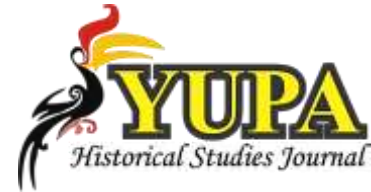


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***Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate: Role in Shipping and Trade in the Malacca Strait in the 18th Century**

Anju Nofarof Hasudungan¹, Linda Sunarti²

¹²Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia

[1anju.nofarof@ui.ac.id](mailto:anju.nofarof@ui.ac.id), [2linda.sunarti@ui.ac.id](mailto:linda.sunarti@ui.ac.id)

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Abstract The purpose of this study was to examine the role of the *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate in shipping and trade in the *Melaka* (Malacca) Strait in the XVIII century. By using the historical method of literature study approach, there is evidence of the triumph of the *Siak Sri Indrapura* sultanate in the Malacca Strait. The *Siak* Sultanate in 1767 under the rule of King Ismail showed its dominance in the territorial waters of East Sumatra by controlling the Tin trade on *Bangka* Island. The expansion of *Siak* influence during the reign of King Ismail continued to grow significantly starting from Terengganu, *Jambi*, and *Palembang*. In 1780 *Siak*'s territory they reached the Langkat, Deli, and Serdang areas. The *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate took advantage of the control of trade through the Straits of Malacca. This success was also supported by the ability of the Sultanate of *Siak* to control the pirates in the area. Search results from Dutch records recorded that in 1783 there were 171 merchant ships from *Siak* to Malacca. The position of *Siak* can be said to be a triangular area of trade between the Dutch in Malacca and the British on the island of *Pinang*. At that time, the *Siak* River was an area where various trade products were collected, ranging from camphor, tin, and gold. Even the people of *Siak* are active in the timber industry, especially for shipbuilding and other construction.

Keywords: *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate, King *Ismail*, Trade, Straits of Malacca

Abstrak Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji peran Kesultanan Siak Sri Indrapura dalam pelayaran dan perdagangan di Selat Melaka pada abad XVIII. Dengan menggunakan metode sejarah pendekatan studi pustaka, diperoleh bukti-bukti kejayaan Kesultanan Siak Sri Indrapura di Selat Malaka. Kesultanan Siak pada tahun 1767 di bawah pemerintahan Raja Ismail menunjukkan dominasinya di wilayah perairan Sumatera Timur dengan menguasai perdagangan Timah di Pulau Bangka. Perluasan pengaruh Siak pada masa pemerintahan Raja Ismail terus berkembang secara signifikan dimulai dari Terengganu, Jambi, dan Palembang. Pada tahun 1780 wilayah kekuasaan Siak mencapai daerah Langkat, Deli, dan Serdang. Kesultanan Siak Sri Indrapura memanfaatkan penguasaan perdagangan melalui Selat Malaka. Keberhasilan tersebut juga didukung oleh kemampuan Kesultanan Siak dalam mengendalikan para perompak di daerah tersebut. Hasil penelusuran dari catatan Belanda mencatat bahwa pada tahun 1783 terdapat 171 kapal dagang dari Siak menuju Malaka. Posisi Siak dapat dikatakan sebagai daerah segitiga perdagangan antara Belanda di Malaka dan Inggris di Pulau Pinang. Saat itu, sungai Siak merupakan daerah tempat terkumpulnya berbagai hasil perdagangan, mulai dari kapur barus, timah, dan emas. Bahkan masyarakat Siak aktif dalam industri perkayuan, terutama untuk pembuatan kapal dan konstruksi lainnya.

Kata kunci: Kesultanan *Siak Sri Indrapura*, Raja *Ismail*, Perdagangan, Selat Malaka



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INTRODUCTION

The history of the *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate can be traced back to the time of the *Melaka* Kingdom. Several articles examine *Siak*'s position as a state within the *Melaka* Kingdom. Meanwhile, the kingdom and society of *Siak* before 1723 were included in the Johor region (Burhanuddin, 2017). However, before coming under Johor rule which was the result of the fall of the *Melaka* Kingdom, *Siak* was under the rule of King *Gasib* (Roza & Masbukin, 2020). According to Anrooi's record (1885), the *Gasib* Kingdom was very powerful at that time (Putri et al., 2018). This is proven by the existence of the legacy of the Sultanate found in the forest around the *Gasib* River such as weapons, trays (*dulang*), and others. The influence of the *Gasib* Kingdom on *Siak* began to wane when it was defeated by *Aceh* in the 15th century. The location of the *Gasib* Kingdom can be seen on the map below.

