which is a parliament house (speaking chamber), modest though it is in size and quite open to the elements except for a shady tree which affords some shelter from the sun.

We have already discussed the meaning of the title "Sunan", which though an ancient term for "King", does have an Islamic and Arabic connotation of "man of judgement" or "man of the path (*sunna*), pointing to the religious aspect of his role. The babad also frequently mentions the term *prabhu* which means "monarch" or "King" as well. The title is bestowed by his religious instructor in Melaka after taking more advanced studies.<sup>12</sup>

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10. J. Schacht, "Islamic Religious Law", p392, and A. Lampton, "Islamic Political Thought", p404, both contained in J. Schacht and C. Bosworth, *The Legacy of Islam*, O.U.P., 2nd ed, 1979.

11. BIG, p50.

12. BIG, p32.

The evidence, then, for the *non*-separation of the religious and the political is considerable, and it would be easy to leave the matter there. However, there are equally significant facts which point in a different direction.

If we take a wider perspective and look at the role played by the other *Sunans*, it is clear that they are playing a completely separate role, one that is a religious, judicial and legitimizing role, alongside that of the secular authority. In Demak, the first Islamic state in Java, the sultan governs in his own right and he is not a religious figure except that he is righteously Islamic. The *Sunan* of this district is Sunan Kudus who resides in the Mosque at Kudus<sup>13</sup>, a holy city near Demak. They do not consider each other as rivals to the same throne, and they do not fight each other; the sultan of Demak could raise an army of 30,000 men in 1516, according to Pires<sup>14</sup>, whereas Kudus is not mentioned by him as a military power. If *Sunan* means "King" then they would have tried to remove the other, but in fact they are allies. It is the same for Sunan Murya situated on the mountain of Murya overlooking Japara. There is no suggestion that he is a rival to the local ruler of that port. The symbolism of the *Sunan* residing on the mountain overlooking the port wherein resides the secular authority suggests that the term should be understood as "guardian of the path of Mohammad", that is, someone who is

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13. "Kudus", from the Arabic term for Jerusalem, "Al Quds".

14. Pires, *op.cit.*, p185.

not directly involved in political or economic affairs but who sees to it that the state and its ruler act in accordance with Islamic law (though one should add that they maintained an active involvement in the spread of Islam by *jihad* (holy war). The situation in Gresik is clear enough since we have established that Giri allowed other Islamic states such as Demak, Madura, Padjang and Surabaya to appoint a Shahbandar and under-Shahbandar to the two parts of Gresik, while Giri itself was considered *perdikan* (i.e. free of taxes). Pires mentions the name of a Pati Cucuf as being the ruler of the port<sup>15</sup>, while we know from the babad that the *Sunan* was established on the mountain overlooking the port. There seems to be a clear enough distinction between the Sunans on the one hand and the monarchy and shahbandar on the other.

More significantly, we have the spectacle of Sunan Giri, along with the other *Sunans*, appointing Raden Patah to the position of Sultan of Demak. The Babad Demak describes the ceremony thus: "Many people were already sitting in the *sitinggil*. All the *walis*<sup>16</sup> were asked to sit, then Sunan Bonang started to speak: 'All of you who are here please listen to me. The Adipati of Demak is now officially a King. I appoint him as King in Java, by the name of Sultan Senapati Jimbun...He is very strong and powerful.' All the *walis* rejoiced in the decision...They all went away and the King returned to the inner palace."<sup>17</sup> This Sultan is being

15. Pires, *ibid.*, p193.

16. The saints or holymen of Islam, i.e., the *Sunans*.

17. Babad Demak, *op.cit.*, pp18-19.

appointed as the first Islamic ruler of Java, with the intention that he should have authority for the whole country, Gresik and Japara included.

There is also the case of the *walis* or *Sunans* joining together to help the Sultan of Demak with the building of the great Mosque of Demak.<sup>18</sup> This does not speak of the *Sunans* as rival Kings; there was a clear separation of functions.

The evidence provided by the first Portuguese arriving at Gresik, Pires, has it that one of the two rulers of the twin city of Gresik, Pati Zeinal, was of the opinion that: "...if Albuquerque made peace with Demak, the rest of Java would be forced to follow suit because Demak stood for the whole of Java."<sup>19</sup> This implies that Gresik was under the protection of the sultanate of Demak, rather than being a rival. Seen in the light of the evidence above, it would seem that the relationship between Gresik and Demak was both a close and cooperative one, each performing a different role.

When the Dutch arrived in east Java they often spoke of the "Pope" at Giri and saying that he was the "kingmaker" for Java and Maluku.<sup>20</sup> According to the 19th century Dutch historian of Gresik, this ruler of Giri was always

18. BTdj, p30. Also BTJ, p113.

19. Pires, op.cit., p195.

20. J.P. Coen, *Bescheiden Omtrent Zijn Bedrijf in Indie*, 's-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1919, vol. 1, p120. Van Hoeverell, W.R.: *Reis Over Java, Madura en Bali, in Het Midden van 1847*, Amsterdam, 1849, vol.1, pp162-3. See also Schrieke, pt. 2, p239.

approached by the all the other Javanese Kings "in a manner as the slave used to approach their masters."<sup>21</sup> They also make mention of, and try to suppress, the sending of tribute to "Raja Bukit" (King of the Hill, i.e. Giri, which is Javanese for "mountain") from the spice islands in the east.<sup>22</sup> It is the term "kingmaker" which is most appropriate because it is precisely that function, the conferring of legitimacy upon prospective Kings, which they carried out and which reveals their special and unique role in the Javanese polity. We have already noted his role in the elevation of Raden Patah to the position of Sultan of Demak. We can also mention his legitimation of the Sultan of Padjang<sup>23</sup>, the ruler of Mataram<sup>24</sup> and Sultan Zainoe'labedien of Ternate.<sup>25</sup> The title "Raja Bukit" is an expression of the enthusiasm of the people of the spice islands for the person responsible for teaching them Islam and bringing them vital foodstuffs in exchange for their spices - Banda for example had no foodstuffs itself because it had a monoculture of nutmeg. It does not imply kingship over the islands of Banda and Maluku.

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21. Wiselius, J.A.B. : "Historisch Onderzoek naar de Geestelijke en Wereldlijke Suprematie van Grissee op Midden en Oost Java Gedurende de 16e en 17e Eeuw" in Tijdschrift voor Indisch Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 's-Hage, M. Nijhoff, 1876, vol. XXIII, pp488-9.

22. Coolhaas, W.Ph.: Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-Generaal en Raden aan Heren xvii der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, 's-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, vol.1, p360.

23. BIG, p51.

24. BIG, pp51-2. Here is to be found a description of the ceremony in which Panembahan Senapati Ngalaga of Mataram is made "Mankurat of the land of Java" by Panembahan Kawisguwa who has had to surrender the title of Sunan and accept the more modest title of Panembahan.

25. Van Hoeffel, op.cit., pp162-3.

The separation of function can be seen clearly in the realm of the judiciary. There is no mention of the Gresik legal system in the local chronicle, nor in any other source. Raffles' study of Islamic justice is however noteworthy. He describes the structure of power generally in Java as a case of the union of judicial, executive and administrative authority in the person of the King. However, in the Islamic period, the law officer (*jaksa*) has lost power to the Muslim *panghulu*<sup>26</sup> due to the fact that Islam maintains the unity of religion and law, law in fact being the direct expression of religious duty. There were two types of court in Java in Islamic times.<sup>27</sup> Firstly, the court of the *panghulu* which is always located in the *serambi* (portico) of the Mosque. The *panghulu* presides over the procedure. The court of the *panghulu* deals with capital offences, divorce, contracts, inheritance and appeals against the *jaksa*. Though the *panghulu* presides and passes judgement, the sentence is determined by the sovereign. The court of the *jaksa* on the other hand is presided over by the *jaksa* who acts rather like a public prosecutor and deals with theft and minor offences. Being a crown law officer, his court suffered from interference by the crown. This legal dualism is reflected in the two types of law extant: the *hukum allah*<sup>28</sup> which are based on the *shariah*<sup>29</sup>; the other legal system was *yudha*

26. *Panghulu* = religious leader or teacher. Raffles, op.cit., vol.1, p269.

27. Raffles, op.cit., vol.1, pp277-279.

28. Judgements of Allah.

29. Islamic religious law. Raffles describes the *hukum allah* as being based on the "commands of God", but this is too narrow since Muslim legal systems involved the elaboration and extension of this basis by analogous reasoning and the other well-known elaborations.



*nagara*<sup>30</sup> which reflected the customs of the community and the proclamations of the King. The *Sunans* of Java must have had a strong influence on the work of legal compilation called "Surya Alam", a legal code for the Sultans of Demak and Padjang, as it is a mixture of both systems.<sup>31</sup>

Ideology becomes separate and autonomous when it ceases to be a mere vehicle for other non-ideological institutions and powers, and develops a set of principles and rules for their elaboration which transcend the world of politics and economics. To be separate and self-maintaining it needs to be institutionalized in an institution like a Mosque. Above all, it must have independence from the monarch and from the wealthy. Its legal system must be applicable to the monarch himself such that there exists the rule of law. These conditions are manifested in part during this period of Java's history, under the political rule of the sultans and the religious influence of the *Sunans*. This separation of power into the political and the ideological lasted until the rise of Mataram, a pseudo-Islamic state, and was finally destroyed with the attack on Giri by the armies of Mataram and the Dutch in 1680 when the *Sunan* and his offspring were executed.

In the western world we have a case where the powers or functions are laid out before us like a skeleton, but in some other societies we have to separate these functions

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30. "Yudha" is old Javanese for "war, administration, law"; *negara* means "country, nation".

31. Raffles, *op.cit.*, vol.1, p279.

analytically because they are not separate in reality, but are conjoined or fused with one or both of the other functions. In the case before us, it is here argued that the north Javanese ports in general, including Gresik, had already set out on this road. There is always the question of intent, however. Whether the adoption of the role of kingmaker, with its assumption of the right to defend Islamic law by imposing it upon all, including the monarch, was the initial intention of the *Sunans*, or whether it was a *space* left to them after failing in the realm of worldly power. It would seem that a reasonable case can be made for the former since the role of kingmaker implies a considerable degree of power in the first place. If the *Sunans* can appoint anyone as King, then they can surely appoint themselves, yet they do not. On the other hand, as de Graaf and Pigeaud seem to be arguing, the *Sunan* of Giri was taking the path to power in a worldly sense but was forced to retreat when confronted by secular powers such as Demak, Padjang and later Surabaya and finally Mataram. He argues that the *Sunans* of Giri succeeded in gaining control over the port of Gresik during the reign of Sunan Dalem, the second *Sunan* of Giri. Whatever the case, whether intentional or not, the *Sunans* adopted the role of kingmaker.

In western societies the separate and autonomous realm of ideology is manifested in the institutions of the independent judicial system, the constitution, protected and upheld by the highest courts, the legal system which is supreme over the powerful and the weak alike, and the

universities which have their institutionalized autonomy. All of these institutions have at their core the ideological principles of natural law philosophy. In the case of Gresik, we have the separate judicial system in the *panghulu's* courts, we have a notional constitution derived from the Koran and Islamic law (a legal system which develops according to its own logic, i.e. *kiyas* or analogy<sup>32</sup> and *ijima* or public agreement, based on the *Koran* and on *hadith* or the tradition of the practices of Mohammed), and the practice of the *Sunan* taking on the role as kingmaker which implies the supremacy of Islamic law over the monarch, and lastly a centre of learning (religious, but also involving language and grammatical studies, canon law and sources of law<sup>33</sup>). It is this supremacy of the Islamic kingmaker over the King which was unique in the archipelago. Moertono argues that the rise of the *Sunans* represented a collapsing in of the religious and the political into a kind of *devaraja* cult. But in fact it was the Hindhu kingdoms that still represented that tradition. Although the Hindhu priests were separate from the monarchy, and had in fact their own judges separate from the judges of the monarch, their religious ideology was such that it was a vehicle for the political realm, it was an ideology which surrendered power to and justified the monarch who was seen as unqualifiably divine. It was a subordinate function of the political realm, whereas in the Islamic world of the north coast of Java, the realm of ideology asserted its independent power by *fiat*.

