

The Social Banditry in the Rural Areas of Rembang by the End of the 19th Century and at the Beginning of the 20th Century

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ABSTRACT: *The social banditry is the act of crime committed by the residents of a village or the people in the low economic and social stratum in order to fulfill their basic needs. Such an act is done due to the structural pressure which depresses the people in accessing the natural resources that support their lives. This structural pressure kept increasing in the rural areas of Rembang by the end of the 19th century, particularly after the issuance of the law on forestry in 1865 that enabled the forestry capitalism to be established. The limitation in the people's access to the state forest as the manifestation of the domain concept and the exploitation of the teak forests done by the private businessmen became the trigger to the increasing acts of crime in the rural areas of Rembang. The scarcity of the local economic resources due to such natural factors as barren land and structural factors as the result of the penetration of the external power became the main trigger to the social banditry to take place in Rembang. There were many kinds of social banditry, such as illegal logging, robbery, "kecu" (burglary), theft of possessions, etc. which were done against the assets owned by both the state and the individuals/groups.*

KEY WORDS: *Social banditry, forest village, Rembang area, economic resources, and colonial exploitation.*

INTRODUCTION

In the sufficiently long time span, particularly during the 19th century and the end of the Dutch colonial reign, Rembang residency was always described in the official reports as one of the underdeveloped regions in Java (Bekking, 1861; "M.v.O of Residency Head Fraenkel", 1905; "Residency Head Einthoven", 1917; "Residency Head Florich", 1921; "Residency Head Hilderling", 1924; "Residency Head FAE Laceulle", 1932;

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and "Residency Head Habema", 1935). The characteristics of Rembang as an underdeveloped region could be seen in many of its aspects such as the limited economic resources, farmland, food production, agricultural infrastructure, communication as well as the low population growth and density, and so on. Such structural factors as the scarcity of resources and the hegemony of the foreign country in this region had simultaneously become the permanent pressure that had an effect on the dynamics of the rural people of Rembang throughout the 19th century until the end of the Dutch colonial reign. The abundant resources of the forests in Rembang region did not always give contribution to overcome the condition of being underdeveloped. That was the irony that the people of Rembang faced when the teak forests of high value which became the source of living for some of the urban people started to be under the hegemony of the foreign country in such a way that it closed the access of the people to exploit the forests.

The territory of Rembang residency in majority consisted of teak forests (*tectona grandis*) which grew rapidly on the limestone ground spreading along Kendeng mountain range. The scarcity of water became the main characteristic of this region although water was still limitedly found in some areas. Bengawan Solo River which flowed in the southern territory brought blessing as well as disaster to the people who lived nearby. In the dry season, the water of Bengawan Solo River could be utilized to support the plant growing activities along the stream flow of the river. However, the flood which was caused by the overflow of Bengawan Solo River often took place in the wet season. The flood and drought disasters came alternately to take place in this region. It was the limited natural resources that had the direct effect on the social, the economic, and the cultural systems of the people of Rembang who in majority lived around the forests (Warto, 2001).

The limitation in the economic resources in the territory of Rembang residency became the main factor to food scarcity and poverty. The structural gap due to the obstacle which was caused by the physical environment such as condition of the land, geographical distance, technology, and limited acces to various opportunities (Abdullah & Saleh, 2001) had brought negative impacts to the people of Rembang by the end of the 19th century until the beginning of the 20th century. Then, the impact brought various forms of responses and adapting strategies. The closure of economic opportunity on one hand had opened new opportunities/chances on the other hand. The forest exploitation which was done by the authority of the foreign country had caused the degradation and the damage of the forests. However, the exploitation has also created new opportunities. On one hand, the policy on forestry which was implemented by the end of

the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century had caused the loss of the people's access and traditional rights to exploit forest. On the other hand, the policy had created new chances and opportunities for the people of the forest villages. The new opportunities that were related to the exploitation and the conservation of the forests created employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sectors.