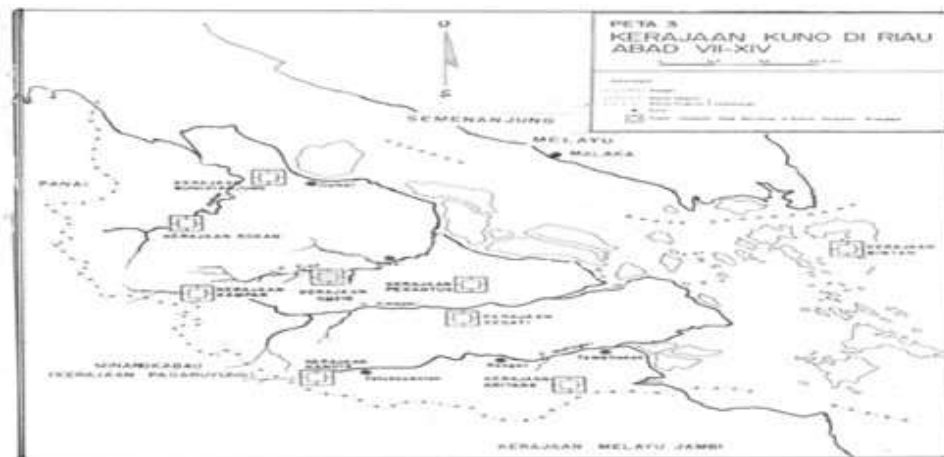


Figure 1. Location of the Sultanate of *Gasib* VII-XIV Century.

Source: (Suwardi, 1986)

Tracing the history of the *Siak* Sultanate can also be found in the *Nagarakretagama* manuscript by *Empu Prapanca* which was completed in 1365 AD. This book, which was written during the *Majapahit* Kingdom, tells the story of *Nagarakretagama*. It is a text that contains historical stories about the *Majapahit* Kingdom in the past and the areas it controlled. Areas outside Java controlled by *Majapahit* in the middle of the fourteenth week: In *Sumatra*: *Jambi*, *Palembang*, *Darmasraya*, *Kandis*, *Kahwas*, *Siak*, *Rokan*, *Mandailing*, *Panai*, *Kampe*, *Haru*, *Temiang*, *Parlak*, *Samudra*, *Lamuri*, *Barus*, *Batan*, *Lampung*. In *Kalimantan* (*Tanjung Pura*): *Kapuas*, *Katingan*, *Sampit*, *Lingga City*, *Kota Waringin*, *Sambas*, *Lawai*, *Kandangan*, *Singkawang*, *Tirem*, *Landa*, *Sedu*, *Barune*, *Sukadana*, *Seludung*, *Solot*, *Pasir*, *Barito*, *Sawaku*, *Tabalung*, *Tanjung Kutei*, *Malano*. In *Semenanjung Tanah Melayu* (*Malay Land Peninsula*) (*Hujung Medini*): *Pahang*, *Langkasuka*, *Kelantan*, *Saiwang*, *Nagor*, *Paka*, *Muar*, *Dungun*, *Tumasik*, *Kelang*, *Kedah*, *Jerai*. East of Java: *Bali*, *3 Badahulu*, *Lo Gajah*, *Gurun*, *Sukun*, *Taliwang*, *Dompo*, *Sapi*, *Gunung Api*, *Seram*, *Hutan Kadali*, *Sasak*, *Bantayan*, *Luwuk*, *Makasar*, *Buton*, *Banggawi*, *Kunir*, *Galian*, *Salayar*, *Sumba*, *Muar* (*Saparua*), *Solor*, *Bima*, *Wandan* (*Banda*), *Ambon* atau *Maluku*, *Wanin*, *Seran*, *Timor* (*Muljana*,

2006). The existence of *Siak* can also be found in a newspaper with an Arabic-Malay script published in 1933 (ZA'BA (Zain al-'Abidin bin Ahmad), 1941). On the first page of the newspaper, it is told about the country of *Siak*, which was once a large country, and its king named *Maharaja Parameswara*, the origin of King *Pagaruyung*.

The echo of the greatness of the name *Siak* is also supported by its location on the banks of the *Siak* River. Even though the center of government has moved 5 (five) times, it is still located along the *Siak* River. This strategic location is advantageous for the Sultanate of *Siak* in global trade crossings in the Malacca Strait (Kanumoyoso, 2018; Gin, 2022). According to Sutomo & Surya (2018) since the *Siak* Sultanate was led by the XI Sultan (*Sultan Syarif Hasyim*), the *Siak* River played an important role in global trade in the 18th century as a gateway for the distribution channel of agricultural products inland and on the east coast of Sumatra to ports between nations (Malacca) via shipping on the *Siak* river. Large commercial ships may pass through the *Siak* River because the *Siak* River is deep. In addition, according to Lloyd's (in Owen, 1975) on the *Siak* River, there are no obstacles that interfere with the passage of ships such as piles of mud, sand, or gravel, and also the river flows very slowly because the water does not come from the mountains but from the swamps. Thus, trading activities along the *Siak* River were profitable for the *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate. Therefore, the focus of the study in this paper is the Role of the *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate in Shipping and Trade in the Malacca Straits.