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32. Schacht, op.cit., pp396-397.

33. BIG, p21.

The study of the legal history of Java by Hooker presents the view that Islamic law was accepted in Java as law "only to the extent that indigenous *adat* (custom) was prepared to accommodate it"<sup>34</sup>. Is it the case though that *adat* ruled in the port cities, cities which contained many foreigners and people long removed from the confines and habits of the *desa* (village)? This is unlikely. It is only in the countryside, or in pseudo-Islamic kingdoms centred in the countryside, that one can see this argument's validity. In any case much of so-called Islamic law is merely Arabic *adat* and there is no reason why Javanese should adopt it in preference to their own *adat*. What is important is the manner of appointment of the King, the ultimate origins of political legitimacy, and the effect that this has on the character of legislation emanating from the monarch. Hooker admits that Islamic law expressed itself in this way: "...in the royal courts it was a theory of royal power originating in a permanent set of 'transcendent values' which served as a fixed basis for judging man-made law. In this sphere it was a standard for law but certainly not a set of prescriptions."<sup>35</sup> These transcendent values do not simply justify the position of the King giving him *carte blanche* to make any legislation he wishes, but qualify the power of the monarch and determine the character of his legislation. Hooker does not discuss the role of the *Sunans* in kingmaking and too easily dismisses the different character of the

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34. M.B. Hooker, *Islamic Law in South-East Asia*, O.U.P., Singapore, 1984, p28.

35. Hooker, *ibid.*, p29.

Islamic and Hindhu legal and political systems in Java, especially during the period of the *Sunans* in the north coastal states. It is not the function of the Mosque to make legislation but simply to watch over legislation emanating from the monarch to see that the basic laws of Islam are observed, that the welfare of the people is protected by the monarch, including the poor, that the people not suffer tyranny at the hands of the King because all people are equal in the eyes of both God and the law, that the society is open to strangers (including merchants) who shall receive protection in the law, and that contracts between individuals be just. It is this non-specific philosophical background which acts like a leavening agent that is the effect of the Mosque and of Islam generally. Hindhuism did not forbid the oppression of the people, nor did it protect and comfort the poor, nor limit the power of the King and subject it to scrutiny from a position of universal values, nor accept foreigners easily into their midst as equals, nor attempt to adjudicate contractual disputes between individuals on the basis of justice, but rather resolved them on the basis of advantage to the King or simply ignored them.

It is worth quoting the document known after its author, Surya Alam<sup>36</sup> and translated by Raffles. On the question of the supremacy of law over the monarchy the document states clearly: "These regulations were also firmly established, and were put into practice without any respect of persons,

36. Cf. Raffles: *Suria Alem*. Raffles vol.2, Appendix C.

not excepting the relations and kindred of Sang Prabu (the King) himself; so that if the left hand offended, satisfaction was demanded by the right, and vice versa, for such is the law of God... his sole object was the establishment of true justice, founded on divine principles."<sup>37</sup> On the subject of equality before the law, the Surya Alam was also adamant: "Those who are thus like unto water, let them be ever so humble and poor, shall not fail to be successful in any cause in which they may be engaged. The lowly, who are thus successful, shall have as much cause to rejoice as the rich (prabu), who are the reverse, shall have to be depressed."<sup>38</sup>

On the subject of the autonomy of the courts, Hooker argues, on the basis of Raffles study, that the court of the *penghulu* was "subject to considerable interference by the local ruler"<sup>39</sup> Actually Raffles argues that both the courts of the *penghulu* and that of the *jaksa* were subject to interference by the King, but that it was the *jaksa* court which was least independent and suffered most interference and he describes its function as being comparable to that of public prosecutor.<sup>40</sup> The court of the *penghulu* had more independence, doubtlessly because of its dependence on a separate sphere of religion with its own principles, because of its location within the Mosque itself and because the judge's appointment is not subject to the whim of the

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37. Raffles: op.cit., vol.2, pXXXIII.

38. Raffles: op.cit., vol.2, pXLIV.

39. Hooker, ibid., p29.

40. Raffles: op.cit., vol.1, p279.

monarch but is governed by rules internal to that religious institution itself. Furthermore, Raffles' study supports the view that the court of the *panghulu* was supreme; his comment, cited above, that this court dealt with "appeals against the *jaksa*", has the implication that the court of the *panghulu* acted as the court of final appeal, the high court of the country.

Having examined the relationship between the political and the ideological, we need to look at the question of the independence of the economy, the degree to which it has separated itself from political domination. This is a question which has not been adequately examined by historians. One cannot simply assume that the economy exists, only that there are economic functions being carried out. Weberians, both in the field of sociology and history, have not adequately explained the emergence of the economy in their studies. They simply apply Weber's method of analysis to the economy or the state. Weber has written extensively on the economy but it is not integrated into the theory of social forms that he presents; it is eclectic. The same can be said for Durkheim despite the fact that he premises the degree of integration of the state on the division of labour. We must start with the premise that a society may or may not have an autonomous economy. Then we should determine whether and to what degree it is independent.<sup>41</sup>

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41. The other question as to the separateness of the ideological from the economic will be left aside here though there may in fact be some moral interference in the economy,

Failure to develop a theory of the separation of the economy from the political has led to the amusing spectacle of western historians of Java tracing the gradual integration of the state down to the most highly integrated state of all, that of Mataram, only to find that it led not to a western style social system, but to the crushing to death of the commercialized states on the north coast, with their relatively free merchant classes and open economies. It would seem obvious that commerce, not to say capitalism, would have had a better survival rate in a highly integrated state centred on the commercialized north coast of Java, rather than one centred on rice cultivation in the hinterland. It is Demak which should be studied more closely to determine what Java's development prospects were like prior to the arrival of the Dutch.

The most obvious sign of an independent economy is the existence of a free merchant class. Pires description of Gresik during his visit to Java in 1516 is one in which Gresik is singled out as the port of the *orang kaya* (meaning "rich men"; it does not mean "public official" though in some places in the archipelago the merchants also held office.). To Pires, Gresik is "...the great trading port, the best in all Java...this is the jewel of Java in trading

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as for example in the Mosque's collection of alms for the poor and the provision of shelter in the Mosque for the homeless. But this is interference from outside the economy; it does not represent that fusion of the ideological and the economic which can be seen in certain monastic social systems.



ports. This is the royal port... It is called the merchant's port; among the Javanese it is called the rich people's port."<sup>42</sup> He is saying here that not only is there a rich merchant class in Gresik, but that this port is in the hands of the merchants. Otherwise we would have to interpret "the merchant's port" as meaning only that many merchants lived there. But the first interpretation seems to be more accurate: at the least, it would appear to be the case that there were a number of rich merchants who shared political power with someone other than a merchant. At most, the rich merchants had the running of the country in their hands.

When we consider that the port of Cherimon (Cerebon) is said, by Pires, to contain five or six rich merchants plus two *Patis* or lords (the local ruler and a refugee from Melaka, both of whom were almost certainly merchants themselves)<sup>43</sup>, and that Cherimon was a small affair compared to Gresik ("...the great trading port, the best in all Java...") then we must be able to conclude that there were many more rich merchants in Gresik than the seven at Cherimon. By "rich", Pires meant as rich as the *Pati* of Cherimon, so it is considerable; we would expect them to live in splendid surroundings, to have a store of wealth, to own at least one junk and to have a retinue of followers and servants.

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42. Pires, op.cit., pp192-3. "/antigamente soyam navegar esta hee a gema da Jaoa no porto da mercadoria Este he o porto Reall homde as naos estam amarradas seguras Dos ventos com os garoupezes em cima das casas/ porto de mercatores se chama chamase antre os Jaos o porto da Jemte Riq\*/" contained in the Portuguese text of op.cit., p432.

43. Pires, ibid., p183.

The power that the *orang kaya* would be interested in is the power to conduct their economic activities without fear of the ruler confiscating their wealth, imposing punitive taxes and duties, nor claiming priority rights to goods entering the market. To this end they need a ruler who is limited in power, one who is amenable. Aceh had its virgin Queen during the reign of the *orang kaya*. What we have in Gresik is a *wali* (saint or holy man) or *Sunan* (he who is held aloft because he is a man of the path of the prophet). He is not a typical Javanese ruler. Contrary to de Graaf and Pigeaud's argument that he was endeavouring to set himself up as typical Javanese ruler with all the trappings of pleasure garden and water-palace<sup>44</sup>, inspection from on foot reveals a modest kedaton (used for prayer and sleeping) of very small size (the area upon which it is built, the hill top, is only c.800m<sup>2</sup>), surrounded by bath-tubs made of brick so that the congregation could carry out their obligatory ablutions before entering the kedaton/Mosque to pray, and occupied by a man who once spent forty days and nights without food, meditating in a cave<sup>45</sup> inside the corpse of a rotting buffalo. There is a style of life which should be termed *Islamic drab* or *spartan*, and here we have an instance of it. The *Sunans* and their appointees, the sultans of Demak, are all buried in unmarked graves. (The housing placed around the grave of Sunan Giri was built much later by Sunan Giri's grandson, Sunan Prapen<sup>46</sup>.) This contrasts sharply with the

44. de Graaf and Pigeaud, op.cit., pp176-177.

45. Cf. BIG, pp37-8, with Mac., pp12-13.

46. BIG, p50.

usual Hindhu Javanese grave of a ruler which is in the form of a temple. The signs of confiscated accumulations of wealth are definitely absent. If there was wealth to be found in Gresik it would be in the large houses, largely belonging to the Chinese, mentioned by Valentyn.<sup>47</sup>

The *orang kaya* were most probably the people who were consulted by the *Sunan* in the *palenggahan* which is found just in front of the *kedaton*. It is of a size which would comfortably hold only a small number of dignitaries, perhaps up to a dozen people. The large coronation ceremonies conducted by the *Sunans* for the different Javanese Kings who sought the blessing of the *Sunan* must have been held in the *kedaton* itself or in a *pendhopo* (pavilion) in the port area, because there was no room for a *pendhopo* on top of the hill of the *kedaton*.

The policies of the *Sunan* towards the traders was liberal and the tolls and market duties were moderate. Schrieke argues that the policy in Java was fairly uniform over the period of the 13th to 17th centuries; quoting an early Chinese report on Java, it appears that "Traders are treated generously; they are not charged expenses for either harbourage or board".<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, van Noort's travel account gives us the following impression of Surabaya in the early 17th century (Gresik was under the rule of Surabaya at this time): "...the King of Surabaya allowed the Portuguese

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47. F. Valentyn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, vol.4, p47.

48. quote in Schrieke, pt.1, pp26-7.

as well as other nations their freedom...because they bring great profit and prosperity in his country; nevertheless he did not take any toll or tribute from any foreigner."<sup>49</sup> The Dutch were permitted to establish a factory at Gresik free of any tolls or surcharges and were given a piece of land for this purpose.<sup>50</sup> These data confirm our picture of a relatively free economic system attracting trade and merchants to itself because of the security and freedom permitted in Gresik.

