

Spices and Diplomacy of the Banten Sultanate with Foreign Kingdoms in the 16th- 19th Century

Syukron Jauhar Fuad Faizin*¹

¹Independent researcher, Indonesia

Author's correspondence: *fuadfaizin99@gmail.com

Abstract

The Banten Sultanate was a pre-Indonesian Islamic kingdom from the 16th to early 19th centuries. Banten developed as a kingdom based on trade, its main commodity being pepper. In the 17th century, pepper became a spice with high value, so Banten used it as a diplomatic tool apart from being a trade commodity. As the destination of many foreign traders, it encouraged Banten to communicate with several kingdoms. Through historical research methods and a literature review, this article attempts to see diplomacy as one of the political activities of pre-Indonesian kingdoms. As a result, it can be seen that the Banten Sultanate carried out its diplomatic activities with several kingdoms, for example, Mecca (Ottoman), the Netherlands, England, Denmark, and France. This activity can be known from Banten's correspondence with the foreign kingdom and is supported by the chronicle narrative as colonial historiography. In this activity, the sultan of Banten often included several gifts, one of which was a large amount of pepper. Therefore, letters and other manuscripts can show Banten's position in diplomacy with other kingdoms, and pepper has an important role.

Keywords: *Banten Sultanate, Diplomacy, Pepper, Foreign Kingdoms.*

Introduction

The Sultanate of Banten is one of the Islamic kingdoms that once existed in present-day Indonesia. The kingdom emerged mid-16th century and collapsed in the early 19th century. Banten's location at the western tip of Java Island and close to Sumatra Island makes the culture that developed in Banten unique. At first glance, Banten appears to have similarities with the sultanates in Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. However, Banten also wants to maintain its Javanese identity (Guillot, 2008:

11). This can be seen in the city layout and building models, which are patterned after the Javanese kingdom, as well as the balanced use of Javanese script, Pegon script, and Javanese language in addition to Arabic script, Jawi, as well as Malay and Arabic. Meanwhile, the clothing style, title of sultan, and funeral traditions are more similar to kingdoms that use Malay traditions.

Banten is also home to various ethnicities with very different cultures and traditions. They lived around the working capital and had more or less direct interaction with the authorities because the sultan and royal nobles also had an important influence in these activities (Lombard, 2018: 7). By relying on trade, Banten developed into one of the busiest international ports. The commodity that traders targeted was, of course, the pepper spice. Banten became one of the world's main producers and markets for pepper at that time (Colombijn, 1989: 21). Pepper is a target for traders due to its prominent function as a cooking spice and is even said to be an ideal medium of exchange like gold (Swantoro, 2019: 10–12). So it is natural that the demand for pepper is high, and Banten takes advantage of this to become one of the producers.

As a result, these trading activities gave rise to disputes between traders and even with the authorities. The rulers of Banten also took advantage of other royal institutions that traded with them to carry out diplomatic relations. However, not every diplomatic relationship arises from a conflict because some are like trade or friendship. The theme of dispute and war can be found in some of Banten's diplomatic letters. One of the interesting things in this diplomatic activity was the gift included by the Banten ruler. One of the most prominent is pepper, Banten's main commodity and a valuable spice product.

Many historical studies have been conducted on the Sultanate of Banten, but most are unrelated to its diplomatic activities. For example, this can be seen in Titik Pudjiastuti's article, *Perang, Dagang, Persahabatan: Surat-Surat Sultan Banten*, published in 2007. In this article, she examines the letters of kings and royal officials from a philological perspective, and the contents of the letters are compared with the *Sajarah*

of Banten, one of the main sources of the sultanate. There is also *Banten: Sejarah dan Peradaban Abad X-XVII*, which contains a collection of Claude Guillot's writings published in 2008. Although it discusses many foreign communities in Banten, it still needs to discuss the diplomatic process in the sultanate. Therefore, this article attempts to look at the diplomatic activities of the Banten Sultanate and the role of spices, especially pepper, in these activities.