The form of responses and adapting strategies of the farmers of Rembang at the beginning of the 20th century could be classified into two types, which were the demographic and the social economic responses (Migdal, 1987). The first type of response was made, for example, by organizing migration and limiting the number of births, which acted as the safety valve in decreasing the pressure of the population on the decreasing economic resources since the economic capacity to support the lives of the people who kept increasing in number was increasingly limited. The second type of response was made through the social and the economic measures. Those types of responses that were made both individually and jointly were highly varied and complex and they had different effectiveness. The responses in the social field included the changes of the social institutions that regulated the access to the resources, particularly to the land and its product. The adapting capacity of the villagers was determined by the level of the relationship with the external parties out of the village and also by the political and economic structures of the internal parties of the village. The villagers could utilize the external resources through the relationship with the external parties for their importance, such as the resources to develop the economic activities of non-agricultural sectors. On the other hand, the internal economic and political structures of the villagers determined the resource allocation among themselves. The resource allocation gave equal rights and portions but the distribution of the resource allocation often created a gap in which the allocation was controlled by only a few people (Benda-Beckmann, Benda-Beckmann & Koning eds., 2001).

The structural pressure in Rembang caused the acute poverty of the people in majority. The adoption of capitalism into forestry which was supported by the hegemony of the Dutch colonial government had great effect on the local people's access to the forest resources. After the forests were under the control of the colonial government and exploited massively by the private sector, the economic value of the forests to people declined. In addition to their loss of access, the people had also lost the subsistence resources which relied on the product of the forest. Such condition became the trigger to many kinds of crime which were known as social banditry to take place.

FORMS OF SOCIAL BANDITRY IN REMBANG

There were sufficiently various forms and kinds of social banditry in the region of Rembang during the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. The variety was a token of the great number of crime, both the general crime and the forestry crime. The formerly mentioned kind of crime included the kind of crime of which target can be both individual/group and state possession. Such general crime as the theft of the possession of other people was socially regarded as the kind of crime which violated the morals. Therefore, the local people always held the principle of *“Do not steal any possession of any other person”* during their lives since such a behavior was humiliated. On the other hand, the forestry crime which was defined by the state as the act of taking the product of the forest was not regarded by the local people as the crime which violated the social morals. The term of “violation in forestry” was the perspective of the state which was supported by the positive law on the property right for the forest resources. Despite the difference in the perspective between the people and the state in signifying the general crime and the forestry crime, both crimes were categorized as the forms of social banditry in this discussion. The main objective of both crimes was to fulfill the people’s subsistence and survival.

Conceptually, the banditry and the social banditry, which were usually committed by the marginal group of the circle of the pre-capitalist traditional farmers and regarded as a crime by the authority, have not included a broad scale and have not had any network in their criminal acts. There was a merely criminal banditry which merely aimed at survival and there was also a social banditry *a la* Robin Hood in which the gain from the crime was distributed to the poor people. So, the social banditry is a form of violation or criminal act which is committed by the poor people in order to fulfill their basic subsistence. Such form can be the theft of the individual or the public or the state possession as forest and any other resource which is under the control of the government. In the context of the theft of timber from the forest, the social banditry was signified as the timber theft which was committed by the people and merely in order to fulfill their subsistence whereas the capital banditry was an organized theft timber which was committed in order to fulfill the supply of timber as the basic commodity for the industries, both the industries nearby the forest and those in the city (Suhartono, 1985; and Santosa, 2002:85). Meanwhile, Donald Crummey differentiates some forms of social protest which took place in Africa during the colonial era such as crime, banditry, protest, opposition, and rebellion. Theft is the most primitive form of protest (Crummey ed., 1986; and Freund, 1986:49-62).