METHOD

This study uses historical methods consisting of heuristics, verification, interpretation and historiography. The first stage of the heuristic is the collection of data relating to the topic of this research, both primary and secondary, namely the Sultanate of *Siak Sri Indrapura*: Role in Shipping and Trade in the Malacca Strait. The focus of data collection is not on the reign of a particular sultan, but the role of the *Siak* sultanate in Shipping and Trade in the Malacca Straits. The second stage is verification, the data that has been collected in various ways and organized is then verified, internally and externally. After verifying or criticizing sources, the authors then carry out interpretation, namely interpreting the data and historical facts that have been obtained. The final stage is historiography, that is, writing history. Gottschalk (in Brewer, 1951) shows how the critical-analytical, substantive-historical and socio-cultural methods of historians are essential to a fundamental understanding of Shakespeare's literature. Thus, the purpose of the historical method includes its operational function outside of pure history such as Shakespeare's literature (Finkelman, 2019).

Wolf (2018) explains that by using primary sources, and perhaps oral history, historians create secondary sources—articles and books written after a period of research that contain information, analysis, and conclusions about the chosen topic. Secondary sources can be just as important to writing a comprehensive history as primary sources. As mentioned, historians begin

a project by first reading historiography—secondary sources that other historians have written on topics they intend to investigate (Lustick, 1996). Thus, historians not only utilize and quote primary sources and oral history, but also secondary sources in their works. Popa (2022) explains the term historical method refers to the expertise of historians, namely the techniques used by historians in collecting, evaluating, validating, and interpreting historical evidence to gain knowledge about the past.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Sultanate of *Siak* in Historical Review

Based on the name of the *Siak* Kingdom, there are many opinions about the origin of the word *Siak*. However, according to Kathirithamby-Wells (1997a), the most accurate opinion regarding the word *Siak* comes from the name of a plant, namely *Siak-Siak*, a type of plant that thrives along the river. The roots of the *Siak-Siak* plants in the local community are used as ingredients for medicines and perfumes. Another source states that the word *Siak* refers to a clan in Pakistan and India, *Siagh* or *Asiagh* which means sword (Rahmad et al., 2019). The origin of the name of the Kingdom of *Siak* can also be found in the poem *Siak Sri Indrapura Dar Al-Salam Al-Qiyam* where fragments of the poem include, namely,” regarding the origin of the name *Siak*, it is said that it comes from the word *LaSiak*, the name pepper in the *Batak* language, which grows a lot around *Siak*” (Roza, 2016).

Before the *Siak* Kingdom was established, the *Siak* area was under the rule of the Johor Kingdom. The *Siak* area is overseen by a *Syahbandar* (harbour master) who is appointed to collect excise on forest products and marine products. But in early 1699, *Sultan Mahmud Syah II* was killed by *Magat Sri Rama* (Winstedt, 1938). The Sultan's wife named *Encik Pong* at that time was pregnant and was rushed to Singapore, who then continued to flee to *Jambi*. During the escape, *Raja Kecil* (Little King) was born and later grew up in the *Minangkabau Pagaruyung* Kingdom (Andaya, 2000). After *Raja Kecil* grew up, in 1717 *Raja Kecil* succeeded in seizing the throne of Johor. But in 1722 the Kingdom of Johor was recaptured by *Tengku Sulaiman*, *Raja Kecil*'s brother-in-law, the son of *Sultan Abdul Jalil Riayat Syah* (Linehan, 1936). In seizing the Kingdom of Johor, *Tengku Sulaiman* was assisted by several Bugis nobles. A civil war ensued which resulted in considerable losses on both sides, so in the end each side withdrew. The Johor side withdrew to Pahang, and *Raja Kecil* withdrew to *Bintan* and so on established a new state on the banks of the *Buantan* River (a tributary of the *Siak* River). In the *Hikayat Siak* (Saga of *Siak*), *Raja Kecil* is also called the wanderer, heir to the Sultan of Johor who lost in a power struggle (Chambert-Loir, 2017). This was the beginning of the founding of the *Siak* kingdom in *Buantan*.

In 1746 *Sultan Abdul Jalil Rahmat Syah* died and was given the title *Marhum Buantan*. As his replacement, the Royal Council appointed *Tengku Mahmud* with the title of *Sultan Mahmud Abdul Jalil Muzaffar Syah* or commonly known as *Tengku Buwang* as the second sultan of the *Siak*

