

The Development of Maritime Culture in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom: Social, Economic, and Political Dynamics During the Time of Sultan Agung (1613 – 1645 AD)

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Abstract

This research examines the development of maritime culture in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom during Sultan Agung (1613-1645 AD), focusing on the interaction between agrarian and maritime cultures that shaped the Kingdom's identity. The Islamic Mataram Kingdom, located in the interior of Java, not only developed agrarian power but also made maritime expansion efforts as its power base. Through a historical approach using political and cultural analyses of primary sources, such as Babad Tanah Djawi, with the concepts of continuity and change as well as cultural acculturation as the basis for understanding the social dynamics that occurred, this research explores Sultan Agung's various policies, including the development of port infrastructure, the strengthening of the navy, and the development of religious traditions related to the sea. The results show that these policies expanded trade routes and strengthened the Kingdom's social and political legitimacy. By integrating local culture and Islamic elements, Sultan Agung created a synergy between agrarian and maritime power, significantly impacting Mataram society's economic and social stability. The findings are expected to provide new insights into the role of marine culture in Indonesian history, which is inclusive, cosmopolitan, multicultural, intercultural/mutual cooperation, and egalitarian, and its relevance in the context of marine culture development today.

Keywords

Agrarian Culture, Islamic Mataram, Sultan Agung, Maritime Culture, Religious Tradition

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Introduction

Since ancient times, the people of the archipelago, which consists of various islands, have had a close relationship with the sea, which has become the primary means of trade, communication, and defense (Mulyana, 2006). The kingdoms of the archipelago utilized maritime trade to build their empire and covered a vast territory (Evers, 2016). In this context, maritime culture is not just an aspect of life, but also the foundation for the glory of the great kingdoms in the archipelago, including Islamic Mataram.

The Islamic Mataram Kingdom is one of the political entities that played an essential role in the archipelago's history, especially in the 16th and 17th centuries. Located on the island of Java, the Kingdom was known as an agrarian power and a strategic maritime power (Maharsi, 2016). Historical sources such as manuscripts, babads, and manuscripts written during Sultan Agung's reign in the 17th century, also contain much about the aggressiveness of Sultan Agung's policies and strategies in maritime strengthening. In texts such as Babad Tanah Djawi and Serat Jipeng, it is explained that Sultan Agung saw the importance of marine power to secure his territorial sovereignty and expand Mataram's influence in the maritime region of the archipelago (Meinsma, 1984).

The texts also mention that Sultan Agung built and expanded essential ports on the north coast of Java, such as Tuban Port and Lasem Port. In addition, Sultan Agung used maritime diplomacy to form alliances with neighboring maritime kingdoms. The historical texts describe how Sultan Agung negotiated and trade agreements with kingdoms such as Makassar, Johor, and Aceh (Meinsma, 1984). Sultan Agung realized that the maritime domain was a strategic asset that needed strengthening to control trade, maintain stability, and protect the sultanate from foreign threats. One of Sultan Agung's central policies was to build and reinforce the Mataram navy.

In social and political transformation, Islamic Mataram could integrate its agrarian culture with the maritime power inherited from its predecessors, such as the Demak and Pajang Sultanates. As the greatest king of Mataram, Sultan Agung successfully combined these two cultures, making him the dominant force in Java and beyond. Through careful policies, Sultan Agung strengthened the navy and harbors and developed effective diplomatic strategies to secure Mataram's interests in the seas (Burdah, 2017). The policies adopted by Sultan Agung, such as the construction of strategic ports, the strengthening of the navy, and the development of trade infrastructure, demonstrate a deep understanding of the importance of the sea as a vital route for economic and social interaction. In addition, Sultan Agung also integrated local religious and cultural traditions with maritime practices, creating a synergy that strengthened the legitimacy and stability of Mataram's power.

This research aims to explore and analyze Sultan Agung's policies in the development of maritime culture in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, with a focus on the factors that supported Mataram's success in controlling naval trade routes and their impact on the social, economic, and political life of the people at that time. By using political and cultural analyses based on the concepts of continuity and change as well as cultural acculturation, it is hoped that the results of this research are not only relevant to the study of Mataram history but can also provide new insights into the study of maritime culture in general in Indonesia.

Although studies on Islamic Mataram maritime culture have been conducted by several researchers before, there has been no research that deeply discusses the dynamics of interaction between agrarian and maritime cultures during the time of Sultan Agung. For example, in his study, Athoillah (2021) only sees the manifestation of a marine culture or 'pasisiran' in Islamic Mataram that shows political collective units connected in a standard process, namely the development of human civilization in the 16th to 18th centuries. Asyrafi (2021) examines trade activities in port cities during the Islamic Mataram period, the port city management system, and the transfer of power and management of port cities from the hands of Islamic Mataram to the VOC. Burdah (Burdah, 2017) examines the politics and praxis carried out by the Islamic Mataram Kingdom so that it reached a golden age and concludes that the Kingdom based its political vision on unifying Java by strengthening Javanese-Islamic identity and synthesizing the Islamic worldview and Javanese culture.