This research defines diplomacy as a relationship between official royal institutions. This action is a political activity and an element of power (Berridge, 2015: 1). Diplomacy is also closely related to international or external relations. This action is carried out by prioritizing the interests of a country with a strategy that can benefit it (Emilia, 2013: 5). In diplomatic activities, one visible thing is the activity of correspondence between two or more royal institutions. Foreign kingdoms refer to rulers with independent authority, especially outside the archipelago, in diplomatic relations with the Banten Sultanate.

The form of this research is qualitative-descriptive. The qualitative-descriptive is related to the data used, which is qualitative and tries to present it in the form of descriptions (Moleong, 2005: 4). In addition, the method used is historical, namely topic selection, source collection (heuristics), data verification (source criticism), interpretation (analysis and synthesis), and writing (historiography) (Kuntowijoyo, 2005: 90). Heuristics were carried out using library study techniques to obtain primary data in the form of diplomatic archives and manuscripts about the history of the Sultanate of Banten. Then, the data obtained is subjected to source criticism to determine its quality, thus making the analysis and synthesis process easier. In the final stage, history is written based on the results of the interpretation that has been carried out previously.

Based on the scope of the object studied, in the form of diplomatic activities between kingdoms, this research can be included in the category of political history. In this category, they generally see the role of ruling figures as determining the course of history, but they must also pay attention to the power structure in society (Kartodirdjo,

1993: 168–169). (Through this research, it is hoped that we will understand the diplomatic style of the Sultanate of Banten, especially that carried out by kings and nobles. Apart from that, it is also to find out the role of pepper as a superior spice commodity in the diplomatic activities of the Sultanate of Banten.

Discussion

Early History of Banten Sultanate

Because the emergence of the Banten Sultanate was related to several things, including the strategic port of the Pakuan Pajajaran/Ancient Sunda Kingdom, the occupation of Malacca by the Portuguese, as well as the territorial expansion and Islamization activities of the Demak Sultanate, the area where the Banten Sultanate later emerged was the territory of the Pakuan rulers. The kingdom had several important ports, namely Bantam (Banten), Pomdam (Pontang), Chegude (Cigede), Tamgaram (Tangerang), Calapa (Kalapa), and Chemano (Cimanuk) (Cortesao, 1944: 166). Among these ports, Banten is the main port of the kingdom. This port links foreign trade with food commodities, especially rice, and pepper (Cortesao, 1944: 170).

Banten's ruler is a subordinate of Pakuan. The center of power was in Banten Girang, also called upstream Banten, because it was located slightly inland, and the port might have been located downstream of Banten (Djajadiningrat, 1983: 125; Guillot, et al., 2008: 16). At the beginning of the 16th century, Pakuan experienced a decline, so Banten took advantage of it to escape its influence. Apart from that, the Malacca Sultanate on the Malay Peninsula was also conquered by the Portuguese in 1511 and became the Portuguese base in Southeast Asia. These things impact the increasingly busy Banten port because traders shift their business activities to that place (Guillot, et al., 1997: 124–125; Ricklefs, 2007: 91).

At the same time, the Demak Sultanate expanded its territory while also influencing the spread of Islamization. This phenomenon made the Pakuan Kingdom feel like a threat to its existence. The expansion of the Demak Sultanate encouraged the Pakuan rulers to collaborate with Portuguese traders and resulted in an agreement on

August 21 1522 (Ekadjati, 2018: 121). One of the agreements was that the Pakuan rulers gave the Portuguese the right to build forts in their territory, and the Sundanese provided the Portuguese with a certain amount of pepper every year (Guillot, 2008: 35). The purpose of this collaboration was so that Portuguese troops could repel Demak troops coming from the sea. This effort failed because the Portuguese traders needed to build their fort. At the same time, the Demak troops had arrived and succeeded in taking control of Banten, making it easier for them to control other ports in the vicinity (Guillot, et al., 1997: 127; Vlekke, 2008: 108).