Kingdom. Tengku Buwang moved the royal capital to *Mempura* towards the Upper Siak River. According to Rijal (2018), since the transfer of the capital, the Kingdom of *Siak* was known as *Siak Sri Indrapura*. After *Sultan Abdul Jalil Muzaffar Syah* died, his son *Tengku Ismail* was crowned king with the title *Sultan Ismail Abdul Jalil Jalaluddin Syah* in 1765. But during the time of *Sultan Ismail Abdul Jalil Jalaluddin Syah* there was a war with his uncle *Tengku Alamuddin* to seize the royal throne due to politics Dutch sheep. The war ended with the surrender of the kingdom to *Raja Alam* who was crowned the 4th sultan with the title *Sultan Abdul Jalil Alamuddin Syah*. It was during this period that the Dutch were allowed to trade in *Siak* freely and reopen their lodges in *Guntung* which later resulted in the relocation of the royal capital from *Mempura* to *Bandar Senapelan*, the forerunner of *Pekanbaru City* in 1767. In 1780 *Sultan Alamuddin* died and was replaced by his son, *Muhammad. Ali* with the title of *Sultan Muhammad Ali Abdul Jalil Muazzam Syah*. The reign only lasted about two years, after his death he was replaced by *Tengku Yahya* with the title *Sultan Yahya Abdul Jalil Muzaffar Syah*.

During the time of *Sultan Yahya Abdul Jalil Muzaffar Syah*, there were many disputes among the royal family which later resulted in the transfer of the center of government from *Bandar Senapelan* to *Mempura*. However, *Tengku Sayid Ali*, the son of *Tengku Embung Badariah* and *Sayid Syarif Osman* came to attack which caused *Sultan Yahya* to leave the kingdom and then flee to *Kampar* to die in *Dungun*. At that time, the *Siak Kingdom* was run by *Tengku Sayid Ali* who was later crowned *Sultan* with the title *Sultan as-Sayid asy-Syarif Ali Abdul Jalil Saifuddin Ba'lawi* in 1784. The *Siak Kingdom* has been led by a sultan of Arab descent with the title *Sayid Syarif* who was previously of *Johor Malay* descent (Gallop, 2018). At this time the Kingdom of *Siak* reached its glory. His conquests reached the kingdom of *Sambas* in *Kalimantan*. It also controls the shipping lanes between *Sumatra* and *Kalimantan*.



Figure 2. Siak Kingdom Area
Source: (Roza, 2016)

In 1810 *Sultan Said Ali* died and was replaced by his son Ibrahim with the title *Sultan as-Sayid asy- Syarif Ibrahim Abdul Jalil Khaliluddin*. However, due to unfavorable health conditions, the government was run by *Panglima Besar Tengku Muhammad*. During the time of *Sultan Ibrahim*, the Dutch managed to conclude agreements and agreements which turned out to be very detrimental to the *Siak* Kingdom. In 1815, *Sultan Ibrahim* died and was replaced by his son, *Tengku Sayid Ismail*, with the title *Sultan Sayid Syarif Ismail Abdul Jalil Saifuddin*. However, there was a dispute with his brother, *Tengku Putera*. To defeat *Tengku Putera*, the *Sultan* asked for help from the British which then acted arbitrarily in the royal environment. This made the *sultan* and royal officials ask for Dutch help to expel the British. In return for the Dutch assistance, an agreement was approved in 1858 known as the *Siak* Treaty. This agreement was very detrimental to the *Siak* Kingdom so that within the palace circles arose conflicts and divisions. Subsequently, in 1864, *Sultan Ismail* died and was replaced by *Syarif Kasim*, the tenth sultan of the Kingdom of *Siak*, with the title *Sultan Sayid Syarif Kasim Abdul Jalil Saifuddin*. This sultan is better known as *Sultan Syarif Kasim I*. During the reign of this *sultan*, Dutch interference in the Kingdom of *Siak* became increasingly sharp. The royal policy had to get Dutch approval. After holding the helm of the *Siak* Kingdom for twenty-five years, in 1889 he died and was replaced by *Syarif Hasyim* who was given the title *Sultan Sayid Syarif Hasyim Abdul Jalil Saifuddin*. During the reign of the 11th *Sultan*, the *Siak* Kingdom had its printing press, one of which was a royal manual called *Bab al-Qawâid*, namely the *Siak* Kingdom manual which began to be compiled in the second period, when the *Siak* Kingdom was led by a sultan of Arab descent (Chatib & Munsarida, 2022). The guideline consists of 22 chapters which are divided into 154 articles. In addition, he built a palace named *as-Sirayah al-Hasyimiah* Palace and also a meeting hall called *Balairung Sari*, also known as the High-Density Hall.

When he died, the government was run by *Tengku Besar Sayid Syarif as-Sagaf* and *Datuk Lima Puluh* because *Syarif Kasim* was studying in *Jakarta*. *Syarif Kasim* was crowned as the 12th *Sultan* of *Siak* in 1915 with the title *Sultan as-Sayid asy- Syarif Kasim Abdul Jalil Saifuddin* better known as *Sultan Syarif Kasim II*. The reign of *Sultan Syarif Kasim II* ended when Indonesia became independent because after the proclamation of Indonesian independence was proclaimed all over and it was known by the people, *Sultan Syarif Kasim II* immediately pledged himself and the *Siak* Kingdom he led joined the Republic of Indonesia (Wiwik Swastiwi et al., 2023). The following shows the area of the *Siak* Kingdom.