Meanwhile, some studies on maritime culture in the archipelago are still generalized. For example, Anshoriy and Arbaningsih studied the Kingdom of Demak Bintara, placing it as the first maritime Kingdom in Java during the Islamic period (Anshoriy & Arbaningsih, 2008). Likewise, Nurmalasari (2014), Kepel, et al. (2024), M. Nur and Siti Nurbayani^{et al.} (2023) M. Nur, et al. (2023), and Barus, et al. (2021) studies the preservation of cultural values and maritime traditions in Indonesia

in the context of modern life and the importance of preserving maritime culture, marine conservation, and sustainable economy by accommodating local wisdom that applies in life, as well as trade networks at sea. It is in line with the new version of maritime history studies initiated by Harlaftis (2020) which places the sea as a background, not as a dynamic agent of change, so that it includes various maritime activities at sea, around the sea, in the sea, because of the sea, and about the sea. The book ASEAN Maritime Security: The Global Maritime Fulcrum in the Indo-Pacific discusses strategic issues surrounding maritime security in implementing Indonesia's vision as the world's maritime axis. Indonesia's development paradigm that prioritizes maritime aspects is divided into five pillars, namely maritime culture, maritime resource management, maritime infrastructure and connectivity development, maritime diplomacy, and maritime defense (Khanisa, 2022).

This research specifically examines the development of Islamic Mataram maritime culture during the time of Sultan Agung, which can strengthen the historical basis of marine development in Indonesia. It is essential because, as Delaney & Frangoudes (2024) recognize, maritime development requires understanding and utilizing maritime cultural heritage that can connect people, their past, and their future. In addition, based on the study of Fragkopoulou (2022) through a diachronic approach and macroscopic framework, it is concluded that the sea has always had a multidimensional role that covers almost all aspects of human life: political, economic, social, cultural, spiritual, and defense and security. This conclusion is corroborated by Zhu et. al. (2024) in their study that the maritime has, since ancient times, been an essential part of the development of human civilization, even now and in the future, beyond certain national and territorial boundaries.

The study of maritime history shows the importance of the sea in human life from the past until now, so that a vibrant maritime culture was born related to various maritime activities, both at sea, around the sea, and in the sea, because of the sea, and about the sea. However, the historical process of maritime culture in Islamic Mataram during the time of Sultan Agung has not been well researched. This research aims to examine more deeply, using political and cultural analyses with the concepts of continuity and change and cultural acculturation, the development of maritime culture in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom during the time of Sultan Agung. It explores the various factors that drove Mataram's success in mastering maritime trade routes and how maritime culture influenced the social, economic, and political life of the Mataram people. Understanding this historical context is expected to provide a more comprehensive insight into the role of maritime culture in shaping the identity and power of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom in the archipelago. Through in-depth analysis, this research is expected to contribute a new understanding of the dynamics of interaction between agrarian and maritime cultures and their impact on social and political developments in the Java region at that time. Thus, this research is not only relevant for the study of the history of Islamic Mataram as an agro-maritime kingdom that manages and integrates agrarian and maritime cultures simultaneously, both in the context of development and economy, but also for the development of maritime cultural studies in general.

Research Methods

This research uses historical research methods by choosing a research topic, collecting historical sources (heuristics), interpreting research results, and writing conclusions (Abdurrahman, 2021). However, due to limited access to Javanese primary sources and records from the Dutch colonial period that are contemporaneous with the research theme, this research has turned to secondary sources written by historians who refer to primary sources from the Islamic Mataram Kingdom era, such as the works of Hermanus Johannes de Graaf (1986, 1987; 1989) and Theodoor Gautier Thomas Pigeaud (Graaf & Pigeaud, 1989; 1976). Data validation is done using a critical approach, and data from other relevant sources is compared.

Data analysis uses a political and cultural approach. In this case, maritime culture is understood as ideational/cognitive/mental systems, behaviors/actions. It works/supplies and infrastructure that the supporting community (maritime society) uses in managing natural resources and engineering marine environmental services for their lives (Salim, 2021). The maritime culture of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom is a culture that was born and influenced by the culture of coastal communities which not only refers to a group of people who live on the border of land and sea waters but also those who have a particular system or pattern of life to give birth to a cultural identity as a coastal community (Fajrie, 2017).

In addition, the concept of continuity and change is used to understand the history of Islamic Mataram culture as a continuation of Majapahit culture or even earlier cultures (Berg, 1974), especially Sultan Agung's policies to maintain a coastal culture in his government system centered in the interior of Java, including transforming the port function to be more oriented towards political control and integration of coastal areas into the agrarian Mataram power. Although this concept is seen as rather broad, it is essential to re-describe or reinterpret past events as historical facts. Given the complex nature of historical writing, the logic of social sciences is needed to describe the topic of past socio-cultural changes (Kuntowijoyo, 2008).

Result

The origin of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom

The Islamic Mataram Kingdom was established in a virgin, unpopulated forest called Alas Mentaok. This forest area is the former Kingdom of Ancient Mataram, which collapsed in 1007 AD. Ricklefs refers to Mataram as the interior of South Central Java and a very fertile agricultural kingdom (Lisailiyah, 2023). The establishment of Islamic Mataram in Alas Mentaok symbolically emphasized that royal power was rooted in controlling and managing a fertile agrarian landscape. This agricultural landscape was a significant economic resource and a symbol of the king's political and spiritual legitimacy as protector of the people and controller of land fertility. Thus, the ideology of early Mataram power was closely linked to the agrarian landscape as the foundation of the Kingdom's prosperity and stability.