In *Carita Parahyangan*, one of the historiographies issued by the Pakuan Kingdom, this event is described as a confrontational war (Holle, 1882: 96–97). The narration in the *Carita Parahyangan* differs from the narrative in *Sajarah Banten*, a historiography published by the Sultanate of Banten, which tells the process of Demak's conquest of Banten more accommodatingly, not in a bloody war. Maulana Hasanuddin came to Banten Girang, then headed to Mount Polosari and was followed by his father, Sunan Gunung Jati (Edel, 1938: 28; Djajadiningrat, 1983: 33; Pudjiastuti, 1991: 193). Banten Girang and Mount Pulosari were pre-Islamic Banten's spiritual and power centers. Maulana Hasanuddin, assisted by Ki Jongjo, a Pakuan nobleman, succeeded in defeating Pucuk Umun as the leader of the teachings, then they were willing to embrace Islam (Edel, 1938: 40; Djajadiningrat, 1983: 34; Pudjiastuti, 1991: 194).

Maulana Hasanuddin, the first king, built the center of his government in the former power of Banten Girang before being moved to the coast. He used the concept of Javanese royal city planning by maintaining several elements that had existed previously; for example, in the royal square, there was Watu Gilang as a pre-Islamic hermitage which later became a kind of throne for the king (Djajadiningrat, 1983: 36; Guillot, 2008: 67–68). The Demak Sultanate gave legitimacy to the new power in Banten by sending a large cannon (De Graaf and Pigeaud, 2019: 202).

After 1552, the leadership of Banten changed from Sunan Gunung Jati to Maulana Hasanuddin, at the same time marking Banten as fully sovereign and no longer under

Demak's rule (Lombard, 2018: 68). He died in 1670 and was succeeded by his son, Maulana Yusuf, who served until 1580. He was succeeded by his son, Maulana Muhammad, until 1596. During the reign of these three kings, the Sultanate of Banten expanded its territory, especially in southern Sumatra, and developed its city planning, thus becoming the foundation on its stability and gold in the 17th century.

Entering the 17th century, the Banten Sultanate was held by kadi and royal officials because the king was still a child, led by Prince Mangkubumi (Nasution, 1994: 13; De Graaf and Pigeaud, 2019: 210). In this period, trade competition in Banten began to become prominent, so this encouraged Banten to carry out diplomacy. Sultan Abul Mafakhir Abdul Qadir only came to full power in 1626 and immediately played his diplomatic role with several foreign kingdoms. He died in 1651 and was succeeded by his grandson, Sultan Abul Fath Abdul Fatah, because his son, Sultan Abul Ma'ali, had died before him. The governments of these two kings focused more on internal stability than territorial expansion. During his time, there were many conflicts with fellow royal nobles and foreign governments. The two sultans and Sultan Abun Nashr, son of Sultan Abul Fath, who was still crown prince, actively communicated with several foreign kingdoms until 1682, when the VOC took control of sovereignty over the Sultanate of Banten.

After 1682, every king's appointment had to be based on the decision of the VOC governor-general. It continued with the Dutch East Indies, so Banten slowly experienced political, economic, and social degradation as a result of intervention in his government (Juliadi, et al., 2005: 158). Therefore, most of Banten's correspondence in the 18th and early 19th centuries was with the Dutch via the VOC. Then, the leadership of Banten was continued by his descendants until it was abolished by Governor-General Thomas Stamford Raffles in 1811, and it became a residency-level region. The last Sultan, Sutan Muhammad Rafiuddin, remained in power, but only at the regent level, and this phenomenon continued to his descendants. Therefore, in this period, the sultan ruled under the shadow of colonialism from foreign governments.

Pepper in Banten Sultanate

Pepper had been a commodity in Banten before the emergence of the Banten Sultanate. One of the reasons for the emergence of the sultanate was the existence of pepper. Especially in the 16th and 17th centuries, pepper became the favorite spice on the international market, also known as the paper boom (Swantoro, 2019: 21). So pepper is nicknamed white gold and black gold because of its exchange value. One of the important episodes in the development of pepper in Banten was when Maulana Hasanuddin expanded Banten's power to the Lampung region and parts of southern Sumatra (Ricklefs, 2007: 92). These areas are large pepper producers so by controlling them, Banten can monopolize the production and trade of pepper in the region (De Graaf and Pigeaud, 2019: 206; Swantoro, 2019: 21). Apart from that, he opened a pepper plantation in the interior of Banten.

