

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF COLONIAL SURABAYA AND ITS IMPACT ON NATIVES, 1830-1930

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the process of economic development of Surabaya residency in the period 1830-1930 and its implications for the natives' economy. The indicator of economic development is focused on export of agricultural and export-import activities of Surabaya in 1830-1930. The natives' economic progress will be seen at the level of their income. The minimum standard used to measure the level of prosperity is the per year income of a native. The rise and decline of the Surabaya economy during the period of Cultivation System and the liberal period can be observed from the export of agricultural products and the value of the foreign trade surplus. The highest value of foreign trade surplus in the Cultivation System period occurred in 1850s. At that time the overall value of foreign trade surplus of Surabaya showed was 0.54 per cent. The highest foreign trade surplus in liberal period was 0.96 per cent which occurred in 1920, when the price of sugar was rapidly increasing. The implication of the economic development of Surabaya for the native can also be differentiated between the period of the Cultivation System and the liberal period. In the period of the Cultivation System the economic condition of people was really miserable, especially in sugar cane plantation areas. The hardship of the people in Surabaya was describe by the nineteenth-century historian Hageman as temporary slavery (tijdelijke slavernij). The economic condition of the people in Surabaya in liberal period can be considered prosperous, especially after the abolishment of the compulsory work. In the city of Surabaya which was the capital city of the residency, as a result of the expansion of trading, shipping and industry, employment was abundant and the people became prosperous too. After 1870 a skilled laborer (tukang) in the capital city of Surabaya received an income of 1.00- 1.50 guilders per day. The depression of the people resurfaced when the economic crisis hit 1930s. As a result, much investment went bankrupt. In addition, a number of development projects of the government had to be stopped which resulted in increasing unemployment.

Key Words: *economic development, colonialism, surabaya, trading, cultivation system, foreign trade*

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Introduction

Since the middle of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the Indonesian economy showed a tremendous development, that truly can be considered extraordinary. According to Rostow's stages of economic development (Rostow, 1973), the Indonesian economy at that time could be classified at the level of pre-condition for take off. The tremendous of economic development in Indonesia can also be observed at the regional level, even though each region possesses its own uniqueness.

Surabaya as case study is considered to be important and interesting to examine. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century (when the Cultivation System was introduced) Surabaya had become a vital economic area in term of its commodity export, industry and commerce. At that time Surabaya was one of the seven residencies located in East Java that was experiencing a tremendous economic development.

During the liberal period (1870-1920s), marked by the promulgation of the Agrarian Law and the Sugar Law (*Staatsblad van Nederlands-Indie* 1870: 55, 117), Surabaya was ushered into a new era of economic history. At that time Surabaya was opened widely for the foreign investors to invest their capital and the colonial government also created an attractive business climate (Cribb, 1994: 24). In the 1880s many foreign investors had invested widely in agricultural sector. With the large number of investors investing their capital in this area, Surabaya became important in term of international commerce. Surabaya at that time became the central point in an economic network covering the whole of eastern part of the Indonesian Archipelago. Surabaya's position at that time was considered to be better than Batavia (Jakarta) in term of economic development or in unit of measurement (Clemens, Lindblad and Touwen, 1992).

However during the great of economic development, the issue of poverty among the natives was also emerged. Scholars such as Gonggrijp (1957), Burger (1962), and Geertz (1963) suggested that the decline of native's economy was caused by the fallacies of the economic policy by the Colonial Government in the nineteenth century. The social economic change in the middle of the Century caused the economic backwardness among of the peoples (*Tijdschrift voor Nederlands-Indie* 1850: I, 96).

Based on the above statement, this article explores the process of economic development of Surabaya residency in the period 1830-1930 and its implications for the natives' economy. The indicator of economic development is focused on export of agricultural and export-import activities of Surabaya in 1830-1930. The natives' economic progress will be seen at the level of their income. The minimum standard used to measure the level of prosperity is the per year income of a native. According to Sollewijn Gelpke, the income 110 guilders per year was certainly enough for the people to fulfill the basic need of life (Suryo, 1994: 8).