The Kingdom was founded by Danang Sutawijaya, the son of Ki Ageng Pemanahan, whose title was Panembahan Senopati in 1568 AD. The title of Panembahan was obtained after Senopati defeated Arya Pangiri, the Duke of Demak, who became the eldest son-in-law of Sultan Hadiwijaya and the successor of Pajang (Graaf & Pigeaud, 1989; Meinsma, 1984). His full name and title then became Panembahan Senopati Ing Ngalogo. Panembahan Senopati is genealogically linked to the lineage of Majapahit kings as a descendant of Brawijaya V, who had a son named Bondan Kajawen (Lembu peteng). He descended from Ki Ageng Ngenis, the father of Ki Ageng Pemanahan, Panembahan Senopati's grandfather. From the maternal line, it is attributed to the Wali family as the descendants of Syeh Wali Lanang, who descended from Sunan Giri I and Sunan Giri II to Panembahan Senopati's mother (Abimanyu, 2015). Meanwhile, politically, the establishment of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom cannot be separated from the existence of two predecessor kingdoms, namely Demak and Pajang (Yusuf, 2006).

Panembahan Senopati died in 1601 AD after ruling for three years and successfully subduing the Pati rebellion (Graaf, 1987). Furthermore, the power of Islamic Mataram was continued by his son, namely Mas Jolang or Prabu Hanyakrawati or Panembahan Seda ing Krapyak (Meinsma, 1984). The expansion of the territory of Islamic Mataram to reach the peak of its glory occurred during the time of his grandson, the ruler of the 3rd Islamic Mataram, Sultan Agung Hanyakrakusuma (Lombard, 2005c).

The Islamic Mataram Kingdom during the time of Sultan Agung

Sultan Agung was the son of Panembahan Seda ing Krapyak, whose real name was Raden Mas Rangsang. He was an agile, intelligent, and religiously devout person with expertise in military, political, economic, social, and cultural fields. The title of Sultan conferred on Sultan Agung resulted from the Mataram Kingdom's international relationship with the Ottoman Turkish Caliphate and served as a means of religious and political legitimization that strengthened his position as an Islamic leader and king (Burdah, 2016). This title was crucial in supporting the expansion of Mataram's power to the coastal areas, as it conferred religious authority capable of integrating coastal regions previously controlled by local forces. Moreover, the title of Sultan became a symbol and strategic instrument in expanding and strengthening Sultan Agung's power in Java and the archipelago. That is why the Mataram Kingdom succeeded in becoming an Islamic kingdom with a high civilization, vast territory, and a strong agrarian and maritime cultural base (Maharsi, 2016).

After coming to power, he took Panembahan Agung and later changed it to Sunan or Susuhunan. This title was considered more authoritative because it followed the titles used by the guardians who spread Islam in Java (Meinsma, 1984). With the title Sunan or Susuhunan, Sultan Agung wanted to be recognized as a government and religious leader. The Islamic Mataram Kingdom carried the mandate of Allah SWT in the land of Java, so the application of Islamic teachings needed to be adapted to the customs and culture of the Javanese people. This philosophy was held by Sultan

Agung as a religious leader, in line with the teachings of his teacher, Kanjeng Sunan Kalijaga, namely '*anglaras ilining banyu ngeli ananging ora keli*', which means doing things in harmony with the flow of water, flowing but not being carried away. The teaching has a deep meaning in the context of life, namely that one must live life wisely, flexibly, and adaptively, but firmly in principle. Based on this philosophy, Sultan Agung changed his government structure based on the Islamic Kingdom while using Javanese cultural legitimacy to realize his ideals. The title Sultan itself was obtained and used in 1642, after a year earlier he sent a delegation to get the title from the ruler of Mecca (Margana, Athoillah, et al., 2021).

In addition, he also added titles with symbols of Javanese kings. The full title of the third Islamic Mataram King is: "*Sampeyan Dalem Ingkang Sinuwun Kanjeng Sultan Agung Adi Prabu Anyakrakusuma Senapati Ing Alaga Abdurahman Sayiddin Panatagama Khalifatullah Tanah Jawi*". The title was significant because it had a strong socio-political effect on the Javanese community, which was primarily Muslim but still held strong Javanese culture at that time. To increase the legitimacy of power and raise the status of the descendants of the Islamic Mataram Dynasty, Sultan Agung also ordered the writing of a Javanese History, namely *Babad Tanah Jawi* (Kartodirjo, 1987). The Javanese History text tells that the ancestors of the Islamic Mataram Dynasty are descendants of extraordinary figures, ranging from the descendants of the Prophet Adam, the gods, and the puppet kings, to the kings who ruled the Land of Java.

Sultan Agung divided his territory into four parts to create social, political, and economic stability. First, the area of Kuta Negara or Siti Narawita, the capital of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, was initially located in Kota Gedhe, then in 1613 Sultan Agung moved it to Kerta (Islam, 2023; Rosidi et al., 2013). Second is the Nagari Agung area, which surrounds the Mataram Palace. The Nagari Agung area is divided into four regions: Bumi Gedhe, Siti Bumi, Siti Numbak Anyar, and Pajang. Third is the Manca Nagari region, which is outside Nagari Agung. This area is divided into Manca Nagari Wetan and Manca Nagari Kulon. Fourth, the Pasisir region is located on the north coast of Java and is divided into 2, namely Pesisir Wetan and Pesisir Kulon. Pesisir Wetan includes Demak, Kudus, Pati, Rembang, Lasem, Tuban, Sedayu, Lamongan, Gresik, Surabaya, Pasuruan and Blambangan. Pesisir Kulon includes Semarang, Kendal, Pekalongan, Pemalang, Tegal, Brebes, Cirebon, Indramayu, and Karawang (Mangkunegaran, n.d.).

