

The Karimata Strait: Heritage of Network System and Socio-political History of Malay Sultanate

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Abstract

Indonesia's maritime historiography so far has focused more on socio-economic interactions, such as: shipping-trade history, ethnic identity, downstream-upstream connections, and the politics of the harbor workers. Meanwhile, the sea, strait, and river function to connect people, goods, and ideas have made their own history which unfortunately to be neglected in Indonesian historiography. By using the historical method, this study focuses on examining a marine network system offered by Indonesian maritime historian A.B. Lopian. The Karimata Strait, an intangible heritage, has produced its own socio-political history through social interactions of the various ethnic groups such as Bugis, Malays, Chinese, Arabs, Dayaks and Arabs. This article focuses on two ethnic groups, Bugis and Arabs who had an important role in the formation of Malay sultanates and maintain their own authorities in the East and West of the Straits. The Bugis ethnic network was represented by the migration of Opu and his Five Son from East Indonesia in the 17th and 18th centuries, while the Arabs were represented by Syarif Abdurrachman's family coming from the West, the Arab-Hadramaut and set up the sultanate of Pontianak. Following the movement of these two groups, and the networks they form, this study shows that their network histories are complex, intersecting in various ways through diaspora, religion, friendship, kinship, intermarriages, diplomacy and war. The intersection of these various networks became social capital to gain political power and economic control in the Malay sultanates. The formation and ways where the network operated had blurred the territorial boundaries of a sultanate in the East and West of Karimata Strait.

Keywords: *Sea network system, socio-politics, Malay sultanate, Karimata Strait*

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Abstrak

Historiografi maritim Indonesia selama ini lebih terfokus pada interaksi sosial ekonomi, seperti sejarah pelayaran-perdagangan, identitas etnis, hubungan hilir-hulu dan politik buruh pelabuhan. Sedangkan laut, selat, dan sungai yang berfungsi untuk menghubungkan manusia, barang, gagasan, dan telah membuat sejarahnya sendiri, cenderung terabaikan dalam historiografi Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan metode sejarah, penelitian ini berfokus untuk mengkaji sistem jaringan laut yang dirumuskan oleh sejarawan maritim Indonesia A.B. Lopian. Selat Karimata merupakan warisan tak benda karena telah menghasilkan sejarah sosial politiknya sendiri melalui interaksi sosial berbagai suku bangsa seperti Bugis, Melayu, Tionghoa, Arab, Dayak, dan Arab. Artikel ini berfokus pada dua kelompok etnis yaitu Bugis dan Arab. Mereka memiliki peran penting dalam pembentukan kerajaan Melayu dan mempertahankan otoritas mereka di bagian Timur dan Barat dari Selat itu. Jaringan etnis Bugis diwakili oleh migrasi Opu dan kelima putranya dari Indonesia Timur pada abad ke-17 dan ke-18. Sedangkan Arab diwakili oleh keluarga Syarif Abdurrachman, yang berasal dari Arab-Hadramaut, mendirikan kerajaan Pontianak. Mengikuti pergerakan kedua kelompok ini dan jaringan yang mereka bentuk, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa sejarah jaringan mereka kompleks, berkelindan dalam berbagai cara melalui diaspora, agama, persahabatan, kekerabatan, perkawinan campur, diplomasi dan perang. Persinggungan berbagai jaringan tersebut menjadi modal sosial untuk memperoleh kekuasaan politik dan kontrol ekonomi di kerajaan-kerajaan Melayu. Pembentukan dan cara-cara jaringan beroperasi telah mengaburkan batas-batas wilayah kerajaan di Selat Karimata Timur dan Barat.

Kata kunci: *Sistem laut, jaringan, sosial-politik, kesultanan Melayu, Selat Karimata*

Introduction

Formerly Malay sultanates, the areas in the Karimata Strait are having rich, unique cultural and historical heritage. In the eastern part of the Strait, there are the sultanates of Matan, Sukadana, Mempawah, Sambas and Pontianak. In the west, there are the sultanates of Siak Sri Indrapura, Riau-Lingga, Palembang with its conquered areas of Bangka and Belitung. In the Malaka peninsula, there are Malay sultanates such as Johor-Riau-Lingga-Pahang, Selangor, Kedah and Trenggano. The sultanates located in the west of Karimata Strait are bordered by the Malacca Strait, in the north by the South China Sea,

while in the south by the Java Sea. Seas, straits, and rivers play a role to connect and integrate people, goods and ideas (Dick, 1988:399-434). In this connection, the Karimata Strait has played role in mediating people from various directions, places, and port cities. The results of that interactions have been created and passed down in its own history and culture that the current generation can see. Cultural and historical heritage such as palaces, mosques, cemeteries are still present till today. However, the socio-political history of the Malay sultanates surrounding area of the Karimata Strait is not as simple as people think. The cultural and historical products of each sultanate are the result of interactions and networks of people from different ethnic groups such as the Buginese, Malays, Chinese, and Arab-Hadramaut. The social interactions and networks among the different ethnic groups were fluid.