The behaviour of the market itself is an indication of the degree of autonomy of the economy. There is some negative data which can be dismissed easily. The price of rice, the main export commodity of Gresik, was so high between 1615 and 1624 that the Dutch decided to close down their agency there: "Rice in Japara half cheaper than in Macassar and Gresik and we will evacuate this factory."<sup>51</sup> Coen also comments on the price of rice in Gresik (1st Jan., 1614) saying that rice in Gresik was three times the price than it was in Japara (15 reals per load compared to 40 to 50 in Gresik).<sup>52</sup> But this is due to the fact that the armies of Mataram had been conducting a long campaign against Gresik and Surabaya, directed particularly against their rice-

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49. quoted in Schrieke, pt.1, p27.

50. Schrieke, pt1, p27. See also F.W. Stapel (ed.), *Beschryvinge van der Ooste Indische Companie*, 2e boek, deel 1, p313: "...one paid no tolls or taxes...the prince was given a gift of about 60-70 rix dollars..."

51. W.Ph. Coolhas, *Generale Missiven van Gouverneurs-General en Raden aan Heren XVII der Verenidge Oostindische Compagnie*, 's-Grav., M. Nijhoff, deel 1, p47. The date is 26th Oct., 1615.

52. Coen, *op.cit.*, p7.

fields. Whereas in Japara rice was pouring in from the rice plains of Mataram because it was the new policy of Mataram to throttle the other ports and direct all rice through one port, Japara.<sup>53</sup> Coen's comments of the 14th Jan., 1614 explain the price phenomenon with the following: "Learned and found that 14 days ago the Mattaram had taken Crissi (Gresik) and Jortan, razed the walls and burned the villages..."<sup>54</sup> The Daghregister explains the price of rice in Gresik with this statement: "Apparently a poor harvest at Gresik because of heavy rains, and that Mataram had sent 30,000 men out...to crush under foot the paddy..."<sup>55</sup> Naturally the market in other commodities, such as livestock, was also affected, even as early as 1611: "We should have liked to take more livestock and other necessities from Gresik, but the country has been so devastated by the (ruler of) Mataram's war...that it was astounding."<sup>56</sup> It should be pointed out that Mataram conducted three destructive campaigns against the territories of the north coastal ports including Gresik, beginning in 1597<sup>57</sup>, through the attack on Gresik on 31st Aug., 1613<sup>58</sup> and ending with the fatal attack on Gresik and Surabaya in 1623-5.<sup>59</sup> Data from this period regarding rice

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53. Schrieke, pt.1, p75.

54. Coen, op.cit., p23.

55. J.E. Heeres (ed.), *Daghregister Gehonden int Casteel Batavia, 's Grave.*, M. Nijhoff, 1896, p47.

56. Cited in Schrieke, op.cit., p145.

57. *De Eerste Schipvaart der Nederlanders naar Oost-Indie Onder Coernelius de Houtman, 1595-1597, 's Grav.*, M. Nijhoff, 1936, p323.

58. Schrieke, pt.2, p146.

59. Schrieke, pt.1, p60.

and other commodity price movements reflect the war and not the economic policies of the ruler of Giri.

We must let the fact that Gresik was such a lively and bustling port with many traders from foreign countries, speak for itself. This port had no special privileges regarding the rice trade and therefore had to compete with the other ports of the north coast of Java. It therefore must have had a competitive market in order to have been so successful. No doubt the Portuguese and the Dutch were being economically rational when they established their agencies in Gresik.

This ends our discussion of the historiography of the structure of society in Java and Gresik. Gresik society appears as one in which specific functions latent in society began to manifest themselves in response to developing world trade opportunities. A religio-legal system with its own autonomy had emerged and had begun to assert its power over the former arbitrary authority of the Kings; an economy dominated by free merchants and which was largely self-regulating had separated itself out from the "state" of former times; the new political forms were to take shape outside Gresik, in Demak and the kingdoms which succeeded it, as Gresik sought to integrate itself into a transformed Java. Though there were flaws and limitations, Gresik's merchants were free men with wealth and some political power, and no King of Java could feel secure until he had been given a seal of approval from the man who lived on the

mountain of Giri. Other historians have written of the rice-plain kingdom of the interior and of the river-mouth port on the coast, but the power and influence of the religio-legal centre on the mountain has not yet been fully appreciated.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



In the previous chapter the relative autonomy of Gresik's economy was demonstrated. This chapter seeks to identify the main features of Gresik's economic life, identifying its strengths and weaknesses, as well as identifying some of the habits and institutions of the port and its merchant community.

*Population.* The population of Gresik is interesting not only as a measure of the size and relative importance of the port but also as a measure of one of the components of the internal market, that of rice imports for domestic consumption from the immediate hinterland.

The babad account gives the date of 1293 A.J. (1371 A.D.) as the date of the founding of the port by new arrivals from the land of Gedhah who came to teach Islam and to trade.<sup>1</sup>

The first report we have regarding Gresik's population is that of an imperial Chinese record. This is the record of Ma Huan who travelled with Admiral Cheng Ho on his seventh voyage to Java in 1431-1433. He reports: "There are something more than a thousand families (here)."<sup>2</sup> He does not tell us whether he is including the poorer sections of the town, but if we assume that he has included them, then on the assumption of 3 persons per family, we have a

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1. BIG, p2.

2. Ma Huan, "The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores," in J.V.G. Mills (ed.), W.H.S., extra series, 42, p90, C.U.P. for Hakluyt Society, 1970.

population of 3,000 people.<sup>3</sup> Many commentators, however, describe Gresik's population as wealthy<sup>4</sup>, so it may be wiser to assume that they contained larger families of about 5. We should be able to conclude then that Gresik's population in 1433 was 3,000-5,000 persons.

The next report we have is that of Pires who passed by Gresik in 1516. He states that: "The land of Grisee contains six or seven thousand men."<sup>5</sup> Pires was on an intelligence gathering mission, searching for weak points and possible allies in the land of Java. These "men" were, therefore, those capable of defending the port against a Portuguese attack. They were, therefore, adult males. We can assume then that they represent, approximately, the number of households. This would produce a population of between 18,000 and 35,000 in 1514.

Urdaneta visited Gresik in 1523 and he estimated the population to be 30,000.<sup>6</sup> This is questioned by Meilink-Roelofs who preferred the estimate of Van Noort who counted 1,000 houses in 1601, thus producing a population figure of only 4,500 people.<sup>7</sup> But Van Noort actually says that:

3. Raffles gives us statistics for calculating family size in Bantam for the much later period of 1815. Based on these figures the average size of the family is 3.1. See T.S. Raffles, *The History of Java*, O.U.P., Oxford, 1978, vol 2, p244.

4. Ma Huan, op.cit., p90; T. Pires, *Summa Oriental*, W.H.S., 2nd series, London, 1944, vol.XC, pp192-3.

5. Pires, Tome: *Summa Oriental*, 2 vols., Works of the Hakluyt Society, 2nd series, vol. LXXXIC, London, 1944, p194.

6. Cited in M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, *Asian Trade and European Influence*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1962, p270.

7. *ibid.*, p270.

"Jortan had a thousand houses all of timber."<sup>8</sup> This indicates that he is ignoring the houses of that part of the lowest economic strata who lived in more simple dwellings made of the bamboo and dried palm leaves, material of which the babad of Gresik speaks.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore he is excluding the houses of the Chinese who lived in brick dwellings.<sup>10</sup> He also indicates that he is excluding Giri, the holy centre about 4 kilometres south-west of Gresik.<sup>11</sup> The evidence of Urdaneta and Pires, being mutually supporting should be accepted as the most reliable estimate: Gresik's population was about 30,000 in the period 1516-1523.

What of the population of the holy centre of Giri which overlooks the port? The babad relates that at the time of Raden Paku's descent from the mountain of Batang after a period of self-mortification and meditation, in the year 1480 A.D., there was at least one village nearby and Paku asked the villagers to help him clear the pool or spring there to make it suitable as an ablution pond.<sup>12</sup> This was the start of the holy centre of Giri. This event of 1480 therefore becomes the founding year of Giri. The Kadaton was finally completed in 1485.<sup>13</sup>

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8. Oliver Noort's account in Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Postumas or Purchas His Pilgrims*, W.H.S., extra series, Glasgow, 1905-07, vol.2, p204.

9. BIG, pp23, 25.

10. Raffles, *op.cit.*, vol.1, p81. Housing material is discussed by Raffles on pp79-81. He states that though the masses generally used bamboo for building material, in east Java timber was often used.

11. Noort, *loc.cit.* "The chief Priest resides in a place without the Citie of Jortan..."

12. BIG, p37.

13. BIG, p38.

The population of Giri rose along with its fame as a holy centre. The babad relates that in 1486 "...there were many people studying under him (Sunan Giri), learning the rules of religion, they had also moved there, the place had already become a kadaton, soon there were 10,000 people, men and women, young and old, who were all enchanted by and drawn into the religion of their guru..."<sup>14</sup> This figure may appear as something plucked out of the air, but it is given credence by Valentyn's statement that there were approximately 2,000 households in Giri (1724).<sup>15</sup> This implies a population of 6-10,000. Given the fact that the *pasantrin*<sup>16</sup> attracted pupils from afar, one would expect them, therefore, to have resided in nearby homes. This would push up the average household size to 5, thus the figure of 10,000 should not be considered too far from the truth.

Probably we should not add the Giri figure to that for Gresik, but rather consider the latter to include the former, because Pires' estimate was of able-bodied men capable of being quickly gathered to defend the port. Giri was only about 4 kilometres distant and therefore we can assume that he took them into account, although it should be noted that he makes no mention of the holy centre.

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14. BIG, pp38-39.

15. F. Valentyn, Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien, Dordrecht-Amsterdam, 1724-1726, vol.4, p47.

16. A place of instruction in Islam and in the reading of the Koran.

If we compare the population of Gresik with that of ports in Europe at this time (c. 1500-1525), it becomes apparent that we are dealing with a port that has a standing similar to those European ports which were not royal centres, and to some that were. Gresik was about two thirds the size of London, Antwerp and Ghent in the north, or Lisbon, Valencia and Rome in the south.<sup>17</sup> If we take the figure for Giri to be in addition to the figure for Gresik, then we have ports of roughly equivalent size.

*Trade and Commodities.* Turning to the question of trade, the data indicates that it is not only an import and export trade, but that it was involved in a very substantial re-export trade as well. Let us first look at the rice trade since this is in part a result of the size of Gresik's population.

Included in the category of rice trade must be the import of rice from the hinterland for Gresik's own consumption. Given a population of 30,000 and an average rice consumption of 36 lbs. per month<sup>18</sup>, then imports for local consumption would have been about 12,960,000 lbs. per year or 5,785 tons.

Apart from the import of rice for Gresik's own consumption, rice was also exported through Gresik to other places. This export trade was part of a network of inter-dependence

17. R. Mols, "Population in Europe, 1500-1700", in Carlo M. Cipolla, *The Fontana Economic History of Europe*, Fontana, Great Britain, 1974, vol.2, pp42-43.

18. J.C. van Leur, *Indonesian Trade and Society*, W. van Hoeve, The Hague, 1955, p128.

between areas within the archipelago. Rice was exported to the spice-growing areas of Maluku and Banda, but also to certain ports which had large populations and poor agricultural hinterlands, such as Melaka, possibly Aceh, and in the early Dutch period, to Batavia.