The population of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom mainly resided in the hinterland of central and eastern Java. They made their living as farmers. The vast expanse of agricultural land with abundant water sources and surrounded by volcanoes made the land exceptionally fertile and suitable for various types of plants. At that time, rice farming became the primary commodity of the community. To support the agricultural system, water channels were built by bringing in workers from the north coast of Java. In addition to agriculture, the trade sector became the main economic support for the Mataram Kingdom. Through trade activities, the distribution of agricultural products can be channeled through traders from various regions, both by land and sea. The population in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom was not only Javanese but also Malays, Sundanese, Bugis, and even Chinese. They came and lived in the Islamic Mataram region for trade or other purposes.

Development of Maritime Culture during the time of Sultan Agung

The Islamic Mataram Kingdom was established as a continuation of the Pajang Kingdom and the Islamic Sultanate of Demak Bintoro on the north coast of Java. Demak Bintoro was built on the foundation of a robust maritime culture. This condition differed from Mataram, which was located in the interior of Java and had a more prominent agrarian culture. This strong agrarian culture in Mataram is even reflected in various Javanese chronicles known as '*Babad*', which homophonically means 'clearing the forest' (Lombard, 2005a). However, to maintain political stability and power, Mataram strengthened agrarian culture and developed maritime culture in various fields. It was done when power was held by the third king, Sultan Agung (1613-1645), who was known as an agile, intelligent, and religiously devout king of Mataram and had expertise in military, political, economic, social, and cultural fields so that Mataram succeeded in becoming an Islamic kingdom that had a high civilization with a vast territory with a strong agricultural and maritime cultural base (Kebudayaan, 2021).

The Islamic Mataram Kingdom under Sultan Agung began cultural renewal by absorbing coastal cultures and traditions. The tradition was aristocratic, in which all cultures were merged and integrated with a diversity that developed into a distinctive Javanese inland culture (Hasan & Shaleh, 2016). According to Lombard, during the first half of the 17th century, under Sultan Agung, Mataram still

outperformed the coast. Sultan Agung did not intend to conquer the coastal areas to annex and confiscate revenues, but to neutralize them (Lombard, 2005a). The Islamic Mataram Kingdom, in its symbolization of maritime culture, was linked not only to the north coast of Java, which always referred to politics and economics, but also to the south coast, which had a 'special sacred meaning' for its founding in the second half of the 16th century.

The conquest of the coastal areas by Sultan Agung, culminating in the conquest of Surabaya in 1625, is the culmination of the story of the antagonism between agrarian and maritime rule. At first glance, it signaled the end of the marine rule and the birth and rise of agrarian kingdoms in the interior of Java. However, according to Denys Lombard, the emergence of this agrarian Kingdom had a unifying power that would later become the historical foundation for the birth of the Indonesian State (Lombard, 2005a). In line with Lombard, H.J. De Graaf also stated that although the Mataram Kingdom was located in the interior, it did not want to be trapped in the green forest. Instead, the Mataram Kingdom had a high ambition to conquer maritime areas. It is pretty evident in Mataram's aggressiveness in conquering Sukadana, a port city in West Kalimantan, establishing diplomacy with the Makassar Kingdom, and providing guarantees to coastal rulers such as in Tuban, Surabaya, and Madura (Graaf, 1986).

Sultan Agung realized that the maritime region was a strategic asset that needed strengthening to control trade, maintain stability, and protect the sultanate from foreign threats. One of Sultan Agung's central policies was to build reinforcement for the Mataram navy. Historical texts describe his efforts to increase the number and quality of warships and sailors and improve the effectiveness and reliability of the Mataram navy. It aimed to secure the waters around Java and block the penetration of foreign powers.

Sultan Agung also built and expanded essential ports on the eastern coast of Java, such as Tuban Port and Lasem Port. It helped to improve trade accessibility and efficiency and strengthen Mataram's economic position in the maritime region. In addition, Sultan Agung used maritime diplomacy to form alliances with neighboring maritime kingdoms. These historical texts describe how Sultan Agung conducted negotiations and trade agreements with kingdoms such as Makassar, Johor, and Aceh. It helped to establish mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance security and secure trade in the maritime region (Graaf, 1986). As recorded in historical texts, these policies reflect Sultan Agung's vision and innovative strategy for strengthening Mataram's naval power. Thinaval is to maintain stability, protect sovereignty, and increase Mataram's political and economic influence in the marine region of the archipelago.

The embryo of maritime culture development began with the founder of the Mataram dynasty, Panembahan Senopati. He had the ambition to control the area directly adjacent to the ocean (coastal). This ambition was partly driven by Panembahan Senopati's visionary view of maritime affairs, that the coast is a very strategic area to open the gates of inter-island and inter-oceanic trade, which at that time had significantly contributed to the economy in Java. Control of the coastal area meant control of economic activities over local rulers and ensuring political and military superiority (Margana, Athoillah, et al., 2021). However, this maritime vision was only realized and reached its peak during the time of Sultan Agung, the grandson of Panembahan Senopati, when Mataram became a hinterland kingdom with a robust and large maritime culture.

