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BANTEN, THE FORGOTTEN KINGDOM

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On 23 June 1596, four battered ships of the first Dutch trading fleet under Cornelis de Houtman anchored off the sprawling capital of Bantam (Banten). Avoiding Portuguese strongholds and patrols and having lost more than half of the crew to disease and privations, they had journeyed 14 months before the vessels arrived at the legendary kingdom of pepper and rice. 17th-century Banten was the master of West Java, Sunda Strait and Lampung, southern Sumatra. It was an emporium to the archipelago and beyond, supplying rice to Portuguese-occupied Melaka and its famed pepper to the courts of India and China. The wealthy sultanate was also a nexus of religious learning, attracting Islamic scholars from the boundaries of the Indian Ocean.

At its height, the kingdom was one of the largest settlements within insular Southeast Asia. Its cosmopolitan population included Japanese mercenaries, Portuguese man-of-arms, and Gujarati trader-sailors. Merchandise from Europe, China, Japan, Indian Ocean and the archipelago were found throughout Banten's many markets. It was at Banten where the English established their first East India Company factory in the Far East. However, within a century of the arrival of the Dutch, the sultanate devolved into a client state of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (Dutch East India Company), eventually dissolving and becoming extinct in 1830. Today, only ruins such as Fort Speelwijk and Surosowan Palace remain, attesting to the city's once noble and neglected past.

Join archaeologist Lim Chen Sian as he explores the rise and fall of the forgotten kingdom of Banten in this fascinating talk.

TIME (MIN)	
0:00 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Yes, thanks, Daniel, for the introduction. So, it's one of those things with introductions, sometimes you don't know what they are going to say about you, and they might bring up childhood stories and things so I was always very nervous when you were standing there. "Oh I remember when he was a..." So, anyway, I'm glad. Yes, it's also another thing about giving these lectures... the first thing you do is to survey the crowd. I'd say now, coming from my academic background, you really wonder whether, do I pack myself here for a public lecture, or pack myself here or pack myself somewhere in between? So I'm glad tonight's crowd is great. So it's like sometimes you get family groups, you got kids and everything, then you gotta really scratch your head to think of how to keep these people entertained for

	<p>the whole evening, right? But today, I guess, it's easy. Mine ends in the evening and I will be entertaining you, I hope, for the next hour or so. And we're going to talk about Banten. But before I do, this is one of those places which I have to ask... maybe I'm cheeky but I just have to ask, how many of us here, by a show of hands, have been to Banten? Oh, that's quite... not too bad. Excellent. I am very impressed. So that's, you know, a good five percent of the people here, which is great. So, okay, the rest of us, those of us who have been to Banten, obviously know about Banten. How many of us, before coming to this talk, heard about Banten? That's not bad, half of us, so that's great. That's good. So I guess, we'll try to, as what Daniel said, weave in a few stories, weave in a bit of the archaeology, weave in a bit about the historical sources and I'll try my best to weave in a few of the thematic elements that we have in the exhibition downstairs and try to point out a few of these artefacts that are on display. Mainly, well, I won't say artefacts but mainly like documents and publications on display as well. Great. So let's talk about Banten. So, I'm sure that we have seen some... is this okay for you guys? It's not too bright? Well, I was wondering whether we can turn off these front lights over here to get a better view, if it's possible. Otherwise, don't worry about it.</p>
<p>2:08 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So Banten, you've probably seen European illustrations of this fabulous kingdom illustrated, in this case, in colour. There's a copy downstairs if you are interested. It's in black and white, but that's the original. So, why Banten? And why did all these Europeans, particularly the East India Companies, the different East India Companies, the Dutch East India Company, the English East India Company, the French East India Company, the Danish East India Company, the Swedish East India Company, the Austrian East India Company. I'm surprised, right? People would say, wow, there are so many East India Companies. There are many of these, and, most of them actually set foot on Banten. So why did they come all the way to the Far East, to the eastern archipelago? Well, spice. That's why. And, particularly for Banten, pepper. Banten was the pepper kingdom of the island archipelago and, well, just a rough... at its peak, maybe around 1700, Banten produces about four-and-a-half thousand tons, so that's 4,500 tons of pepper. And if we look at the estimates of 1700, of what the Dutch East India Company is exporting to Europe, to Holland, that's only about 6,000 tons. But Banten is really producing the most of it and they're producing all this pepper not just for the European market or the American market – the New World – but also for the Chinese market. We have good Chinese records that says about, talks about pepper, as far back as the 14th century and they talk about buying pepper from Southeast Asia. Maybe from Aceh, maybe from Sumatra... later from Banten, and the Chinese are consuming about, between, anywhere from 500 tons to 1,500 tons so this data is a bit, well, I would say that it's not iffy, but it's hard to really pinpoint, but you're looking at a lot, right? 500 tons is a lot of pepper. And how does 500 tons of pepper... is like? Well, imagine this room. How much do you think it can fill? Take a guess. There's a lot of prizes there, I think there's tea and coffee, right? Well, we need about 500 of these rooms. Just that. Yeah, of course you can stuff everything in there, but no, they put in the bales, got to keep sure that they are dry and everything so we do need a lot of them, right, for 500 tons, so this type of volume, of pepper that the Chinese – only the Chinese – were consuming, during the Ming Dynasty and later in the Qing dynasty, right.</p>
<p>04:41 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So, where exactly is Banten? Well I'm glad that people have been there and have heard about the place. But just in case: that's Banten in West Java, Singapore is right here. So right on the coast of the Sunda Straits, the main straits travelling</p>

	between East and West Malaysia from India, down to Singapore, and go up towards China and Japan and the other straits, that's Sunda Straits.
5:04 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Here's a more recent map of the province of Banten. After Suharto's government has collapsed, this became an independent province with a lot of autonomy. So, more or less, it's about the size of the kingdom 500 years ago. So, where we are looking at, it's on this tip. The city itself. Old Banten, or Banten Lama, it's right here. And this nice little bay with harbours. This map doesn't show Sumatra but we can see these little bits of island here that was Krakatoa which is the island that blew up, the volcanic island that blew up in 1883. So here's the Sunda Straits and it's very close to southern Sumatra.
5:51 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	It has a 19th-century navigational chart of that area. You can see again, Krakatoa, just after the explosions, right? And that's Banten itself right here, this little tear, unfortunately. So that's the Banten city itself. And that's Banten Bay. And you can see why Banten flourished as a port city or port settlement. It's because of this big bay. So even despite the explosion and Krakatoa, the tsunami didn't really reach it over here. It's very well protected by this bay. And likewise, why Jakarta became – or Batavia became – a very, very prominent port is because of the bay. So this is another bay here. It's the bay of Batavia or Jakarta.
6:39 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Right, so, what do we really know about the chronology of Banten? So as an archaeologist, we like to work with dates, right? We like to find out how old it is and where is it from. Well here, it says a quick list of the, the short list of the chronology of Banten, or otherwise spelled as Bantam, you might have come across this other spelling instead. And we really, don't really know when this port entity existed. The earliest record that we have was from a Portuguese record that mentions about some sort of port, a port settlement there around the 1500s. So that's the earliest record that we have of it. And surprisingly, the Okinawans as well, people from Ryukyu, they actually came by here to Sunda Kelapa. That's the old name, or even, the older name prior to Batavia. So they mentioned that there was another port to the east as well. So there's some references to it but we don't really know exactly what's there. Then, later on, this is a big "if" as well... a big question mark there... around the mid-1520s, around 1525, thereabouts, one of the famous twelve <i>wadis</i> of Islam, the 12 prominent saints, Islamic saints who spread Islam throughout the archipelago. One of them and his son conquered this old polity and established this new kingdom or new sultanate. So, we're not exactly sure when precisely, but most people think it's around the mid-1520s. Then of course, later, the Dutch East India Company became part of the British, which is Java for a short while and the sultanate survived all the way until the early 19th century. Or well, sort of the early, contemporary Singapore in the early 19th century.
08:39 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	So, right, here's a quick description of how a European trader or merchant would have witnessed how Banten was like. So it's a fabulous experience for these European traders and this account in 1598 was with the very first Dutch fleet that visited the archipelago since the very first time they came into Banten, and it describes it this way. All sorts of people were there, the various nationalities, you know we have the Portuguese, Arabs, Turks, Chinese, Kelings, the Pegus, the Malai, Bengalis... So, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So it's after the founding, around circa 1525, mid-1520s, it started to become very cosmopolitan and very, very popular, that it's famous enough that the Dutch knew that this is a place they have to go to get pepper, buy pepper at the source. Why buy it through the Italians