The Development of Export Agriculture in Surabaya, 1830-1930

1. The Agricultural Export Production of Surabaya 1830-1870

Not every part of the soil in Surabaya residency is fertile for the certain agricultural export products, as was noticed Van den Bosch. The fertile soil in Surabaya residency are located in Surabaya regency (Sugar Cane), Mojokerto regency (Sugar Cane, Coffee, and Tea) and Jombang regency (Sugar Cane). In Gresik regency for example, Pepper plantation was tried out but proved to be unfruitful. In Sedayu regency this had also been tried in 1845 although the soil was already selected to be fertile one but this experiment proved unfruitful too (*Tijdschrift voor Nederlands-Indie*, 1850: I, 96).

The types of sugar cane planted in Surabaya were the *Jepara*, *Bali* and *Jepara Bima* Types, which had a green skin. The *Nyamplung* type or the sugar cane with a white skin can also be much found in Surabaya residency (Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia (ANRI), Jakarta: *Algemeen Jaarverslag* 17 April 1863).

Since the application of the Cultivation System, the production of sugar cane increased. In 1830 the whole of Surabaya produced 15,000 piculs. In 1835 the capacity of sugar production increased become 31,098 piculs, it means twice the sugar production in 1830 (ANRI, Jakarta: *Verslag omtrent den Staat de Cultuur van Producten van Europeasche Markt op het Eiland Java Gedurende* (1835).

In 1840, the Surabaya's sugar production was about 144,000 piculs, and in 1845 from 17 sugar factories, which were actively working at that time, produced 182,000 piculs. All of the sugar production was under the authority of Colonial Government, except in the Willem II factory which had been rented out with a capacity of 19,759 piculs.

Until 1862 the sugar production in Surabaya residency could be considered profitable. At least the sugar production was more than the previous ten years. The sugar production in 1862 was 239,226.46 piculs and all under authority of the Colonial Government.

In the Surabaya Residency the soil which was suitable for coffee was situated only in the high areas of Mojokerto regency, especially in the *afdeeling* which covered the Welirang and Penanggungan Mountains. The area of Coffee plantation was situated in the districts of Mojokerto, Mojosari, and Mojoagung. Based on the colonial report which was written in 1835, the coffee plantation had been extended to the capability of the people (ANRI, Jakarta: *Verslag omtrent den Staat der Cultuur van Producten van de Europeasche Markt op het Eiland Java Gedurende* (1835).

In 1834 in Surabaya residency the inhabitants had succeeded in planting 2,271,435 trees, that consist of 1,474,148 young trees, 1,502 trees still in growing, and 795,785 trees yielding to harvest. In 1840 the coffee plantations in Surabaya residency had 300,000 more trees than in 1836. In 1844 the number of coffee trees was decreasing about 100,000 trees.

The Coffee plantation in Surabaya residency was similar to other residencies in Java. Coffee was planted were not only in the plantations area but also in the people's yard and in the forest. In 1846 coffee plantation in Surabaya residency

involved 2,637 families. In the same year there were 2,349,898 coffee trees yielding a harvest, which covered 1,629,340 trees situated in the forest; 29,700 trees in family's yards, and 670,850 trees in the coffee plantation. In the 1862 the total number of coffee trees was 3,697,774 trees (*Tijdschrift voor Nederlands-Indie* 1850: I, 106; ANRI, Jakarta: *Cultuurverslag Residentie Soerabaja* (1865)).

Tea plantation were found only in Mojokerto regency. This tea plantation started to be operated in 1835. Concerning the yield of the harvest, this plantation in 1840 could produce 830 Amsterdam Pounds. In 1846 an agreement was made to rent the tea to a private company, but in the same year, the agreement was cancelled unilaterally. The following year, the tea plantation didn't exist anymore in the Surabaya residency (*Tijdschrift voor Nederlands-Indie* 1850: I, 107).

The tobacco plantation for the European market was not so popular in Surabaya residency. This kind of plantation had been imposed on the people as a compulsory plantation in 1844. Compared to other residencies in Java, Surabaya was among the last where tobacco plantation was introduced. In the Lengkir District of Surabaya Regency, in 1846, around 92 *bau* of rice field and 1,640 families assigned for this plantation. The production produced from this plantation was estimated at a round 6 piculs (*Tijdschrift voor Nederlands-Indie* 1850: I, 107).

2. The Agricultural Export Production of Surabaya in 1870-1930

The land authority system after the agrarian law and sugar law had come into existence in 1870 differed completely compared to the previous system. Previously it was compulsory for the peasant to provide one-fifth of the land for Cultivation System. However with the new system, land was being rented from the peasant.