Some examples of cultural and historical heritage as the product of social interactions in the past can be seen as follows. In the cultural heritage, *songket* and *cual* weaving are two good examples. When traced back to its root, *songket* produced by women from Sambas and Trenggano was the result of migration of the Malays aristocrats from the sultanate of Siak to the two sultanates mentioned above. They built connections by using kinship ties (Barnard, 2004). On the other hand, *cual* weaving was a cultural product of noblemen meeting from Chinese, Buginese and Malays from Palembang and Johor sultanates in Siantan. The interaction of different people from different places had produced knowledge and ideas in weaving technology that the noblemen from Mentok had brought it to Mentok. Mixed knowledge and ideas of *cual* weaving can be seen from its technology, motifs and color (Kiswanto, 2014). The mixed technology of weaving including varied motives and colors is the result of historical processes and a

meeting of owners of high cultures on the island of Siantan (Erwiza, 2021). From these two examples, it is known that the geographical distribution of cultural heritage of *songket* and *cual* weaving that we find nowadays in Bangka-Belitung, Daik-Lingga, Siantan, Pontianak, Mempawah, and Sambas cannot be separated from the mobility and social interaction among the aristocratic group members in the past.

There was a dynamic process of interaction that can be marked by collaboration, conflicts, granting and sharing of power, political legitimacy, and protection happened in the Malay sultanates during the 17th and 18th centuries. These all-historical events originated from the product of interconnected people from different areas. But unfortunately, the history of social and political interaction of different ethnic groups at the circle of Karimata Strait gains less attention. To fill this gap in research, this present study will focus on the socio-political history of areas around the Karimata Strait from the perspective of network system.

Literature Review

Seeing the role of seas, straits, and rivers from the perspective of the network system has not been widely carried out by Indonesian historians, except A.B. Lopian (1984). Most Indonesian historians focused their study on some themes. First, the theme of shipping and trade in port cities has been widely studied, such as the ports of Makassar, Cilacap, Sibolga, and small ports on the west coast of Sumatra, Banjarmasin, Pekalongan, Mandar and Jambi (Polinggomang, 1991; Zuhdi, 2002; Soesilowati, 2004; Widodo, 2002; Asnan, 2007, 2011; Zuhdi, 2010; Nur, 2015, Hamid, 2019). From these studies, the trajectory of goods' import-export, the volume, the number

of ships, the lines of shipping, the conflicts between the Dutch, and the local rulers to control trade became the focuses of their studies. Studies on the connection between trade and ethnicity as studied by Heather A. Sutherland on Makassar received a little attention of Indonesian historians (Sutherland, 2001). According to Sutherland, the extensive trade networks and Islam shaped Malay identity in Makassar port society in the 17th century.

The second most-studied theme is about the role of rivers. The rivers function as trading traffics that connect people, goods and ideas from inland areas to port cities (Subiyakto, 2000, 2005; Asnan, 2016). And the third theme is about the history of the organization of production of the fishermen community on the island of Java (Masyhuri, 1995), workers' politics at port cities such as Tanjung Periuk, Makassar, and Semarang, ethnic identity of the community living at Barus and Sibolga (Razif, 2005; Asba, 2005; Supriyono, 2008; Tanjung, 2016). The fourth theme is the role of the Java Sea (Singgih, 2003) and the West coast of Sumatra (Purwanto, 2017). There is indeed an effort from a maritime historian, Susanto Zuhdi, who tried to map Indonesian maritime historiography from the perspective of theory, methodology and historical sources. Unfortunately, he did not explain the perspective of the sea network system (Zuhdi, 2002). Studies on the network of Arab-Hadramaut have been done by Azyumardi Azra (2013) and Kathirithamby-Wells (2009), but how network operated and made socio-political history of the sultanates around Karimata Strait is still lacking of attention.

Method

This study focuses on an intangible heritage, namely the network systems established by two ethnic groups, Bugis and Arabs. A

historical approach was employed to describe how these networks have created the socio-political history of the Malay sultanates around the Karimata Strait. The two ethnic groups were selected as the case study, considering that after the VOC controlled the Goa sultanate in 1667, many Buginese people migrated to the west of the archipelago, particularly to the areas of Malay sultanates. They were successful in economic and political aspects; they even held power in Malay sultanates in western and eastern parts of the Karimata Strait. It was unknown how these ethnic groups could reach that position.

The Bugis ethnic network is represented by family of Opu Daeng Rilaka with his five sons, also called as Opu and Five Brothers, while the Arabs are represented by Syarif Abdurrachman's family coming from the Arab-Hadramaut who set up the Malay sultanate, Pontianak Sultanate in 1771. Two main questions to be addressed in this study are: How are the networks of two families formed? What are the factors that function to connect the network?