	<p>or through the Arabs or through the Gujaratis? We come to its source, and this is the very, very first stop that they made in the archipelago.</p>
<p>9:48 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>There are a few historical sources. I'm a historical archaeologist, meaning that I tread both worlds of history and archaeology so I use documentation and I use other sorts of illustrations and maps as well, and of course, the artefacts, to try to piece together the past. The historical sources... fortunately, we have an indigenous account. It's called the <i>Sejarah Banten</i>, a bit like our <i>Sejarah Melayu</i>, in a sense, of Singapore. Sort of written in the 17th century. It talks a bit about the founding myths of Banten. But the problem with these indigenous accounts – they tend to be written much later when the sultanate was already well established. By most scholars' accounts, we believe that it's around the mid-17th century. The surviving example is actually much later, from the 18th century, but it has a date that is copied from something earlier. So most people think that it's written during the reign of Sultan Agung and talks about the lineage and everything. So, there's a lot of this mythology behind it and from it, we extract some information. Well, fortunately or unfortunately, we have a lot of European accounts for some reason. We start from the Portuguese. You got the Dutch, so you have various accounts, like earlier we have the first VOC, the Dutch East India Company fleet in 1596. We have that account of those guys when they went back, they published their diaries and they became very famous and they sold quite a bit of their publication; it went into many reruns or reprints. We also have Chinese documentation. And of course, the other East India Company records.</p>
<p>11:32 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>I'm just gonna go very briefly so don't really bother. I know I'll bore people with a lot of texts here but just a few quick dates that we should at least keep in mind as we talk later as I show you all the more exciting pictures about the site itself, about the things that we find. Just a few dates that I've highlighted here to keep in mind. So, we know that in about 1525, the sultanate roughly, circa, was established around that time. The Dutch appeared about 70 years later and that's when we started getting a lot of description about Banten as a city, as a settlement, as a society, about the economy, about the politics. One of the few things that most people forget, or are maybe not aware of, is, the British – or the English East India Company which founded Singapore, of course – had their very first factory in the Far East at Banten. So that's, again, the very first stop for them was to arrive at Banten and they managed to persuade the Sultan to allow them to set up a trading station or factory there, so they literally had a compound there in 1602. So the Dutch actually arrived earlier compared to the English but they weren't really on that great terms with the people or the Bantenese, and it was only a year later that they managed to persuade the Sultan to allow them to establish a trading lodge, and, well, I did mention their relationship's not so good, so at some point, they were forced – or actually asked – to quit Banten, and in 1619, they moved eastwards and established their own factory there in Batavia, well, Jakarta, right? And you can see that their relation really, really soured with the Bantenese. So, over the next 20, 30 years, there was a constant Dutch blockade to try to squeeze the economy of Banten and divert all this maritime traffic to Batavia. Another date which I highlighted here is the 1680 Civil War. So, this is a very, very important turning point for the history of Banten. This is the point where, well, it's one of those things when I suppose you have too many descendants. Yeah, that's the thing. We stop at two, right? Yeah that's one of those things. We have too many descendants. At some point, the Sultan Agung had a disagreement with his heir apparent and then the usual story: the son tried to overthrow his father and one of them decided to</p>

	<p>invite the Dutch to support him militarily, and that's when the Dutch really established a real good foothold. And when Daniel mentioned one of the treaties – the 1691 treaty – when the next Sultan was installed, they had all these contracts establishing monopolies for the Dutch and we talked about pepper, right? So, what was one of the conditions that they have for this military aid? It was – they were – to expel all other Europeans from Banten. Sell pepper only to the Dutch at 15 reales per 400 kilos or something like that, right? So about 400 kilos. You sell that at 15 reales. So this is a fixed price for the next 300 years. So you're sort of giving up. Don't be mistaken, it's not like, wow, the poor sultan, he got the short end of the stick. Not really. The sultan buys it between three and seven reales, silver dollars per 400 kilos and he's selling at 15. It's still a pretty decent profit, right? But still, we can see, slowly, the Dutch is moving. The incursion is there. The authority being stamped on to the various sultans that followed. Right, so going on ahead. Yep. We're coming to the end of the boring parts, so let me just finish this.</p>
<p>15:26 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>I like pictures too so I'll show you what's what, later. So here we are. So just briefly going through. I also mentioned a few of these, like Valentijn. So he visited Banten. I've mentioned a few of these visitors as there are a lot of visitors. A lot of Europeans – and also Asians – that visited Banten and left accounts of it, but these are the few more prominent ones which, even today, you are still able to find their accounts. And, of course, most of them are on exhibition, on display downstairs, so you can go have a look at the accounts and the illustrations and drawings. Right, so, fast forward to 1750, so about another 75 years later, after the Great Civil War. There was a big rebellion. Again, it is one of those things when you have too many descendants. So, one of the consorts, the queen – she's Arabian – and she, of course, wanted to have their own faction to support a certain lineage and conveniently persuaded the Dutch to support her, to install her, her child. Yes, to the sultan. But because she's a foreigner, in a sense, and so, one of these things, a rebellion occurred and it took about three years before this rebellion was stamped out. It would help the Dutch. And after this rebellion, new treaties were signed, right? So again, they lose a lot more properties. They lost a lot more authority. And slowly, you can see from the late 1750s onwards until 1808 when the sultanate was almost stamped out. And it's really in Raffles' hands when, in 1813, when he was the lieutenant governor of Java, that the final sultan of Banten surrendered his claims to his territories for a return in the pension. So, if you are not sure, you can see how the rise and fall of this kingdom...</p>
<p>17:25 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>But we are interested in what's exactly inside the kingdom, right? So here we begin again. We look at one of the earliest accounts in 1598, during the first fleet. So you can see all sorts of people... very cosmopolitan at the top, all sorts of things they were buying, different people... Here we have, we talk about the Persians, the Arabs, the Pegus that came by sea, the Chinese merchandise, this little exchange with pepper, specifically talk about how they were investing... the Malays and the Klings would invest money in bottomry. And this is quite an obsolete term but it basically means that you sort of pledge your ship or your cargo or even your person in turn for cash, right now, to loan. If you are familiar with <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>... what's his name? The Italian guy? Antonio... Shylock and Antonio, right? Antonio was the merchant of that three ships and he sort of pledged his ships and borrowed money from Shylock right? Yeah, incidentally written around the same time, <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> was written in about 1596 or 1599 or thereabouts right? So, it's about the same time, so, yeah. So, this was the practice at that point.</p>

