



FROM *BADAWAH* TO *HADHARAH*: THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION OF NORTHERN COASTAL JAVANESE CITIES IN 1518–1546

LAILATUL FADILAH, DZULFIKAR UBAIDILLAH ROIS, HELMI SYAIFUDDIN

UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

Corresponding email: 250204220006@student.uin-malang.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study examines the socio-economic dynamics of the northern coastal cities of Java, namely Demak, Gresik, Tuban, and Surabaya, during the period 1518–1546. Using the urban sociology framework of Ibn Khaldun's 'ashabiyyah theory and André Raymond's urban historical approach, this research investigates how these port cities functioned as centers of Islamic civilization characterized by the Santri (Puritan) Islam typology as formulated by Clifford Geertz. The method applied is the historical method, consisting of four stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Primary sources include Dutch-language texts by Roo de la Faille (1954), Sutterheim (1952), Mellema (1947), the historiography of H.J. de Graaf, and several Dutch colonial newspapers including *De Locomotief* (1925), *Algemeen Handelsblad* (1925), *Nijmeegsch dagblad* (1949), and *De Volkskrant* (1995). The findings are organized into three phases: first, the pre-Demak tribal phase (*badawah*) in which coastal cities existed as loosely connected trading communities; second, the consolidation of Islamic political power under Sultan Trenggana, driven by the 'ashabiyyah of the santri trading network; and third, the fragmentation phase following Trenggana's death in 1546 and the eventual fall of Demak to Pajang. This study contributes a new urban-sociological reading of northern Javanese coastal history that complements existing economic-history approaches.

Keywords: 'Ashabiyyah, Demak, Ibn Khaldun, Islamic Urban Sociology, Northern Coastal Java

INTRODUCTION

Studies of cities in the northern coastal region of Java have generally been approached from political and economic historical perspectives. For example, the works of H. J. de Graaf on the Islamic kingdoms of Java, as well as Denys Lombard's study of trade networks in Le Carrefour Javanais, have focused predominantly on commercial networks. Questions concerning how Islamic cities were formed as social entities, how tribal solidarity was constituted, how urban space was structured, and how religious identity shaped economic dynamics have rarely been posed explicitly. This study employs two frameworks in urban sociology: Ibn Khaldun's (1332–1406) concept of 'ashabiyyah and his theory of the cycle of civilization as formulated in *al-Muqaddimah*, and André Raymond's (1925–2011) approach to Islamic urban morphology. From an Ibn Khaldunian perspective, the dynamics of the cities along Java's northern coast during the period 1518–1546 began with an initial tribal phase (*badawah*), reached their peak as centers of Islamic civilization (*hadharah*) under Sultan Trenggana, and subsequently underwent disintegration, culminating in the fall of Demak to Pajang.



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Nur'aini (2025) describes the Mesjid Agung Demak (Demak Great Mosque) as an icon of the northern coastal city of Java that functioned not only as a spiritual center but also embodied economic dimensions analyzed through the semiotic concepts of denotation and connotation.

Accordingly, the development of Islamic coastal cities in Java was structurally supported by networks of trade and political power encoded through the tortoise relief on the walls of the Mesjid Agung Demak. Nur Hadi (2022) demonstrates that the cities and markets of the northern Javanese coast had developed a cosmopolitan *hadharah* character through commercial networks and the teaching of *fiqh*, in contrast to the inland regions, which retained a heterodox *badawah* character. This spatial dichotomy is therefore consistent with the concept of transition within Ibn Khaldun's theory of 'umrān. Rukayah et al. (2023), Cahya et al. (2024), and Rafid et al. (2024) demonstrate that the civilizations of the northern coastal cities of Java developed as centers of maritime power and Muslim commercial networks but subsequently experienced decline as a result of ecological factors and political shifts. Consequently, the historiography of Islamic civilization along Java's northern coast needs to be reconstructed from the perspectives of Islamic sociology and economics.

Hana and Wijaya (Historia, 2024) demonstrate that Jepara, as a port city on the northern coast of Java in the sixteenth century, developed an Islamic urban morphology through the integration of markets, inter-port trade networks, and maritime power. This configuration is consistent with André Raymond's concept of Islamic urban structure, in which *sūq* (market) activity constitutes one of the driving forces in the formation of urban space. Ulum Fasih (Batuthah, 2022) explains that the urban organization of Gresik as an Islamic city developed through the integration of a commercial port, mosque, and religious educational institutions from the fourteenth century onward. This configuration is likewise consistent with André Raymond's concept of Islamic urban morphology, in which *sūq* and religious institutions constitute key structural elements in the formation of urban space. Choirunnisak and Afiyanto (Historia Madania, 2022) demonstrate that the morphology of Dutch colonial cities such as Malang was constructed on the basis of ethnic segregation and economic zoning through the *Bauplan* (building plan) system. This stands in sharp contrast to the morphology of Islamic cities such as Banten, which, from an Ibn Khaldunian perspective, developed organically from Islamic 'aṣabiyyah by integrating the mosque, market, and sultanate authority as expressions of a cohesive 'umrān ḥaḍarī civilization.