The implementation of the maritime vision of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom can be seen in Sultan Agung's policy of building a large pond by damming the Opak River on March 2, 1643. The large pond used as a miniature sea is known as Segaran or Segoroyoso, which means 'artificial sea' (Rosidi et al., 2013). The work occurred before the Pleret area was used as a Mataram palace (Athoillah, 2021). During the time of Sultan Agung, Segaran was used primarily as a military training ground, especially naval training and war preparation, while also serving as a strategic defense fortress and building the physical strength of the soldiers (Alifah, 2009). Despite its symbolic and ritual value, especially after the time of Sultan Agung, its practical function as a military training center was more important than as a cosmological symbol of the sea. The making of Segaran shows Sultan Agung's incredible attention to maritime culture to prepare defenses for Kraton Kerta.

The conquest of the coastal areas by Sultan Agung, culminating in the conquest of Surabaya in 1625, was the culmination of an antagonistic story of agrarian and maritime rule. It signaled the end of the marine rule and the birth and rise of agrarian kingdoms in the interior of Java. However, according to Denys Lombard, the emergence of this agrarian Kingdom had a unifying power that would later

become the historical foundation for the birth of the Indonesian state (Lombard, 2005a). Graaf (Graaf, 1986) stated the same thing, saying that although the Islamic Mataram Kingdom was located in the interior, this Kingdom did not want to be trapped in a green forest. Instead, the Islamic Mataram Kingdom had high ambitions to conquer maritime areas. It is evident in its aggressiveness in conquering Sukadana, a port city in West Kalimantan, establishing diplomacy with the Makassar Kingdom, and providing guarantees to coastal rulers such as Tuban, Surabaya, and Madura.

Sultan Agung's success in expanding his influence to the Surabaya area after previously to Tuban and Pasuruan (1614-1616) and continuing to Madura (1624) seems to be an inspiration to continue expanding in coastal regions, which are geographically very strategic. He then continued his expansion to the west, especially Banten, after previously controlling Pati (1627) and Cirebon (1624) (Lombard, 2005a). The region is considered essential to control because it is a shipping and trade route between areas in the archipelago, even Europe and eastern Asia (Susilo & Asmara, 2020). However, Sultan Agung's attempt to conquer Banten was not easy, as he experienced two failures when facing VOC soldiers who tried to protect him. Nevertheless, in general, in the first half of the 17th century, Sultan Agung was able to control almost all coastal areas on the North Coast of Java, known as *pasisiran*, both '*pasisiran wetan*' and '*pasisiran kulon*' (Munawar, 2020).

Historical sources such as manuscripts, chronicles, and chronicles written during Sultan Agung's reign also contain much about the aggressiveness of Sultan Agung's policies and strategies in maritime strengthening. In manuscripts such as *Babad Tanah Jawi* and *Serat Jipeng*, it is explained that Sultan Agung saw the importance of marine power to secure his territorial sovereignty and expand Mataram's influence in the maritime region of the archipelago (Graaf, 1986). He strengthened the navy, built strategic ports and warships, and improved the skills of sailors to increase the competitiveness of the Islamic Mataram navy (Pigeaud, 1976). To maintain sovereignty and increase Mataram's influence in the maritime region of the archipelago, Sultan Agung also expanded to the north coast of Java and beyond. He built strategic ports, such as Tuban Port and Lasem Port, to increase trade and strengthen control over important trade routes (Ricklefs, 2007).

Sultan Agung had an ambitious policy of controlling the Sunda Strait, an important maritime route connecting the Indian Ocean with the Java Sea. The first step was to build and strengthen a naval fleet to secure and control the maritime area (Ricklefs, 2007) and make strategic forts along the coast of the Sunda Strait to monitor and secure the main trade routes that pass through there (Pigeaud, 1976). Sultan Agung also conducted intensive diplomacy with neighboring maritime kingdoms to ensure a strong influence in the Sunda Strait. By forging strategic partnerships and alliances, Sultan Agung sought to build a coalition that could control and supervise maritime traffic in the Sunda Strait (Graaf, 1986). Sultan Agung's policy towards the Sunda Strait is reflected in his efforts to maintain sovereignty and build a strong economy in the maritime region. This control was also directed at protecting Mataram from threats and making the Sunda Strait a strategic asset that strengthened Mataram's political and economic position at the regional level (Ricklefs, 2007).

Sultan Agung built trade partnerships with local and foreign traders. This step aimed to increase the volume of trade, drive the economy, and improve the economic status of Mataram. Sultan Agung's policies regarding developing Tuban Port and Lasem Port were part of a larger economic and military strategy to consolidate and expand Mataram's power. Through the development of port infrastructure and increased trade, Sultan Agung sought to optimize the economic potential of his maritime region and build a solid foundation for Mataram's defense (Pigeaud, 1976).

The policy of developing maritime culture opened up opportunities for Mataram to expand the market for its agricultural commodities beyond Java. Dutch records state that Mataram had a sizable trading fleet that carried out voyages and trade between regions and islands at that time. Some of the areas that became the shipping destinations of traders from the Mataram region were Jayakarta, Palembang, Sukadana (Kalimantan), Banjarmasin, Malacca, and all of Maluku (Alifah, 2009; Margana, Athoilah, et al., 2021; Soelarto, 1980).