The Role of the *Siak* Sultanate in Trade Routes in the Malacca Straits in the XVIII Century

The *Siak* River is a very important route for the traffic of various trading products such as camphor, benzoate, and even tin and gold (Barnard, 2003; Perret & Alves, 2022). At the same time, the *Siak* people have also become the main exporter of wood in the Malacca Straits and one of the timber industrial areas, especially for shipbuilding and building. With abundant wood

reserves, in 1775 the Dutch allowed *Siak* ships to have direct access to sources of rice and salt in Java, without having to pay compensation to the VOC but of course on condition that the Dutch were also given direct access to sources of wood in *Siak*, which they referred to as the endless rainforest area.

According to Kathirithamby-Wells (1997), the domination of the *Siak* Sultanate over the eastern coast of *Sumatra* and the Malay Peninsula was quite significant, they were able to replace the previous Johor influence over control of trade routes. In addition, according to Reid (2005), the *Siak* Sultanate also emerged as a key holder to the *Minangkabau* highlands, through the three main rivers namely *Siak*, *Kampar*, and *Kuantan*, which had previously been the key to the glory of Malacca. According to Khairiah (2014), the Sultanate of *Siak Sri Indrapura* took advantage of the control over trade through the Malacca Strait and the ability to control pirates in the area. *Siak's* economic progress can be seen from Dutch records which stated that in 1783, there were around 171 merchant ships from *Siak* to Malacca (Lewis, 1970; Vos, 1994). *Siak* became a triangular area of trade between the Dutch in Malacca and the British in *Pulau Pinang*.



Figure 3. Map of Sumatra Island Trade Routes

Source: (Sutomo & Surya, 2018)

Sultanate of *Siak Sri Indrapura*: Advantages over trade control in the Malacca Straits

The dominance of the *Siak* Sultanate over the east coast of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula was quite significant. They were able to replace Johor's previous influence over control of trade routes. In addition, in earlier times, the key to Malacca's glory lay in the role of the three main rivers, namely *Siak*, *Kampar*, and *Kuantan*. The Sultanate of *Siak* emerged as a major player in the *Minangkabau* highlands. Goods exported to *Bengkalis*, *Siak* and *Bukit Batu* in 1862 were coffee, candles, gambier, tobacco, rattan, *terubuk* eggs, dried *terubuk* fish, Balam sap, sago, dried mackerel, rice, resin, people's sugar, horses, cake, salt, pork, *suntai* oil, dried kuru fish, goat, dollars, Dutch rupiah, coconut. Apart from that, Barnard explains that the main income of the

Sultan of *Siak* is as follows (Wahyuni, 2019): 1) Excise through the rivers contained in his kingdom; 2) Taxes from the worst fishing; 3) Traffic tax for foreigners; 4) Taxes from the sale of opium and salt, forced labor, mandatory provisions, and income in the form of money.

Table 1. Some Trade Commodities in *Siak*

Kampar Region	Siak Region	Rokan Region	Kubu Region
Gambir	Gold	Gold	Rice
Wood	Wood	Rattan	Rattan
	Rattan	Rice	

Source: Barnard (in Wahyuni, 2019)

Overall, the Johor-*Riau* sultanate maintained friendly relations with the VOC from the early 1600s, starting with the creation of an ad hoc alliance between *Sultan Ala'udin Ri'ayat Shah III* and Dutch admiral *Jacob van Heemskerck* (1567-1807) Johor was among the first Asian powers to send a diplomatic mission to the Dutch Republic in 1603. Three years later, when the representatives of the Johor embassy returned safely aboard Admiral Matelieff's fleet, two treaties were formally ratified between Johor and the VOC in May and September 1606. The *Raja Muda* (Viceroy) of Johor-*Riau* refused that free Dutch citizens from Malacca were allowed to enter the Sungai *Siak* area to trade (Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2013). During British rule, *Tengku Prince Siak* alias *Sayid Zain* was an important figure in smoothing out the British plan to occupy the island of Java. He became one of Raffles' trusted agents and played a very crucial role, especially in terms of communicating and "seducing" the rulers throughout the Malay region. Moreover, he is a figure of loyalty, sincerity, and integrity. It is not surprising that Raffles later, in a letter to Lord Minto, called *Tengku Prince Siak* his best assistant (Hazmirullah et al., 2016).

Before the founding of the *Siak* kingdom in 1723 by *Raja Kecik*, the *Siak* state was in the territory of the Johor-*Riau* sultanate which was the successor to the Malacca sultanate which was defeated by the Portuguese in 1511 AD. political, economic, social, cultural, and geographical (Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2012). At that time in *Siak* a king was appointed who served as the representative of the government of the Johor sultanate and also collaborated with the Dutch in the context of dealing with the Portuguese. Furthermore, in *Siak* a *Syahbandar* was placed in charge of collecting excise on goods that entered and left through the *Siak* River.