In contrast to previous studies of northern coastal Javanese cities such as Tuban, which have generally employed traditional historiographical approaches emphasizing narratives of prominent figures, the process of Islamization, and local political dynamics, this study proposes a more comprehensive epistemological approach by integrating Ibn Khaldun's sociological perspective with André Raymond's framework of Islamic urban morphology, which emphasizes key components of Islamic urban architecture, including the mosque, market, and political authority. Accordingly, Islamic coastal cities are no longer viewed merely as arenas for religious propagation and political conflict, but rather as urban civilizational entities characterized by geospatial configurations, socio-economic dynamics, and cycles of rise and decline that can be systematically explained within the historiography of Islamic cities. This historiographical framework has thus far been applied more extensively to Arab and

Middle Eastern cities than to Islamic cities in the Nusantara.

The central issue examined in this study is the historiography of the cities along the northern coast of Java from the perspectives of Ibn Khaldun's sociology and André Raymond's urban morphology. Based on this research problem, the study addresses the following questions. First, how did the dynamics of Islamic 'aṣabiyyah (social solidarity), from an Ibn Khaldunian perspective, contribute to the rise of northern coastal Javanese cities such as Demak, Gresik, Tuban, and Jepara as centers of civilization, and how did the weakening of this solidarity contribute to the decline of Islamic coastal cities in the region? The 'aṣabiyyah of the Islamic cities along the northern coast of Java developed through a historical cycle that began with trade networks in Gresik, cooperation between ulama and rulers in Demak, and Sufi traditions in Cirebon, before eventually weakening as a result of competition, internal divisions, and Mataram political pressure.

Second, how did the morphology of northern coastal Javanese cities develop through Islamic urban architectural patterns consisting of mosques, markets, *alun-alun* (town square), and *keraton* (palace), as conceptualized in André Raymond's approach to Islamic urban morphology, and to what extent did Islamic urbanism reflect the distinctive characteristics of Nusantara Islamic cities in contrast to Dutch colonial urban planning? Traditional Islamic cities were characterized by spatial arrangements that reflected socio-religious activities, such as the presence of a Masjid Agung (Great Mosque), in contrast to the *stadsgemeente* (colonial municipality), which implemented grid-based planning, the separation of administrative functions, and state control over public space.

Third, what were the implications of the formation and decline of civilization in the northern coastal cities of Java for the development of Islamic historiography in the Nusantara, given that these cities played a significant role in the Islamization of the coastal region because of their strategic locations as nodes within interregional networks of trade and *da'wah*?

This article aims to analyze the spatial organization of Islamic cities along the northern coast of Java through the perspectives of Ibn Khaldun and André Raymond. Ibn Khaldun's framework is employed to examine how social solidarity and the character of civilization contributed to the formation and decline of cities, while Raymond's framework is used to examine the physical structure of Islamic cities, particularly in terms of their sacred and profane dimensions. The sacred dimensions of Muslim urban space include the Masjid Agung, religious art, ritual purification facilities, and tombs, whereas the profane dimensions include the *alun-alun*, markets, and ports. Through the perspectives of Ibn Khaldun and Raymond, the spatial organization of cities such as Gresik, Demak, Cirebon, Tuban, and Banten can be understood not merely as products of economic and geographical necessities, but also as expressions of how coastal Muslim communities built, sustained, and ultimately lost their civilizational power.

METHOD

This study employs the historical method, which consists of four stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 2013; Herlina, 2020). These four stages are undertaken sequentially and complement one another, thereby producing a historically accountable reconstruction. Heuristics refers to the stage of collecting historical sources relevant to the research topic (Kuntowijoyo, 2013).

At this stage, historical sources are classified into two types: primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are those closest to the events under investigation and constitute the principal basis for historical reconstruction.