Karimata strait is seen as a sea network system as noted by A.B. Lopian that a network subsystem is connected with other network subsystems that sometimes can overlap with each other. The mobility of people and the networks they formed, have crossed territorial, and ethnic boundaries. The narratives of socio-political history of the Malay sultanates around the Karimata Strait have been extensively studied. However, the explanation behind the historical narratives has been out of attention. As a result, a series of questions arise. For example: How was Raja Haji from the Riau-Lingga sultanate able to crown an Arab descendant, Syarif Abdurrachman as the first King in the Malay sultanate of Pontianak? How could Syarif Abdurrachman collaborate with Raja Akil from the Siak sultanate? How could the sea

adventurers Opu Five Brothers from the sultanate of Luwu, gain access to the courts of Malay sultanates in the East and West of Karimata Strait?

This study is a historical research by nature. Traditional historiography such as *Sadjarah Riouw Lingga dan Daerah Taaloqnya*, *Tuhfat al-Nafis* and *Carita Bangka* were used to reconstruct actors, their journey and the network that they build both in the east and west part of the Karimata Strait. To complement the data, internal and external critics of the historical sources were made, particularly in comparison with other sources. Finally, interpretation towards historical sources was carried out to reconstruct and construct their journey, life, and the network that they used in their involvement of the socio-political history in the Malay sultanates around Karimata Strait.

Result and Discussion

Karimata Strait: Socio-political dynamics of the Malay Sultanate

The government of Indonesia promoted the Karimata Strait area for marine tourism with the title "Sail to Karimata". The Karimata Strait serves to connect people from the West (the Indian Ocean) through the Malacca Strait, and from the East (Maluku) through the Java Sea, or the North coast of Kalimantan. In the north, the Karimata Strait area is connected to the South China Sea, bordering the Riau Islands province, and with the past sultanates of Johor-Riau-Lingga and Pahang. Chinese migrants flowed from the north to the area, becoming gold miners in the Sambas sultanate, tin miners on Singkep and Karimun, Bangka and Belitung islands (Heidhuis, 1992, 2008; Erwiza, 2005). From Singapore, Chinese immigrants were recruited and worked in the fish processing industry in Bagansiapiapi and logging businesses

(*panglong*) in eastern Sumatra such as in Siak, Bengkalis islands, Rupert and Lingga islands (Erwiza, 2017). Meanwhile, the descendants of the Bugis became Raja Muda, traders and farmers of *gambir*, coconut, pepper around the western and eastern parts of the Karimata Strait. The areas located at circle of Karimata Strait has made its history that might be different from the history of another strait such as Makassar Strait. Figure 1 below illustrate the position of Karimata Strait among the strategic cities and countries.



Figure 1. Map of Karimata Strait
Source: wikipedia

The history of the community can be seen from the mobility of the people. Traders, fishermen, peasants, and seamen have stated that Karimata Strait area is a meeting point for different people and cultures. This claim was proven by the residents of Pontianak who used the name of their area of origin/ethnic background. For example, there are Bugis villages, Malay villages, Tembelan, Sampit, Banjar, Bali, Bangka-Belitung, Siantan, Kuantan, Cambodia, Pasir, Arabic and Parit Mayor, located in Pontianak (Alqadrie, 1984:19). Interviews with Bugis people in Tanjung Binga, Belitung suggested that their ancestors

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from Sulawesi have moved from Kuantan, Indragiri, to Jambi, Palembang and finally settled in Belitung Island. Meanwhile, the fishermen and farmers around Teluk Balok, the eastern part of Belitung Island, are of Dayak, Malay, Bugis, Sulu, and Chinese descendents (interviews with traditional leader Pak Syarie in East Belitung, 2017, 2018).

The areas located around the Karimata Strait have recorded the history of Malay kings in the 17th and 18th centuries. First, the Sultans were involved in internal conflicts, power struggles within the family members of the sultanate who asked for help from outsiders. Second, those sultans involved in the trade visited several port cities to buy and sell various needed goods. Third, the mobility and network of nobles from the sultanate of Luwu known as the *Opu and his five brothers* played an important role in helping one of the conflicting parties among the royal members both in the west and east of the Karimata Strait. Fourth, the history of mobility and network of Syarif Abdurrachman, descendants of Arab-Hadramaut through religion, kinship ties and friendship in expanding his economic activities and political power. How and in what ways the network is set up can be seen from the two cases below.

The Bugis Network: Opu Daeng Rilaka and his Five Sons

Many historical narratives describe the voyages and adventures of Bugis nobles from the Luwu sultanate in the Eastern part (Sulawesi) to the west. According to the *Sadjarah Riouw Lingga dan Daerah Taaloknya* (2013), the five sons of Opu Daeng Rilaka are: Daeng Parani, Daeng Marewa, Daeng Celak, Daeng Manambun and Daeng Kemasi. These Opu five brothers had succeeded in changing political and economic systems in areas located in the Karimata Strait, in Malay

sultanates; Mempawah, Sambas, Sukadana, Kedah, Selangor, Johor-Riau, Lingga, Siak and Indragiri. The author of the manuscript recorded historical events regarding the genealogy and origin of the kings around the Karimata Strait area as follows: "That in fact this is the genealogy and the history of the origins of the neighboring kings of Mempawah, Pontianak, Matan, Sambas, Riau and Selangor who are related. So, the upper half of the relatives are both from the father's and the mother's side (Sadjarah Riouw, 2013:25).