Banten became one of the largest pepper producers in the 17th century. At the beginning of that century, the Banten pepper harvest reached 100,000-200,000 zak, and there was a price jump from 10-12 riyals to five times or around 50-60 riyal per ten zak (Swantoro, 2019: 21). A century later, when Banten was under the influence of the VOC, Banten pepper production was still high. It is recorded that around 1000-2000 tons of pepper are produced from Banten and Lampung (Swantoro, 2019: 22)). Banten's monopoly on pepper in the area it controls is also recorded in the Dalung Bojong Inscription from the end of the 17th century. One of its contents states that the people of Lampung are each obliged to plant 500 pepper trees (Wijayati, 2011: 397). Therefore, it is natural that pepper production in Banten and its territories was quite high compared to other sultanates at the same time.

Apart from being a trade commodity, high pepper production in Banten was also a tool for the sultanate's diplomacy. One can be seen in Sultan Abul Fath Abdul Fatah's letter 1663 to Charles II. The Sultan gave a small box made of red gold containing four diamonds, while in the second letter, he gave a gift of 100 bahars of black pepper (1 bahar = ±70 kg) and 100 pikuls of ginger (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 28-32). Pepper was also given when Banten was under Dutch colonialism. In 1803, the sultan sent a letter of

thanks to the governor-general, including a gift of 300 bahar black pepper (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 106). Several things show pepper's role, apart from being a trade commodity, but also as a tool for Banten diplomacy with foreign kingdoms or institutions.

Banten Sultanate Diplomacy

Diplomacy is one of the important aspects of a sovereign kingdom. These activities are related to the foreign interests of the kingdom. Many factors caused it, including trade, friendship, and recognition of other royal positions. One of the kingdoms that actively conducted pre-Indonesian diplomatic relations was the Banten Sultanate. This paper tries to see the relationship from the point of view of its officialness because in its history, the establishment of Banten has been visited by many traders and even settled from various foreign nations such as China, Japan, Persia (now Iran), Arabia, Denmark, Keling (now-India), Portuguese, England, Dutch and so on (Marwoto, 1991: 8-9; Tjandrasasmita, 2020: 42). Of these nations, only a few kingdoms or sovereign governments have official relations. Those relations can be known from archives, manuscripts of correspondence, and manuscripts that tell the narrative. Among several kingdoms or governments that have held diplomatic relations with Banten are:

1. Mecca (Ottoman Empire)

Mecca's influence on the archipelago has increased since the early 16th century. The penetration of Mecca's influence happened after Sultan Selim I managed to conquer Egypt in 1517. This event was accompanied by the use of the title of caliph, which had an impact on the political and religious image of other Muslim kingdoms (Chambert-Loir, 2013: 17; Lombard, 2018: 63). The Ottoman Empire also controlled the Hejaz region where Mecca was located. The influence of Mecca on the sultanate in the archipelago is also inseparable from its position as one of the holy cities where Islam developed and a qibla in salat.

One of Banten's relations with Mecca has been established since the time of Sunan Gunung Jati. Around 1521, when the Portuguese controlled Pasai (now-Aceh), he went

to Mecca for several years (Chambert-Loir, 2013: 158). After controlling Banten, according to *Sajarah Banten*, with mystical narration, he and Maulana Hasanuddin returned to perform Hajj to Mecca (Djajadiningrat, 1983: 34). In addition, in that period, there was the name of the figure Maulana Judah, which was similar to the name of one of the port cities to the holy land. The figure is mentioned briefly and became a royal advisor in the early period.