The primary sources used in this study consist of Dutch-language written sources, which can be broadly categorized into two groups. The first group comprises colonial scholarly texts written by Dutch scholars during the first half of the twentieth century. These texts include *Historische curiositeiten uit Malajoe en Java* by Roo de la Faille (1954), which contains historical and ethnographic accounts of life in Java and the Malay world; *Cultuureschiedenis van Indonesie* by Sutterheim (1952), which examines the cultural history of the Nusantara, including the development of coastal cities; *De Islam in Indonesie in het bijzonder op Java* by Mellema (1947), which specifically examines the development of Islam in Java; and the historiographical corpus of H. J. de Graaf, comprising several studies of the Islamic kingdoms of Java. The second group consists of Dutch colonial newspapers containing observational accounts and reports on the conditions of Javanese port cities, including *Nijmeegsch dagblad*, 14 April 1949, which contains an article entitled “Havenstaking in Surabaya”; *Nederlandsche Antillen; De Locomotief*, 3 December 1925; *De Volkskrant*, 19 December 1995; and *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 28 February 1925. The secondary sources include Ibn Khaldun’s *Al-Muqaddimah*, translated by Franz Rosenthal (2005); several works by André Raymond on Islamic urban morphology (1994, 2002); Clifford Geertz’s *The Religion of Java* (1960); and M. C. Ricklefs’s *A History of Modern Indonesia* (2001). These secondary sources are used to construct an interpretive framework through which the data from the primary sources can be examined from a sociological perspective.

Once the sources had been collected, the next stage was source criticism, namely the process of assessing the validity and credibility of the identified historical sources. Source criticism consists of two forms: external criticism and internal criticism (Kuntowijoyo, 2013; Herlina, 2020). External criticism was conducted to assess the physical authenticity of the sources, including examination of the date of publication, the identity of the author, and the institutional context in which the source was produced. The Dutch scholarly texts used as primary sources in this study were published between 1947 and 1954, either during the colonial period or shortly thereafter. Their authors, including Sutterheim, Mellema, and Roo de la Faille, were scholars of Indology affiliated with Dutch colonial institutions and had direct access to the archives of the Netherlands East Indies government. The physical authenticity of these texts can be confirmed through the catalogs of Dutch university libraries, which consistently record their publication details. The colonial newspapers used in this study can likewise be authenticated through the Delpher platform, which preserves high-resolution digital copies of the original editions.

Internal criticism was conducted to assess the credibility of the content of the sources, specifically whether the information they contain can be considered reliable (Kuntowijoyo, 2013). At this stage, colonial scholarly sources were read critically by taking into account the ideological position of their authors as part of the intellectual apparatus of Dutch colonialism. Texts produced within a colonial context often contain biases in their representations of colonized societies, tending to diminish indigenous agency and portray colonialism as a civilizing mission. Awareness of such biases formed an integral part of the internal criticism process. Each factual claim in the primary

sources was cross-checked against other sources, including other primary sources and secondary literature written by Indonesian historians. Information that appeared in only a single source and was potentially controversial was treated with a higher degree of caution. A reading-against-the-grain approach was also employed to identify information about the lives of Javanese coastal communities that remained concealed beneath colonial narratives.

At the interpretation stage, data from the primary sources were examined and classified according to their relevance to the research questions. Data concerning the social, economic, and religious conditions of coastal cities were organized chronologically according to the three phases constituting the analytical framework. During the synthesis process, the established facts were integrated into the theoretical frameworks of Ibn Khaldun and André Raymond. Ibn Khaldun's concepts of *badawah*, *'ashabiyyah*, and *hadharah* were employed as analytical categories for explaining the socio-political dynamics of coastal cities, while Raymond's concept of Islamic urban morphology was used to explain changes in urban spatial organization and economic networks. Geertz's *Santri* Islamic typology served as an additional lens through which to examine the religious dimensions of the identified dynamics. In Geertz's typology, the *Santri* refers to Javanese Muslims whose social and religious practices are more closely associated with normative Islamic traditions and institutions.

The final stage is historiography, namely the writing of history based on all the facts and interpretations generated through the preceding three stages. At this stage, the interpreted facts are presented systematically, chronologically, and argumentatively in the form of a historical narrative (Kuntowijoyo, 2013, pp. 80–81). The cities of coastal Java exhibit a distinctive mechanism of *ashabiyah*, based not on Arab tribal ties but rather on Islamic solidarity combined with commercial networks. According to André Raymond, the traditional Orientalist conception of the "Muslim city" differs from a post-secular Indological perspective. Raymond emphasizes the importance of Islamic law in understanding the structure of Islamic urban spaces. This study indicates that markets in Muslim cities differed from the urban layouts of *stadsgemeente* (municipalities established under the Dutch colonial administration) governed by the *Burgemeester* (mayor). The urban structures of northern coastal Java, including Demak, Cirebon, Gresik, Surabaya, Tuban, and Banten, therefore reveal distinctive spatial configurations shaped by the interaction of Islamic institutions, commercial activities, political authority, and local social networks. These characteristics demonstrate that the development of Islamic cities in Java cannot be adequately understood solely through the framework of colonial urban planning, but must also be examined as an expression of indigenous Muslim social organization and the historical dynamics of Islamic urban civilization.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Badawah Phase: Northern Coastal Javanese Cities before Demak

Ibn Khaldun begins the *al-Muqaddimah* with an academic inquiry into the distinction between *badawah* (inland or tribal life) and *hadharah* (urban civilization). By the time Islamic cities along the northern coast of Java, such as Demak, Gresik, and Cirebon, had entered the *hadharah* phase, characterized by foreign settlements, royal compounds, markets, and ports, the inland regions of Java remained in the *badawah* phase,

characterized by agrarian-based rural communities and solidarity. Panembahan Senopati subsequently built an agrarian-based power that contributed to the downfall of the coastal cities.