These inter-island trade activities, in turn, had a significant impact on Mataram's economic progress. *Kraton Kerta*, as the center of Mataram's power, experienced substantial economic growth and prosperity. Sultan Agung's strengthening of maritime connectivity helped integrate the coastal areas with the Mataram center of power, facilitated the distribution of crops to international markets, and provided opportunities for coastal communities to engage in export activities. The hinterland's abundant agricultural and livestock products became commodities hunted by traders from various

regions. The Kerta market was the center of economic activity then and was reportedly very crowded. They came from different parts of the area. They traveled long distances, such as West Java, either on foot or riding traditional transportation such as cow carts (a conventional means of transportation that uses cow power as a driver). Agricultural products, especially rice, are the primary commodities traded in the Kerto market. The livestock that is traded are chickens, cows, and buffalo. At certain times, the community's livestock production is so abundant that meat can be cheaper than rice (Alifah, 2009). The news illustrates how Kerta, as the capital of Mataram during the time of Sultan Agung, grew into a metropolitan city with enormous economic potential that attracted many people to visit it.

To resist the influence of foreign trade, mainly from Europe, Sultan Agung expanded and modernized the Mataram fleet. He increased the construction of modern warships, strengthened weaponry, and trained sailors to become more skilled. These measures helped secure Mataram's maritime territory and deter foreign penetration attempts (Pigeaud, 1976). It also forged strategic alliances and trade partnerships to form a common front against foreign penetration. In this process, Sultan Agung established a network of cooperation that helped maintain security and stability in the maritime region of the archipelago (Ricklefs, 2007). One of them was to build and strengthen partnerships with maritime kingdoms in the archipelago, such as Johor, Makassar, and Aceh (Pigeaud, 1976). This helped to improve diplomatic relations with these countries and expand Mataram's influence in the archipelago.

Sultan Agung also developed maritime culture through religious traditions. Some spiritual traditions developed during the time of Sultan Agung include Grebeg, Labuhan, and the performance of sacred objects (Harun, 1995). The Grebeg tradition that is carried out as a 'syiar' that marks the celebration of Islamic holidays consists of Grebeg Poso as a celebration before Eid al-Fitr, Grebeg Besar to celebrate Eid al-Adha, and Grebeg Mulud or Sekaten to celebrate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. In historical records, Sultan Agung was the first Mataram ruler to revive the traditional Sekaten ceremony used by Javanese Islamic kings in coastal areas since the Demak Bintoro era. During the time of Sultan Agung, the Sekaten ceremony was even more lively than before with various reforms (Maharsi, 2016).

Although Sultan Agung declared Mataram an Islamic Kingdom, his commitment to continue the old culture, including Hindu culture, was powerful. In 1555 Saka, coinciding with 1043 Hijriyah or 1633 AD, Sultan Agung combined the Hindu Saka and Hijriyah calendars. The calendar, later called the Javanese Calendar, uses Islamic lunar calculations with modifications following Javanese culture and language. The birth of the Javanese Year was also an attempt to show that Sultan Agung, as the most excellent Islamic Javanese King, was a combination of the Majapahit Hindu King symbolized by the Caka Year and the Demak Bintoro Islamic Sultanate symbolized by the Hijri Year.

The integration of competencies across disciplines trains several skills. The first skill is interpreting historical events. These skills are necessary to make learning more meaningful when combined with various skills in other disciplines. Students can understand facts and see relationships and impacts within a broader framework. Connections between fields will also help students enrich their perspectives and dig deeper into the meaning of an event. Next is the ability to write persuasive essays. This ability or skill is a place for students to express their understanding. In this case, students will be allowed to express ideas or arguments they have in-depth and convincingly. Writing persuasive essays plays an essential role in education and professionalism because, with this persuasive essay writing, students will think critically in every delivery of their ideas (Karima et al., 2024).

Sultan Agung also initiated the birth of the book 'Sastra Gendhing' to harmonize the fusion of Islam and Javanese culture. This book explains how the relationship between SWT and humans is as creatures. 'Sastra' as a representation of Allah SWT's essence must be followed by 'gendhing' as a symbol of human life as His creation. The 'gendhing' must follow the instructions in the 'sastra' because the 'sastra' determines the 'gendhing' of life that is sung. Harmony in the 'gendhing' of life is determined by its 'sastra', by maintaining harmony between Allah SWT as the creator, humans, and nature as creation. It was this harmony that guided Sultan Agung in exercising power in Mataram.

Discussion

Sultan Agung, who ruled from 1613 to 1645 AD, was the most significant and most crucial king in the history of Islamic Mataram, whose policies focused not only on political and military aspects but also on economic and cultural development, primarily through maritime power. According to Lombard,

Islamic Mataram outperformed the coast under Sultan Agung during the first half of the 17th century. Sultan Agung did not intend to conquer the coastal areas to annex and confiscate revenues, but rather to neutralize them (Lombard, 2005b). Sultan Agung made cultural reforms by absorbing coastal culture and traditions during his reign. These traditions were aristocratic, and all cultures were merged and integrated into the diversity that developed into a typical Javanese inland culture (Hasan & Shaleh, 2016).

Sultan Agung's policy of maritime strengthening brought about integration between inland agrarian and coastal communities. Through the conquest of essential ports (Tuban, Lasem, Jepara), there was migration, interaction, and cultural exchange between the two groups of people. This process gave birth to a new Javanese-Islamic identity that was not only rooted in agrarian traditions but also open to maritime influences and Islamisation from the coast.