Banten diplomacy with Mecca occurred again in the second half of the 17th century. Prince Ratu sent Labe Panji and Demang Tisnajaya to go on Hajj to Mecca. The sending of the envoy was also a form of the king's request to Sharif Zaid bin Muhsin to explain the books of *Markum*, *Muntahi*, and *Wujudiyah* and request the sending of jurisprudence scholars. The king gave gifts to the Mecca sharif in the form of cloves, nutmeg, Kasturi, and others (MS 12304, 1787; Djajadiningrat, 1983: 53). It seems that the chronicle narrative can be accounted for because the event corresponds to the reign of Sharif Zaid ibn Muhsin (1631-1666), as sharif or governor of Mecca (Chambert-Loir, 2013: 17). In addition, although the Sharif of Mecca could not fulfill the request for jurisprudence scholars to Banten, there were two treatises compiled by Shaykh Ibn 'Allan (died 1647), on the question given by the king.



Figure 1. The Copy of *Mawahib Ar-Rabbaniyah* Manuscript from Syakh Ibn Allan to Sultan Abul Mafakhir Abdul Qadir

(Source: opac.perpusnas.go.id)

The Banten envoy returned from Mecca around 1638. Sharif Mecca brought gifts in the form of a flag from Prophet Ibrahim, pieces of cloth covering the Kaaba and pieces of cloth covering the tomb of the Prophet Muhammad, letters whose contents are not known with certainty, and the granting of the title Sultan Abul Mafakhir Abdul Qadir and to his son the title Sultan Abul Maali Ahmad (Djajadiningrat, 1983: 54-55). The title "sultan" also attracted Mataram and Makassar's interest in Mecca in the future. Sharif Mecca also bequeathed the three sultanates to maintain Islam, especially in the archipelago (Ms 12304, 1787).

In 1651, Banten sent its envoys back to Mecca. The sending of the envoy was intended to notify Sultan Abul Mafakhir of the death, ask for the name of the Sultan of Mecca to replace him, and beg the envoy from Mecca to Banten. After returning from Mecca, Santri Bentot brought a letter giving the title to Pangeran Ratu with Sultan Abul Fath (Djajadiningrat, 1983: 71). It can be understood as Banten's attempt to gain political-religious legitimacy from the leader of the holy land.

Banten again sent its envoy to Mecca around 1669. It was done by the makhkota son of Sultan Abul Fath. The prince's envoy returned in 1671 with a letter granting the title Sultan Abun Nasr Abdul Qahar to the son of the crown. However, at that time, he was not yet king (Chambert-Loir, 2013: 33). A few years later, the prince made the pilgrimage to Mecca, so that later he was known as Sultan Haji.

After Sultan Haji, the political legitimacy of the Banten Sultanate rested with the VOC, causing its relationship with Mecca to become more tenuous. This political strategy can be known from manuscripts that do not mention the official relationship between the two rulers. Even so, Mecca remains a spiritual center for the Sultanate of Banten, and many Banten people perform Hajj in Mecca. Some scholars who still have relations with the ruler studied and settled in the holy land, such as Sheikh Abdullah bin Abdul Qahhar and Shaykh Nawawi Al-Bantani.

2. Dutch

Dutch merchant ships were first docked in Banten in June 1596. To secure their position as a foreign nation, they sent letters to the sultan of Banten on behalf of Prince

Maurizt to establish friendship and trade and promised not to violate the agreement that had been made (Heeres, 1907: 3–4). It was issued on July 1, 1596, and was the first of two letters sent in the same year.

Once established, Dutch merchants formed a trading partnership in 1602 known as the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), an organization similar to the state. Pthere 1 619 VOC controlled Jayakarta and made it the center of its trading activities. In response to the incident, high-ranking officials of the Banten Sultanate sent an accommodating letter. Four letters were sent, foreign-each from Pangeran Gebang, Pangeran Aria, Pangeran Ranamanggala, Pangeran Hupapatih, and Kiai Senapati. The letter has similar content, namely the acceptance of the peace invitation proposed by the Netherlands to Banten and the establishment of trade conditions between the two parties (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 150). All letters were issued not from the king because, at that time, the king was still in the guardianship period, and the actions of these officials, one of them, took advantage of the position of the VOC to stem the expansion of Mataram.