Cities such as Gresik, Tuban, and Surabaya became symbols of Muslim communities before the establishment of Demak. In the chapter entitled "The Country of Chao-Wa (Java)," Ma Huan wrote that foreign ships consistently first anchored at a city called Tu-pan (Tuban), then proceeded to New Village/Gresik and Surabaya, and finally reached Wilwatikta (Sidoarjo). As Majapahit weakened following the Paregreg War (Suhita, 1401–1406), Islamic cities such as Tuban, Gresik, and Surabaya began establishing small kingdoms. Gresik Kedaton and Giri Kedaton emerged, while Tuban began to develop Islamic political power under Demak's authority.

Sutterheim (1952), in *Cultuurgeschiedenis van Indonesie*, describes the condition of the northern coast of Java in the early sixteenth century as a set of adjacent economic networks, although there was not yet clear evidence of cultural diffusion or exchange among religious traditions. There were communities of Javanese Muslim merchants residing in settlements near the ports, Gujarati merchants who introduced the Chisti order, Hokkien Chinese merchants who established their own mosques and settlements, and Hindu-Buddhist Javanese aristocrats who still controlled Wilwatikta. Mellema (1947), in *De Islam in Indonesie*, reinforces this account of the spatial organization of Islamic cities along the northern coast of Java by noting that the process of Islamization in the coastal region occurred gradually and unevenly. Some ports, such as Demak and Tuban, already had mosques and qadi (Islamic judge), whereas others still exhibited a mixture of Hindu-Javanese practices.

According to André Raymond, the Islamic cities of the northern coast of Java had not yet fulfilled the criteria of *morphologie urbaine* (urban form) during their early phase. In his studies of Arab cities, Raymond demonstrates that developing Islamic cities can be characterized by the *Masigit Hageng* (Great Mosque) as a religious and social center, the *suq* or market as an economic center, and Muslim settlements. During the *badawah* phase of coastal Java, these three nodes remained relatively separate and had not yet been integrated into a coherent and organically structured urban order.

Roo de la Faille (1954), in *Historische curiositeiten uit Malajoe en Java*, provides a more complex account of the economic life of pre-Demak coastal cities. Roo de la Faille notes that the trade in pepper, rice, and textiles generated economic surpluses for Muslim ports. Trade networks along the northern coast of Java before the emergence of Demak were not yet fully organized around religious identity. In the *Kanzul Hum*, Muslim merchants are described as trading alongside non-Muslim merchants primarily on the basis of economic interests rather than religious solidarity, a characteristic of the *badawah* phase from the perspective of Ibn Khaldunian sociology.

This condition can be further illuminated through Geertz's distinction between *Abangan* and *Santri*. In Geertz's (1960) typology, the *Abangan* refers broadly to Javanese Muslims whose religious and social practices remained closely intertwined with local customary traditions, including cultural practices containing pre-Islamic and Hindu-Buddhist elements. The *Santri*, by contrast, refers to Muslims whose religious orientation was more closely associated with normative Islamic practices, Islamic learning, mosques, religious institutions, and the observance of Islamic obligations. These categories should not be understood as rigid or mutually exclusive social groups; rather, they provide an

analytical framework for identifying different orientations within Javanese Muslim society. This distinction is particularly useful for understanding the transitional character of northern coastal communities before the emergence of a more consolidated Islamic urban order.

From this perspective, coastal communities during the *badawah* phase can be understood as occupying a transitional position between Abangan-oriented cultural practices and a more explicitly *Santri*-oriented Islamic social order. Islamic practices were already present, particularly among merchant communities, but Islam had not yet become the exclusive basis of collective identity, social organization, or urban legal authority. Muslim merchants could fulfill their religious obligations and observe halal commercial practices while simultaneously participating in Javanese customary rituals that incorporated elements of Hindu-Buddhist traditions. Rather than representing the absence of Islam, this condition indicates an incomplete process of religious and institutional consolidation. Islam was present as a religious practice and as an emerging social identity, but its institutional and normative influence had not yet fully reorganized the broader structure of coastal society.