We can get some idea of the volume of rice exports from Java as a whole to the spice islands of Maluku and Banda from the population of these islands. Van Leur estimates the population of Banda in 1621 to have been 15,000, while the population of Ambon and Maluku he estimates to be 150,000.<sup>19</sup> He calculates the rice imports of these islands on the basis of their food production and consumption habits, taking into account variant consumption for different social levels. This is clearly a rough estimate but nevertheless a useful indicator. He estimates that on Banda, two thirds of the population would have consumed about 12 lbs. of rice per month (this being one third of a full ration). This results in an annual consumption level of 1,440,000 lbs., which must be imported. In Ambon and Maluku where there were more local foodstuffs and where there were more slaves etc who relied on sago, consumption is figured at 10,800,000 lbs.. The two figures combined give a total of 12,240,000 lbs. or 8,100 ship's tons, being 5,500 tons and only slightly less than Gresik's own consumption. Van Leur estimates the number of ships required to carry this amount of rice to be 130-140 junks capable of holding, on average, 60 ship's tons (a ship's ton being 1500 lbs. or 2/3 of a ton). These figures

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19. Van Leur, *ibid.*, p128.

are at variance with those of Pires who estimated the population of Banda to be a mere 3000 and who estimated the shipping from Gresik (Junks only, i.e. excluding praus) to be 3 to 4 per year.<sup>20</sup> We must follow the later Dutch figures since they are first hand reports (upon which Van Leur has based his estimates); Pires never actually saw the eastern spice islands. Of course not all of these goods came from Gresik. Melaka and Demak were also involved. It will be shown below that Gresik had 60 ships plying the route to Banda and Maluku. This would mean that Gresik carried about 40 to 45% of this cargo.

The trade with Melaka in rice was also voluminous. Van Leur's figures for 1617 were 120 Javanese junks.<sup>21</sup> If they carried the same amount as those for the eastern islands then Java exported to Melaka 7,200 ship's tons.

At this point it is useful to digress from the subject of the rice trade to look at the location of the rice-fields themselves. Where exactly Gresik's rice was grown cannot be determined with certainty. Pires' account shows that goods were coming through Surabaya and being exported through Gresik. Doubtless other minor ports around the Madura sea were also using Gresik as their outlet, at least as far east as the border with Pasuruan. As the rice that passed through Surabaya was coming from up the Brantas river it must

20. Pires, op.cit., pp206-8, 213-214. Pires' figures are also disputed by J. Villiers, "Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century", *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 15, 1981, p726.

21. Van Leur, op.cit., p128.

therefore have been coming from Majapahit in early times. Confirmation of this is found in various Javanese chronicles, including the babad of Gresik, which refer to Gresik as the port of Majapahit. Much of the rice put through Gresik must therefore have been rice from areas outside Gresik's own territory, mainly from Majapahit itself. What of the area around Gresik?

It cannot be assumed that all areas within Java were populated at this time. This is apparent from the account of the founding of Mataram at the end of the 16th century where the Babad Tanah Jawi states that it was unpopulated when Ki Pamanahan founded it, despite the fact that it has always been the most fertile area in Java and was the centre for the first Mataram kingdom. However the babad of Gresik mentions several place-names in the area of Gresik which must have relied on rice production for their means of subsistence. These areas are those of Lamongan, about 25 kilometres west of Gresik, Babat located a further 25 kilometres west, Gumena situated near the Solo river about 15 kilometres north-west of Gresik, and the nearby town of Leran which is about 7.5 kilometres north-west of Gresik (although this latter place was clearly a port until the coastline moved 2-3 kilometres out). Polaman (later known as Sutji) is also mentioned in the local babad and is situated on the other side of the limestone hills of Gresik, 6 kilometres distant.



It is noteworthy that the coastline has experienced considerable change since the beginning of the 15th century. Formerly the areas to the north and south of Gresik were under sea-water, and one could say that Gresik was located on a peninsula of limestone hills which jutted out into the straits of Madura. Now the coastline has moved at least 2-3 kilometres eastward while the deep water is still another 2-3 kilometres again. When the coastline did move east, it was only possible to use it as fish-ponds and salt-pans since it is so low and wet. When Captain William Thorn arrived in Gresik during the British occupation he travelled along the road from north to south through Manjar and Leran to Gresik and he described the land after Manjar as rising on the west side and "well cultivated".<sup>22</sup> We can assume therefore that the immediate hinterland of Gresik was producing rice for the Gresik market. On the negative side we may note the restrictions to rice-cultivation of the wet-lands to the north and south, the Gresik limestone hills themselves, and the relatively low rainfall (by Javanese standards) of north-east Java generally. Nevertheless, despite these restrictions, Coen reported that it took 30,000 Mataram troops trampling the rice crops of Gresik to make an impression.<sup>23</sup> We can conclude that significant amounts of rice put through the market at Gresik were from local areas although we cannot ascertain the amount relative to that from Majapahit.

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22. W. Thorn, *Memoires of the Conquest of Java*, 1815, p300.

23. See reference in previous chapter.

Gresik imported as much as 60 ship-loads of spices, that is, cloves from Maluku and nutmeg and mace from Banda.<sup>24</sup> Since the trade was an island hopping one, with the ships stopping to buy and sell at each island, it is not clear whether other commodities were brought back as well as spices. Pires' figures for the spice production and trade of his time are as follows:<sup>25</sup>

<u>COMMODITY</u>	<u>WEIGHT (BAHAR)<sup>26</sup></u>	<u>SOURCE</u>
CLOVES	1400	TIDORE
	1200	MOTIR
	1500	MAKYAN
	0150	TERNATE
	<u>0500</u>	BACHIAN
	<u>4750</u>	
MACE	0550	BANDA
NUTMEG	<u>6500</u>	BANDA
	<u>7050</u>	
TOTAL SPICES	11800 [2000 TONS].	

24. J. Keuning: op.cit., vol.111, p42, n11.

25. Pires, op.cit., pp206-8, 212-9.

26. Weights in the archipelago are as follows: 1 bahar = 375 lbs. or 170 kgms.; 1 kwintal = 220 lbs. or 100 kgms.; 1 pikul = 137 lbs. or 62 kgms. These are modern measurements, and as Van Leur (op.cit., p445) has shown, the sixteenth century equivalents varied widely with the bahar measuring between 360 and 600 lbs. As a rough humanistic guide, however, a pikul is the weight a man can carry on a pikul (pole).

It would appear from the difference in tonnages of rice exported to that of spices sent out that the ships would have had space for other cargoes on the return voyage. About the *pati* of Gresik and the *chetti* merchant of Melaka, Pires says that both of them have "made a large sum of gold in this trade" adding that : "There were other merchants as well, both Javanese and Malay."<sup>27</sup> Gresik's trade must have improved over the sixteenth century because it increased its control over the spice trade<sup>28</sup> and because the price of nutmeg, mace and cloves rose due to the increased demand, a result of the Portuguese entry.<sup>29</sup> The price of cloves and mace just prior to the Dutch attempt to take control of the spice trade in 1603-8 was about 60 *reals* per bahar and fluctuated wildly for a few years thereafter as a result of the conflict in Banda.<sup>30</sup> No production or export figures comparable to those of Pires are available from the Dutch period.

Much of Gresik's trade was in pepper even though this commodity was not grown in central and east Java. The main areas of pepper production in the Malay world were Sumatra, much of which was exported through the port of Jambi<sup>31</sup>, some islands in the Melaka Straits, especially Pulau Lada about whose methods of cultivation we know so much due to the

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27. Pires, *op.cit.*, pp213-4.

28. See below.

29. J. Villiers, *op.cit.*, p739.

30. Meilink-Roelofs, *op.cit.*, p275-276.

31. "...most of the pepper which up to now has been in Malacca, Jhoor, Pattane and Grissy (Gresik), has come from Jambi...", from Coen, J.P.: *Bescheiden Omtrent Zijn Bedrijf in Indie*, 's-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1919, vol.1, p204.

visitation by a French merchant and ambassador to Aceh<sup>32</sup>, and near Banten in west Java. Gresik's purpose in buying pepper was not merely for its own consumption, nor even for its sale to the hinterland kingdom of Majapahit, but for re-sale to Chinese merchants. This is due to the inter-mingling of two factors: regional specialization and wind-patterns in the archipelago. Chinese traders sail to Java from China with the north-east monsoon, their object being to market their high priced luxuries in the richest areas of Java, these areas being the court of Majapahit and the wealthier ports. However, they are not greatly interested in the purchase of Gresik's rice nor spices from the eastern archipelago.<sup>33</sup> The bulk cargo they are seeking is pepper, to which is added an assortment of curiosities and delicacies sold through Gresik. The merchants of Gresik therefore are obliged to have pepper ready for the merchants from China when they arrive because it is too time consuming to unload their goods at Gresik and then wait for a seasonal change to sail to Sumatra, then to repeat this by waiting for a further seasonal wind shift to sail back to China. Gresik therefore became a pepper port. According to Coen, the pepper of Gresik was sold at the reasonable price of 4 realen per pikul and was "of the best quality"<sup>34</sup>. He also

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32. "The Expedition of Admiral Beaulieu To The East Indies" in J. Harris (ed.): *Navigantium Atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca*, or a complete collection of voyages and travels. London, 1705, vol.1, p738ff.

33. Villiers, *op.cit.*, p737.

34. Coen, *ibid.*, vol. 2, p90.

was of the opinion that much of the pepper of Sumatra was purchased by the merchants of China.<sup>35</sup>

From the above it can be seen that pepper constituted the bulk of the cargo to China. In the non-bulk category, trade between Java and China was conditioned in part by mutual perceptions regarding each others relative status. These perceptions governed the articles that did enter into exchange, and in fact worked to produce an on-going trade in specific commodities. Before the Islamic period, the Javanese elite of *priyayi* (aristocracy) and *orang kaya* looked up to China as a country of high status, even though they had for centuries been under the cultural influence of India. This change in outlook probably took place at the time of the Cheng Ho voyages when China projected its power into the Southeast Asian realm in the early 15th century. Evidence for it can be seen in the legendary stories of the marriage of Kings of Java with *putri cina* (Chinese princesses). Imports from China were therefore of fine commodities of high status value such as silk and silk goods, especially the gold-flecked type, porcelain, especially the blue patterned variety, varnished umbrellas,

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35. Coen, *ibid.*, vol.1, p178: "The Quamers, a people situated between Jamby and the mountains or the Manicabers regularly produce a good harvest of pepper but it has mostly been bought by both the Portuguese and the Javanese who carry same to Bantam, Japara, Grissi and Jortan and sell to the Chinese there so that if there had been money there, it would all have been sold to us at a civil price." Also p204: "...most of the pepper...has come from Jamby, likewise also that the Chinese moreover have taken a good quantity to China."

musk and beads.<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately we cannot obtain data on the volume and value of this silk and porcelain trade in the sixteenth century. For the early nineteenth century, Raffles gives the figure of 8 to 10 junks per year coming to Java, each junk being of 300 to 800 tons.<sup>37</sup> But this latter period is a time when the orang kaya class had been reduced by the Dutch and Mataram's policy of monopoly. In Raffles' time tea was an object of trade, but its earliest history has not been determined in relation to Java. In exchange for these items, the Chinese purchased, apart from pepper which is discussed above, many objects of diverse nature, which could be summed up as objects of curiosity and delicacies. These range from tropical bird-feathers, wax, honey and wood-dyes to bulkier commodities like sandal-wood re-exported from Timor and trepang (beche-de-mer) from the eastern islands.<sup>38</sup>

Indian cloth played a major part in the international trade network of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Indeed one can determine the relative distribution of political power in the archipelago simply by observing which country or port had control of the sale of cloth in Banda and Maluku. But first let us look at the trade itself.