How was the network established through the kinship of Opu Daeng Rilaka with his five sons in Karimata Strait area? Opu Daeng Rilaka, with his five sons from the sultanate of Luwu, South Sulawesi, has made their adventures to the Malay sultanates at the Karimata Strait. They left the Luwu palace to Bone, met Arung Palaka and were granted permission to continue their journey to Makassar. However, Daeng Parani, his eldest son, was involved in the murder of the son of the Sultan of Goa. The murder was the result of struggling over a woman. Finally, Opu Daeng Rilaka and his five sons decided to sail to the western part of the archipelago to avoid embarrassment.

Their journey from Makassar to Batavia was to meet their younger brother of Rilaka, named Opu Daeng Biasa, who was appointed by VOC as the Captain for Buginese community in Batavia. His appointment as a captain was as a reward that the VOC gave to him for his assistance to eradicate pirates in Sulu waters. Opu Daeng Rilaka stayed at Daeng Biasa's house for three months. He wanted to buy a ship and then borrowed money from his younger brother. Then, they sailed to the north to the island of Siantan, and lived in a Bugis skipper named Nakhoda Alang. The network made by ethnic relationship had been strengthened by establishing family ties, inter-marriage between

Opu Daeng Parani and the daughter of Nakhoda Alang. This inter-marriage had a positive impact on the position of the Opu five brothers to live in Siantan Island, an area subject to the Sultan of Johor. On this island, the Opu five brothers initially met with groups of nobles from various Malay sultanates both from Malay and Karimata Strait. From the west, nobles from Palembang, Muntok, Johor, and Siak were coming. From the west of Karimata strait, there were nobles from Matan, Pontianak, Mempawah and Sambas. Siantan was a meeting place for trading, making alliances, and exchanging ideas among Malay, Bugis noblemen, and even Chinese people from the north.

From the island of Siantan, Opu and his five sons helped the Malay Sultans who wanted to maintain their power. The power of the Opu and his five sons was increasingly seen when they gained victory and wealth from a game of cockfighting with Raja Chulan, a wealthy merchant from Minangkabau in Cambodia. They sailed from Siantan, Malacca, and Cambodia, which took nine months (Sadjarah Riouw, 2013:35). The position and economic status of Opu Daeng Rilaka and his five sons were getting stronger because from the game of cockfighting. They bought six ships with crews and weapons from the cockfighting bet, hence every one of them had their own ship.

Opu and his five sons were successful in obtaining economic power through cockfighting. In the next stage, Opu and his five sons tried to gain political access by helping one of the parties in the Malay court that were conflicting, such as: in the sultanates of Palembang, Johor-Riau, Kedah and Matan. In this context, Opu and his five sons helped one of the conflicting parties through diplomacy and. The rewards for their assistance had made their network wider with the Malay Sultans, initially through political marriages and then ways to have access to

power. The political marriage was followed by the granting of power which became the capital for them to launch their shipping and trade.

Some examples of the roles of Opu and his five sons are as follows. First, they had role in helping the army for the sultanates of Palembang, Johor-Riau, Kedah and Selangor in the 17th and 18th centuries. For example, Prince Wijayakrama or Sultan Badaruddin I, who fled to the island of Siantan asked Opu and his five sons to help him regain power from his uncle in Palembang. Opu Daeng Parani brought dozens of warships to accompany Prince Wijayakrama back to Palembang with his entourage from Siantan. Daeng Parani with his warships had stopped at Bangka Kota and was ready to fight if Prince Wijayakrama was attacked when he entered Palembang (Wieringa, 1990). Another example is the conflict in the Johor sultanate. Sultan Sulaiman from the Johor-Riau sultanate, was in conflict with Raja Kecil, asked Opu and his five sons for help. After winning the war with Raja Kecil, Daeng Marewa was appointed as Yang Dipertuan Muda (the First Viceroy) of the Sultanate of Johor-Riau and Daeng Celak later succeeded him. He married the younger sister of Sultan Sulaiman. Daeng Parani remarried to a Selangor noble and the sister of the Sultan of Kedah, and received three ringgits as a return for helping the Sultan of Kedah (Parani, 2015:36-37). After having a child in Kedah, he then returned to Riau (Siantan). Meanwhile, Daeng Marewa married Engku Encik Ayu, daughter of Datuk Tumenggung Riau, and Daeng Celak was with Tengku Puan, younger sister of Sultan Sulaiman.