On the Ordinary Theft. In Rembang residency, the target of the crime which took the form of theft and robbery was classified into three types: the theft of state possession, the theft of individual possession, and the theft of public possession (“Archives of Rembang, No.19” in ANRI). The social and economic conditions of the underdeveloped people of Rembang became the factors to the great number of crime, such as theft of cattle, robbery, murder, *kampak* (robbery which is committed by using the axe to threat the victim), and so on. The simultaneous correlation of the poverty and the condition of being underdeveloped to the crime in the region under the Dutch colony at the beginning of the 20th century was the general phenomenon which was easily found in many places (Hasselman, 1914:263). Those forms of criminal act were among others theft, robbery, *kecu*, *kampak*, *begal* (robbery which is committed by blocking the way of the victim on the street), murder, and so on. All of those terms referred to the criminal acts which are committed either openly or secretly, by using either both sharp weapons or bare hands, by either individual or group, either on the street or at the victim’s house, either at night or in the daytime. However, the essence was basically the same: the people commit theft or robbery merely to fulfill their basic subsistence. They do not act in a big group which is well-organized just like the big-scale crime which is supported by the capital power and the elites in authority. The kind of crime which is mentioned latter can be regarded as the capital banditry due to its widespread and solid network. Table 1 below illustrates the number of the theft of possession at the beginning of the 20th century in Rembang residency:

Table 1:
Number of Theft of Individual Possession, 1899-1905

Year	Rembang Regency		Tuban Regency		Bojonegoro Regency		Blora Regency	
	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b
1899	385	111	965	138	-	-	753	64
1900	374	102	1,094	212	622	187	875	62
1901	220	113	826	247	669	230	1,007	75
1902	378	141	1,091	270	398	217	976	84
1903	373	96	1,102	203	339	169	1,032	62
1904	-	-	-	-	346	184		

Source: MWC (1911) attachment.

Note: a. Ordinary theft.

b. Theft accompanied by torture against victim.

As seen in table 1, the theft of the individual possession was great in number and it was often accompanied by violence and torture. This kind of crime was committed by both individual and group by combining the elements of the physical and the mystical power. Stealing or robbing does not only require thorough estimation, physical strength, and sufficient bravery, but also supernatural power. Javanese people, according to Tjipto Mangunkusumo in 1918, were accustomed to using their own calendar system, or *petung*, in which they try to determine the good or lucky day to do many life activities, including *petung* for committing theft and the ways to overcome it (as cited by Korver, 1985).

As previously explained, the theft of possession includes many kinds and forms such as *kecu*, *kampak*, *begal*, and *maling*, which can be committed at the victim's house, in the public street, and in the forest. Such crimes are often accompanied by violence, torture, or murder. The case of a criminal named Juwo was an example. Juwo was the then well-known criminal in Blora. He was a dangerous person who had connection with the *kecu* group in Sragen (Surakarta). This group of robbers committed its criminal act on the streets where people usually passed through and in the forest villages within the territory of southern Blora. This criminal act seemed to be related to the rampant trafficking and smuggling of opium in the territorial border of Sragen. The criminals stole cows to be exchanged for opium which was usually sold by the Chinese. The lush forests made the robbers easy to commit their acts. The theft of cattle was usually committed in the dry season through the paths around the forests that were already cut in such a way that the paths are easy to be passed through. When the shepherds were taking a rest or playing with their mates, they became inadvertent. Therefore, the thieves could easily commit their acts ("Archives of Rembang, No.19" in ANRI).

In order to find out some kinds of crime which often took place within the territory of Rembang residency, table 2 below indicates the number of crimes as reported by Gongrijp, who was the head of Rembang Residency in 1914, including the kinds of crime that were opposed by the people and the state due their disruptive and harmful natures against other people.

Theft and robbery were the social phenomena that kept taking place in the circle of poor people. The efforts to fulfill the subsistence were the main factor that drove people to commit such crimes whereas the limitation and the scarcity of resources drove some people to commit the crimes that are mentioned above. Therefore, it can be assumed that there was a simultaneously positive correlation of the problem of poverty and the threat of subsistence to the rampant forms of social banditry within the

territory of Rembang during the late colonial period. Even in its progress, the target of the thefts was not only the individual possession but also the objects that were under the control of the government.

