

Marine Silkroad Musical Heritages in Molucca Islands

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The spice trade had brought great prosperity through the Indian Ocean Marine Silkroad, where the fame of nutmeg, mace, cinnamon, and cloves found in Molucca Islands are attributed to human welfare in providing sanitary and evergreen frozen cattle flesh. In fact, spices have been one of the world's most valuable commodities, where it drew the European colonial powers to the Indonesian archipelago.

Prior to the colonial era, the Arab traders, mainly descendants of sailors from Yemen and Oman had indisguisely introduced Arabic lute *al 'ud* played in a drum percussion ensemble labelled as Islamic music by the Malays. Since Islam was introduced by the Arabs, and reaches a majority in Indonesia, denotation between the Arabic and Islamic musics are interchangeable. While Islam only tolerates plain song for *Qur'an* reading, and *adzan* calls to prayer, untuned Arabic *rebana* drum ensemble also used to accompany the *Qasidah* and *Nasyid* performances in singing the *shalawat* verses to hail the Prophet Mohammed SAW. The Arabic musical heritage in Molucca can be found in Ronggomoni village, disctrict of Central Molucca with their *Alaka* percussion ensemble using *gambus*, an Arabic lute; together with *suling*, a bamboo end-blown flute; *kentongan*, bamboo slit drums; *rapa'i*, Arabic tambourines; *maracas*, and *harmonika*.

The 16th century Portuguese expertise in navigation, ship building and weaponry allowed them to make adventurous expeditions of exploration. They were the first Europeans to reach the islands of Indonesia, particularly the Molucca Islands, where their quest to dominate the source of the lucrative spice trade and Catholicism missionary efforts, saw the establishment of tangible heritages, apart from the Portuguese cultural element that remains substantial in Molucca Islands, including the *kroncong* guitar as an adaptation from the Portuguese *cavaquinho* in accompanying *Moresco* and *Cafrinha* dances. One of their