The second role of Opu and his five sons could be seen in the sultanates of Matan, Mempawah, Sambas and Pontianak. This kinship relation between members of the Malay sultanate was strengthened

through marriage with Opu and his five sons. The case is quite similar with those in the Malay sultanate in the western part of the Karimata Strait. Sultan Muhamad Zainuddin from the Sultanate of Matan asked for the help of Opu and his five sons in Siantan to free him from the confinement of his brother who wanted to rule. Opu and his five sons were successful in restoring the power of Sultan Muhammad Zainuddin. As a reward, Daeng Menambun married Princess Kesumba, the daughter of Sultan Muhammad Zainuddin. Daeng Menambun also received the title of Prince Mas Sri Nagara and was later appointed as Sultan in Mempawah. Meanwhile, Daeng Kemasi was appointed by Sultan Umar Agamaddin I as Mangkubumi in the Sambas Sultanate, married to Raden Tengah, the sister of the Sultan of Sambas (Sadjarah Riau, 2013: 43; Haji, 1923: 26-27). In brief, through war, diplomacy, and intermarriage, Opu and his five sons were successful in making access to the sultanate bureaucracy, becoming Yang Dipertuan Muda (Raja Muda) in the Malay sultanate of Johor-Riau, Selangor, Sultan of Mempawah and awarded the title of Mangkubumi in the sultanate of Sambas. The formation of kinship relations through marriage with royal members strengthened the political power and the Buginese trade networks. For example, the position of Raja Muda in the sultanates of Johor and Riau-Lingga applied for generations. The position of the Raja Muda was stronger than Malay Sultan, because he was directly in charge of the royal bureaucracy. The position of Malay Sultan or the Raja Tua is only a symbol of the sultanate. For instance, in Riau Lingga sultanate, the Raja Muda Bugis domiciled in Penyengat Island and lasted until Raja Muhammad Yusuf, the Raja Muda XI. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Dutch colonial government abolished and replaced sultanates and traditional system with the Dutch colonial bureaucracies.

Under the leadership of Raja Muda, the economy of Johor and Riau Lingga had developed. Coconut plantations and copra exports from the Anambas and Natuna islands to Singapore flourished, while *gambir*, black pepper and sago processing plants were exported. Raja Ali Kelana, the third generation of the Opu and his five sons, succeeded in opening a trading office in Singapore and establishing trade relations with Japan (Erwiza et.al, 2012). The trading network facilitated the merchant ships belonging to Raja Muda. His Buginese family sailed between Johor, Riau-Lingga and West Kalimantan and brought basic produce and goods to port cities around the Karimata Strait. In West Kalimantan, the Bugis people play a role in buying products produced by the Dayaks in the interior and bringing their basic needs from outside. The role of the Bugis as broker trader continues to this day (Rahmayani et al, 2014). Kinship ties and the ownership of sea transportation had succeeded economic benefit for the Opu and his five sons, even for the second and third generations which have a wider network in the region of Karimata Strait. As an example, the second generation, Gusti Jamiri, son of Daeng Menambun, used Bugis family networks and their political power to do business with the Dayaks in the interior of Sambas (Sadjarah Riau, 2013: 45).

Under the leadership of Opu Daeng Marewa, the implementation of Islamic law made progress by making networks with the Arab-Hadramaut family. Even the Sultan of Mempawah invited Sayyid Husein Alqadri, a descendant of Hadramaut who became a famous royal cleric in the Matan sultanate, to move to Mempawah. The migration of Sayyid Husein Alqadri with his wife, a Dayak woman, who had converted to Islam with their children, expanded a new kinship network between Bugis and Arabs. The marriage between

Syarif Abdurrachman and Putri Candramidi, the daughter of Opu Daeng Manambun, became the capital for him to expand his collaboration with the extended family of Opu.

From this historical narrative, Opu and his five sons who came from the Luwu sultanate played an important role in the socio-political history of the sultanate in the west and east of the Karimata Strait. With the ship's capital obtained from a family loan and winning in a cockfighting game in Cambodia, the five brothers succeeded in strengthening their business and forming their own army. The five brothers later also succeeded in entering the palace environment and gaining power as Viceroys, Princes and even Sultans such as Daeng Menambun in the Mempawah sultanate. This family was able to build a network with the palace and gained the center of power through the success of helping the Sultan to fight the Sultan's enemies. The new network was formed through a political marriage between the daughters of the Malay kings Matan, Mempawah and Sambas. From all of Opu's journey with his five sons from Luwu, Sulawesi to areas of Eastern and Western part of Karimata strait, it can be seen as the formation of various networks such as ethnical bond (Bugis links), marital relations, business and diplomacy and war to help the Sultans of Matan, Sambas, Johor-Riau, and Palembang. The network did not operate independently, but the various forms of the network coincide with each other.

Network of Syarif Abdurrachman's Family

Syarif Abdurrachman was the founder of the Pontianak Malay sultanate. He can be said to be a 'stranger king' of mixed descent, Arab-Malay/Dayak. He was a scholar, trader, and the first Sultan of Pontianak (Kathirithamby-Wells, 2009). He succeeded in building

Pontianak from a scarce area into a developed port city located by the Kapuas River. Pontianak was slowly developing into a large port that serves export and import trade traffic at regional, national and international levels. This development was in line with Pontianak's position as the capital which became the residency of West Borneo and then the province of West Kalimantan.