The land obtained for the sugar cane plantation in the Surabaya residency was obtained by contract. The rental prices of rice field and *tegal* (dry rice field) in many places in Surabaya differed considerably. The rental price of rice field is normally between 40–50 guilders, but sometimes it could decline to 20-30 guilders. In certain cases the rental price could increase until 60-70 guilders, and in fact sometimes it reaches 100 guilders per *bau*. The rental price of dry rice field (*tegal*) was around 20–30 guilders per *bau* (*Indische Gids* 1866: II, 713).

In Surabaya Residency during the liberal period, the most popular export crops were sugar cane and coffee. During the Cultivation System sugar cane was very profitable. The decision to abolish the Cultivation System gradually and replace it with the liberal system in the early 1870s was still a tight one. In the 1875 the resident report stated that sugar cane production was not that profitable. The reason was due to relatively low market prices, plantation diseases and management problems including the escalation of wages. In order to overcome this problem a proposal was formulated about the need of administrator to be involved (von Faber, 1931: 181).

Other related matters that resulting in the law on production of sugar cane included the heavy rains in 1874 that brought losses to the planters. The sugar cane

plantation became very bad. Thus the storage of sugar cane shouts was reduced. During the rainy season in the 1875 the production of sugar cane was relatively low compared to the dry season in the same year. In general, the production of sugar cane in 1875 was higher than 1874. In the Surabaya residency, for instance, this took place in the sugar factories of Krian, Kremboong, Konning Willem II, Jombang, and Goedo (*Koloniaal Verslag*, 1876/1877: 182).

The hard time faced by the sugar cane planters did not last long. In the 1877 the resident's report stated that sugar cane industry made a big profit, involving both private estates and government's own. When sugar cane in the residency of Surabaya was at the profitable stage, another problem emerge on the scene in 1880s. At that time the sugar crisis were took place, in which production exceeded demand resulting in a decline of the sugar price to its lowest level. This crisis took place because of the development and expansion of the industry of beet-sugar in Europe. In addition to this the sugar cane disease known as the *sereh* disease was spreading. Planters tried to curb this disease but without succes. As the result many sugar cane plantations became distorted especially along the Brantas and Mas Rivers.

Several attempts were made to overcome the disease. In 1887 a *Proefstation* of sugar cane was opened for the first time in Pasuruan district. Dr. J.G. Kramer and J.D. Kobus led the *Proefstation*. Together with Dr. F. Soltwedel they conducted experiments and successfully discover how to curb the *sereh* disease. These efforts resulted in an increase in the sugar production in Surabaya residency. The level of sugar production rose from 904,905 piculs in 1885 to 1.093,760 piculs in 1890 (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1886 and 1891).

The compulsory coffee plantation was the longest to survive because it provided much profit for the colonial government. The colonial government newly decided to eliminate the forced plantations in 1919, when production was slacking and the number of plantations was small (Ricklefs 1994: 190). In Surabaya residency the decline of colonial coffee plantation can be traced to thears between 1865 and 1880. The volume of coffee production was 804, 581, 408, and 296 tons in respectively 1865, 1870, 1875, and 1880 (Van Baardewijk, *Changing in Economic of Indonesia* Vol. 14).

In 1880s the colonial government tried to upgrade the coffee production by developing new methods. Among them was to organize coffee plantations more efficienly (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1882: 76). The number of young coffee trees that was prepared to be planted and the number of existing coffee trees in 1885 and 1890 were 1,237,993 and 1,091,375 respectively (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1886 and 1891). This data show that the increase of coffee trees planted in Surabaya was declining. The reason for the decline was the colonial government's lack of encouragement of landowners or village people to plant coffee trees (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1882: 176). The types of coffee planted in Surabaya were from the *Java*, *Liberia*, and *Robusta* species.

The elimination of forced coffee plantation was done gradually and followed by the development of private plantations. Private plantation expanded in a particular from 1907-1910 onwards (Table 1). In 1915 the coffee production of

Surabaya declined. Besides being caused by the leave disease, the decline was also because of the longer of dry season. As a result, the only important export crop of Surabaya at that time was sugar (*Indische Gids* 1917: I, 126). The decline of coffee production continued up to the 1920s. In 1920 the coffee production of six coffee plantations with a planted an area of 3494 *bau*, amounted to 319,306 Kilograms (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1921). In the following years the size of the coffee plantation decline further. In 1925 the planted area was only 1,688 *bau* or half the size of the area which was planted in 1920 (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1926).