The coexistence of these religious and cultural orientations also helps explain the relatively fragmented character of the early coastal urban landscape. From André Raymond's perspective on Islamic urban morphology, an Islamic city is not defined solely by the presence of Muslim inhabitants but by the integration of key urban institutions and spatial elements, particularly the mosque, *suq*, residential quarters, and political authority. During the early phase of northern coastal Java, these elements existed but were not necessarily integrated into a unified urban structure. Mosques functioned as religious and social centers, markets connected local communities to interregional trade, and Muslim settlements developed around commercial nodes; nevertheless, political authority and urban space remained distributed among different social and religious communities. The absence of full spatial and institutional integration therefore corresponds to the transitional character of the *badawah* phase.

Islamic 'Aṣabiyyah: "The Consolidation of Sultan Trenggana's Power and the Zenith of Coastal Urban Civilization"

A fundamental transformation in the political, social, and urban organization of the northern coastal cities of Java occurred during the reign of Sultan Trenggana, conventionally dated to approximately 1521–1546. This period marked an important transition from relatively dispersed Muslim communities and commercial networks toward a more integrated Islamic political and urban order. From an Ibn Khaldunian perspective, the transformation can be understood through the strengthening of *'aṣabiyyah*, namely a form of collective solidarity capable of mobilizing social groups around shared political, economic, and religious interests. *'Aṣabiyyah* in Ibn Khaldun's thought should not be reduced to primitive tribal loyalty. Rather, it constitutes a mechanism of social cohesion through which a group develops the collective capacity to establish authority, defend its interests, and ultimately construct a political order. Religion can significantly strengthen this solidarity because it provides a normative framework that transcends narrower kinship interests and directs collective action toward a broader moral and political purpose (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). In the context of sixteenth-century Java, therefore, the emergence of Islamic political authority under

Sultan Trenggana can be interpreted not simply as the expansion of a royal dynasty, but as the consolidation of a new form of solidarity connecting religious authority, commercial interests, and political power.

The importance of this transformation becomes clearer when the political geography of northern coastal Java is taken into account. Demak did not develop in isolation from the other coastal centers. Tuban, Gresik, Surabaya, Jepara, Cirebon, and, further west, Banten, were connected through maritime trade, migration, religious networks, and political alliances. These cities constituted a chain of interconnected coastal settlements rather than independent urban units. Their strategic significance derived from their position within the maritime routes linking Java with Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, Gujarat, southern China, and other parts of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian trading world. Consequently, the consolidation of Demak's political authority under Trenggana should be understood within a broader process of regional integration (Mellema, 1947). The expansion of Demak did not merely enlarge territorial control; it strengthened connections among already existing commercial and Muslim communities and provided them with a political framework within which their interests could be coordinated.

Within this process, Islamic religious networks played a particularly important role. The ulama should not be understood exclusively as religious teachers detached from political and economic affairs. Their importance lay partly in their ability to establish connections between religious legitimacy, local communities, rulers, and commercial groups. Their authority could therefore function as a mechanism of social integration. From the perspective of Ibn Khaldun, religious solidarity has the potential to transform dispersed social groups into a more cohesive political community because a shared religious orientation can subordinate particular interests to a broader collective purpose (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). In the Javanese context, the development of an increasingly *Santri*-oriented Muslim social network provided one of the ideological and institutional resources through which political authority could be consolidated. Thus, the relationship between Trenggana and the religious networks of the northern coast should be viewed not simply as a ruler-cleric relationship but as part of a wider process of coalition building among political, religious, and commercial actors.

This interpretation can be further illuminated through Geertz's distinction between *Abangan* and *Santri*. If the preceding *badawah* phase was characterized by the coexistence of Islamic practices with established Javanese and Hindu-Buddhist cultural traditions, the period of Trenggana witnessed the increasing institutionalization of a more explicitly *Santri*-oriented Islamic identity in several coastal centers. As what was explain previously, In Geertz's (1960) formulation, the *Santri* refers to a social and religious orientation associated more closely with Islamic observance, religious learning, mosques, and Islamic institutions, whereas the *Abangan* represents a more syncretic orientation in which Islamic practices coexist with local Javanese traditions. These categories should not be treated as fixed or mutually exclusive populations. Rather, they are useful for identifying shifts in the dominant religious orientation of particular social networks. In the coastal cities, the growing prominence of *Santri* networks provided a cultural and normative basis for linking religious practice with commerce, education, and political authority. Islam thus increasingly functioned not merely as a personal religious identity but as a source of social organization.