Syarif Abdurrachman obtained a position as the first Sultan of Pontianak and built the Algadri dynasty. He built the Alkadariyah mosque and palace. How did he build that socio-economic and political capital? How does an Arab descendant get political legitimacy from Raja Haji, Raja Muda Riau-Lingga of Bugis descent, and other Malay kings in the East Karimata Strait? The socio-economic capital of Syarif Abdurrachman were: the Arab-Hadramaut diaspora network, as Mufti or Ulama in the palace and marital relations with the royal family. All these factors did not function separately.

The first network was formed through the history of his father, Al-Habib Husein Al-Qadri. His father is from the city of Tarim, Hadramaut, Yemen. After finishing school, Al Habib Husein and three of his friends, Al Sayid Abubakar Idrus, Al Sayid Umar Al Segaf, and Al Sayid Muhammad Quraisya fulfilled their teacher's message to spread Islam to the Eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula. They sailed following the spice trade route to the archipelago, from the Arabian Peninsula, the Indian Ocean and the Straits of Malacca. They finally arrived in Trenggano, an advanced port in the eastern part of the Malay Peninsula. These four youths decided to find a place to settle down. They splitted up. Sayid Mohamad bin Quraish chose to stay in Trenggano, Sayid Umar Husin Al Segaf continued his journey to the eastern part of Sumatra, settling in the sultanate of Siak, a large Malay

sultanate where the king was of mixed descent from Minangkabau, Malay and Arab. Al Habib Husin continued his journey towards the northern tip of the island of Sumatra and settled in Aceh. Al Sayid Abubakar Idrus sailed and settled in Aceh, while Al Habib Husein decided to sail to the south, through the territorial waters of the Riau Lingga, Bangka-Belitung Islands Java Sea, and arrived at Batavia. In Batavia, he lived in the house of an Arab family for seven months. After that, Al Habib Husein continued his journey along the north coast of the Java Sea. He landed in Semarang. He met and lived at the house of Sheikh Salim Hambali for two years, a long time to get to know other areas outside Semarang. Based on the advice of Sheikh Salim, Al Habib Husein decided to continue the journey to the sultanate of Matan, to meet Sayyid Hasim bin Yahya, a friend of Sheikh Salim Hambali, a well-known cleric in the Matan sultanate. Al Habib Husein sailed along the Java Sea, and the Karimata Strait and continued to Kapuas and Landak rivers to Matan. Matan was a Malay sultanate that produced diamonds and gold. Through the network of Arab-Hadramaut scholars, Al Habib Husein was able to enter the network of the Matan Malay sultanate. His network in Matan was strengthened by his marriage to Nyai Tua, daughter of Sultan Muhammad Muazzuddin (Al Qadri, 2005:24). He was appointed as a Mufti or royal cleric until the reign of Sultan Ahmad Kamaluddin. In 1730, Syarif Abdurrachman was born in Matan, received religious education from his father and learned to trade from the merchants who came to the port city of the Matan sultanate, namely the port of Ketapang.

After having a network with the Matan palace, the next network was the Mempawah palace. The transfer of Al Habib Husein from Matan to the Mempawah palace was due to a dispute with Sultan Ahmad

Kamaluddin in the application of the death penalty to Nakhoda Ahmad, a Buginese and immigrant from the island of Siantan (Umbaran, et al.:1996:16). As a royal cleric, Al Habib Husein did not want to apply the death penalty as Sultan Matan wanted to punish Ahmad, who violated religious rules. But then he was offered as a royal cleric by Daeng Menambun, a Bugis nobleman who became Sultan of the Mempawah sultanate in 1758. Al Habib Husein accepted the offer. He moved with his family to Mempawah. Sultan Mempawah appointed him as Patih. Apart from him, another ulama, Sheikh Ali bin Fakhir al-Fhatani also moved to Mempawah. These two religious leaders succeeded in developing Islamic law in Mempawah (Farhan, 2014:50).

Syarif Abdurrachman benefited from the network of his father in the Malay sultanates of Matan, Mempawah and kinship ties with the royal family through his mother. His father moved to the Mempawah sultanate and brought a positive impact on the broader network. Through the Arab diaspora network, his father obtained a position as the cleric of the Matan sultanate. His father's network increased as a member of the royal family due to his marriage to a court lady from the sultanate of Matan. Syarif Abdurrachman's marriage later broadened the first layer of his father's network to Princess Kesumba, daughter of the Sultan of Mempawah, Daeng Menambun, who received the title of Prince Mas Suma Negara.

This marriage strengthened the relationship between Al Habib Husein family and the Bugis kings who ruled in the Malay sultanates. The second marriage of Syarif Abdurrachman with the daughter of the Sultan of Banjar, Ratu Syahranon strengthened his first layer of network. This marital relationship brought him a more substantial

status in the political field because he was close to the court. Moreover, through marital relations, Syarif Abdurrachman obtained political power from the Sultan of Banjar, who appointed him as Prince Syarif Abdurrahman Nur Alam. In the next period, Syarif Abdurrachman expanded his network through marital relations with 25 women from different regions and having more than 60 children. The marital relation was a precious asset for Syarif Abdurrachman. Through this wider kinship, he paved the way to expand his settlements, followers and launch his trading business.