During the seventeenth century, Johor became the successor state to Melaka and *Aceh* as it began to dominate trade in the Malacca Straits due to its ability to transport goods through its ports, cooperate with foreign merchants in the area, and restrain people who could potentially act as rivals to its sovereignty. Among Johor's rivals were scattered groups of Malay, *Minangkabau*, and *Orang Asli* (example of the *Sakai* tribe) who used their special knowledge of the environmental niches of eastern Sumatra to funnel trade into the Straits. Johor's conquest of

the region created resentment, which finally erupted in the successful east Sumatran uprising of 1717 (Barnard, 2001b).

During its development, the *Siak* Sultanate emerged as a powerful maritime empire and became a force to be reckoned with on the East coast of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula amid pressure from European imperialism. The farthest reach of this kingdom's influence reached Sambas in West *Kalimantan*, as well as controlling the shipping lanes between Sumatra and *Kalimantan*. The ups and downs of this kingdom were inseparable from competition in fighting over control of trade routes in the Malacca Strait (Ali & Sulistiyono, 2020). From an economic point of view, it is considered that if a king is seated in *Siak*, it will require a large amount of financing, while trade in *Siak* and along the *Siak* River is not yet very profitable. Tin and gold are the main commodities of *Petapahan Kampar*, only tens of *pikul* are available, not as expected (Roza & Masbukin, 2020).



Figure 4. Map of Sumatra Island. F. Valentijn, 1726
Source: (Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2013)

Barnard placed particular emphasis on the geography of the region, the character of its population, and the personalities of the rulers who, with varying degrees of success, shaped its political development in *Siak* (Kahin, 2005). *Raja Kecil* (little king) (1699-1746) was the figure most responsible for incorporating the east coast peoples into the loosely structured *Siak* sultanate, and he and his descendants dominated *Siak* history throughout the eighteenth century. *Raja Kecil* is also an important figure in the traditional history of other communities bordering the Malacca Straits, as well as the highland *Minangkabau* people (Koh, 2017; Barnard, 2014).

Before the *Siak* Kingdom was founded by *Raja Kecil*, *Siak* was in the Johor-Riau Kingdom area. One of the first attempts to co-opt Johor's power, and its status as a center of Malay identity, occurred in eastern *Sumatra* along the *Siak* River during the eighteenth century when a leader named *Raja Kecil*, possibly of *Minangkabau* origin, appeared claiming to be the son of *Sultan Mahmud*, and thus entitled to become heir to the throne of *Johor-Melaka*. Previous censuses have used the term 'Malay' in two different senses—as a broad category of what we now call

Austronesian, as well as a narrower sense of Muslim Malay speakers from the Peninsula and *Sumatra*, arguing that 'linguistically, ethically, and ethnologically Malays are Malaysians and Malays *Jambi, Kampar, Siak, Minangkabau* and other districts in *Sumatra* are one race' (Reid, 2005).

Siak's transformation into Malay rule during the eighteenth century is emphasized in traditional texts which are one of the most common forms of 'teaching manuals' in the region. *Siak* has several texts that centralize governance as a developing Malay state. One of the most famous is *Hikayat Siak*. Written with the support of exiled factions of the *Siak* ruling family, this epic story shows how one group slowly changed its identity from its central Sumatran origins to a broader Malay identity. However, their *Minangkabau* origin has never been fully denied.

Central to the development of a Malay identity for *Siak* were the numerous coups that took place among the descendants of *Raja Kecik* after 1740 (Colombijn, 2003), which resulted in power being rotated between the two lineages, with the transition often marked by periods of conflict or open war. When these two factions compete for the throne, the provisional winner will oversee the trading network system between villages and economic niches in central eastern *Sumatra* that transports goods to and from the Malacca Straits (Barnard, 2001a). The 18th-century Malays were not submissive farmers or fishermen but identified with the dynamic trade, politics, and culture of the Malacca Straits. Once *Siak* had the opportunity to form its state, those attributes were brought to a higher level. Violence, custom, and trade become intertwined in the formation of *Siak*-Malay identity (Barnard, 2001b). The final placement of *Siak's* identity within the boundaries of the sea and trade routes of the Malay world occurs in the last 30 pages of the 600 folio pages of the text of the *Siak* saga.