Table 2:
List of General Criminal Acts in Rembang, 1906-1912

Kinds of Crime	Tuban		Rembang		Bojonegoro		Blora
	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912
Theft of cattle	104	62	27	21	29	51	39
<i>Kecu</i> and <i>Kampak</i>	18	62	27	21	29	51	39
<i>Begal</i> on the street	33	25	13	14	11	14	14
Murder	61	57	46	57	54	55	45
Torture against victim	122	115	126	104	93	92	110
Arson of victim's house	26	31	18	9	12	18	27
Theft of valuable possession	1,436	819	545	433	515	491	556

Source: M.v.O. Gongrijp (1914).

On the Illegal Logging. The term “illegal logging” was in fact unknown to the people of Rembang. This term was created by the colonial government in which forest was seen as the possession of the state in such a way that any one person who took away the wealth of the forest without permission was regarded as a thief. So, the term “theft of forest product” was biased upon the importance of the state which claimed itself as the holder of the authority over forests. The forest resources that the nature had provided actually become everyone’s possession so that no one was allowed to claim him/herself as the single owner of the forest.

In the view of traditional people, forest was the collective possession and it could be utilized collectively as well in accordance with the needs. In such a context, the state in fact could be regarded to have committed the “theft” against the forests which were “possessed” by the traditional people because the state claimed that all forests were the possession of the state. The view of the traditional people on the forest resources in the power relation of a modern state was, however, negated and replaced with the concept of state domain in which the state claimed that all forests were the possession of the state (the term “state forest” emerges here).

As the concept of domain got strengthened, the term “illegal logging” which referred to the acts committed by the villagers who took away and utilized the products of the forest nearby without the permission from the forestry service officer developed. The taking away of the forest products that was subsequently labeled as “the illegal logging” by the state actually

became the long-time tradition of the people in such a way that it was hard to eliminate or *houtdiefstallen waren dan ook aan de orde van de weg* (Cordes, 1881:248). This indicated that the taking away of the forest products was not an act of theft according to the people. Instead, it was the legal act that had been done through generations.

The cases of illegal logging and trespass which had been committed since the 19th century was related to the social and the economic problems as well as the political policy and the ecological change. The increase of the illegal logging was triggered by the change in the function of forests which had altered from previously the economic basis of the forest village to the trade commodity. Forests had also lost their social function when their resources were under the control of the state or of the private businessmen who held the right of forest exploitation. The concept of state domain had eliminated the traditional rights in accessing the wealth of forest. The extraction or “timber extraction” politics had been run almost throughout the 19th century before it was replaced with the policy of “timber management”. In the terminology in the social history, illegal logging can be regarded as the form of “banditry”, “social banditry”, or even “capital banditry”. The emergence of this phenomenon was the form of the farmers’ response to the depressing situation.

Illegal logging was only one of the disruptions against the security of forest. It was different from the other forms of banditry because it was not the kind of crime which was regarded as the disruption against the social morals. Taking away timber out of the forest was not a humiliated act to the villagers. This was different from the act of stealing the possession of other people. Such a point of view as this had caused illegal logging to keep occurring since long time ago. The custom of taking away the forest products was a certainty that had been done through generations. This custom had even become the social institution which was widely accepted. However, the custom that was based on the social and economic aspects of the villagers was increasingly declining when the forests were under the control of the state. The villagers who took the forest products were found guilty and they could be punished.

Such forestry crime as illegal logging and other violations occurred because the subsistence was not fulfilled and there was not any solution found. The act of illegal logging became the main option to do due to two factors: it is easy to do due to the closeness of the forest to the dwelling place of the villagers and it was morally justified which meant that taking away timber out of the forest was not the kind of act which was against the law. In short, the act of illegal logging or timber theft was supported

by the communal notion on the possession of forest which was free to be accessed by everyone and by the ignorance of the villagers which made them ignore the fact that the timber they stole came from the state forest (under the control of the state).