<p>18:38 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Here's an account, about a hundred years later. So this is, remember, the few key dates, right? This was the first contact. This is a very valuable sultanate and very powerful, very rich, you know, when they first contact, when they first arrived at around 1600. 100 years later, this is after the Great Civil War, right? So now, Sultan Agung versus his son, Sultan Kaji. But despite that, about twenty years after that civil war, Banten was still very rich. And if you look at the description here, it's quite fabulous. And this guy. They actually talk about... here we are. The sultan was accompanied by four Ambonese carrying buckets and swords, followed by Javanese, Balingers and all sorts of people. And then he is carried on a chair and this is only the prince – one of the princes, a young prince... and in the procession, continued a young prince attended by hundreds of women, wow, each carrying beautiful ornaments, golden cups, flowers and fruits in their hands. A company of Dutch followed. Now the Dutch soldiers themselves, the soldiers stationed in Banten, were part of the procession as well. So they were escorting the sultan and finally he appeared, bumptiously attired. The "lord of the universe". Well, these are wonderful descriptions.</p>
<p>19:54 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>I guess descriptions like these, when, went back to Europe, these fired people's imaginations, right? So they said, "Who are these mysterious eastern princes with all these loads and loads of money and selling pepper and spice?" So they have all this imagination and so here, the publisher Van Der Aa in the early 18th century... But I think none of us in this room really believe that this looks like Banten. It always reminds me of my trip to Kathmandu, rather than Banten. But you get this very fantastical type of description of Banten. I don't know what is this. Some sort of palanquin or something. So, different people, different hats, different, you know, I think some Chinese over here. Well, also the character here is a little elephant. Just to show how cosmopolitan and how fabulously wealthy Banten was. Banten was one of the few Southeast Asian states, the earliest, one of the few earliest ones who sent an embassy to London. So just at the big civil war, an embassy was sent to London. So several of these Bantenese <i>orang kaya</i> and princes went up there. So, Europe suddenly sees these Bantenese for the first time in all their wealth and pomp and circumstance.</p>
<p>21:08 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So here we are, our little map again of Valentijn. Earlier, I showed you another source, a different rendition, in colour. It's dated 1726. That's the year it was published. You can go downstairs, have a look at it. But I really, seriously, think that this map is obviously based on a much earlier plan or map of Banten itself, probably the mid-17th century, 1650s thereabouts. Well, there's a few clues. Over here, it actually says that this is the English factory. Well, we know after the Great Civil War, the Banten, the Dutch East India Company chased out – expelled – all its people as part of the contract, right? So the English no longer had this factory over there. And Chinatown is right here. You can't really see it, but here is the palace and the Great Mosque, the tower, the minaret. I'll show you in detail in a bit.</p>
<p>22:02 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>And some of you might have seen this, this is very, very famous and it's very popular. It's always... been reprinted by so many different publishers, even in the 18th century. And today, of course, people just rip it off all the time. If you just look on the Internet or Wikipedia, you can find maybe 20 different versions of it and it's quite fun looking at the different versions. It's almost like spotting the mistakes, right? Because here is the accurate description of the bazaar, the market in Banten. So if I show you, this is a bit more detail, so what's the big mistake?</p>

<p>22:37 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>This is a mirror image, so the publisher didn't even realize that it's in the reverse image. It's sort of cropped over here but there's also these, but there's lots of details. Fortunately, earlier with the Italians, this is published during the first voyage. Sorry, this one is not coming out but I'll just read it out. Initially, for some reason, the animation is not working. But all these little boxes will show you which activity is happening. Over here, I believe, this is pepper so they are selling pepper over here. If my memory doesn't fail me, these are bamboo sellers. Here's the coconut sellers. Then these are cloths for, possibly, women, I think... women's cloth. And another group of them. I don't know why they are in the circle... here's another one for men's cloth. And lots of, see, rows and rows of shops. There's <i>warungs</i> in the middle, and kiosks selling all sorts of different things. They have all sorts of merchandise that are being sold there from all over the archipelago and all over the world. So people are bringing things from France, from Holland, from India, from Japan and they are all trading in this port. Okay so, finally, we're getting to the more sexy stuff. Map, okay, I love maps...</p>
<p>24:03 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So here's a late 17th-century map of Banten. Don't pay attention to details. It'll just make you cross-eyed. But just follow my pointer. Observe the boundaries of the port. So this is looking north, this is Banten Bay, right? So here is Banten itself, even today. There's the Banten river, Ci Banten, sort of runs through the city, through the town, so it splits into a little estuary to the east. There's one estuary going out, so that's... one of the harbours or ports is on this estuary and the other harbour or port is on this estuary. So there's on two sides, east and west, right? Just burn this into memory. Just try to remember the outline of this settlement.</p>
<p>24:52 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Fast forward to 500 years later. So this is a Google Earth imagery. 2000... mine was not really that updated, but ten years ago, at least. Look at the settlement. It's pretty much, feels very much, the same. So here's the river and it runs through the town itself. This is the east and this is their western port. It's still very active, right? And all this silting over the years – over the last 500 years – have sort of moved the shoreline about a kilometre north now, so it was the original shoreline. You can really see from this area photograph, from the satellite imagery, it used to be somewhere around here, right? So, still very much the same, so Banten, in a sense, it's an archaeologist's dream because it's really, relatively untouched. You have no new shopping mall or subway station or Starbucks or, you know, whatever. This is perfect.</p>
<p>25:47 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So, Banten's about, just slightly under 100 kilometres from Jakarta to the west. You take the main toll road going west, you can't miss it, towards the provincial capital, Serang. You take one of those airport express or the Serang Express, like a five-dollar bus ride. And you can just tell the bus driver or the coach driver to drop you off at the junction before he makes it to an off-turn and take one of these tiny angkots which is, this is one of the great treasures of Indonesia, with like, 20 cents or two thousand rupees – at least ten years ago, it was two thousand rupees. I don't know about inflation now – but two thousand rupees, I know you can take the 15-minute right into Banten. So that's how it looks like going in towards Banten and it's still lined with all these <i>warungs</i> and thatched huts, so very much the same, right? So, in a way, I'm sort of reliving my fantasy of how it would be like with all these Dutch and European and Chinese and Japanese mercenaries when they first came to Banten. Well, in a sense, it's still very much the same.</p>