Banten's decision to allow the VOC to build a fort in Jayakarta was used by the VOC to further strengthen its influence in Banten. As a result, there were frequent conflicts between the VOC in Batavia and Banten until the signing of the treaty on July 10, 1659 (Heeres, 1931: 155). The peak of the confrontation occurred from the late 1670s to the early 1680s. The VOC took advantage of Sultan Abu Nasr's closeness to him to wage war with Sultan Abul Fath. Consequently, Sultan Abu Nasr had to sign a treaty in April 1684 granting the VOC monopoly on trade and interference in government (Heeres, 1934: 350). Since then, Banten's diplomatic letters have focused on the VOC.

In 1695-1709, Banten sent about ten letters to the VOC. The letter was sent by Sultan Abul Mahasin as many as four letters, and Pakih Tajudin as many as six letters (Katkova, 2019. 36). The contents of the letter are not explained with certainty, but it can be ascertained that Banten is related to the VOC. In 1781-1794, Banten sent about four letters to the VOC. Sultan Abul Mafakhir Aliuddin sent Thevein to the VOC governor-general. One contains information on ship piracy in Lampung, so pepper

shipments do not reach Banten (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 90-91). In the Banten letters of the 18th century, there is no explicit mention of the gifts included, so the letters focus only on the issue at hand.

The gift-giving that comes with the letter goes back to the 19th century. In 1802, Banten sent about four letters to the Dutch. One of his letters contained the sultan's gratitude to the governor-general with a gift of black pepper as much as 300 bahars (1 bahar = ±70 kg) (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 106). Two years later, there were two letters sent by Banten. One of Sultan Abun Nashr Zainul Muttaqin's letters expressed his gratitude for his inauguration as sultan of Banten and was accompanied by a gift of black pepper as much as 50 bahar (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 113). In the same period, high-ranking officials of the sultanate also sent letters to the Dutch with contents that partly told about the problems and conflicts that occurred in the government.

The reply letters received by Banten are very few. One of the factors is that the filing of letters in Banten was lost when the palace was destroyed in 1810-1811. There were only two reply letters from colonial officials. One of the letters was sent by Cornelis Theodorus Elout to Sultan Mahmud Safiuddin. The letter contains a sign of Elout's farewell to the sultan and gives a memento as a flower vase with Frans *van Oranje's* picture (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 212). Since that letter, there has been no correspondence between the Sultanate of Banten and the Dutch government because the status of the sultanate has been abolished.

3. England

In 1600 AD, England established the *East Indische Company* (EIC) trading partnership to regulate trade in the Indian Ocean region. One of the points that became the center of trade was Banten. To establish trade relations with Banten, the British commissioned Edmund Scott from 1603 to 1605, where he wrote about many phenomena in Banten that year (Guillot, 2008: 364).

Soon after, Banten's diplomatic relations with the British were established. In October 1605, the regent, on behalf of the sultan of Banten, wrote a letter to the king of England, James I. The letter contained remarks on the appointment of James I as king

of England, gratitude for gifts from England, and replies to gifts from the king of Banten in the form of two *faizar* (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 14). Through the letter. It can be seen that previously, the British king had sent a letter accompanied by gifts to the king of Banten, thus showing that the British relationship with Banten had been established earlier. After the Mataram invasion of Batavia, the sultan of Banten, who still held the title Prince Ratu, sent a letter back to James I. Through a letter sent in 1629, the sultan of Banten reported the incident. He asked the British to send guns and gunpowder. This request indicates that Banten has prepared in case of war. Together with letters, the sultan gave gifts of *khassa* cloth, *rambuti* cloth, and thousand weighings of pepper, kris, and spears (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 18–19). Not long ago, Banten again sent a letter to the British because the Dutch began to confront Banten. The letter was sent in 1635 requesting weapons in the form of guns, gunpowder, two cassowary birds, a kris, and a spear (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 23).