Religious-political legitimacy supported maritime strengthening through the title "Sultan" acquired by Sultan Agung. This title strengthened claims to power over coastal areas previously controlled by local elites and coastal clerics and extended Mataram's influence into the archipelago's Islamic sultanates' network. The policy of sultanates' expansion and port control became an effective tool to integrate coastal areas into the Mataram system of government centered in the interior. It strengthened political control, minimized the potential for rebellion, and confirmed Mataram's hegemony in Java. Sultan Agung conducted maritime diplomacy with neighboring kingdoms (Makassar, Johor, Aceh), building strategic alliances to secure trade routes and counter foreign threats (VOC). This diplomacy strengthened Mataram's political position in the regional arena.

Sultan Agung's policy of building a vast and strong army (Susilo & Asmara, 2020), both land and sea, was a strategy to show the greatness of Mataram's power and protect its territory. This policy can be understood as an effort to strengthen the position of the Mataram kingdom, whose founders came from among the peasants who were a low caste in the structure of society at that time. Sultan Agung's success in building a maritime-based military (navy and fleet of ships) significantly impacted his efforts to strengthen the Islamic Mataram Kingdom into a respected kingdom in Java and beyond. Therefore, diplomatic relations with several kingdoms outside Java were not only based on the existence of a common enemy, namely the existence of the VOC in Batavia (Margana, Athoilah, et al., 2021) but also to reinforce Mataram's position as a kingdom that made the maritime (sea) the 'foreground', not the 'background' in the sense of backing it up. On the other hand, with the strengthening of the harbor and navy, a new social class emerged, the maritime elite consisting of harbor officials, admirals, and large merchants affiliated with the court. They underpinned Sultan Agung's power and strengthened the Kingdom's social structure, which agrarian elites had previously dominated.

Knowing a lot about local cultural values is expected for students to have the proper understanding, so local events have significant meaning in their lives. Social science learning, especially history, should still provide knowledge, materials, and values in the local culture. Thus, education will produce people who understand the culture's values, so they are not easily influenced by other parties (Firza & Aisiah, 2019).

Mataram's conquest of the 'pasisiran' region impacted political and power contexts as well, power, and contexts. The unification of the hinterland and the Pasisiran region, which was followed by mobilizing the unity of the people of Mataram (Jalaludin & Ghofur, 2021), gave birth to changes in the form and meaning of the Sekaten traditional ceremony, the process of which cannot be separated from the role of the ulama. It happened because ulama, during the time of Sultan Agung, were placed in an essential and honorable position, namely as advisors and mentors to the king. The repositioning of ulama as advisors and mentors of the king can also be understood as a form of acculturation between coastal (read: maritime) and inland cultures. Coastal culture places ulama and umara (read: rulers) as one unit in their personification and role. Meanwhile, the inland culture that inherited the debris of Hindu culture with the concept of Brahmana places a group of scholars who master teachings, knowledge, customs, manners, and religion (priests or religionists) as an elder and honored position (as an advisor to the king) but has no power (Harun, 1995).

These changes cannot be separated from the process of acculturation and natural selection (Kartodirjo, 1993). In the acculturation process, cultural factors become an unavoidable part of a society that adapts when meeting other cultures. Meanwhile, natural selection is a continuation of the meeting of maritime culture with the inland agrarian culture deeply rooted in Javanese society. The

meeting will usually occur between acceptance and rejection, from homogeneous to heterogeneous. It can lead to conflict or even harmony. This phenomenon is interesting in the maritime culture of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom during the time of Sultan Agung. The continuous interaction with the surrounding environment and natural resources also gave birth to unique knowledge in response to the environmental challenges. The knowledge, which in its development became the basis of the community in creating a system of relations between humans and their macrocosmic and microcosmic environment, was then realized in a concrete form based on experiences gained from a life that integrated material, spiritual, and environmental aspects (Wijaya & Kadarusman, 2019).

Sultan Agung has significantly transformed the maritime culture of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom. His policies resulted in several concrete changes in the marine culture of Islamic Mataram. Firstly, the consolidation of harbors and trade. Sultan Agung unified the north coast harbors by uniting the small kingdoms on the north coast of Java (such as Tuban, Gresik, and Surabaya) to control the spice trade route. This policy changed the pattern of the trade from competition between coastal kingdoms to a centralized system under Mataram. Sultan Agung also conducted large-scale rice exports through the ports of Jepara and Cirebon to Malacca and the eastern region. This policy strengthened Mataram's position in the Southeast Asian maritime trade network. Sultan Agung also closely monitored the export of teak wood from Central Java forests for shipbuilding to limit the VOC's access to this strategic raw material (Handayani et al., 2024). The second was the militarisation of the ports. Principal harbors such as Jepara were used as military bases in preparation for the attack on Batavia. This policy shifted the function of ports from economic centers to defense fortresses (Triwahana, 2024). Third, the Islamisation of maritime culture through coastal ulama networks and the dispatch of kiai to seaside villages, the adaptation of the Hijri-Maritime calendar (a combination of Saka-Hijri) to determine shipping seasons and maritime rituals, and coastal mosque architecture that reflects the synthesis of Javanese-Islamic maritime culture (Subekti, 2021).