<p>26:48 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>And when you look around, Banten today is surrounded by <i>sawah</i>, all these rice paddy fields and, from historical documents as well, and from archaeological investigations over the years, it has been traditionally rice fields and further away, the pepper fields.</p>
<p>27:06 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Increasing over the years, there is a small industry of bird's nest. Right, so all these swallows, and bird's nest, well, structures have popped up in Banten. So, these are probably the most recent development that has disrupted the landscape.</p>
<p>27:23 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>There is a small site museum. Very tiny, it's quite pleasant and built in the 80s, so it's a little Museum Situs, so site museum, and in it, they have displayed quite a number of the archaeological materials that have been uncovered over the years, including some of them that we have excavated. So I'll just show you a few items. So we're not so sure about the port of this Banten prior to it becoming a sultanate, right? In 1525. So there were some archaeological evidence to show that something there earlier like this Nandi, this Hindu-Buddhist statue. You know, Nandi is, of course, the sacred bull, the vehicle of Shiva. It was found in the river, in the eastern river – sorry, western river – of Banten. So it does predate to the sultanate arrival. So this, possibly, was part of the port of the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of West Java. Well my friends, you can see the size of the pottery.</p>
<p>28:32 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So these are all made locally, the local industry was quite active as well from the early Bantenese period and continue until today. There's still a very big ceramic industry. One of my favourites, this little piggy bank, that is actually a 16th-century piggy bank, they actually make this little piggy bank to store your money.</p>
<p>28:49 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>And Banten, it has many ruins from the sultanate period that littered the entire district town or village today. There is a Chinatown on the eastern side of the town. So here's the shoreline, the old shoreline looking north. That's about one kilometre towards the coast. You can still see the river, not very clear but you can see this tree line that's part of the river that's very, very badly silted up. It goes up over here. So that's the eastern port. And here, we have the western port, the river on the other side. Here, another zone right here. Sorry, next slide. So yeah, Chinatown.</p>
<p>29:42 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Well, allegedly, these are the oldest Chinese townhouses in Banten. It's a bit hard to ascertain. Different people claim different things and you ask all these architectural historians, a lot of my colleagues, when I ask – check with – them, one guy would tell you that it's from the 17th century, another one would tell you this was from the 18th century. We are not really sure, but I think it's because it's difficult to tell as over the years they have been remodelling it and renovating it, so it's a bit hard to tell. But these were the two structures that still remain. It purportedly dates as early as the 17th century. Well, I suspect that it might be, you know, late 18th century. Here's a little site which I pointed out within the Chinatown. There, apparently, was a Chinese mosque, right, which date to the 16th century. Now it's in ruins. The minaret still stands. So Chinatown's right here. Here's a little mosque, and the minaret, you can see it right there. On the western harbour, over there, we have the Karangantu Harbour. That's where they found the Nandi, the bull, the sacred bull. Here's the main feature of Banten today, or even back then, in the centre of the town, was – or is – Surosowan Palace.</p>

<p>31:03 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Here, we look at the river. It's still active, still used as a fishing port. So all these little <i>perahus</i> – motorized now, of course – come in and they still sell their catch from the ocean. You can see it's still a marketplace, still very vibrant. The earlier marketplace, the great marketplace of Banten which I showed you from the description in the 16th century and 17th century, effectively, it's at this location. So this is where that marketplace is surrounded by <i>pagar</i> and everything. If you really take away the electrical cables and maybe the PVC tarps, and the corrugated iron, it's very, very much the same as how Anderson would have seen it in the 19th century, when he described how these little huts or <i>jambans</i>, toilets, are built over the river. Those are traditional in that sense. When you look back today, I don't think it would be very, very much different from all the first Europeans when they first came here in 1596, and would have seen. They would have taken... their large galleons, large ships would have anchored off in Banten Bay, of course, and they would take these little <i>perahus</i> or lighters to come in. They will come in through this little port.</p>
<p>32:19 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Right, so Surosowan Palace, the centre of the city. Looking northwards, just north of it is the king's assembly ground, Alun-alun. It's a big square. We have quite a few good detailed depictions. I actually have a few more. Unfortunately, I couldn't find them but they have a very, very nice depiction or illustration from the 17th and 18th century on Alun-alun, that square. But here's one from 1645 showing the governor of Bantam – the old spelling – sitting down at Alun-alun, holding court and meeting the people. And here from the minaret looking southeast, here's Surosowan Palace. You can see the palace there. Here is Alun-alun, big meeting ground... Here's Gunung Karang in the distance, looking south in that way.</p>
<p>33:17 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Another view of the Alun-alun.</p>
<p>33:21 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Tradition has it that one of these stones, the Watu Gilang, and there are two of these <i>watus</i> too, these big boulders. Very nice, polished, and set in the Alun-alun as the throne or the meeting place for the seat, for the sultan, or the king of Banten, and this is where he would hold hearings from the public and people can come and give him missive and petitions and stuff. He would hold his assembly here. Well, tradition says that once these stones were removed or destroyed, the sultanate would have collapsed. But I guess it stood, the sultanate. It's still there. It's protected now by the conservation office, there's a little barrier around it. It's still sitting there.</p>
<p>34:03 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>According to the <i>Sejarah Banten</i>, it's one of those early pieces that were set in place from the mid-16th century onwards. Now, looking at the Great Mosque of Banten, the Masjid Banten... so the palace is here, the Alun-alun. And just to the east of the Alun-alun, that sandy area, is the mosque. And this mosque has been depicted in all illustration that you can't miss it. You can see the little minaret and tower right there. Right here. This little tier structure. Sometimes, people refer to it as the palace. But I think, with its proximity and location, it is actually the mosque itself. You can see it. Since we are on this illustration, we can tell you are here looking southwards. Here is the eastern river. That's probably the English East India company factory there and Chinatown further ahead. There should be another river going here, but it's not depicted on this image.</p>

<p>35:04 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So, up to 19th century, there are a lot of these wonderful antiquarian prints showing the mosque. And maybe it's just for me, maybe because I'm an archaeologist and we do feel kind of nostalgic for the past, and in a sense, I don't know in this instance. It's one of those... nature of the profession. But, look at this.</p>
<p>35:29 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Still feels very much the same, right? So of course, they renovated; they replaced the roof and everything. But when you really think about it, superficially, it's still very much the footprint. In fact, the minaret's still there. The minaret, again, according to the <i>Sejarah Banten</i>, was built during... around the 1570s or thereabouts. So it might be one of the oldest standing structures in Java.</p>
<p>35:55 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Another view of the minaret, and from the minaret you can actually see all these... surrounding the mosque, the great mosque of Banten, you have all these little <i>warungs</i> and all these little shops setting up their little you know... these bamboo poles and they put a tarp over it. So this is the avenue leading up to the mosque over here. The Alun-alun and here's the Surosowan Palace, the big palace is right there. You can see all these rows and rows of shops, so every time when I go by there and I look, I think, you know, how different is it compared from someone from the 16th century? The only thing missing is that I don't have my sword, or my <i>kris</i>. I don't have anything by my side. I don't have my men-in-arms following me or my female retainers of course, right?</p>
<p>36:40 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Yes. So yeah. So how different can it be? Well, unfortunately it's very different now. Because just last year, those of you who have been to Banten would know that there is this big project which is from the local government, Proyek Revitalisasi, revitalization of Banten Lama, and the Alun-alun and the big square around the area. A nice big square. They host a lot of activities and host a lot of things. But it's kind of a re-branding and re-packaging of Banten Lama, right? So it's called Keraton Surosowan. Here, the palace is there. So it's a bit like "I Amsterdam", the big image, right? It lights up at night, even. So I don't have a picture of it. So I stole this from the <i>Serang Post</i>, so you can see this nice little walkway and everything. So, it's really kind of a hipster type of thing now, right? So very different from the <i>warungs</i> of, you know, 2010s and 1600s, right? So it's a bit different. But the <i>warungs</i> and the things are still there. They're just moved away from the centre.</p>
<p>37:39 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Right, so here, <i>tambak</i>, the fish farm. So, yep, all these silting has been going on for the last 500 years. The geo-archaeologists in the 80s when they were doing work, they estimated that the river silt that's deposited is sort of creeping northwards by about four metres a year. So, over time... But <i>tambaks</i> are great because, now... in the past, this was Banten Bay, right? Sorry, this is Banten Bay, right? So, the ships would be anchored here, and they'll take all the small <i>perahus</i> to come up, right? So the ships will be anchored right there. They're the big galleons. The big cargo vessels.</p>
<p>38:22 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So now, for me, I'm not an underwater archaeologist. Since I'm a terrestrial archaeologist, I can just walk up to the site. So they no longer have anything buried in the ocean, the ship sank in the ocean. You've already seen a lot of pictures but now I can just walk out there. It is true, if we look around the <i>tambak</i>, there's lots and lots of artefacts all these ceramics, these 18th-century Chinese ceramics, the Japanese ceramics. So they're all over the place. Artefacts are everywhere, it's almost like a... yes, this is just behind someone's house, right? Someone's little thing. So you can imagine, right? So yes, wow. So the idea of the 18th-century Chinese and Japanese material, this is all from Jingdezhen. There was someone</p>