Figure 2. Letter of Pangeran Anom to Charles I
(Source: Gallop, 2015: 47)

Banten's friendship with the British was getting closer to Sultan Abul Fath or Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa. During his reign, he sent letters to the king of England, whom Charles II then ruled. In 1664, Sultan Abul Fath sent two letters containing almost the same request for the sale of cannons and rifles from England. In the first letter Sultan Abul Fath gave a gift of a small box made of red gold containing four diamonds, while in the second letter he gave a gift of black pepper, as much as 100 *bahar*, and ginger as much as 100 *pikul* (1 *pikul* = ±15-23 kg) (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 28-32). The existing letters show that Banten's relationship with the British is quite close. This close relationship was especially emphasized in the letter of Sultan Abul Fath in 1675. The letter contains the hope that Banten's friendship with England will not be severed and accompanied by a gift of black pepper (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 43).

Banten's relationship with the British is also shown by the sultan's commitment to the murder of British officials in Banten. It was later written by Sultan Abun Nashr in 1680 and Sultan Abul Fath the following year to the king of England to investigate the case properly. The peak of the friendship occurred in 1682 when Banten sent its ambassador to London to face the king of England. The two men were named Kiai Ngabehi Nala Wipraya and Kiai Ngabehi Abdul Jaya Sedana. The two envoys brought letters from Sultan Abun Nashr, which. One of them contained a request to sell cannons to Banten, and as a gift, the sultan gave 1757 jewels weighing 1088 carats (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 64-66). In addition, the envoy departed on November 10, 1681, and arrived in London, England, on April 27, 1682, also bringing gifts of spices such as ginger, sandalwood, cloves, and pepper (Fruin-Mess, 1924: 208; Jones, 1982: 10). The Dutch certainly did not like this action, so a reply letter from the British as well as some gifts, especially weapons, were taken by the Dutch when the envoy arrived in Banten (Suleiman, 1970: ii).

In the same year, Sultan Abul Fath also sent two letters to Charles II. One of the letters asked for arms assistance to the British in the conflict between the sultan and his son in exchange for the Jakarta area (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 75). The British refused to intervene in the conflict, so the sultan lost, and the sovereignty of Banten came under

Dutch supervision. After that time, there was no diplomatic relationship between Banten and the British until the early 19th century when the British controlled Java. In 1811, one of the princes of Banten, Panembahan Anom, sent two letters to the governor-general Raffles asking for British help to attack Merak, Caringin, and Anyer Islands (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 145). Two years later, in 1813, Raffles destroyed the Sultanate of Banten, which made Banten's diplomatic relations with Britain severe.

4. Denmark

Denmark is among the European kingdoms associated with kingdoms in the archipelago that are less well known. Banten's diplomatic relations with Denmark can be traced from the mid-17th century through letters between officials of the Banten Sultanate and Denmark. In 1642, at least three letters were sent from Banten officials to Danish officials. Kiai Dinda Supati issued a letter about pepper trade with *kumendur* and *petor*, Danish administrative officials (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 167). The Banten sultan's letter to Denmark was sent in 1671. The letter contained permission from the sultan at the request of the Danish king, Christian V, to own land in Banten, and in return, the sultan asked Denmark to sell gunpowder and gunpowder. The letter also mentioned the transaction of pepper from Hadhelar, a Dane, who ordered 176 *bahars* of pepper to and with the syahbandar of Banten, Ngabehi Cakradana, which was proven by the veins sent by Cakradana the following year (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 169). Sultan Abul Fath's letter was replied to by Christian V sent in the same year, but the letter could not be identified due to conditions.

In 1675, Sultan Abul Fath again sent two letters to Christian V. Both letters had the same content, namely regarding the sultan's complaint about the behavior of two Danish petors (administrators) cheating in trade (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 38). After the letter, diplomatic relations were no longer found through correspondence between Banten and Denmark, one of which was because not long after the Dutch controlled the last letter Banten. Banten's letters with Denmark are also more formal, namely trade relations. It can be seen from the language used, that gifts of friendship do not accompany the letters.