An Arabic manuscript translated into Indonesian language and published in 2000 described Syarif Abdurrachman's journey. After marrying Daeng Manambun's daughter for the first time at the age of 18, four years later he began to trade outside Kalimantan to the islands of Tambelan, Siantan, Penyengat, Bangka and other islands. Under the Johor-Riau subject, these areas were undoubtedly not strange for him because his father-in-law, Daeng Manambun, started their business in the area. The island of Penyengat was where the Raja Muda Bugis, Daeng Celak, brother of his father-in-law lived. The trip lasted for two months. He then continued his journey to Palembang and stayed there for eleventh months and returned to Mempawah and stayed for two months with his family. The next voyage to Banjar was for four months, to Pasir three months, and back to Banjar, stayed there for two years, married to Ratu Syahbanun, daughter of Sultan Sepuh. Syarif Abdurrachman spent four years in Banjar and had two children. In 1771, he returned to Mempawah and then his father died.

Syarif Abdurrachman's shipping and trading networks for the next period was getting more extensive. He had a merchant ship equipped with a crew sailed to various places. It was mentioned that he returned

to study in Siantan, Siak, Riau-Lingga, Johor, Jambi, Palembang, Bangka-Belitung and trading cities on the north coast of Java (Ota, 2019:33). It was not difficult for Syarif Abdurrachman to establish trade relations with the traders in the aforementioned places. Siantan was the trading base area of his father-in-law's family, Daeng Menambun. The same was true for areas of the Riau-Lingga and Johor sultanates, which were controlled by his father-in-law's family, who acted as Raja Muda. Meanwhile, Siak and Johor-Riau were familiar because the descendants of the Kings of Siak, Johor-Riau and their followers had lived in Sukadana, collecting diamonds from Matan and other products before Syarif Abdurrachman built Pontianak. Many Siak and Riau traders lived in the delta of the Kapuas and Landak rivers. Some of them were king of pirates. Syarif Abdurrachman managed to build a trading fleet from his trading business and strengthened by a weapon at sea and ship crews led by his friend, skipper Daud. He managed to have dozens of merchant boats armed with small cannons to defend themselves from pirates. In 1770, he attacked a French merchant ship that traded in the area of the Pasir Penajam sultanate. The following year he also pirated an English ship. For fear of revenge from the English side, the Sultan of Bandjermasin gave rise to deny him (Kielstra, 1916: 35). Therefore, he went back to Mempawah.

In West Kalimantan itself, Syarif Abdurrachman had strengthened his trading network with several sultanates, Tayan, Sangggau and Sekadau. In 1777 Syarif Abdurrahman prepared forty boats to sail to the three inland areas. In addition to being loaded with merchandise, this boat was equipped with cannons and various weapons. Arriving at Sanggau, Panembahan Sanggau did not allow Syarif Abdurrachman's

entourage to continue their journey to Sekadau. Syarif Abdurrahman, who had a strong character and had experience in various places around in the West and East Karimata Strait and in the north coast of Java, felt that Sanggau's Panembahan blocked his will. Finally, a conflict broke out between Sanggau's troops and Syarif Abdurrahman's entourage, who opened fire on Sanggau's defenses resulted in seven days of endless war. Finally, Syarif Abdurrahman returned to Pontianak to prepare for an enormous force. This action was the beginning of Syarif Abdurrahman's movement to establish power and desire to control other areas. Eight months he built the strength of the ship, his men and his weapons to conquer Sanggau.

In 1778, Syarif Abdurrahman sailed back to Sanggau with two large ships, several Kici boats and 28 Penjajab boats, complete with weapons. On this second trip to Sanggau, Raja Muda from Riau, Raja Haji, the son of Daeng Celak, brought his army to help Syarif Abdurrahman in getting access to control trading network in the hinterland of Kalimantan. The war took place between Syarif Abdurrahman's troops and Sanggau's troops in the Tayan waters. In the end, Sanggau's troops lost the battle. Syarif Abdurrahman's entourage succeeded in occupying Sanggau with Raja Haji (Ota, 2010: 36). This event was the beginning of Syarif Abdurrahman's political and military movement against the king of Sanggau, an old sultanate in West Kalimantan. The aim of occupying Sanggau was to control the trade route to the interior of the Kapuas River. As evidence that Sanggau was under his subjugation, Syarif Abdurrahman took the door of the Sanggau royal palace, installed it at the gate of the Al-Qadariyah palace. Together with Raja Muda Haji, he built a fort on Labi Island as proof of his power in Sanggau. He also left some of his troops on the Labi island and then returned to Pontianak.