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36. Ma Huan, "The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores", J.V.G. Mills (ed.), C.U.P. for The Hakluyt Society, 1970, W.H.S., extra series, vol. 42, p97. See also Raffles, The History of Java, vol. 1, p205.

37. Raffles, op.cit. vol.1, p205.

38. See J. Crawfurd, History of the Indian Archipelago, vol.1, Edinburgh, 1820, pp150-151. Also Villiers, op.cit. p737.

The Portuguese were the first to describe the cloth trade in Java and Gresik. Pires reports: "Many cloths of all kinds are disposed of in Grisee, and in large quantities. They are sold to most of Java and to many other islands."<sup>39</sup> He adds that it was the Malays and Javanese from Melaka who first stopped at Java to sell Indian cloth and it was usually of the best quality.<sup>40</sup> According to Barbosa, the Javanese at Melaka bought cloths of Paleacate, Mailapur and Cambaya, that is, from the Coromandel coast of India and from the north-west Indian port of Cambaya. They also purchased opium, rosewater, vermilion, a lot of grain for dyeing, raw silk, salt-petre, iron and drugs (cacho and pucho).<sup>41</sup> The Portuguese seizure of Melaka in 1511 and the ensuing counter-attacks by Gresik and the other Javanese ports in the following years certainly would have disrupted this cloth trade. However Gresik soon accommodated itself to this new force in the archipelago and after the Portuguese-Gresik treaty of 1532, trade resumed without interruption,<sup>42</sup> despite further attacks from other Javanese ports. Thereafter it was the Portuguese who brought the Indian cloth to Gresik.

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39. Pires, *op.cit.*, p194.

40. Pires, *op.cit.*, p206-7.

41. Barbosa: *The Book of Duarte Barbosa, an Account of the Countries Bordering on the Indian Ocean*, vol. XLIV, XLIX, pp174-5. The mention of salt-petre imports to Java indicate that the deposits at Suci (Polaman), a few kilometres from Gresik, had not yet been developed.

42. B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, part I: *The Shifts in Political and Economic Power in the Indonesian Archipelago in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, The Hague-Bandung, 1955, 2nd ed., p36.

What exactly was the agreement reached between these two powers? At the beginning of the Portuguese period, Pires states that the Portuguese were trading directly with the spice islands of Banda and Maluku, and had in fact opened up a new route there, namely one across the northern side of the Java Sea. He claims, furthermore, that they had for the first time brought cloth and other wares directly from Melaka, whereas the Javanese, sailing along the southern edge of the Java Sea in an island hopping fashion, always bought and sold as they passed from one island to another, thus arriving in Banda without the high quality goods of Melaka. They off-loaded the cheaper, low quality cloth of Sumbawa onto the Bandanese. Presumably the Bandanese were able to afford the Indian cloth because it was made cheaper by the fact that it was carried directly from Melaka. Pires' argument foreshadows that of Steensgaard. We cannot confirm or deny Pires' claims here. Returning to the question above, it is interesting that when the first Dutchmen arrived they both described Jortan and Gresik as the *staple* of the spices from Banda and Maluku and said that it was here that "...the Portuguese also trade; they carry their trade with cotton cloth and other cloth which the Javanese and other islanders use."<sup>43</sup> This is reinforced by Coen a decade later: "The Portuguese bring there every year a large supply of clothes which they sell, like we do, for about one cent deposit, taking cloves in return as well as nutmeg and mace which

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43. J. Keuning, *Der Tweede Schipvaart...onder J. van Neck en W. Waerwijck, 1598-1600*, vol. IV, p54.



Javanese junks bring there from Amboina and Banda."<sup>44</sup> Thus Gresik (and its near neighbour Jortan) had become the staple port for eastern spices and the Portuguese ceased to make the voyage to the eastern islands and chose instead to purchase their spices from Gresik. Some also found it profitable to conduct their own commenda trade out of Gresik, advancing money to Javanese merchants.<sup>45</sup> Summarising this movement, the century began with a sharing of the eastern island trade between Gresik and old Melaka; then the Portuguese replaced the Malays in Melaka but continued to share, unwillingly, this trade with Gresik; finally, between the signing of the Portuguese-Gresik treaty of 1532 and the arrival of the second Dutch fleet in 1599 the Portuguese were carrying out their spice trade through Gresik. It follows then that over the sixteenth century, Gresik had strengthened its hold over the eastern islands. Melaka had finally been displaced, and this when it was under the control of a European power.

A great variety of sundry items passed through the port of Gresik. Foodstuffs were commonly reported by both the Portuguese and the Dutch a century later as being on sale in the Gresik market. Barbosa says: "In these ships the Jaos bring hither great store of rice, beef, sheep, swine, deer, 'salt meat', fowls, garlic and onions..."<sup>46</sup> In 1624, the

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44. Coen, J.P.: *Bescheiden Omtrent Zijn Bedrijf in Indie*, 's-Gravenhage, 6 vols., M. Nijhoff, 1919, vol. I, p74.

45. M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, *Asian Trade and European Influence*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1962, p151.

46. Barbosa, *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, WHS, London, 2nd ed., 1918, 1921, vol. XLIV, XLIX, p174.

Dutch purchased 36 cows and 11 horses as well as 1000 bos of rice; a further 21 cows were bought later in that same year.<sup>47</sup> The following year a Dutch ship is mentioned arriving in Batavia loaded with cows, buffaloes and horses, coming from Gresik.<sup>48</sup> Coen mentions the purchase of 800 horned cattle which they exported to Amboina, Banda and Jacatra from Gresik, indicating how large was this trade in beef.<sup>49</sup> Valentyn speaks of salt being exported from Gresik.<sup>50</sup> In 1611 it is reported that the Company from a very early stage often sailed to Gresik to fetch beans as well as rice.<sup>51</sup> During a visit to Gresik by Sultan Padjang (in 1568), the latter ordered fish-ponds (*tambak*) to be constructed on a large scale, presumably for sale to the people of the kingdom of Padjang.<sup>52</sup> Research on the Indonesian-Australian connection is still in progress and has yet to be pushed back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However it is known that the Bugis fished for *trepang* or *beche-de-mer* in Australian waters in the nineteenth century and that it probably goes further back than that. Australia was then known as *Mareje*<sup>53</sup> in Buginese or *Lam-hai* in Chinese. What is interesting here is that

47. Heeres, J.E. (ed.): *Daghregister Gehonden int Casteel Batavia, 's Grave.*, M. Nijhoff, 1896, p47-48.

48. *Daghregister*, op.cit., p255-6. And this is going on while the Dutch are trying to blockade Gresik!

49. Coen, J.P.: *Bescheiden Omtrent Zijn Bedrijf in Indie, 's-Gravenhage*, 6 vols., M. Nijhoff, 1919, vol.1, p561.

50. Valentyn, F.: *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, vol.4, Dordrecht-Amsterdam, 1724-1726, p47. See also Schreike, op.cit., vol.1, p246 where he mentions salt being sent to Sumatra to exchange for pepper.

51. *Realia. Register op de Generale Resolutien van het Kasteel Batavia, 1632-1805*, vol. 1, Leiden, 1882, p449.

52. Raffles, T.S.: *The History of Java*, 2 vols., O.U.P., Oxford, 1978, vol.2, p142-143.

53. "Mareje" is Buginese for "Trepang fishery".

Macassar did not really emerge as a major port until Gresik went into a steep decline after 1625. The merchants of Gresik fled, many moving their base of operations to Macassar<sup>54</sup>, thus leading to the rise of that port. It is possible that prior to the rise of Macassar, the trepang was put through Gresik, especially considering the fact that it is destined for the China market - Gresik was always a destination point for the Chinese. Trepang constituted a "considerable part"<sup>55</sup> of the exports of the archipelago to China.

Timber and plank are mentioned by the Dutch as an item in Gresik's export trade, along with other building materials such as rattan.<sup>56</sup> Trade in sappanwood, sandalwood and dyewoods are mentioned in relation to the trade with Timor and the other smaller islands in the east.<sup>57</sup>

Gresik also exported metal goods such as weapons (kris, swords, daggers, axes, hatchets and brass cannon) and metal bells or gongs.<sup>58</sup> Other metals were also exported such as gold, silver, copper, quicksilver, tin and lead.<sup>59</sup> The Chinese scribe who accompanied Cheng Ho on his voyage to

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54. Schrieke, op.cit., pp69-70.

55. J. Crawford, op.cit., vol.1, p441.

56. Dagregister, op.cit., p27, 47, 48. On 21st April 1624 the Dutch bought 341 beams and 2900 bos rattan. On 1st May they purchased 114 beams and 130 planks. For rattan see also BIG, pp23-25.

57. Dagregister, op.cit., p287.

58. Barbosa, op.cit., pp174, 196, 202-203.

59. Barbosa, op.cit., pp174, 197, 202-203.

Java states that: "All kind of precious stones... are sold in great quantity."<sup>60</sup>

There is also mention of some trade in slaves between Java and Macassar, in the account by Pires.<sup>61</sup> However, we do not know whether Gresik itself was involved in this trade.

Barbosa informs us that in Banda there is a strong demand for "certain hairy caps from the Levant" which the Javanese were happy to supply.<sup>62</sup> These caps were probably the traditional cap (furry rather than hairy) known as the "petji" which Javanese muslims wear. Almost certainly this trade with Banda was from Gresik because the latter had such a close relationship with Banda, especially after Portuguese Melaka was displaced at the end of the 16th century.

*Institutions.* In discussions about the type of trading institutions employed in the archipelago it is the "modernity" of them which is the centre of interest. This "modernity" is conceived in the same terms as that of "state-formation", that is, in terms of their degree of specialization and integration. Van Leur and Meilink-Roelofs are examples of this approach. They look for integration and specialization of the trading organization which is seen as involving the reduction of the independence of the many minor economic actors to a position of salaried dependence on the principal investor. These minor figures

60. Ma Huan, op.cit., p90.

61. Pires, op.cit., p226.

62. Barbosa, op.cit., p197.

are the multitude of small pedlar-merchants travelling in the company of their own kind, though without being financially integrated with these others, on board a ship in which each has hired some cargo space or compartment.

The source of capital for the trading venture, in the pre-modern system, is the principal investor (prince/orang kaya) and the multitude of minor investors (pedlars who advance some of their own funds and/or borrow from the principal investor) who come together in a joint venture, though each with his separate capital and compartment. The rules of the game are that the small investor is the active partner who trades (in part) on behalf of the principal investor who performs the passive role of financier. If the venture results in a loss due to poor judgement of the market by the active agent, then he loses his commission, thus making up for the losses of the principal investor. If the loss is great then he and his wife and children become debt-slaves of the principal investor. If the loss is due to an act of nature (loss of the vessel etc.) then there is no blame.

This organization of trade could be described as "mechanical", to use the Durkheimian term, since it lacks integration and is held together with threats of punishment in the form of slavery. The "organically" integrated form of trading organization is one where the capital is pooled and the investors, large and small, are members of a single company under a single professional management, and which continues to exist beyond the life of a single trading

venture. This gives various advantages of size and of decision-making, as well as spreading the risk. The provision of "protection" services, defending the shipping lanes, is also meant to separate out and become a specialized function of the State in the form of the navy.