Changes in the maritime culture of Islamic Mataram during the time of Sultan Agung can be understood as a form of manifestation of the socio-cultural system of the community formed due to the need to fulfill psychobiological demands and maintain the continuity of life (Malinowski, 1939). Because a society's distinctive patterned behavior (cultural behavior) follows its natural environment and cultural conditions, it is born as a way for that society to meet its needs. Cultural behavior is the implementation, adjustment, and application of social organization rules, values, customs, ideas, beliefs, and so on that are socially, rather than biologically, inherited. Therefore, these behaviors are dynamic and tend to be influenced by outside cultures, resulting in a shift in every socio-cultural form. Likewise, in maritime culture, each cultural element functions in the community's life and is dynamic (Wijaya & Kadarusman, 2019).

On the other hand, Sultan Agung's incredible attention to culture and religious traditions can be understood as the impact of his changing perspective on maritime affairs, from territorial to religious and culturally oriented. This change in perspective occurred after he failed to conquer Batavia. One of the manifestations of Sultan Agung's maritime orientation shift was the construction of mythical reasoning by bringing up the figure of Kanjeng Ratu Kidul from the southern sea. This figure was portrayed as the haunted and mysterious ruler of the South Sea. The mythical story of Kanjeng Ratu Kidul is presented in a canonical work called 'Babad Tanah Jawi'. This work, among other things, tells of the relationship between Mataram and the South Sea that has existed since the time of the founder of Mataram, Panembahan Senopati (Fitriyani, 2019; Margana, Athoilah, et al., 2021). To maintain the good relationship between Mataram and the southern sea, Sultan Agung and the kings of Mataram afterward then performed the 'labuhan' ritual ceremony, which was intended for the safety of the king, the palace, and the people of Mataram (Soelarto, 1980). It is done by integrating local religious and cultural traditions with maritime practices. Royal rituals, such as 'labuhan' and 'sedekah laut', were adopted and adapted to Islamic teachings, reinforcing the legitimacy of power while strengthening social cohesion between inland and coastal communities.

Sultan Agung's development of maritime culture cannot be separated from geographical and economic factors. As is known, Islamic Mataram is an inland kingdom with a strong agrarian culture. It was supported by the vast and fertile agricultural land, the work ethic of the Mataram people, and Sultan Agung's brilliant and bold policies. One of them was the population migration program, which moved part of the population in the Central Java region to Karawang, West Java, to cultivate vast and

fertile rice fields (Susilo & Asmara, 2020). This policy made Islamic Mataram one of the major agricultural commodity-producing regions.

Sultan Agung realized the importance of developing a maritime culture to support the economy. By encouraging sea trade, Sultan Agung expanded the market for agricultural commodities and increased interaction with other regions. Sultan Agung implemented bold and innovative policies by developing port infrastructure and fleet improvements to enhance maritime trade capacity. In addition, strengthening the navy to protect the trade routes was also a significant focus, thus increasing the security and confidence of traders. The agricultural commodities from Mataram - such as rice, spices, and other agricultural products - became highly valued merchandise in domestic and international markets. Mataram became a food barn and an influential trading center by combining agrarian and maritime strengths. This visionary and innovative policy showed how integration between economic sectors could bring prosperity to the Kingdom.

Sultan Agung's policy emphasized exporting crops (rice, sugar, spices) through strategic ports. It encouraged local economic growth in agricultural and coastal areas, increased royal revenues, and expanded international trade networks. Despite strengthening maritime connectivity, Sultan Agung exercised strict control and a monopoly over the ports. It had a positive impact on the economic stability of the Kingdom. Still, it limited the dynamism of the local economy and the potential for the growth of maritime capitalism, as in the time of Majapahit or other coastal kingdoms. The construction of harbors, dams, and artificial lakes (e.g., Segoroyoso) not only supported agriculture but also facilitated the distribution of crops to domestic and international markets. This connectivity is the foundation of an integrative economy between land and sea.

Sultan Agung's policy of strengthening maritime culture had far-reaching impacts on social (community integration and acculturation), economic (agrarian-maritime export-based growth, but with strict controls), and political (legitimization of power, regional integration, and regional diplomacy) aspects. Through a continuity and change approach, it can be seen that Mataram-Islam under Sultan Agung successfully synthesized agrarian and maritime cultures, built a stable political power, and laid essential foundations for maritime identity and development in the archipelago.

Conclusion

This research shows that maritime culture was central to the Islamic Mataram Kingdom's development during Sultan Agung's time. Through visionary policies, Sultan Agung integrated agrarian and marine power, strengthening the Kingdom's economy and expanding its social and political influence in the archipelago. Controlling naval trade routes and developing port infrastructure, such as Tuban and Lasem Ports, became strategic steps that increased Mataram's competitiveness and sovereignty. Sultan Agung also emphasized the importance of religious tradition and cultural harmony in strengthening the identity of Mataram society. He created a solid foundation for social integration through rituals and the fusion of Islamic teachings and Javanese culture. In addition, his diplomatic policies with neighboring maritime kingdoms showed an effort to build mutually beneficial cooperation, strengthening Mataram's position in the international trade arena.

Overall, this research underlines that the development of maritime culture not only impacted economic aspects but also shaped complex social and political dynamics in Islamic Mataram's history. A deeper understanding of the interaction between agrarian and maritime cultures is expected to contribute to studying naval history and cultural identity in Indonesia.

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The Development of Maritime Culture in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom: Social, Economic, and Political Dynamics During the Time of Sultan Agung (1613 – 1645 AD)

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