Siak Sri Indrapura once controlled the entire east coast of *Sumatra*. The *Siak* Sultanate, which was relatively underdeveloped by foreign (except Japanese) plantations, was able to maintain its traditional character and spirit of tenacity when compared to other Malay kingdoms. Ethnically, the 117,000 residents are relatively the same as the 30,000 *Minangkabau* people who have migrated. Only in this area is there a strong Indonesian merchant class who trade in smallholder rubber and copra. In 1924, there were 109 native traders in *Siak* with an income of more than f 760 per year, more than twice the total number of native traders in East *Sumatra* (Wahyuni, 2019). *Tijdschrift voor indische taal-, land -en volkenkunde uitgegeven door het bataviaasch genootschap van kunsten en wetenschappen*, written by Mr. J.A. van der Chijs Deel XIII (Van Der Chijs, 1875), is a translation of the initial conditions of the *Siak Sri Indrapura* Kingdom, socio-cultural life, and writings about the territory and laws that were in effect at that time. Its contents are mostly J.S.G.'s travel reports. Gramberg from Batavia to *Bengkalis*, on his way he also headed to the *Siak* area. This trip was made in 1863. Gramberg departed from Batavia by boat with the aim of the East Coast of *Sumatra*, especially to the *Siak* River (Barnard, 2022). The area

that was first visited was *Bengkalis*. According to him, the area could become a trading base for the surrounding area because it is close to the mouth of the *Siak* River which is rich in products from the interior and is not far from the coast, thus facilitating trade with Singapore. In *Siak*, Gramberg noted, that there is no trade and industry (Swastiwi et al., 2023).

The *Siak* River is an important route for the traffic of various trade products, ranging from camphor, benzoar, and even tin, and gold. At the same time, the *Siak* people have also become the main timber exporters in the Malacca Straits as well as one of the timber industrial areas, especially for shipbuilding and building. With abundant wood reserves, in 1775 the Dutch allowed *Siak* ships to have direct access to sources of rice and salt in Java, without having to pay compensation to the VOC but of course on condition that the Dutch were also given direct access to sources of wood in *Siak*, which they call it an endless rain forest area (Sutomo & Surya, 2018).

Siak is a downstream, coastal state, and its economic base depends on the collection and export of forest products. Through the village chief, the kingdom encouraged various inland and upstream people (upstream people) to look for forest products to supply trade. The main forest products are ivory, rhino horn, gallbladder (*guliga*), honey, wood, rattan, and river products. However, for the Dutch, the *Siak* River, which originates from the Malacca Strait, was an important traffic route, and the Dutch even placed great importance on the *Siak* River to expedite their journey to areas that were believed to have abundant agricultural products (Masuda et al., 2016; Tagliacozzo, 2007).



Figure 5. *Siak* and the South Malacca Straits

Source: (Barnard, 2001a)

Raja Ismail, grandson of *Raja Kecil*, ruled *Siak* for several months in 1761. After the defeat at the hands of VOC-led forces, *Raja Ismail* explored the region for eighteen years before returning to *Siak* as his sultan. King *Ismail Syah* or *Sultan Ismail Abdul Jalil Syah* from *Siak Sri Inderapura*,

was the son of King *Mahmud*, King *Siak*. There is another popular, controversial, and courageous figure in *Siak* who inherited *Raja Kecil*, namely *Raja Ismail*. He has the title *Sultan Ismail Abdul Jalil Jalaluddin Syah* (1765-1766 AD). *Raja Ismail*, son of *Sultan Mahmud* or *Tengku Buang Asmara* is the youngest son of *Raja Kecil*. After the death of King *Mahmud*, the *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate was fought over by *Raja Ismail* and *Raja Muhammad Ali*. This succession was won by *Raja Muhammad Ali*. Finally, King *Ismail* chose to wander.

In his early voyages of exploration in the South China Sea, *Raja Ismail* had many experiences that enabled the writer to place his actions in the context of Malay identity. Despite the difficult conditions during the initial phase of his flight, according to *Hikayat Siak*, King *Ismail* continued to receive many honors and tributes, while also upholding custom, reflecting his role in wider Malay society. These stories convey the message that Malay leadership must be respected and recognized.

When King *Ismail* and his brothers arrived on the *Tujuh* (Seven) Islands, the local people presented him with a gift of Spanish reals. Island *Tujuh* is a single sea unit with hundreds of islands in it that are neatly arranged like a string of pearls. The islands are *Tambelan* Island, *Serasan* Island, *Subi* Island, *Bunguran* Island, *Laut* Island, *Siantan* Island and *Jemaja* Island. Some of these groups only had to recognize the Sultan of *Siak* as their king and conscripted his troops in times of war. Their role is to keep trade from West and Central Sumatra flowing downstream to *Siak*. They were not taxed by the *Sultan*. The people of these areas were relatively self-sufficient and they occasionally provided labor to other neighboring kingdoms. Orang Batin's obligation to the sultan is to provide him with bezoar stones (*guliga*) and agarwood (*gaharu* wood). The inner chief of each sub-group (*pebatin*) shipped only a small quantity of these goods to the sultan, and the remainder was traded with Chinese merchants in the area. Rice and forest products were taxed by the sultanate to secure the official economy. The level of taxation is determined according to the socio-religious classification system (Porath, 2018).

Another sign of acceptance was the willingness of the *Trengganu* ruler to marry his daughter to *Raja Ismail* (Sheppard, 1949). Such relationships can be very important not only for a leader but also for his followers. A Malay leader could negotiate a diverse society from fluctuating VOC outposts, immigrants, ships, environmental niches, and local states (Koh, 2017). That King *Ismail* had been chosen (*rajakan*) as a leader reflects factors that more directly determined who would become the leaders of this emerging Malay community and some of the determinants of how Malayness was formed at the time.