It is noteworthy that the Dutch United East Indies Company, which eventually superseded the archipelagan traders, was more "modern", that is, more specialized and integrated, in two respects only, the pooling of capital and integration of leadership on the one hand and integration of the employees (servants) on the other. In all other respects it was a backward organization, more backward than that of the merchant communities of Southeast Asia. This can be seen in the fact that it was not separate from the Dutch state, thus combining economic and political functions in the one organization. It also combined the military or "protective" functions with the economic. Steensgaard has argued that it was more efficient than the Asian system because it cut costs by integrating the protection function into the economic function by providing the merchant ships with their own cannon.<sup>63</sup> This made the protective function cheaper by replacing the traditional payment of dues to various princes (protectors) by the merchants. But this argument surrenders some terrain to those who dispute the "modernity" of the Dutch organizations of the time: the Dutch system of organization was more integrated but less free, and led

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63. Steensgaard, N.: *Carracks, Caravans, and Companies: The Structural Crisis in the European-Asian Trade in the Early 17th Century*, Copenhagen, 1972.

eventually to the destruction of the free market of the Southeast Asian world, and its replacement by a state monopoly, the V.O.C.. That its integration of capital, management and labour was a step forward cannot be denied, but its integration of the political and military functions into a business organization is a step in the opposite direction. The merchants of the archipelago were familiar with this socio-economic form and had defeated it in the past by voting with their feet, leaving the ports governed by tyrants and taking their trade to freer ports. The V.O.C., however, had ships with guns on board and were able to patrol widely over the seas of the archipelago. It represented a dangerous mixture of the backward and the modern and soon led to the destruction of the trading civilization of the *pasisir*. This development therefore parallels those discussed in the previous chapter about the destruction of progressive tendencies in the political and economic realm that occurred in Java.

What of the trading organizations of the north coast of Java and, in particular, Gresik? It is well known that political rulers use the instrument of the family to expand their power and influence by appointing offspring and other junior members of the family to outlying regions; polygamy is a development of this practice to increase the number of offspring and therefore to expand the potential area under the control of the monarch. It would be reasonable to expect that, in a similar culture, the merchants would employ the same instrument as the monarch to overcome the problem of

maintaining control over long distances. The family, it is thought, is a source of fidelity because of the mutual benefit inherent in it and because of the fact of inheritance. This fidelity facilitates long distance transactions of a on-going kind: the sons can be sent off to become resident factors at the distant ports of trade, buying goods at times when the price is right rather than having to buy them when they have just arrived in port with all their competitors. The goods are ready for re-shipment to the home port or some third port, thus speeding up the turn-around time. Furthermore, the need for money can be reduced as paper accounting methods can be safely employed since there is a natural basis of trust. The family business organization may be considered "pre-modern" by organization theorists but it is still the most common form of business organization in the western world at present; the polygamous form of it would represent an added advantage allowing for a wider distribution system.

The evidence we have for family trading organization in Gresik requires interpretation since it is not immediately apparent. Pires gives us two pieces of data in this regard. The first is that of the story about Pate Cucuf and his family connections. According to Pires, this Pate Cucuf was the *Pate* (i.e. *Pati* or regional governor) of Gresik. More likely is it that he was a *Kapten Cina* (captain of one of the China towns at Gresik) since, as was argued in the previous chapter, there was no single *pati* for the different outer regions in the late Majapahit period, as they had been



broken up into smaller units. He was therefore one of the *orang kaya* or merchants of Gresik. Cucuf's father was called Pate Adem and he "came and settled in Malacca (presumably from Gresik); he had his houses in Malacca and traded in merchandise. In Malacca he married a Malayan woman, by whom he had Pate Cucuf, and the said Pate Cucuf lived in Malacca for a long time. On the death of his grandfather (name unknown), Pate Adem went to Grisee (Gresik) to take possession of his land."<sup>64</sup> Pate Cucuf was eventually summoned by his father in Gresik and upon the death of his father, Cucuf took up residence there.<sup>65</sup> Pires further adds that: "This man used to have the trade with the Moluccas and Banda as long as he had junks."<sup>66</sup>

We know that Gresik traded with Maluku/Banda and with Melaka. From Pires' description of the Cucuf-Adem family, it would seem that this trade was carried out by using family connections (at least between Gresik and Melaka) and that this was firmly institutionalized over three generations. As regards the Gresik-Banda connection we do not know if the connection was familial but descriptions by Pires of the relationship would be compatible with such a view: "...and as soon as the junk (from Java) reached Banda they use to take command of the country, and bought as they wished as long as they stayed there; and when the people of Banda had good cloth in their hands it was a great novelty to them, and they used to fix a price for the people of the country,

64. Pires, op.cit., p193.

65. Pires, op.cit., p193.

66. Pires, op.cit., p193.

and the captains of the junk were adored by the people."<sup>67</sup> The command that Gresik exerted over Banda is not necessarily a sign of familial connection but the adoration for the Javanese captain may be a result of benevolent paternalism on the part of the captain. This statement by Pires is in some contrast to the picture conveyed by Villiers of the rule of Banda by an aristocracy of *orang kaya* who had established a non-monarchical system of government.<sup>68</sup> Pires' data points rather to rule by an aristocracy of *orang kaya* who are both protected by outsiders from the predatory Kings of the north (Tidore and Ternate), and divided amongst themselves by outsiders, thus preventing an autonomous kingdom under single rulership from emerging. These outsiders were Curia Devi, a *chetti*<sup>69</sup> merchant from Melaka, who had the trade with one of the islands of Banda (the one called Banda), and Pate Cucuf of Gresik, who had the trade with the other main island of Banda (Neira).<sup>70</sup> These two merchants had a shared power arrangement between themselves; the natural rivalry between them being attenuated by the symbiotic trade between the two ports, Melaka needing Javanese rice and an outlet in Java, Gresik needing an outlet in Melaka for the western trade. Thus an aristocracy of merchants took charge of Banda, but one that could only exist because of external guarantees and

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67. Pires, op.cit., p207.

68. J. Villiers, "Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century" in *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 15, 1981.

69. A merchant of south Indian origin, though a permanent resident of Melaka.

70. Pires, *ibid.*, the data is collected from pp206-208, 213-214.

arrangements. While direct evidence of a familial connection is lacking, it would not be surprising if these Banda rulers were related by blood or marriage to these outside families, considering the cordiality with which the Javanese were received and considering the customary use of familial ties in dynastic politics.

Further evidence of the use of family connections in the realm of international trade can be found in the history of Cerebon from its own chronicle, the Tjarita Purwaka Tjaruban Nagari. This chronicle tells of a certain merchant<sup>71</sup> of Cerebon who is *kaja-raja*, very rich, and is a *djuragan perahu*, an owner of ships. His name is Ki Dampuawang and he originally came from Tjampa.<sup>72</sup> Probably he left behind relatives in Tjampa who were also involved in the same business. While in Cerebon he married the daughter of the harbour-master, Njai Lara Ruda, and out of this marriage came a daughter who was sent to Tjampa for her islamic education. The story relates, however, that Ki Dampuawang had already taken a woman to wife at Pinang Island before he

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71. Tjarita Purwaka Tjaruban Nagari, trans. by Drs. Atja into Indonesian, Seri Monografi Museum No. 5, Djakarta, 1972, vv22-26.

72. Probably Tjampa here means the well known kingdom of present day central Vietnam. However this is not certain. The problem of locating Tjampa has not yet been resolved by historians. There is some evidence in various sources which also place it in Sumatra (Jambi?). For example, the Tjarita Purwaka Tjaruban Nagari mentions (v77) persons returning to Java from Mecca, yet stopping off at Tjampa on the way. A possible solution for this problem would be to postulate two Tjampas, the original in central Vietnam, the second arising out of the progressive collapse of the first as a result of attacks from the northern Vietnamese rice-plain kingdom, such attacks creating several waves of refugees, some of whom fled to Sumatra creating a second Tjampa kingdom there.

married Njai Lara Ruda. Tracing the connections of this Dampuwang, we find that there are connections between him at Cerebon and both Pinang Island and Tjampa which involve relatives. Since he is a merchant, it is not too much to conclude that these connections involved trade and that it was therefore a tripartite trade of international dimensions based on the familial principle of business organization. It provides supporting evidence for the existence of such a business organization principle and closely parallels the one of Pati Cucuf at Gresik.

*Money.* Regarding the monetary system of the time it is unlikely that the Gresik area ever possessed a mint or mine to produce coin, since the underlying geological structure is unsuitable, because it consists of limestone. A recent survey of monetary finds in Java has failed to discover anything of significance in Gresik.<sup>73</sup> However this is probably due to the lack of research in this particular area. Gresik participated in the monetary history of Java and coinage was in use at that time. The earliest Imperial Chinese records for this area mention the existence and use of gold, copper and tin coins.<sup>74</sup> The gold coin was called "ti-na-erh" (dinar) and was probably of foreign origin as Mills claims. The copper coin was from the "Central Country" and was used universally. The tin coin was common and was called "chia-shih" (Portuguese: caixa; English: cash). Later

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73. R.S. Wicks, "Monetary Developments in Java Between the Ninth and Sixteenth Centuries: A Numismatic Perspective," in *Indonesia*, vol.42, 1987.

74. Ma Huan, *op.cit.*, pp88, 94, 120.

in the sixteenth century the Portuguese who were based at Gresik used the tin coin for their commenda trade, advancing it to the Javanese merchants of little capital.<sup>75</sup> Java provided the spice islands with currency by selling them brass cannon which were cut up for coinage.<sup>76</sup>

*Practices.* We do not have the sort of detail of the shipping and harbouring practices that we find in accounts of Melaka. However, some elements are mentioned in the local babad. We read that on board the ship taken by Raden Paku to Banjar, his first trading expedition, it was normal practice to carry a cannon and to fire it whenever entering or leaving a port.<sup>77</sup> It signals to both the harbour-master and the traders on shore that a merchant vessel has arrived and that they wish to unload their cargo; it also serves to attract a greater number of traders. The departure firing would appear to be a matter of protocol - the ships requesting permission to take leave. Polite forms such as these are common to Javanese tradition. At the same time as firing the cannon when entering harbour the ship is expected to hoist its flag, according to the babad.<sup>78</sup> This is presumably to identify its origins. The antiquity of this practice is at first sight questionable as the Javanese word for flag is "gendera" (Malay: bendera) which is of Portuguese origin. However the Malay/Indonesian languages possess both Arabic loan-words (eg. 'alam) and words of their own (eg. panji and

75. Meilink-Roelofs, op.cit., p273.

76. H. Jacobs, A Treatise on the Moluccas, Jesuit Historical Institute, Rome, 1970, p139.

77. BIG, pp22, 23, 25.

78. BIG, p23.

tunggul) which bespeak the antiquity of the flag in the archipelago. As for the cannon exercise, it would appear to be an anachronism since, at the time of Paku, although the Javanese knew of the existence of cannon, they probably did not possess them. Both the Tjarita Purwaka Tjaruban Nagari and the Sejarah Melayu express astonishment at the sight and sound of these instruments, thus indicating their novelty. This would make this part of the Gresik babad an anachronism, since Paku died before the arrival of the Portuguese and his adventure in Banjar took place in 1460 A.D.<sup>79</sup> However, the cannon was probably copied by the Javanese soon after the initial contacts with the Portuguese. Their knowledge of the existence of cannon prior to their advent to the world of the archipelago is indicated by etymology. The word "meriam" in Malay and "mariyam" in Javanese is derived from the Arabic word "Mariyam"<sup>80</sup> meaning Mary, the mother of Jesus and of Christianity.

After hearing the cannon and sighting the flag of the vessel, the shahbandar was expected to report the event to the King who would then issue a "serat pratonda"<sup>81</sup> to be given to the captain of that vessel. This "serat pratonda" is a treasury letter, a letter of permission, which a captain must have before he may unload and sell his merchandise.

