

A Spatial Analysis of Ethnicity and Land-use of Batavia, 1619-1930

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Abstract: Batavia was a typical European colonial city in maritime Asia. Its history goes back to the seventeenth century and it is currently one of megacities in the world. The research presented in the workshop is a pilot study of GIS-based analysis of colonial urban history of Batavia from 1619 to 1930, especially focusing the eighteenth century, in terms of ethnicity and land-use.

Keywords: Batavia, colonial city, cross-cultural contacts, Dutch East India Company(VOC), ethnicity, Jakarta, land-use

1. Introduction

- In 1619 the Dutch East India Company (VOC) fixed Batavia, present-day Jakarta, to be its headquarters in maritime Asia. Afterwards, this port city took an important role as a center for the global trade as well as for Dutch colonial rule in Asia until the mid-twentieth century.
- The research presented in this workshop is a pilot study of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) -based analysis of the colonial urban history of Batavia from 1619 to 1930, especially focusing the eighteenth century, in terms of ethnicity and land-use.

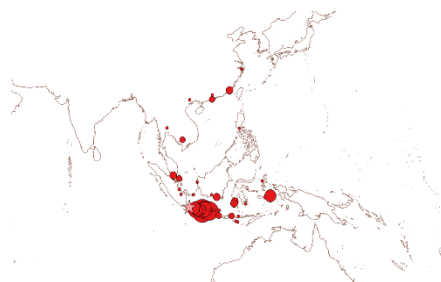
2. Population and ethnicity

- Not only European and Asian employees of the VOC lived in Batavia, but also European and Asian free citizens and even Asian slaves. The population of Batavia did increase during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while it rose much more rapidly from the nineteenth century onwards. For example, in the 1673 her population was 27,000 and in the early nineteenth century it reached about 47,000. From the point of view of ethnicity, Europeans and Eurasians had political and economic power, but they were a minority group in this city. In fact, they occupied only 11 per cent in 1673 and 4 per cent in 1815. Besides from Europeans, there were several ethnic groups in the city, such as Chinese, Indian Muslims, Arabians, Malays, Javanese and so on.

3. GIS-based survey

3.1 Maritime network

- Batavia was a center for the trade of the VOC in terms of the Euro-Asian trade as well as the intra-Asian trade. In addition, this port was also a center for Asian traders. Map 1 shows the trading network based on Batavia in the eighteenth century. The network covers the half of the maritime Asia, *i.e.* East Asia and Southeast Asia, and the Javanese coastal trade was the most important in the Batavian trade by Asian traders.



Map 1. Asian shipping at Batavia, 1731 (numbers of arrival Asian vessels at Batavia)

3.2 Ethnicity and land-use

- The first analysis is to examine ethnically divided districts in the urban area. It is often said that each ethnic group formed its own district. Based on a GIS-based analysis of population data, a reexamination will be conducted about the ethnic distributions of citizens in the city spatially. The population data used in this analysis was annually reported from the High Government of Batavia to the Netherlands.
- The second analysis is concerned with the development of suburban areas. The suburban areas were developed for plantation agriculture to produce sugarcane to export to the European and Asian markets since the seventeenth century. However, during the nineteenth century, the sugar plantation disappeared while the industry emerged in the northeast coast of the Island of Java. Meanwhile, the suburban areas of Batavia were transformed to rice fields to feed the inhabitants in Batavia. This is because the urban area of Batavia expanded greatly during the nineteenth century and the Dutch colonial authorities introduced cultivation system to Java in order to increase the exports of colonial agricultural products. In any case, my investigation focuses on changes in land-use in the suburban areas based on GIS-analysis.



Map 2. Urban area with multi-ethnic inhabitants, 1739



Map 3. Suburban area with multi-ethnic inhabitants, 1689

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