5. France

The Kingdom of France was the last foreign kingdom to establish diplomatic relations with Banten. The new Royal French trading partnership was formed in 1664 at the request of Colbert, a finance minister to King Louis XIV (Dorleans, 2006: 79). To carry out trade activities with the East Indies region, the trading partner sent three ships which then docked in Banten in 1671. The group was led by Jean Baptiste de Guilhen, who, upon arrival in Banten, was greeted by the Kaytsu syahbandar and then escorted to the palace to meet Sultan Abul Fath (Dorleans, 2006: 81). The festive welcoming event directly encountered by the sultan can be seen not only as a form of trade relations but also as a diplomatic relationship.

According to historical sources, diplomatic relations between Banten and France initially also had correspondence, but until now, physical evidence has yet to be found from the manuscript of the letter. It can be seen that around 1680, together with the ship *Soleil d'Orient* sultan sent an envoy who brought official letters to Louis XIV accompanied by gifts in the form of diamonds (Dorleans, 2006: 89). Regarding the event, no further information has been found about the contents of the letter and the envoy. However, it can be ascertained that it contains friendly relations between the two kingdoms.

With Banten's relations with France at least until 1682, before the VOC controlled Banten's politics and economy, there were four European kingdoms, namely the Netherlands, Denmark, England, and France, which had official representatives who functioned as a kind of economic embassy (Guillot, 2008: 291). In addition to having official representatives, each of these foreign kingdoms was allowed to build a lodge or storage warehouse in the capital area of the Banten Sultanate. The lodge served as the official representative's residence and to store trade goods.

After Sultan Haji, assisted by the VOC, won the war with Sultan Ageng, many representatives of countries other than the Dutch were expelled from Banten. This expellant made the correspondence that became diplomatic relations between Banten

and these countries unrecovered. Only the British and French returned to Java in the early 19th century and conducted correspondence with the Sultanate of Banten.

In 1808, Herman Willem Daendles, on behalf of the Kingdom of France, became governor-general in Java. Sultan Abun Nashar Muhammad Ishaq twice sent letters to Daendles. Both letters were sent in the same year, 1808. The first letter congratulated Daendles' appointment as governor-general, and the sultan gave a gift of 200 *bahar* of black pepper (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 126). Then the second letter contains information about pepper planting in Lampung and trade problems. In the letter, the sultan expressed his gratitude for the gifts and gave a return gift of 200 *bahar* of black pepper, cloth, and various other gifts (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 138). In addition to these two letters, Daendles also received a letter from Sultan Muhammad ibn Sultan Muhyiddin Zainussalihin in 1810 containing the arrival of Prince Suramenggala on the orders of Major van Dragonder to investigate the murder in Pandeglang (Pudjiastuti, 2007: 140). The letter is also the last letter regarding Banten's relations with France. A year after the letter in 1811, Daendles left Java and was replaced by the British.

Conclusion

The Sultanate of Banten developed from a port city in the western part of Java. The location of the royal capital is an international trade route, thus impacting the number of foreign nations and kingdoms in Banten. Banten responded to this condition by establishing diplomatic relations with some of these kingdoms. Based on the evidence available until now, especially from archives, letters, and manuscripts, not all foreign nations in Banten have diplomatic relations. Some kingdoms with diplomatic relations with Banten are Mecca (Ottoman), the Netherlands, England, Denmark, and France. Banten's relationship with Mecca is political-religious, while the hub with other powers is more political. In addition, in diplomatic relations, pepper, one of the leading spices from Banten, has an important position. At that time, Pepper got the black and white gold and became a tool of Banten diplomacy with other kingdoms, so pepper

had a high bargaining position. Although the main factor of the relationship was motivated by economic and trade interests, this condition showed Banten's position that it was needed and equal to other European kingdoms. Therefore, the diplomatic relations of the kingdoms in the archipelago, including Banten, with its diplomatic tool, spices, showed a high bargaining position of the kingdoms in the world.

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