	digging a pit and then he found a whole stash. It shows you the volume of imports and things coming in. So it's not just pepper because, obviously, you know we can't just live on pepper, right? After you're wealthy, what do you do? You can't make a pepper chair or pepper bed, but you buy things. Just like us, today's affluence, it's this affluenza, right? That's what they call it, right? So you buy all these imported goodies from all over the world. So tons and tons of things are shipped there.
39:29 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	In this case, ceramics; they survived. I'll just talk a few more slides then we can talk about the archaeology. I know, I think I've been talking too much. Yes. So just outside off Banten, the town limits, there's another <i>keraton</i> , the Keraton Kaibon right there. You're familiar with these already so I don't need to orientate you.
39:49 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Here is a 19th-century print of this place. It still looks very much the same, the gates are still there. So yeah. But this, surprisingly, is a 19th-century structure. So, despite the fact that, you know, about 1808 when the sultanate sort of went into decline, the Dutch came in and they actually occupied the place and they kicked the sultan out of the Surosowan Palace; they moved him to Sedang. But he was sufficiently wealthy enough to build a palace for his mother, right? So it's a big palace. Very little archaeological work has been done – I think, none. So we're seeing lots of opportunities.
40:30 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Another area which is wonderful is the Tasik Ardi. <i>Tasik</i> , of course, we know it means "lake", right? It's an artificial reservoir or lake, up here. And, if you can follow this line, follow my pointer, there is an aqueduct that leads all the way into the palace. So there's this water... water resources are being tapped for the palace, right? So it's always for the palace.
41:02 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	So this is how it looks like. You can visit this little pleasure ground. You can rent those little swan boats and ride around it. We don't really know when it was really built. A lot of conflicting data on it. So again, no archaeology is being done on this place yet. It's two kilometres south. So the palace. Along the aqueduct, there's these three filtration, well, most researchers interpret it – or at least, even the sign says – these are filtration tanks. I don't know when this name came about, a <i>pangindalan indel</i> for sediments. So people would think that it's a filtration tank to purify the water. And there are three of them. So one's called the <i>Aban, Putih</i> , and <i>Emas</i> . So <i>aban</i> is red, <i>putih</i> is white, <i>emas</i> is gold. So most people would think... the theory is that as you slowly, from the reservoir, going towards the palace, those waters, reddish and muddy, becomes pure white and finally becomes gold by the time it reaches there. So I'm not too sure. Most people are not too sure. There's no work being done. Someday they've been talking about doing some work since 1980s. I'm not sure whether in the last ten years anyone has done any archaeological research on this thing. It might be a gravity station because of the distance. So you try to put the tanks and let it flow.
42:22 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	But the aqueduct is still around. It's still running by the main road; it leads into the palace.
42:29 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	So okay, now let's talk about the two major features which any tourist visiting Banten will have to go. That's the Keraton Surosowan, and Fort Speelwijk, the Dutch fort. And these are the two sites which I personally did some excavation. Of course, Indonesian archaeologists have been digging since the 1970s and the

	<p>1980s, particularly in different parts of Banten, but these are the few places I'll just share a bit with you. So Surosowan Palace, of course, it's a great site, right? It's right there, right? So we're not even talking about low-hanging fruit. It's just a fruit that's on the floor. You just need to pick it up, right? The site is there. It's a no-brainer, right? You just have to dig it. So, of course we ran a dig. And for us, our research was just trying to understand a bit more about how's the lives of these elite, of the sultan. This rich, fabulous fellow and his court. We did an excavation... this image is from 2009, so we did a few small excavations. The Surosowan Palace itself is about maybe 300 metres by 100 metres, about the size of the Padang in Singapore, so this is a reference. So it's quite big. And it was built again, important date, post-1618, post-Civil War. And it was built in relatively European style. So, apparently, there was a Dutch architect or engineer who was hired and he built this place. Over the years, lots of things have happened, but two major things that happened. I mean there's all those palace fires and all sorts of things in different accounts. He was sacked in 1808 when the Dutch occupied the entire city. There was Dutch Garrison before that, but this time, literally, it's a military occupation. And then finally, in 1832, the Dutch wanted to erase everything of the sultanate, to make sure there was no potential future uprising or anything to destroy the palace and then you get ruins. So what do we have in there? We know there was a Dutch Garrison being stationed there, and in Fort Diamond, the Dutch called it Fort Diamond. So there's one component of this palace that is for the Dutch European Garrison. And in one of the earlier descriptions, we talked about the Dutch troops in the procession as well, right? So they were following along in this big ceremony as guards-of-honour. But the court and their administration, of course, have a place there. There's bathing pools, a garden – sort of in European style – and then, of course, <i>dalam</i>, the inner household.</p>
<p>45:04 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So, for us, we wanted to find out a bit more about how was life like in there. We have very little evidence of this place. This is one of those mysterious places that most Europeans don't even enter the inner sanctum, in that sense. So how was life like? There were a few accounts where dignitaries, VIPs like the High Commissioner from the Dutch governor general of Batavia, was dispatched and the sultan hosted. So there's a few images and a few accounts, but a very, very small handful. So you can see his female entourage right there, and they're holding a musket and all sorts of regalia – a golden pot and golden betel box and things like that. Here's another group or entourage right there. So here, the foreigners are seated around the table. Oh here's another, well it's quite late already and this is in 1755... we know that it's not true... it's a very, very fantastic type of romantic image of how Banten was like. If you look at the statue here, this looks like Shiva instead, with multiple arms. So yeah, there's all sorts of very fancy portrayal of this European imagination of how Banten would have looked like. But how does it look like from archaeological data?</p>
<p>46:18 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So we did a few excavations. This is how Surosowan looks like from the minaret. So you can see it's 300 by 100 metres.</p>
<p>46:28 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Here is the interior of different ruins of different buildings. So, one of our jobs is trying to find out different functional zones and activities, what's happening. Here, you can see the minaret in the background, right? And that's a little site museum. There's a little museum just across.</p>

46:47 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	I think you just pay one entry fee and you get to go to two places, which is not bad also.
46:55 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Here's a view. And here's a pool. Here's a bathing point. Yeah, I know it's a lot of algae but if you clean it up it's still great as a spa.
47:05 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	The water – the aqueduct – leads into it. So there's all these different types of sedimentation tanks. So there's several of these water features and bathing pools and reflecting pools in this entire structure. So you can see that it's quite a feat of engineering to bring in water from two kilometres away and to use it for the pleasure of the sultan.
47:25 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	So, mind you, it's not public works in that sense, where they were giving water to everyone. There's always a lot of accounts about brackish water from the river. The well-water is brackish, things like that. But for the palace, there's enough for the elites, life goes on. You're insulated from everything else. So here's one of the excavations just outside, in the moat area from the wall of the palace.
47:53 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	This is Fort Speelwijk, to the north. Surrounding Fort Speelwijk is a Dutch cemetery. A lot of them died really young. It's just the conditions in the 17th and 18th century... well, we'll come to that later.
48:16 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	So here is a description from Valentijn in the 1700s, where he talks about Fort Speelwijk. We got a lot of good descriptions of it, of how this thing works. But I wouldn't dwell on it. So, we push ahead.
48:28 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	So here's how Fort Speelwijk looks like from the top. So the description actually fits. The little river that runs through it. Here's Chinatown and oh, there's a Chinese temple that's still there. I'm sorry I don't have a picture of it, but this Chinese temple, again, they claim, is one of the oldest in Java. But all temples and institutions like to claim they are the oldest, right? So for some reason, "Mine is older than this guy." "No, we're here first." They like that. So anyway, this structure itself, at least, is the earliest element I can detect from 19th century, but it might be much earlier. Yeah, so that's the fort.
49:04 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	That's how it looks on the inside.
49:06 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	It's also conveniently used as a soccer pitch for the local Bantenese team. So people come and not only watch soccer, but they come and watch us digging. That's a kind of entertainment for them, right? Also entertainment for us. So that's how it looks.