Finally, after the power and support of the *Orang Laut* (People of the Sea) in 1779, King *Ismail* replaced King *Muhammad Ali* as his Highness in Tuan *Siak*. Chou (2009) describes, supported by *Orang Laut*, continues to show dominance in the eastern waters of *Sumatra*, by starting to control the tin trade on *Bangka* Island, and then conquering *Mempawah* in West

Kalimantan. In 1767, *Sultan Ismail* received assistance from the Sultan of *Palembang* of 1000 *pikul* (traditional unit of weight) of silver. This silver was a reward to *Sultan Ismail* as a security deposit because *Sultan Ismail's* fleet guarded the waters around the island of *Bangka* from attacks by pirates. In addition to getting rewards, the Sultan of *Palembang* also allowed the *Siak* royal aristocrats to open tin mines on *Bangka* Island. Dutch reports said *Palembang* had paid 3,000 *Ringgit* to King *Ismail* to keep his shipping lanes safe from disturbances. While *Hikayat Siak* tells about the excitement of the welcome received by King *Ismail* upon his arrival in *Palembang*.

Roza et al. (2022) explains that after *Sultan Abdul Jalil Muzaffar Syah* died, his son *Tengku Ismail* was crowned king with the title *Sultan Ismail Abdul Jalil Jalaluddin Syah* in 1765. In running the government, this sultan still adhered to his father's government pattern and the mandate mandated his father had to hand over the royal throne to his uncle King *Alamuddin* when he returned to *Siak*. News of the death of *Sultan Abdul Jalil Muzaffar Syah* and the appointment of *Sultan Ismail* as his successor spread to *Johor*. This news caused the Dutch to start carrying out their politics of turning one against the other, namely to persuade *Tengku Alamuddin* to return to *Siak* to hold the royal throne. This Dutch effort was successful so *Tengku Alamuddin* and the Dutch troops came to attack *Siak*.

The arrival of King *Alam* with Dutch troops reached *Sultan Ismail* in *Siak*. For this reason, the sultan also prepared his troops to face the Dutch army. Then there was a terrible battle, the *Siak* heroes fought relentlessly and many heroes died on the battlefield. When the Dutch troops were almost defeated, the Dutch did their trick by persuading King *Alam* to write a letter to the sultan to stop the fighting and make peace (Koster, 2005). After reading the letter from his uncle, *Sultan Ismail* stopped his army from fighting and got ready to welcome his uncle. *Sultan Ismail* strictly adhered to his father's will and after his uncle arrived in *Siak* the royal throne was handed over to him and in 1766 King *Alam* was crowned as the 4th sultan with the title *Sultan Abdul Jalil Alamuddin Syah*. After that *Sultan Ismail Abdul Jalil Jalaluddin Syah* resigned to *Pelalawan* and continued to *Langkat* until the end of his life. Therefore, this sultan was given the title *Marhum* Dead in Balai. Even though the Company took economic and political benefits from the conflicts and competition that occurred, these traditional local rulers were often able to use the Company as an institution to support their power (Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2012).

Barnard (2001a) reveals that *Hikayat Siak* can be seen as a celebration of the prowess of *Siak* warriors, and perhaps a bit of hyperbole, the followers of King *Ismail* were famous throughout the Malay world for carrying out brutal attacks, leading Dutch observers to categorize them as notorious pirates. Such was the martial skill of King *Ismail's* followers that rulers sometimes offered them protection to prevent attacks on their own country. This region has become a cultural, economic, and geographical frontier that is home to various groups inhabiting many islands, straits, forests, and harbors, all of which influence the development of its people. A

key factor in this transformation was how a prince, King *Ismail*, developed a Malay identity through dispossession and violence.

CONCLUSION

After the collapse of the Johor Sultanate, the *Siak Sri Indrapura* Sultanate continued to dominate the Malacca Straits in trade. Not only the Malacca Straits but also utilizing existing rivers such as the *Siak* River and others that empty into the Malacca Straits. At that time the *Siak* River was a collection area for various trade products ranging from camphor, tin, and gold. The *Siak* people are even active in the timber industry, especially for shipbuilding and other construction. The Sultanate of *Siak* took advantage of the control of trade from merchant ships passing through the Malacca Strait. This success was also supported by the ability of the Sultanate of *Siak* to control pirates in the area. King *Ismail* who had reigned twice, namely, in 1760-1766 and 1779-1781 was called the Pirate "Ruler of the South China Sea". These things have an impact on *Siak's* progress in the economic sector. Search results from Dutch records noted that in 1783 there were 171 merchant ships from *Siak* to Malacca. The position of *Siak* can be said to be a triangular area of trade between the Dutch in Malacca and the British on the island of *Pinang*.

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