Export Import Activities of Surabaya In 1830-1870

Surabaya at that time was considered to be a center of storage for products from East Java. Traders invested millions of Guilders from an early stage. The export import activities in Surabaya showed an increase between 1851 and 1856 (Table 2).

The import production of Surabaya consisted of household products such as food, beverages, metals, silver, etc. Meanwhile the export of Surabaya was mainly comprised of natural resources. These goods were stored by the colonial government and shipped to the Netherlands by *Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij* (NHM, Netherlands Trading Association), as a handling agent. The activity used private ships to transport primary products at a fix payment based on regulation by the colonial government.

The Development of Export and Import of Surabaya, 1870-1930

The change in economic policy from Cultivation System to the liberal regime in 1870 opened up a new economic history of Surabaya. Foreign investors were invited to invest their capital. Although the volume of foreign trade was until 1911 still classified as small. The period of 1911-1930 saw the great development of foreign trade activity of Surabaya (Figure 1).

The largest profits from international trade in Surabaya were pocketed in 1919 and 1920. The immediate aftermath of World War I was an advantageous and booming period. The value of trade in Surabaya in 1919 was 431.749.000 guilders and in 1920 was 447.558.000 guilders (Clemens, Linblad and Touwen 1992).

The most popular product in exports from Surabaya in that period was sugar since almost 80 per cent of the Javanese sugar export came from Surabaya. In the 1919 and 1920, after the eruption of World War I, the price of sugar reached 69 cent per Kilogram. However in 1922 the price of sugar returned to its normal level, namely 19 cent per kilogram. When the economic depression struck, the price of sugar fell from 13,7 cent per Kilogram in 1929 to 9,6 cent per kilogram in 1930 (*Indische Verslag* 1932). Imports passing through the Surabaya Port in this were dominated by rice followed by textiles, machines, and metals.

The Economic Condition of The Native, 1830-1870

During the period of the Cultivation System, the condition of the inhabitants was very poor. The calculation of people's yield in Surabaya residency per household was 9.95 guilders, although from this amount a land tax of around 14.91 guilders was cut off. In this case, the land tax was more than the people's income resulting in a deficit of 4,96 guilders (Elson 1994: 62). To earn their daily standard of living they had to do other jobs next to planting sugar cane such as growing rice or fulfilling various occupations in order to meet subsistence needs. It seemed very hard to them to fulfill such needs properly. In addition to the land tax, they also had to pay other taxes and do compulsory work (*herendiensten*) (ANRI, Jakarta: *Cultuurverslag Residentie Soerabaja* 1866).

In Mojokerto regency, because of the severe compulsory work, such as doing *pancen* work and others task that could not be redeemed with daily wage, caused the inhabitants to be on a temporary condition of slavery (*tijdelijke slavernij*).

Surabaya City's people also had to do compulsory work. The number of workers is shown in the Rothenbuhler Report as follows (Von Faber 1931: 67-68):

1. 186 persons worked for construction workshop (*constructiewinkel*), skilled laborers and unskilled ones earned 10 *stuivers of silver* per day 40 *duit* which was equal to 1/4 and 1 *kati* of rice.
2. 494 persons worked as mechanic repairmen or skilled laborers with wages equal to 5-10 *stuiver* and unskilled ones earned 4 *duit* without rice.
3. 65 persons worked for storehouses with wages around 1 *kati* of rice.
4. 10 persons worked for store houses with wages around 2 *stuiver* and 1 *kati* of rice.
5. 44 persons worked in hospitals and earned 4 *duit* without rice.
6. 407 persons worked for building barracks and other buildings; skilled labourers were paid 10 *stuivers* or more per day and unskilled ones 4 *duit* and 1 *kati* of rice.
7. 56 persons worked as city cleaners with wages of 4 *duit* and others 6-8 *duit* per day.
8. 20 unskilled labourers worked as gardeners, without wages nor rice.
9. 44 persons who were sailing by boats for guarding purposes earned 2-3 *ringgit* per month.
10. 108 workers who were sent to work on boats by the regent to load an unload goods and did not get any wages.
11. 27 workers who took charge of taking care of houses had to be in *paseban* to load goods or do other work for which they were not paid.
12. Regents supplied 264 workers and several horses for several stop places along with horse drivers and servants without paying them any wages.
13. 212 workers worked for burning some wood earned 2 *duit* for every basket of coal.
14. 80 workers worked for cutting down trees for fine places were not paid.
15. 156 workers worked for burning bricks.
16. 1500 workers in coffee plantations.