<p>49:24 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>I'm sorry, I apologize, I couldn't find my hard drive where I had all the plans and drawings so you have to make do with my field notes, my diary. So here's the area where they've excavated the well. And we believe that this is the kitchen area that we have excavated, right here. So that's the kitchen and the well. We found a lot of materials relating to cooking. So you can see, it's always very fun when we excavate. Lots of people come, hang out with us. So the type of artefacts we get... everyday, we get hundreds and hundreds of kilos of things. So here are all the different types of gin bottles, right? Alcohol, it's consumed, of course, in Banten, by everyone. And then we also have... yup, so this is my workstation.</p>
<p>50:17 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>We were looking through the artefacts and taking photographs. So we have a whole box of clay pipes. It's like tobacco. Glass bottles, bones and all sorts of material.</p>
<p>50:23 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>And we have more ceramics. Ceramics is one of the interesting points for us to figure out what sort of trends or patterns or fashion, if you will, what's popular? So people do like things, right? So if your so-and-so <i>orang kaya</i> bought this, oh I also must buy, must buy bigger. So there's these type of trends that you can follow through these ceramics. I know you look at these things, you probably think to yourself, if tonight I go back home and accidentally washing my plate, I "piang", it breaks, oh that's it. That's archaeology. In that sense, it is, right? From all these here, we can piece together what and how was your lifestyle like, you know? If someone uses which wood, versus me, I use melamine at home. So what does it mean, right? All those styrofoam guys, those who keep recycling their own styrofoam, right? So, there's different type people, right? So there are different things from... these are all Chinese, so there's maybe one or two Japanese or from Kyushu or Arita.</p>
<p>51:22 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>See the Chinese? Late Ming, early Qing. So, again, I couldn't find my hard drive. But by looking at different types of patterns and stuff, you can find... and a lot of people ask me, how do you know how old it is? How can you tell it is from this period? It's from the designs. So things change, right? Just like our clothes, our cell phones – iPhone 3 or iPhone 10 or X or whatever. It's from different time periods, so you change. So based on all these designs and things, we can tell you the time period. And from there, we can tell you how old the site is or how old these layers are. So, European materials, they are 19th century, these are all 19th-century. British and Dutch ware. So these are very Scottish. Here is a 18th-century wine jug.</p>
<p>52:10 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Clay pipes. Lots of people who smoked. Lots of people were smoking. Again, some images. So you can tell from the designs and stuff like that, we can figure out from which time period they came from. But we know that from the company, like, in this case, this is in 19th century, from 1842 or something thereabouts.</p>
<p>52:31 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Clay pipes are great also because if you notice very, very carefully, at the stem of these... these Dutch guys are very helpful for archaeologists... they put their maker's mark on the stems, on it. Well, here you have a little hen.</p>
<p>52:47 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>We can tell you which manufacturer they are and when they're from. And from there, we can plot the depth of the site and figure out the entire assemblage that this layer is from the pre-Civil War layer, this layer is not from the pre-Civil War, this is from this layer, this is from Sultan X, Sultan Y, or whatever. Well, but most of the</p>

	<p>days, as you can see, post-date the civil war. So it seems that everything around this, of course, the fort and those things were built. So the thing is, tobacco is one of the... I don't know what was the vice back then... but you know it's very popular. There are reports of Bantenese princes smoking away.</p>
<p>53:25 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>It's the height of fashion, so everyone was like copying these practices. And animal remains. We've got to remember that we excavated by the kitchen, and then some other areas. And then within these areas, we got all sorts of bones. I'm running out of time so I'm trying to speed up a bit.</p>
<p>53:42 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>But there's only a few more slides. These are coins. So they have Chinese cash. This is the Chinese cash. And local Bantenese tin coins. The Chinese copper cash. These are nails and some other sort of fishing hooks. But these are Bantenese coins, so they are minting coins. So the currency was real. Spanish silver, Spanish dollar, pieces of eight, one reale. But obviously, you don't use a reale to buy your coconut or to get a massage or something. So you have all these smaller denominations, so probably the exchange rate varies over the few hundred years. One reale is equal to X number of strings for these things. So there's a very complicated exchange rate.</p>
<p>54:26 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Right, so the general examination is just from ceramics alone, but you can tell it was from various different places. So here, in red, you have things from Fujian, from Zhangzhou, from Jingdezhen. So these are different types of things. There are some Japanese materials. They look very much like Chinese, but they are not, they are Japanese. From Hizen, Arita, saga prefecture in Kyushu. So these are things which... they are copying Chinese ceramics because there was this demand for it. So these people did. And they're very good actually, they are not knockoffs, not cheap knockoffs, they're very good. Then we have local pottery. So you have things like, you know, these we know were all made in Java... little pots and cooking pots or <i>kendis</i> and things like that. But we know that some are made in Banten itself, and some are made from elsewhere and imported. I'll come to that later. So there's a whole selection of different things that we're studying.</p>
<p>55:20 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Kind of boring things again. I'm trying to see... Okay, in a nutshell, over time, we can tell from the few sites that we've worked... here is just from Surosowan Palace. Fort Diamond is also a part of Surosowan Palace. Over time, the highest quality, the best-regarded ceramics, porcelain from Jingdezhen have declined over time, possibly due to the decrease in wealth or decrease in power of the sultan. And over time, they make it up but they still want to maintain the semblance of I-still-have-a-lot-of-stuff, right? So they buy the cheaper knockoffs. So there's increasingly more Fujian and Guangdong material much later. Well, of course, it's not just because they're maybe cheaper, or maybe they're not as good quality, but at that point in time, the Chinese were exporting a lot more of these everyday wares. So there's a slight decline in that.</p>
<p>56:19 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>So my colleague, Kay – Kay Ueda – she did a petrographic analysis on the local ceramics of all these coarse earthenware, so these like <i>kendis</i>, you know those little things you wash your hands with. So here's an image showing a Bantenese nobleman with his entourage and one of the servant girls is carrying his little <i>kendi</i> to wash his feet and wash his hand or let him spit after taking betel. So you realise that there are two different types of things. They all look the same, right? They all look like these red little flower pots, right? Effectively. So they are made locally, in Java. We know from the local clay... by scientifically matching the chemical</p>