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79. BIG, p42.

80. See Koran, chapt. 19: Mariyam.

81. BIG, p23.

Following these formalities, the captain mentioned in the babad, hailed the "ketji"<sup>82</sup> (a smaller boat), which, it would seem, has accompanied the larger vessel either under its own sail power or by being in tow. The purpose of this vessel is to take the cargo ashore, presumably by being run up onto the beach itself, there being no wharf at Banjar. Thus the "ketji" functions as a kind of mobile wharf which accompanies its mother-ship.<sup>83</sup>

Once the merchandise was unloaded (on the beach?) then the captain ordered a crew member to strike the "bende"<sup>84</sup>, a small copper or bronze gong used for attracting attention and to indicate the commencement of exchange. This gong, or another instrument, a bell, was sounded upon leaving the port. This would suggest that the gong or bell was the predecessor of the cannon since, in this case, they shared a common function.

The babad also indicates the existence of some sort of written accounting procedure<sup>85</sup> on board the ship which is used to determine ownership of goods, that is, it records what proportion of the cargo is owned by each individual merchant, there being many small merchants each with his own compartment in the hold, or each with a share of a cargo

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82. BIG, p23.

83. An alternative explanation of this "ketji" is that it was stationed at Banjar all the time and was hailed by the skipper of the ship, rather than accompanying it. However the babad indicates that two vessels returned to Gresik. See BIG, pp25-26.

84. BIG, p23.

85. BIG, p27.

stored in common. It was especially this individual ownership yet commonality of storage and carrying that necessitated the written account. Some small goods can be stored in the privately held compartments, but other bulkier goods may be stored in common on the deck (in this instance it was a large amount of rattan and dried palm leaves which the merchants purchased from Banjar).

In this babad of Gresik there is no mention made of a weigh-station nor mention of the payment of harbour and custom duties. Dutch records give us the following account specifically about Gresik: "One paid no tolls or taxes, except as any ship came there, the prince was given a gift of about 60-70 Rix dollars, from which everything may be loaded or unloaded without opposition."<sup>86</sup> This question has been discussed at greater length in the previous chapter.

*Shipping.* Figures for shipping from the sources vary greatly but can be interpreted in a way which removes some of the inconsistencies. Pires' account of trade with the spice islands of Banda states that 3 or 4 junks came from Gresik each year along with 8 junks from Melaka.<sup>87</sup>

Next to these figures are Van Leur's estimates for the number of ships operating from Gresik, Jaratan and Sedayu: one thousand "vessels" with a capacity of between 20 and 200

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86. F.W. Stapel (ed.): *Beschryvinge van de Ooste Indische Compagnie*, 2rd boek, dl. 1, 's Gravenhage, 1931, p313.

87. Pires, *op.cit.*, pp213-4.



tons.<sup>88</sup> According to Pires, Sedayu was a small affair with a difficult harbour and few vessels of its own.<sup>89</sup> Jaraton was part of the twin-city of Gresik. Most of these vessels were therefore from Gresik.

This figure of 1000 vessels for Gresik, Sedayu and Jaratan is rejected by Meilink-Roelofs as being unrealistic. If it is true then these vessels must have been small, about 20 tons each, she argues. But they cannot be true, in her view, because they are not compatible with her estimates of the population of Gresik which she puts at about 4500.<sup>90</sup> This population estimate however is not acceptable as shown earlier in this chapter. It was probably the population of only one *kampong* in Gresik. Released from this restriction, we may now entertain the notion of a larger number of vessels.

A definite figure for shipping can be found in the records of the Tweede Schipvaart: "Jacob van Heemskerck says that the Shahbandar of Jortan told the people sent to the land (Jortan/Gresik) that if we remained there for three months, we would receive enough spices; 60 junks with nutmeg and

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88. Van Leur, op.cit., p372 n51. See also Schrieke, vol 2, p20, quoting "Accounts of Some Wars in the Indies": "...they have a multitude of ships. In those places there can be a thousand or more boats of twenty-fifty to two hundred tons..."

89. Pires, op.cit., p192. "The town is small... It is a poor affair with few inhabitants... it has no junks or pangajavas."

90. M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, *Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1962, p270. The figure of 4500 can be deduced from her figure of 1000 houses for the city of Jortan.

cloves were expected."<sup>91</sup> If 60 Junks were required to work the Banda-Maluku route, one would expect at least the same number to be handling the Melaka route since it involved even more tonnages of cargo. This implies a minimum of 120 Junks of 60 to 90 tons each.

Many other types of vessel existed, however. The authorities of the city and harbour possessed vessels for the control of shipping in the straits of Madura, the sea of Madura and possibly out in the Java sea, giving Gresik the power to make itself the staple port for the spice trade from Banda and Maluku. Pires gives a description of some of these vessels: "Many calaluzes (swift rowing vessels) and naviotes (small craft); these used for raids; other Pates have many too; but not fit to go out of shelter of land. They are intricately carved, with serpents and gilt; ornamented; made in an elegant way; for Kings to amuse themselves in; they are rowed with paddles."<sup>92</sup> This description covers three separate functional groups of vessels: the "royal" pleasure craft; the harbour authority's vessels and the naval craft. Since Gresik was in fact the staple port for the spice trade we can assume that these oared vessels were effective enough for the job of maintaining control of the trade routes. Considering further the fact that the Java sea was rarely rough and that the winds are *sepoi-sepoi* (gentle), we should discard Pires statement that they are not fit to go out of shelter of land. They have always been effective in warfare

91. J. Keuning, op.cit., vol. III, p42 n111. The date is 1599 A.D..

92. Pires, op.cit., vol.LXXXIX, p194.

against sailing vessels because of their superior speed and manoeuvrability in *sepoi-sepoi* conditions. The trade route from Melaka to Banda was always along the southern Java sea route because it was an island hopping trade, buying and selling along the way. The ships were therefore interceptable from Gresik using these swift rowing vessels.

Amongst the remainder must have been small cargo vessels ("pangajavas", small prahus and dhows) trading with the islands of Madura and Nusa Tenggara, carrying *trepang* and sandalwood. There must also have been vessels used for the shunting of goods from Surabaya and other ports around the Madura sea coastline to Gresik for export.<sup>93</sup> Finally we have the fishing boats operating out of the harbour of Gresik and working the waters of the Madura and Java seas.

The 1000 vessels reported above by the Dutch and cited by Van Leur and Schrieke were therefore made up of Junks, vessels of the authorities ("royal" pleasure craft, harbour authority vessels and naval craft), small trading praus and fishing craft. The existence of 120 large *prahu* or Junks lends support to Pires' view of Gresik as the port of the *orang kaya*, that is, the port of a free merchant class.

In conclusion it would appear that Gresik was a port that had an autonomous economic system in the sense that the ruler had surrendered the rights to confiscatory taxes and

93. Pires (op.cit., p196.) states that "The merchandise of Surabaya goes out from Grisee...Surabaya has no junks or pangajavas."

had allowed the port to develop by giving the market freedom to determine prices. Under this system, merchants were attracted to Gresik and consequently its population grew in time to become one of the largest free ports in the archipelago. It was also a port of the free merchant class, or as Pires would have it, the "port of the rich people", in contrast to those ports which were ruled by "knights".

The trade of Gresik was far from a peddling trade or a trade based on the system of *commenda*. Family trading companies were in existence which overcame the problems of international and inter-regional exchange. These companies probably also employed the same technique of polygamy as the dynastic rulers of the period, thus overcoming the economic limitations to expansion of the nuclear family. Nevertheless the *commenda* was certainly alive and well in Gresik with ships heavily loaded with the small peddling merchants who financed their trade through loans from the wealthy and powerful. But much of Gresik's business was in the wholesale or bulk carrying trade, especially in commodities like rice, where whole cities or islands were being supplied in a regionally specialized trade network. This bulk carrying trade also included the commodities of cloves, nutmeg, mace, pepper and cloth. Cattle, other foodstuffs, sandalwood, Arabic and Chinese luxuries also constituted a wholesale trade that went beyond the peddling form.

Gresik's trade was in part a re-export trade based on the fact that Gresik had established itself as the staple for

spices from the eastern islands of Banda and Maluku. This stapling characteristic is in fact strengthened during the sixteenth century despite the challenge of the Portuguese, and Gresik finds itself in a paramount position in the eastern islands. Gresik's chief activity is however the export of rice and this export is part of a complex of regional inter-dependency of a very high degree, involving the re-export of spices, pepper and cloth, and the export of rice. Gresik was the main provider of foodstuffs for the port of Melaka and for the spice islands. While such a system makes for efficiency and growth, it also makes it vulnerable to external disruption. Such disruption appears with the Dutch takeover of the spice islands at the beginning of the seventeenth century, a takeover which threatened Gresik's most vital interests.

PART THREE: THE PERIOD OF SEDAMARGI AND PRAPEN

CHAPTER EIGHT: SUNAN SEDAMARGI: 1546-1548.

With the sudden death of Sunan Dalem in 1546 the position of Sunan was taken automatically by his eldest son, Sedamargi. His name means "died on the road" or "died on the way", a posthumous name given to him by our scribe. His original name has been forgotten. Javanese usually change their name with a change of status. If they die without accomplishment, or if their death is more memorable than their deeds, they are given a name beginning with "Seda", meaning "died", followed by a description of the manner or place of the death. In the light of our knowledge of the meaning of his name we should disregard the babad's statement that he resigned in favour of his younger brother, Prapen. The circumstances of his death support the view that he too was killed in the internecine strife that swept across the north coast of Java in the period after 1546. The civil strife took many "men of quality"<sup>1</sup> at that time. The strife is vividly described by Pinto who was present not only at the battle for Pasuruan but also at the conflagration in Demak. Given that Sedamargi "resigned" sometime after 1546, and that he "died on the road", we can safely assume that he was killed in this internecine strife. The babad's statement that he "resigned"<sup>2</sup> is simply a formula: Islamic chronicles are designed, in part, for pupils from the pesantrin and therefore

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1. Pinto, F.M.: *The Voyages and Adventures of Ferdinand Mendez Pinto*, trans. by H. Cogan, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1891, p384.

2. BIG, p49.

inflammatory violence is strictly minimized. The pupils are encouraged to be ascetic and unemotional.

There are further indications of the circumstances of his death obtainable from the site of the Kedhaton itself and from local accounts. Immediately behind the Kedhaton there is a steep cliff-face with a track carved into the side of the slope that leads around to the front of the Kedhaton hill-top. The track is about eight feet wide and is almost completely obstructed by an immaculate, miniature Mosque, brilliant white in colour. Local informants say that this is where Sunan Giri was killed. This Mosque is in fact a kind of Islamic *tjandi* (temple) with the remains of the local deity contained within it. The fact that it is the place of death of a Sunan of Giri would indicate that it contains the remains of Sunan Sedamargi because it is situated in the middle of the road or track.

As this road curves around the terraced hill-side toward the front of the Kedhaton one can see other gravestones in amongst the greenery which has overgrown the road. These gravestones also obstruct what must have been one of the pathways to the Kedhaton. Even more surprising is the grave and headstone of someone buried on the very top of the hill and situated again on the pathway that leads to the front entrance of the Kedhaton itself. Javanese do not normally bury their dead outside cemeteries, nor on roads and pathways. On the contrary, their gravesites are



often walled compounds with definite entrances. The same can be said of the gravesites of foreign merchant communities as well. It is probable, therefore, that these people are buried where they were killed.