The villagers took various kinds of response against the limitation of the access to the forests. Illegal logging in addition to forest arson, cattle grazing, collecting *rencek* (the twig of teak used for firewood), deforestation for farmland, etc. were the forms of rebellion that were done repeatedly. The increasing control of the state over the forest resources could not eliminate the long-time custom which was had by the people of the forest villages. The harder pressure from the state just exactly made the responses of the people of the forest villages get stronger and more widespread. Other cases of illegal logging and forestry crime kept increasing. The placement of the forest police under the Forestry Service in 1897 was an example of the efforts to increase the prevention from the disruption and the devastation of forest so that the surveillance could run more efficiently. Forestry Service became the state institution which was getting more autonomous and greater in its authorities in controlling the forest resources. This institution frequently had different point of view from that of the local government in seeing the problems related to the forests which had been utilized by the villagers to a large degree. In 1920s, the number of the police personnels, such as rangers and police orderlies, was increased continuously.

In the reign of Residency Head Helderling (1921-1924), the police corps was extended. Nine police orderlies, 46 first-rank police agents, and 229 second-rank police agents were appointed ("State Gazette, Number 86 Year 1921" in *Verslag*). In addition, 12 second-rank police superintendents were appointed to be in charge of the territory of Rembang which was based on the Decree dated November 2nd 1920 of Number 2556/A.P. Two police orderlies and 12 surveillance officers were added to be stationed in the seaport in order to prevent theft of oil. The increasing number of theft of timber required cooperation among the military detachment, rangers, and police superintendent in their surveillance. Up to the year of 1927, the number of the police personnels in each resort of Rembang residency (Rembang residency consists of Rembang, Cepu, Bojonegoro, Tuban, Blora, Padangan, and Jatirogo resorts) was around 37-48 personnels. The number range consisted of 1 first-rank police superintendent, 1 second-rank police superintendent, marshal, police orderly, and police agent. However, the addition in security personnel brought an unfavorable result since the total number of personnel after the addition could not control all of the area of the teak forests which was sufficiently widespread ("M.v.O. Kloprogge", 1927; and Wartyo, 2010).

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The following table 3 indicates various kinds of forestry crime from 1917 to 1920. The long list of the kinds of forestry crime, as seen in table 3, was a token of the strong control of the state over the forest resources in such a way that all activities of forest utilization which was not accompanied by the permission from the state were regarded as violation and such activities were punishable. Since the end of the 19th century, the domination of the state over all natural resources within the Netherlands Indies showed an increase. In the forest exploitation, the state was in cooperation with the community of the capitalists whose role was getting stronger in the economic activities in the Netherlands Indies.

Table 3:
Security Disruptions against Forest Handled by Forest Police from 1917 to 1920

No.	Kinds of Crime	Year	
		1917	1920
1.	Theft of timber.	16,815	22,381
2.	Forest devastation.	1,509	1,648
3.	Cattle grazing.	1,251	950
4.	Forest arson.	938	1,080
5.	Collecting timber without permission.	697	1,598
6.	Deforestation for farmland.	833	-
7.	Other violations.	2,007	1,257
8.	Deforestation for farmland which is against the ordinance.	147	146
9.	Violation against the State Gazette number 362 year 1902 in the form of stone taking.	32	40
10.	Violation against the State Gazette number 100 year 1908 in the form of hunting with air rifle.	9	23
11.	Other forestry crimes.	303	428
Total		24,541	30,232

Source: *Verslag van Dienst van het Boschwezen*, 1917, 1921, and 1922.

Note: The kinds of the security disruption against forest that are mentioned in numbers 1 through 7 are based on the "State Gazette, Number 216 Year 1875" in *Verslag*.