Various networks owned by Syarif Abdurrachman and his family had an important role in strengthening his business in the areas around the Karimata Strait. Meanwhile, Raja Haji assisted him to control the trade network to the interior. For seven years, Syarif Abdurrachman had maintained good relations with the surrounding residents. Through his *da'wah*, more and more people, especially the Dayaks living in the interior, converted to Islam. He gave agricultural land along the Landak and Kapuas rivers to the surrounding population, especially the Dayaks. They were loyal followers of Syarif Abdurrahman. Syarif Abdurrahman also established a family relationship with the local people by marrying several natives and immigrant women. In the coastal area, Syarif Abdurrachman cooperated with the traders and king of pirates from Siak, so that trading activities at Karimata strait became safe.

With his wider socio-economic network, Syarif Abdurrachman wanted to create Pontianak as a center of power and trade. Raja Haji, friends and family's members and Malays kings in West Kalimantan supported him a lot. Raja Haji, played an important role in preparing Syarif Abdurrahman to become the Sultan of Pontianak. Raja Haji sent a letter inviting the Panembahan Agung, Mempawah, Kubu, and Sultan Matan, Sukadana and Sambas to come to attend the appointment of Syarif Abdurrachman as Sultan of Pontianak. In 1778, at the age of 39, Raja Haji inaugurated and crowned Prince Syarif Abdurrahman Nur Alam as the Sultan of Pontianak in front of the Malay kings in West Kalimantan.

From the detailed narrative above, it can be concluded that there were various forms of networks built by Syarif Abdurrachman, an Arab-Malay descendant who founded the Pontianak Malay sultanate. As a

"stranger king" he used his father's network and created a new network with traders who came to the port of Ketapang. The formation of his network was facilitated by his father's close relationship at the center of power as Mufti and his kinship with Raja Matan and Mempawah. His social network was strengthened by Abdurrachman's marriage to a noblewoman of Bugis descent, the daughter of Daeng Menambun, and the daughter of the Sultan of Banjar. The Banjar Sultanate was the largest sultanate in Kalimantan with influence in South, Central, and West Kalimantan. Then, his network expanded by marrying 25 women from various ethnic groups and different social statuses. The religious network that his father built was quite important, apart from the network with merchants and kings, and pirates from Siak to secure his trade. The wide network with various elements does not run simultaneously, they overlap each other. As a result, it is not surprising that Abdurrachman as a stranger king was supported by Raja Haji (a family of the five brothers), the trading partner of the Sultan of Palembang who once lived in Siantan.

Conclusion

The Karimata Strait is an intangible heritage that functioned as a bridge for connecting people, goods, and ideas. The areas within the circle of the Karimata Strait had created their own socio-political history through various networks during the period of the 17th and 18th centuries. Various networks are formed and its formation through complicated historical processes, working cross the territorial or administrative boundaries, and differences in ethnicity, culture, and religion. Siantan served as a safe island for kings, sons of kings who were expelled from the palace, and sea kings who looked for Orang Laut as their followers to secure the trade traffic of the Malay

sultanates located in the west and east of the Karimata Strait. On the small Siantan island, social interactions between them are established, and alliances and linkages between actors, Opu and his Five brothers and Syarif Abdurrachman, with traders, kings, sons of kings, Sea King (Raja Laut), and Pirates are formed.

The Opu and five sons from Luwu, South Sulawesi who played an essential role in the socio-political history of Malay sultanates around the Karimata Strait cannot be separated from their extensive, multi-layered, and overlapping networks. Their sea voyage from east to west and his successful business, appointed as a prince, Raja Muda in various Malay courts was by building wide social networks through kinship, ethnical relations, marriage within the same or out of the ethnic group, particularly with daughters of Sultans in Matan, Mempawah, and Sambas. Marriage with the daughters and sisters of the Sultan could be said as a political marriage because it was a return for the assistance of five brothers to the Malay Sultans in fighting their enemies. The network did not operate independently but in various forms of the network that coincided with each other.

The case of Syarif Abdurrachman, an Arab-Malay descendant, a 'stranger king' who founded the Pontianak Malay sultanate; he used his father's network and created a new network with traders who came to the port of Ketapang. The formation of his network was facilitated by his father's close relationship at the center of power as Mufti and his kinship with Raja Matan and Mempawah. His social network was strengthened by Abdurrachman's marriage to a noblewoman of Bugis descent, the daughter of Daeng Menambun in Mempawah, and daughter of the Sultan of Banjar. The Banjar Sultanate was the largest sultanate in Kalimantan with influence in South, Central, and West

Kalimantan. Then, his network expanded by marrying 25 women from various ethnic groups and from their different social statuses. The religious network that his father built was quite important, apart from the network with merchants and kings, and pirates from Siak to secure his trading areas. As in the case of the Opu and his five sons, the wide network with various elements run simultaneously, overlapping and intersecting each other. As a result, it is not surprising that Abdurrachman as a stranger king is supported by Raja Haji (a family of the Five Brothers), the trading partner of the Sultan of Palembang who once lived in Siantan.

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