17. 138 workers worked in *Jati* forests.
18. 176 workers worked cutting grass.
19. 200 workers worked milking cows and making butter.
20. 50 workers worked in the other task.
21. 170 workers served regents.
22. Construction roads around 1834 imposed too many burdens on the people every day. It needed 1500 workers and it reach 140 *paal* without any compensation.

Around 1850, the extension of compulsory growing plantation gradually came to an end although the burden of compulsory work still suppressed the inhabitants. For example in Sidoarjo, in 1863 the assistant-resident in charged of grinding sugar cane, every day supplied workers for the benefit of sugar factories located in Surabaya as follows:

1. Candi	140 persons
2. Boedoeran	170 persons
3. Waroe	220 persons
4. Porrong	140 persons
5. Tanggoel Angien	140 persons
6. Watoe Toelis	190 persons
7. Ketegan	220 persons
8. Balong Bendo	160 persons
9. Sroeni	200 persons
10. Krian	200 persons
11. Kremboong	110 persons

The total number of compulsion workers was 1890 persons per day only for sugar factories in *afdeeling* Sidoarjo. In that place the only sugar factory which was very important for the government was the Ketapang sugar factory hiring 84 compulsion workers every day. The wages for workers who worked for sugar factories via government's contract were fixed at 25 cents for 11 hours per day. On the other hand, hard work was paid equal to 30-40 cents for carrying sugar cane to the grinding process places and lifting fire caught 35 cents. Putting sugar canes into the grinder and throwing away the wet waste caught wages equal to 30 cents where the wages for other equal 25 cents (von Faber 1931: 69).

The Economic Condition of The Native, 1870-1930

The prosperity among the natives was increasing since 1870, mainly after the abolishment of compulsory work. During the Cultivation System the wages received by farmers were not enough to cover the cost of land rent. In liberal period, however, by renting the land to foreign investors, farmers could manage to cover the cost of land taxes and the still gain some money.

In order to cover the daily needs, farmers had the opportunity to work at the sugar cane plantation, sugar factory and later by planting rice when the sugar cane plantation was completed. The average wage received by farmer working at the sugar cane plantation was 35 cents for males per day; 25 cents per day for females and 15 cents per day for children (Uemura 1986: 56). This means that a male work alone in the sugar cane plantation the annual income of 127,75 guilders.. In the months of April up to September, when the female farmer and their children to work for sugar cane plantation fertilization, the annual income of the farmers family would be 199,75 guilders (127,75 +72,8), excluding their children's salaries. After the sugar cane plantation was completed, the farmer could plant by rice according to the system of plantation rotation. The income of the rice planting was normally around 140 guilders (Uemura 1986: 55).

When we look at the income calculated by Sollewijn Gelpke, each farmer needed 110 guilders per year for fulfilling the daily basic needs, which means that the income of the farmer in Surabaya residency can be considered sufficient. The economic condition of the native in liberal period can be categorized as prosperous.

At Surabaya City, which was the capital of the residency as the result of the expansion of trading, shipping and also industry, opportunity for employment were wide opened. The people became prosperous. Blacksmiths, carpenters, painters etc. were in high demand. The salaries of the skilled labour (*tukang*) in that time was 1.00 up to 1.50 guilders per day. The home industry of native people such as batik, textile handicraft (*tenun*, and *bordir*), handicraft of jewelry made from silver and gold, were also expanding.

In the depression of 1930 the difficulties made a comeback and shocked both industry and agriculture. As a result of the depression, cash crops were no more marketable at a high price. Many industries went bankrupt and unemployment increased (*Handelsvereniging Soerabaja* 1930: 43).

Conclusion

This survey indicates that the economic development of Surabaya has experienced both rise and decline during the period of 1830-1930. At the beginning, the economic development of Surabaya took place when Van den Bosch introduced his brilliant economic concept known as Cultivation System. In the 1860s the Cultivation System became unstable and in from 1870 it was abolished for ethical reasons and replaced by a new economic system known as liberal system.