The consolidation of *‘aṣabiyyah* was also expressed through the economic organization of the coastal cities. Muslim merchants were not simply individual economic actors; they participated in networks in which trust, reputation, religious affiliation, and social reciprocity could facilitate commercial interaction. The importance of Islam in this context should therefore not be reduced to the existence of halal trade. More significantly, Islamic norms and institutions could provide mechanisms for regulating social relationships, resolving disputes, establishing obligations, and maintaining trust among geographically dispersed commercial actors. The emergence of Islamic legal practices, including those associated with *fiqh mu‘āmalah*, can consequently be interpreted as part of the institutionalization of economic relations within Muslim communities. Where supported by historical evidence, the presence of qadi and other religious authorities indicates that Islamic legal norms were becoming incorporated into the institutional structure of coastal society. However, these developments should be understood as evidence of an evolving normative order rather than as proof that the entire commercial system had already become exclusively governed by shari‘a. The economic dimension of this emerging solidarity is particularly visible in the development of coastal trade. Roo de la Faille (1954) documents the importance of pepper, rice, and textile commerce in the economic life of coastal ports such as Gresik and Surabaya. These commercial networks connected coastal communities to wider maritime routes and provided a material basis for the consolidation of urban power.

The economic significance of Islamic solidarity was particularly important because the coastal economy depended upon long-distance commercial networks involving Muslim and non-Muslim merchants. *‘Aṣabiyyah* therefore did not necessarily imply economic exclusivity. On the contrary, the strength of Muslim commercial networks could coexist with commercial interaction across religious boundaries. What distinguished the emerging Islamic commercial order was not necessarily the exclusion of non-Muslim merchants, but the increasing capacity of Muslim communities to organize economic relationships through shared religious institutions, trust networks, and normative expectations. In this sense, Islamic solidarity operated as a form of social capital. It strengthened intra-community cooperation while simultaneously enabling Muslim merchants to participate in broader cosmopolitan markets.

The development of these economic networks corresponded with important changes in the morphology of the coastal cities. André Raymond's approach to Islamic urban morphology is useful here because it directs attention away from political chronology alone and toward the spatial organization of everyday urban life. In Raymond's analytical framework, the mosque, *suq*, residential quarters, streets, and centers of political authority constitute interconnected components of Islamic urban space. The transformation of northern coastal Javanese cities can therefore be understood as a process in which previously dispersed social and economic nodes became increasingly interconnected. The mosque served not only as a religious institution but also as a social and symbolic center; the *suq* concentrated commercial activity; residential quarters accommodated various communities; while the palace or center of political authority provided a focal point for governance. The emergence of such spatial relationships indicates a transition from a relatively fragmented coastal settlement pattern toward a more integrated urban configuration.

This transformation, however, should not be interpreted as the simple replication

of Middle Eastern Islamic urban morphology. Islamic cities in Java developed through an interaction between Islamic institutions and pre-existing Javanese spatial and cosmological traditions. The arrangement of the Masjid Agung, *alun-alun* (town square), and *keraton* (palace), for example, demonstrates that Islamic urbanization in Java was articulated through a distinctive spatial vocabulary. The *alun-alun* functioned as a public and ceremonial space connecting religious and political institutions, while the mosque represented the religious center of the Muslim community and the *keraton* embodied political authority. Such an arrangement illustrates the process of localization and adaptation through which Islamic institutions became embedded within existing Javanese spatial traditions. From Raymond's perspective, therefore, the morphology of Islamic cities in Java should be understood relationally: urban space emerged through the interaction of religious institutions, commercial functions, political authority, and local cultural traditions.

The concept of *mahallah* is also relevant to this process. The existence of distinct residential quarters associated with particular ethnic or religious communities reflects the cosmopolitan character of coastal cities. Muslim merchants from different regions, Javanese communities, Chinese merchants, and other groups could maintain relatively distinct residential and social networks while participating in the same urban economy. Such spatial differentiation did not necessarily indicate complete segregation. Rather, it could facilitate the organization of social networks within a commercially interconnected urban environment. The coastal city consequently became a space in which difference and integration existed simultaneously: communities maintained particular identities while participating in shared markets, ports, religious institutions, and political structures.

Surabaya provides a useful illustration of this transformation. Its position as a port enabled it to function as an intermediary between maritime routes and the riverine and inland networks of East Java. Colonial-era historical records, including *Nijmeegensch dagblad* (14 April 1949) and *De Locomotief* (3 December 1925), preserve retrospective accounts emphasizing Surabaya's strategic significance as a major gateway of Java. The description of Surabaya as *poort van Java* ("gateway of Java") reflects its long-standing importance as a maritime node. Such evidence should nevertheless be treated critically because these sources were produced within colonial historiographical contexts and often interpreted earlier political and economic developments through later colonial categories. Their value lies less in providing an unmediated description of sixteenth-century Surabaya than in corroborating the city's long-term significance within the regional maritime network.