The last piece of data comes from de Graaf and Pigeaud. Citing local stories, they report that Sunan Prapen shifted the Mosque/kedhaton to the present place of Giri near the village of Sedayu and that this event took place within a year of taking over from Sedamargi in 1548.<sup>3</sup> Our babad states that this event took place in 1590 A.D.<sup>4</sup> but this date is doubtful since it is not accompanied by a sangkala chronogram and has probably been inserted at a later date based upon imperfect memory. Wiselius' account supports the earlier date since his version of the babad states that the "palace" of Sunan Dalem was burnt down after the war with Pasuruhan.<sup>5</sup> Since that battle at Pasuruhan turned into a battle between Gresik and Demak on one side with Surabaya on the other,<sup>6</sup> it is possible that it was Surabaya which burnt the Kedhaton down. Padjang, however, had recently emerged as a factor in the power struggle and the Sunan appears to have denied recognition to this candidate and given it to the Prince

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3. De Graaf, H.J. and Pigeaud, Th.: *Kerajaan-kerajaan Islam di Jawa*, Grafitipers, Jakarta, 1985, p186.

4. BIG, p50.

5. Wiselius, J.A.B.: "Historische Onderzoek naar Geestelijke en Wereldlijke Suprematie van Grissee op Minden en Oost Java Gedurang de 16e en 17e Eeuw" in *Tijdschrift voor Indisch Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 's-Hage, M. Nijhoff, 1876, deel XXIII, p480.

6. Pinto, op.cit., pp384ff.

of Madura instead.<sup>7</sup> It is more likely to have been Surabaya, however, because the initial conflagration was between it and the Demak-Gresik alliance.

These three lots of data create a grim picture of the events at the Kedhaton at that time and point to the conclusion that the Kedhaton was attacked between 1546 and 1548, that Sunan Sedamargi and his followers defended it but that they were overcome by Surabaya and the Kedhaton was destroyed. Sunan Prapen, not wishing to rebuild the Mosque amongst the ashes and corpses, decided to move it to Giri. The explanation offered by de Graaf and Pigeaud that the move was to build a centre that was more fitting with Gresik's growing power and glory,<sup>8</sup> does not seem appropriate, though one must admit that the trade of the port itself was still healthy and strong and that the new site offered more scope for expansion.

We may conclude, then, that Sunan Sedamargi was killed by Surabaya in a power struggle between Surabaya, Gresik and Demak, with a fourth contender, Padjang, emerging from the interior, as the strongest contender.

With the deaths of the two Sunans in 1546, it is appropriate to look at Gresik from a wider perspective in

7. Both the lords of Padjang and Madura claimed to be the legitimate heir to Demak on the grounds that they had married a daughter from that line. Gresik gave recognition to Madura until 1570 A.D. (Wiselius, op.cit., p487) when he changed his view and finally gave recognition to Mas Karebat of Padjang, making him Sultan.

8. De Graaf and Pigeaud, op.cit..

order to see how the parameters of power in Java set upper limits on Gresik's role in Javanese history. To be sure, it is still too early to speak of a decline in Gresik's power in Java. However, a certain attenuation is discernible.

Three factors stand out as determinants of Gresik's position in Java: the geo-political, the ethnic and the religious. The first factor, the geo-political, was ultimately fatal for any attempt by Gresik to take the leading political role in Java. Gresik was a dry-land area relatively speaking. Its capacity to attract the bulk of the Javanese peasant population, after the destruction of Majapahit, was severely limited because their means of production, rice agriculture, was not possible in any large-scale sense in the hinterland of Gresik's territory. Whoever can capture and attract the bulk of this Javanese peasant population has the power in Java; but to do this requires an adequate supply of suitable land upon which these people can put themselves to work.

Assuming that power in Java must reside in Java proper, that is to say, East and Central Java, rather than Sunda (West Java)<sup>9</sup>, then we must accept that there are only four contenders for the leading position: the three major Islamic commercial states of Surabaya, Gresik and Demak,

9. Sunda is separated from Java by an ancient tribal and linguistic division which still influenced preferences at this time.

and an agrarian based hinterland kingdom centred on the Padjang-Mataram area. The other ports were not as rich and populous, nor did they have control over trade routes such as Gresik's degree of control over the spice trade with Banda and Maluku.

As for the other rice plain states, Majapahit's central land area was evacuated or fell under the control of Surabaya, while Terung, Sengguruh and Kediri were too small and distant to carry out a reconstruction of Javanese power; Blambangan also suffered from these limitations. Mataram, at this time, had not yet been rediscovered. Its very rich soils and plentiful rainfall, along with its ancient temples of Barabodur and Prambanan, lay hidden in a dense rainforest. Padjang's advantage lay in the fertility of its soil, its rainfall, its arable area and its location, being centrally located vis-a-vis the rest of Java and having proximity to a port in the Semarang-Demak-Jepara area. At a later time, after the Mataram area is opened up to agriculture, power would swing between the two adjacent rice plain kingdoms of Padjang-Surakarta and Mataram-Jogyakarta. The underlying geographical conditions would assert themselves.

The hinterland kingdoms set out with the conditions and limitations of their existence: they have agriculture but no port; they have the Javanese peasantry but not the ethnic traders; they have rice but not money. The port states, on the other hand, set out with the reverse

condition. On the level of geo-politics, one contender or the other must make a play to capture the condition which it lacks. Power will remain unstable until this requirement is met. Gresik's leaders, if they were aware of this in 1478, must have been perplexed: to destroy the infidel kingdom of Majapahit was an imperative, but how would the cards fall afterward? They could not fall in a way that would allow Gresik to reconstruct Java politically under Gresik's control. Gresik was therefore limited by the fate of its geographical circumstances.

This left Surabaya and Demak as the main contenders from the coastal side. Demak succeeded at first in expanding its agricultural base because its soil was fertile and the rainfall was good. However, its terrain was flat and always subject to flooding. Water control was a problem that would limit its growth. Historically its terrain was in fact only a recent phenomenon, having been under water in the first millenium of our era.<sup>10</sup> When it emerged gradually by a process of siltation, it was naturally flat and therefore subject to flooding. Demak seized its limited opportunity however and established the first agro-mercantile state in Java.

In the meantime, in east Java, Surabaya found that its fortunes had truly changed. While in the 15th century it had played second fiddle to Gresik in handling the trade

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10. See Budiman, A.: Semarang Riwayatmu Dulu. Tanjung Sari, Semarang, 1978, figs. pp2-3.

between Majapahit and the outside world, now, however, it found itself in de facto possession of the agricultural lands upriver of itself, even possibly extending to the former terrain of Majapahit. The latter kingdom had been destroyed and made a vacuum by the Islamic states. The vacuum must have been filled gradually by peasant populations under the protection of Surabaya. In the initial period after the fall of Majapahit, Surabaya's influence was inhibited by the kingdoms of Terung and Sengguruh nearby, both remnants of Majapahit. After the decisive battle on the mountain of Sunan Giri's Kedhaton in 1535 A.D.<sup>11</sup>, however, these two kingdoms were never to be a threat again. Indeed, the babad asserts that they were Islamised as a result of this battle. But it is not always the victor who enjoys the fruits of his efforts. Surabaya was in the right position to take advantage of the defeat of Terung and Sengguruh.

Evidence for Surabaya's changed circumstances is apparent from a comparison of the Portuguese and Dutch records of the time. Pires gives an indication of the population for Surabaya of about 6 or 7 thousand fighting men in 1516, or about the same number as Gresik's.<sup>12</sup> A century later the Dutch reported the deaths of 10,000 Surabayan troops<sup>13</sup> in 1614 yet Surabaya continued to battle on against Mataram for a further 15 years. Surabaya's power

11. BIG, p48.

12. Pires, T.: *Summa Oriental*, WHS, vol. LXXXIC, London, 1944, p196.

13. Coen, J.P.: *Bescheiden Omtrent Zijn Bedrijf in Indie*, 's-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1919, vol. 1, p74.

to appoint a Shahbandar to Gresik (the Pakojan) and an under-Shahbandar to Jortan (Kebungson) during the latter half of the 16th century also dramatically point to the change in circumstances.<sup>14</sup> How can we explain this change without reference to some basic economic variable changing. Since Gresik had the advantage of control over the Madura Straits, then it cannot have been caused initially by a growth in Surabaya's trade. It can only have been agriculture and consequently population which could have altered the mix of economic variables. Surabaya had, like Demak, emerged from the wars with Majapahit and its offshoots as a large agro-mercantile centre by taking possession of the lands upriver.

The second factor in our formula for power in Java is the ethnic one. The commercial centres on the coast were dominated by the ethnic trading groups including the Chinese, the Indians, the Arabs and others. While these groups formed the backbone of the new Islamic states on the north coast, how could they seriously claim legitimate authority over the traditional Javanese peasantry. Javanese sentiment militated against such a prospect. The attempt by babad-authors, including the author of the Babad Tanah Djawi, to establish a lineage for the new ruler of Demak by claiming that he descended from the last King of Majapahit and his Chinese wife, is clever, but stretches credulity. The Chinese wife was

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14. Schrieke, B.: Indonesian Sociological Studies, part 1, W. van Hooft, The Hague, 1966 (1955), p46.

said to have been passed off to the local ruler of Palembang while pregnant with the King's child. The myth is evidence of a felt need by Demak for a Javanese ancestor. At base, however, a foreign ethnic minority could not stay in power for long unless it could demonstrate significant racial and ethnic integration with the Javanese.

A deeper element within this factor is the Javanese royal lineage; the Chinese are not merely lacking in ethnic qualifications to rule the whole of Java, they lack a connection to the royal line of Majapahit. This could be countered by their claim to a separate source of legitimacy: being bearers of Islam and claiming descent from Mohammed. The issue of two sources of legitimacy could be decided on the battlefield. But was the battle field ever even?

This raises the issue of the third factor: religion. The old kingdom of Majapahit as well as the numerous remnants in the mountains and beyond, in Sengguruh, Terung and Daha, could not seriously present themselves as candidates for power in Java until they made a show of embracing Islam and all that it implies for the notion of kingship. While the Chinese could claim a right to rule on the grounds of being bearers of a universal religion, they could not succeed in claiming to be Javanese in any sense. On the other side, the Javanese merely had to surrender their gods and accept Islam: they could steal



the fire of their opponents. The Chinese were never in a position to do likewise. That the state of Demak did not last longer than it took for a Javanese, with some claim to be of the Javanese royal lineage, to embrace Islam is not surprising.<sup>15</sup>

Gresik's power, even during the Demak and Padjang period, was therefore limited. On the other hand, its strengths in trade and religion led it to sculpt a new role for itself in the Javanese polity: a religio-legal institution that claimed independence from, and supremacy over, even an Islamic monarchy. It could and did grant or deny legitimacy to a Javanese ruler, and it did so according to whether that monarch was willing to follow Giri's directions in policy, especially in regard to the spreading of Islam and the unification of the whole of Java under an Islamic monarchy. Although the Javanese could steal the fire, it was up to the Sunan of Giri to determine whether the fire was extinguished or not in the stealing.

Of the other powers, it was clear that by 1546, Demak had been knocked out of the field by Surabaya which had become an agricultural state as well as a commercial one. The only other candidate for controlling and re-building Java was the hinterland kingdom of Padjang and its offshoot Mataram. The period 1546 to 1625 is therefore,

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15. The first ruler of Mataram was Javanese and claimed such descent: q.v. Ricklefs, M.C.: A History of Modern Indonesia, Macmillan, London, 1981, p37.

in the main, a struggle for supremacy between these two powers.