The rise and decline of the Surabaya economy during the period of Cultivation System and the liberal period can be observed from the export of agricultural products and the value of the foreign trade surplus. The highest value of foreign trade surplus in the Cultivation System period occurred in 1850s. At that time the overall value of foreign trade surplus of Surabaya showed was 0.54 per cent. The

highest foreign trade surplus in liberal period was 0.96 per cent which occurred in 1920, when the price of sugar was rapidly increasing.

The implication of the economic development of Surabaya for the native can also be differentiated between the period of the Cultivation System and the liberal period. In the period of the Cultivation System the economic condition of people was really miserable, especially in sugar cane plantation areas. The incomes of the people in Surabaya residency was 9.95 guilders per household, not enough to pay the land taxes to the colonial government which amounted to 14.91 guilders. There was still a shortage of 4.96 guilders in order to pay land taxes. In order to survive farmer had to find an alternative job, such as planting rice after sugar cane plantation was completed and others occupations to meet daily needs. In addition to land tax, the people were subjected to other kinds of obligation such as compulsory work or *heerendiensten*. The hardship of the people in Surabaya was described by the nineteenth-century historian Hageman as temporary slavery (*tijdelijke slavernij*).

The economic condition of the people in Surabaya in liberal period can be considered prosperous, especially after the abolishment of the compulsory work. The rental gain from the planter was used by the people to pay land tax. In order to fulfill the needs of daily life farmers had the opportunity to work in the sugar cane plantation area, sugar factories, and by planting rice after the sugar cane plantation was completed. The income per family reached 199.75 guilders per year. This income was excluding the gains from the rice plantation which was 140.80 guilders (once in sixteen months).

In the city of Surabaya which was the capital city of the residency, as a result of the expansion of trading, shipping and industry, employment was abundant and the people became prosperous too. After 1870 a skilled laborer (*tukang*) in the capital city of Surabaya received an income of 1.00- 1.50 guilders per day. The depression of the people resurfaced when the economic crisis hit 1930s. As a result, much investment went bankrupt. In addition, a number of development projects of the government had to be stopped which resulted in increasing unemployment.

Table. 6.1. The volume of private and government's coffee production in Surabaya residency 1907-1910 (piculs)

Year	Java		Liberia		Robusta	
	Private	Govern.	Private	Govern.	Private	Govern
1907	2046	68	526	---	---	---
1908	10251	62	579	---	---	---
1909	2071	3	764	---	16	---
1910	20930	15180	15390	826	9862	150

Source: *Verslag van de Handelsvereniging te Soerabaia over het jaar 1909* (Soerabaia: van Ingen 1910), 58.

Tabel. 6.2. The value of import and export of Surabaya In 1851-1856 (guilders))

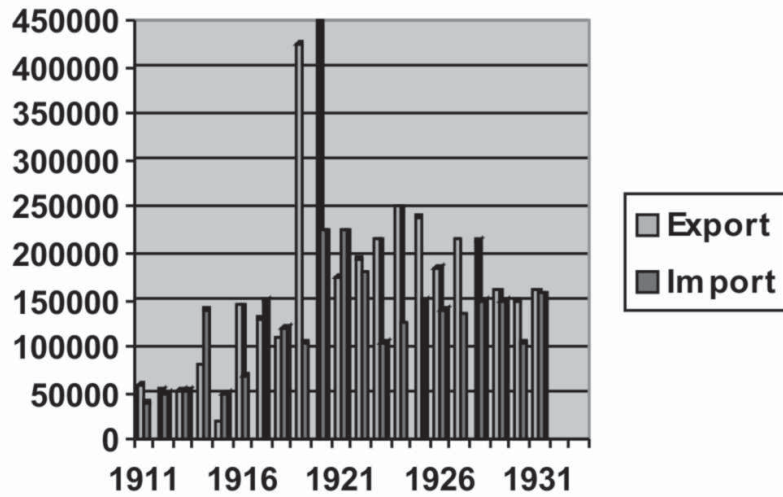
Year	The Value of Import	The Value of Export
1851	4,229,860	10,967,698
1852	4,930,792	9,472,870
1853	5,523,282	11,370,630
1854	6,434,547	12,216,652
1855	7,184,670	13,730,820
1856	6,595,151	20,981,196

Source: Von Faber, 1931: 147.

Figure. 6.1.

The value of export and import trade of Surabaya, 1911-1931(thousand *guilders*).

Source: Clemens, Linblad and Touwen 1992



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NASUTION

Economic Development of Colonial Surabaya and Its Impacation Natives, 1830 - 1930