The case of Surabaya demonstrates why the development of Islamic coastal cities cannot be explained solely through the expansion of political sovereignty. A port city could become important because it occupied a strategic position within maritime trade, while its political and religious institutions subsequently reinforced that economic importance. Conversely, political integration could provide greater security and institutional coordination for existing commercial networks. The relationship was therefore reciprocal: economic networks supported political power, while political authority provided conditions for the consolidation of commercial and religious institutions. In Ibn Khaldunian terms, this reciprocal relationship strengthened *'aṣabiyyah* by connecting collective solidarity with material interests and political

authority.

The expansion of Islamic education represents another important dimension of this transformation. The emergence of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) and other centers of Islamic learning contributed to the reproduction of religious knowledge and social networks. Their significance extended beyond the transmission of religious doctrine. Islamic education created social relationships among teachers, students, merchants, rulers, and local communities. Students who moved between different centers of learning could subsequently become religious teachers, merchants, administrators, or intermediaries connecting different communities. Education thus contributed to the circulation of religious knowledge and the formation of networks that transcended individual cities. In this respect, the development of Islamic learning can be interpreted as part of the institutional infrastructure supporting *‘aṣabiyyah*.

The relationship between *Santri* identity and economic life is particularly significant. *Santri* identity was not simply a marker of religious affiliation; in certain contexts, it could function as a form of social capital. Shared religious norms created expectations concerning trustworthiness, reciprocity, commercial ethics, and social responsibility. Such expectations could facilitate economic cooperation among members of dispersed Muslim communities. Nevertheless, it would be methodologically problematic to assume that all Muslim merchants belonged to a homogeneous *Santri* community or that economic transactions were exclusively determined by religious identity. The historical evidence instead suggests a more complex configuration in which religious solidarity interacted with kinship, locality, ethnicity, political affiliation, and commercial interests.

From an Ibn Khaldunian perspective, this period can therefore be interpreted as a moment in which *‘aṣabiyyah* reached a relatively high degree of political effectiveness. Religious solidarity was transformed into collective political capacity; political authority strengthened the organization of economic networks; and economic prosperity supported the institutional development of religious and urban life. The resulting configuration approximated what Ibn Khaldun describes as the transition toward *hadharah*: a stage in which social groups move beyond basic subsistence and tribal organization toward a more complex civilization characterized by urban institutions, specialized economic activities, political authority, and cultural production.

The transformation was simultaneously spatial. Through the integration of mosques, *suq*, residential quarters, ports, educational institutions, and political centers, the coastal cities developed increasingly complex urban structures. The city was no longer merely a place where traders happened to meet. It became an institutional environment in which religious, economic, political, and social relations were reproduced through interconnected spatial arrangements. This is precisely where Ibn Khaldun's sociology and Raymond's urban morphology complement one another. Ibn Khaldun explains why collective solidarity could generate political and civilizational expansion, whereas Raymond helps explain how that social and political transformation became materially articulated in urban space.

The period of Sultan Trenggana can thus be interpreted as a significant moment in the consolidation of Islamic urban civilization along the northern coast of Java. The emergence of stronger *‘aṣabiyyah*, the growing influence of *Santri* networks, the institutionalization of Islamic learning and legal authority, the expansion of commercial

networks, and the integration of urban spatial elements collectively transformed the coastal cities from relatively dispersed Muslim settlements into more complex centers of Islamic *hadharah*. The achievement of this phase, however, should not be understood as the complete Islamization of all aspects of coastal society. Rather, it represented a historical moment in which Islamic institutions and identities acquired sufficient political, economic, and spatial coherence to become major forces in the organization of urban life. It was precisely this consolidation of *‘aṣabiyyah* that enabled the coastal cities to reach their political and civilizational prominence, while also creating the conditions against which subsequent internal fragmentation and political competition would eventually operate.

Disintegration and the Fall of Demak: When *‘Aṣabiyyah* Weakened

Ibn Khaldun never promised permanence for any civilization. In his view, the *‘aṣabiyyah* that brings a group to the height of power contains within it the seeds of its own destruction. When a dynasty attains prosperity and stability, subsequent generations grow accustomed to luxury and gradually lose the spirit of solidarity possessed by the founding generation. Without renewed *‘aṣabiyyah*, political power begins to weaken, and a new group possessing stronger *‘aṣabiyyah* will eventually take over (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). This cycle became particularly evident in Demak after 1546.

The death of Sultan Trenggana in the battle of Panarukan in 1546, an event recorded by H.J. de Graaf, opened a new chapter in the history of the Demak Sultanate. Trenggana left no clear succession, and a struggle for the throne soon erupted among members of the royal family. This conflict reflected the weakening of coastal Islamic *‘aṣabiyyah*: the solidarity that had previously bound ulama, merchants, and rulers together began to unravel as the interests of royal clans came into conflict with those of increasingly autonomous port cities.