	<p>elements in there, it is made locally from the clay, from the nearby area. And A is from somewhere else. So we also realize that something is interesting. A is a final quality product, potentially from East Java. Because, we don't know where yet, but potentially from East Java where they produce a lot of these very, very fine quality ones; it's imported as a prestige object. But at some point in time, because it is imported by distance, obviously, logically, it's going to be more expensive, right? Although it is just a flower pot or <i>kendi</i>, but it's going to be more expensive compared to something locally made. And of course, the sultan can just order someone to make it as well, right? As a threat of death, so you might not even need to pay, right? So it is the other way. So these are local stuff. But, the local potters, although using different clay, they're still trying to mimic the stuff coming out from Eastern Java. So, at least, outside, exterior-wise, the design and the burnishing, they're trying to polish it enough to make it smooth enough, so even comparing it side by side, it's almost like a replica. So they were doing things like that.</p>
<p>58:13 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Well, animal remains. So again, looking at Surosowan Palace. In the early 18th century... 17th century to early 18th century, there was still very large consumption of prestige foods, like buffalo and cattle. Buffalo and cattle were expensive. So in Banten, one cattle cost you about, at that point in time, seven reales or something like that, seven silver. So it's expensive, right? They rest in the inland, let's say you go all the way down to the south, to Anjer or something like that, or the mountains, it is about two or three reales. So in the city itself, it is expensive. So that's the sort of value. So the sultan and the elite inside were eating these things. It was described by a few accounts that he was served certain things like beef and stuff like that. But over time, we see the drop, and then we realized that, to make up for protein, they consumed more fowl or chicken, things like that. So there's a lot more chicken towards the later part of the 18th century.</p>
<p>59:24 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Right so, yeah, I know I went a little bit overtime, I apologise. So what do we know about Banten? Effectively, after today, a quick introduction to what's happening, from the archaeology, we still know very little. There's still a lot of question marks like when was the place found? When did they start having this thing? Our focus, so far, at least from the five seasons that I worked there, was to really look at the lifestyle of the elite and post-1684 after the civil war. And look at the space, the demarcation between the elites and the non-elites, the indigenous and the foreign, and from there, we realised that certain prestige items, for example, the <i>kendis</i>, right? So it looks like it's from somewhere else, but it's actually made locally, and we have things like a lot of imports of Chinese material or external material, and the consumption of a lot of different types of materials or different types of animals for meals. So, there are many, many different areas and themes that still remain unexplored. I've shown you, in a whirlwind tour, in a sense, of the different sites that are still out there. Most of them have never been excavated so they're still sitting there, so we don't really know. I mean, it would be interesting for someone to go and study the different ethnic quarters, the Gujaratis or the Chinese. And the ruins are there, right? The Chinese mosques... As you can see from the various walkabouts, so just digging in someone's backyard, there's lots of artefacts coming out from the ground. So, many things still to be done. Maybe at some point, I should go back. It's actually a nice little retirement place.</p>
<p>01:01:03 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Not that far from Jakarta and nowadays it's, of course, a little bit more hipster. I can open my café or something, right? So, anyhow, thank you very much for joining me this evening. I do apologize for slightly going above the time and these are my colleagues that I've been working with in Banten and so, yep, once again,</p>

	thanks for joining me this evening, spending your time.
01:01:42 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Wait, we do have time for questions. I was a bit worried.
01:01:48 (Vidya)	Please wait for the mic before you ask your question. We're going to pass the mic around because we are being taped. Also, please don't forget to fill out the... click on this link for your feedback.
01:02:40 (Audience)	Thanks for the informative talk. We've been to Banten, just as kind of a tourist to look at the sites. One thing that struck me after having visited Central Java where, with many times, with lots of Buddhist and Hindu ruins, Banten didn't have – doesn't have – any of that. And the ruins that we saw were this temple with... essentially, it's Buddhist temples built by the Chinese, so Taoist temples. At the museum, in your picture, there were some tombstones from the Qianlong period but no Hindu or Buddhist temples, pre-Islamic structures. Does that mean that Banten at the time was not as, let's say, developed as central Java was? So, in other words, the structures were actually built just around the time when the Dutch arrived so they would be attacking each other's structures and sacking them and burning them. Thank you.
01:03:57 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Right, great question. This is one of the few things, I mean for our colleagues and the archaeologists have so far been concentrating on the sultanate period, so post-1525 and post-European context. That's the area we do. So in Banten itself, yes there is some artefacts, so like this big Nandi, so, obviously, it's a Hindu-Buddhist type of religious iconography. It was found in a river. Or it's just that maybe we have very little evidence for other things, for other things earlier in terms of, let's say, the sites that we were looking at, most of them are from the sultanate period, like from the European, VOC, the East India Company period. So, it's, well people haven't really been looking for something earlier. So that's the one thing. So statistically it's just that, you know, we've been focusing on something else. We haven't gotten a lot of reports, but like something like this, this is massive. So, obviously, it has to mean something. It can't just be floating in a river, right? It was found there. So there must be some sort of settlement. The earlier accounts by the Ryukyans, the Okinawans and by the Portuguese around 1513 thereabouts, they talked about Banten, pre-sultanate days. So there was something that was happening. Now let's extrapolate and go back a few hundred years. Archaeological evidence-wise, that's one of the few. And there are few ceramic pieces, but the quantity is just very, very low so I suspect that no one has really gone to look for it yet. Now further, it's not a part of the topic of this talk but, about maybe 13 or 15 kilometres away, south of Banten, in Banten Girang – upstream Banten, that's what it means, right – there is another big settlement up in the hills and they have evidence from the prehistoric period all the way to the Hindu-Buddhist period. So they have things from, you know, from the ceramics or from coins or the things that we find, we can date them from that time period, you know, the 11th century to 14th century thereabouts, so it predates the sultanate period. Krakatoa, where Krakatoa is, there were a few – fortunately, before the island exploded – religious iconography. Again, big statues. A Ganesha and a Shiva was found at Krakatoa. So within that area, yes, there was definitely a West Javanese, Hindu-Buddhist kingdom before the sultanate of Banten. So, even the <i>Sejarah Banten</i> specifically said, right, this mythical guy, this fellow who came down here and conquered the Hindu-Buddhist state or kingdom or settlement that is

	there, but there's very little work being done, that's all.
01:06:53 (Audience)	Thank you for a fascinating speech. My question is, has anything come down to us about the interaction between the Dutch and the locals? You know, in terms of maybe any commentary on their local custom with the traders, perhaps? Lifestyle? Are the traders considered elite or non-elite? Anything you can share with us?
01:07:15 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	Yes. A lot of these accounts about interactions are from European accounts, from publications and things, so again, in the exhibition there's quite a few wonderful illustrations and books and things that have published accounts. It's almost like a travelogue, right? So you know, I won't say it's like a Lonely Planet guide, but someone who has come out to the east, so I've been here, this is what I saw. Some I know are very detailed, and some are very, very grey. Some are very scientific because they have a very naturalist type of mindset. So most of these data about the interactions between the Europeans and the local people... so "local", again, is very broad, right? Who exactly are the local people? I described that. Now from the archaeology, that's why, I think, in my last slide, I mentioned that there's still a lot of things that we can, as archaeologists or as historians, look into... is to look at other themes, about what sort of interactions between these people? Now, were the Dutch merchants elite? Yes. They were the elite class of the Europeans. So, even within the European classes, there was the pecking order, right? So they were the elite in the Far East. But they might not be the elite back home. So I can't remember the quote and who is it, but it'll come to me. A lot of these guys going out to the Far East were really the lowest end of the people, right? Those people, as they say in Singapore, you cannot make it back home, right? So they come up here and some of them were criminals. Some of them were given options. You either go up there to join the eastern force or what. A lot of people were destitute as well. They have no choice. They have no other options, I think. So they say I go out for a couple of trips, I come back and bring back as much goods as I can. Even the sailors and the soldiers were entitled to bring... depending on your rank, the hierarchy, the social pecking order and the military order or the trading company order... you are allowed to bring X amount of goods back, your own personal chest, and some of them try to stuff as much as possible, right? And then you try to make your fortune there. So yeah, there's very little being done in terms of the interaction amongst the Europeans as well. Or the Europeans and locals. Now, "locals", what do you mean? Asians or the Bantenese itself? The most records that we have is always the dealings with the sultan and the <i>orang kaya</i> . Now, the everyday Joe, there's very little accounts of them. That said, there are Bantenese records, there are a lot of court records, court cases and stuff. But they tend to be a much later period, not from the early 16th century or the European contact period. A much later period, in the 17th – and particularly 18th – century onwards, there's always cases about inheritance, and so and so have this plot of <i>sawa</i> and I want to give it to my descendants and this is worth how many reales. There are a lot of these documentation about the social life, in that case, we can extract from the Bantenese itself. Now that's the Bantenese. Then how about the other populations of people that we have no clue about? We are finding snippets here and there. How do we find out about the Chinese? There is one or two Chinese cases. So, of documentation and visitors. We are also finding out from things like the records held in Nagasaki. The Chinese junks from Banten, commissioned by the sultan of Banten, will be sent all the way up to China, Guangzhou and some of them go up to Nagasaki, and they trade and bring back something, pepper and whatever they want back. And these guys left accounts of Banten. The Tokugawa shogunate was