Port cities such as Gresik, Tuban, and Surabaya, which during Trenggana's reign had been willing to remain within Demak's sphere of influence, began to assert greater autonomy. Sutterheim (1952) notes that local rulers in the coastal cities became increasingly reluctant to send tribute and troops to Demak, which was then embroiled in a succession conflict. This was not merely an act of political defiance but reflected a deeper sociological dynamic: the *Santri* commercial networks that had constituted the backbone of Demak's *‘aṣabiyyah* were apparently stronger as economic networks than as networks of political loyalty. Once the charismatic sultan was no longer present, these networks reverted to their primary orientation, namely the commercial interests of individual cities.

This process was further intensified by the emergence of a new power from the interior of Java. Within an Ibn Khaldunian framework, the rise of Pajang can be interpreted as the emergence of a new *‘aṣabiyyah* from the *badawah* zone of the Javanese interior, challenging the hegemony of coastal *hadharah*. De Graaf records that Jaka Tingkir, the founder of Pajang, successfully exploited the political vacuum in Demak to establish alliances with several local rulers, including some coastal rulers who had become dissatisfied with Demak's internal conflicts. Around 1568, the center of Islamic political power in Java shifted from Demak to Pajang, an event that, in Ibn Khaldunian terms, marked the end of one civilizational cycle and the beginning of another.

The 28 February 1925 edition of *Algemeen Handelsblad* published an article

tracing the history of ancient Javanese trade and referring to the decline of the northern Javanese port cities after the sixteenth century. From a colonial perspective, the author regarded this decline as evidence of Java's inability to sustain an advanced urban civilization. Read through an Ibn Khaldunian framework, however, what appears as decline can instead be understood as a natural process of civilizational succession: the coastal cities did not collapse permanently but entered a new phase of *badawah* before experiencing renewal in a different form.

From the perspective of Raymond's urban morphology (1994), the fall of Demak also left traces on the physical landscape of the coastal cities. Raymond demonstrates that the decline of political power can affect the degradation of urban space: markets that had previously been vibrant became less active, major mosques lost their political and economic patronage, and *Santri* residential quarters contracted. The 19 December 1995 edition of *De Volkskrant* reported on archaeological surveys in the northern coastal cities of Java that uncovered layers of remains from the sixteenth-century golden age buried beneath simpler structures from subsequent periods, providing archaeological confirmation of the cycle of Islamic urban architecture described by Raymond.

It is important to emphasize that the collapse of Demak's hegemony did not entail the collapse of Islam *Santri* as a social force. *Santri* communities in the coastal cities had developed sufficiently deep roots during the Trenggana era to survive the collapse of Demak's political authority. *Pesantren* established on the outskirts of the port cities continued to function, *Santri* commercial networks continued to operate on a more limited scale, and *Santri* Islamic identity continued to be reproduced across generations. This is consistent with Raymond's (2002) observation that in Islamic cities, religiously based civic institutions such as mosques, madrasas, and waqf possess considerably greater institutional durability than political institutions of power.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the socio-economic dynamics of the northern coastal cities of Java during the period 1518–1546 can be explained more comprehensively and systematically through the urban sociological frameworks of Ibn Khaldun and André Raymond. The three phases identified (pre-Demak *badawah*, the zenith of Islamic *'aṣabiyyah* under Sultan Trenggana, and post-1546 disintegration) should not be understood merely as a chronological sequence of political and economic events, but as manifestations of sociological processes governing the formation, culmination, and decline of urban civilization.

The principal contribution of this study lies in introducing an urban sociological perspective as a complementary framework, of equal analytical significance to political and economic history, for understanding the coastal cities of Java. Cities such as Demak, Gresik, Tuban, and Surabaya have generally been portrayed as actors in the history of spice trade or the spread of Islam, but have rarely been examined as urban entities possessing their own social and spatial logics. By employing the conceptual frameworks of Ibn Khaldun and Raymond, this study demonstrates that these cities were not merely stages upon which history unfolded, but historical agents in their own right.

The study also demonstrates that Geertz's *Santri* Islamic typology did not emerge suddenly, but rather developed through a prolonged process of urban formation: the crystallization of religious identity within urban commercial networks, driven by

‘aṣabiyyah and reinforced by Islamic urban institutions such as *pesantren* and sharia-based markets. Understanding Islam *Santri*, therefore, requires an understanding of the urban sociology of sixteenth-century Javanese coastal society.

Future research should extend this inquiry chronologically to examine how these coastal cities evolved under the pressures of the VOC during the seventeenth century, while also adopting a comparative approach to examine the northern coastal cities of Java alongside other Islamic port cities in the Indonesian archipelago, such as Banten, Makassar, and Aceh. Such comparative research would contribute to the development of an autonomous and more mature field of Islamic urban sociology in the Indonesian archipelago.

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