	<p>very restrictive. They insisted on all these people to make accounts of every ship captain to come; you must be interrogated about what's happening in your own town. So we get accounts from all these little bits and pieces. So, of course, there are a lot of people, right? I didn't get a chance to talk about the Japanese mercenaries in the early 16th century. So there were quite a number of them. There were other people from India to different coups of India, Malabar, Gujaratis, things like that. So there are a few accounts, locally, about those guys. But if you look towards their merchant guild, let's say in South Asia, I suspect quite a few more information are over there. But, it is a wonderful site. There's a lot of things to do, so it's a great retirement place. You can sit there and try to investigate. And it has plenty of things to do. So yeah, that's a very long-winded answer to your question. Shall we take one or two more questions?</p>
01:12:00 (Audience)	<p>In Java, you can't go very far without seeing a volcano. And in one of the pictures you show Gunung Karang. In your work, have you come across any signs of volcanic activity affecting Banten over that period of time? Because it is quite an active part of the world for volcanoes.</p>
01:12:20 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	<p>Great question. Fortunately, for me, because I'm working on the last five hundred years, so the volcanic eruptions, for my time period, there's none in the strata that we noticed. But I suspect that if we go further south, let's say to Anjer or to the coasts facing Krakatoa, right, we might be able to find a whole strata – or stratum – of volcanic ash and all those debris from the tsunami. Some of my colleagues like Ed McKinnon and others were working up in Aceh. That's another topic that we can talk about. And they have identified several different layers of volcanic explosions and resultant tsunami in archaeological records. We can even peg them to the years over there. So for my case, no. But I'm sure, yes, I'm sure at some places, if we go further, yeah, perhaps. So the archaeologists looking at earlier periods maybe.</p>
01:13:25 (Audience)	<p>So you spoke about the relationship with the European traders and foreign traders. How about the neighbouring kingdoms? Are there studies and evidence about the relationship with the other sultanates?</p>
01:13:48 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)	<p>Yes. That's another area that is worthy, right? So, again, the <i>Sejarah Banten</i> talks about how Banten or the Sultan of Demak dispatched this <i>wadi</i> to Banten and then he conquered, with his army from Demak, Banten to set up this new sultanate. And then later, Banten claimed sovereignty over Cirebon. So there's this relationship between Banten, Cirebon and Demak. So yes, archaeologically, I can't see it. I can't see all these things from Cirebon or anything, but this is some area which, you know, historians and others can study – any dynamics between. So in order for archaeologists to study, let's say, the relationship between Cirebon, Demak and other principalities if you want to call it, or even Batavia, we need comparative analysis so we need to have sufficient excavation, let's say, in Batavia, old town Batavia, the old port of Batavia and Banten Lama. I can compare, let's say, Dutch fortress to Fort Speelwijk to Dutch fortress in Batavia, Dutch port in Batavia with the... where is it, the Dutch one is on the western side... eastern port, so I can compare. So that's the only way we can do it, but so far, off the top of my head, I don't think anyone has done something with this. But, you know, if you're retired as well, I welcome you to join me. Well, someone was trying to sell me a plot of land there and build a house. So yeah, lots of things can be done. It's just not been examined.</p>

<p>01:15:35 (Audience)</p>	<p>Hi, in terms of historical records, of course, we want to understand from the past, from these archaeological artefacts. But I've read from other sources also, as well, in terms of understanding the history in Southeast Asia. Because if you would like to dig more about Southeast Asia in terms of archaeological artefacts, it could be quite significant. So according to this writing, actually this part of the world is actually about what we call a text, in terms of historiography... I just want to get your comments, in terms of the significance of understanding the history in Southeast Asia, between the artefact and the text itself. Because you say just now the records of inheritance, these of course are the texts. So, your comment on that? Thank you.</p>
<p>01:16:40 (Speaker: Dr Lim Chen Sian)</p>	<p>Well, I hear several sub-questions in there, but I'll try my best. This is a tough question for the last one. Well, I guess, directly relating to today's talk at least, in Banten. Yes, so as a historical archaeologist, we do rely on a lot of texts and try to compare the material data. As we know, textual sources is just one element of it. People can lie, they can say whatever they want. I'm not dissing the <i>Sejarah Banten</i> or anything. But remember who commissioned the <i>Sejarah Banten</i>? The sultan, right? So, obviously, the scribe, the person who writes it, and there's a specific objective for writing that genealogy. It's about the greatness of, here's my lineage and et cetera. So there are certain things which they will cover only, and certain things they might not. And so even the European documentation for example, I've just shown you a few illustrations that anyone in this room... there's a lot of romantic ideals of how the artists imagined Banten and looks like they have... Obviously the artist hasn't been there, it doesn't look like that. So, in a sense, I wouldn't say that these documents and things can lie, but they might not depict... I wouldn't say the truth as well, but may not really depict what may be there. So, through the artefacts, can we compare with it, and see what it tells? We extract the data from historical sources and we compare it with archaeological artefacts and see how they hold up. So, in this case, for our work in Banten, yes, to your question, we do rely a lot on historical sources and we try our best to match up, or to compare, or if you do match up, what does it mean? What does this suggest? So we try to interpret or recreate what the society might be. Now, the second part of the thing, which I think is a broader question in Southeast Asia at large... well, I guess the short answer, maybe if we can have more archaeologists, then we can have... well that's a biased wish, right? So to understand Southeast Asia from a different perspective, it's really a multidisciplinary thing. You do need a whole spectrum of people from economic historians to social historians, and even architectural historians, sociologists, linguists, archaeologists, anthropologists... maybe not come together. But even for Banten itself, you noticed Surosowan Palace, we were only digging a little tiny, little excavation unit. So if I were to dig up the whole site, it'll probably take us another hundred years. So, it's just a small part of knowledge that we are revealing. So there's still a lot more, but we can leave it for a future generation. I guess that should be it.</p>

About the Speaker

Lim Chen Sian is an Associate Fellow at the Archaeology Unit, ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. He is a historical archaeologist interested in the transitional period between pre- and post-European contact in Southeast Asia and the development of port settlements, military fortifications, and the material culture of trade. Between 2009 and 2012, he conducted five field seasons of archaeological investigations at Banten together with Indonesian counterparts.