The timber theft in the region of Rembang was closely related to the efforts of the villagers to fulfill their subsistence. Residency Head, Gongrijp, wrote, "[...] *still, the theft of timber is committed frequently by the farmers to make plough and hoe but this case is seldom reported*" (M.v.O. Gongrijp, 1914). The theft of timber, which had been a custom in the region, was a social phenomenon which would keep emerging as long as there were still forests nearby. The theft of timber, the cattle grazing, the forest arson, the

deforestation for farmland, and other activities that were committed in the middle of the forests had been parts that were inseparable from the social economic life of the people of the forest village.

The criminal acts such as theft, robbery, *kecu*, and those of a kind were classified into the kind of security disruption of which target was the individual possession whereas the target of the theft of timber and other security disruption against forests was the state possession. The kinds of crime that are mentioned latter do not belong to the amoral criminal act according to the villagers and there was not any social sanction which was imposed on such crimes. Therefore, the strict surveillance and the ban on the utilization of forest did not decrease the number of disruption and violation against forest. Not all of the villagers who lived around the forests understood the various regulations on forestry that were issued by the Dutch colonial government in relation to the kinds of activity that were banned to do in the forests. According to the villagers, collecting timbers from the teaks which had stopped growing, twig of teak used for firewood, teak leaves, and other forest products as well as the villagers' customs of deforestation for farmland and cattle grazing were not regarded as the acts of violation against the law although those were banned in accordance with the laws on forestry. The laws on forestry themselves often had multiinterpretation in such a way that the establishment of the limitation of the violation against the law differed among the officers.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the methods and the frequency of illegal logging had also improved. The theft of timber was not any longer based only on the motive to fulfill the demand for the direct consumption of timber but also the motive to fulfill the demand of other parties. The stolen timbers became the commodity of which theft involved the collector from outside of the village. According to the report, the theft of timber in general was committed by the people of the forest villages anytime. The theft which was committed by those people was decreasing in the harvesting period since they busily worked in the fields during the time. The thieves would not commit their acts before there was an agreement with the people who would buy the stolen timbers from them. They used axes as weapon and bring foodstuff for their supply in the forest. They usually committed their acts in small groups of three up to five persons. They sought for desolate and safe spots and then looked for dry timbers that they cut into the length of four meters and the rectangular shape to be utilized to construct parts of the Javanese traditional house, such as *blandar* (beams), *soko* (pillars), *pengeret* (connecting beams), *lambang* (decoration studded on the pillar), and *sunduk/sindik* (construction stabilizer to resist shock).

The wooden block with 4-meter length and 20-centimeter thickness or 0.16 m³ was sold for fl or f 6.25 per m³. The wooden plank with 4-meter length, 20-centimeter width, and 2-cm thickness was sold for fl or f 6.25 per m³. So, one piece of wooden plank with such dimension cost f 9.30. A wooden rafter with 4-meter in length, 5-meter in width, and 2-centimeter in thickness cost f 0.10 or f 25 per m³. Prior to its transportation to the collector/buyer's place, the stolen timbers were brought home to be hidden in a safe place. When the situation was seen as the safe one, the timbers were handed over to the buyer who lived rather far from the forest (MWC III-A, section 1, 1911).

In order to deceive the security officers, many stolen timbers were made the materials for house in such a way that the timbers were easy to be moved to another place. In addition, many houses of which constructions had been completed were sold afterwards. The opening of the railway line that connected Solo to Semarang caused the transportation of stolen timbers as well as the sale of timbers in the form of house between the people of the forest villages and the Chinese, Arabian, and European traders to get more intense. After the house was sold, the people took away the timbers from the forest again in order to build house which was subsequently sold again (Cordes, 1881:182). In the 1910s, there were cases in which many people living around the forests sold houses to the people (rich traders) from outside of their villages to earn cash money in order to fulfill their other needs. The transportation of teak wood in the form of house was easier to do than that in the form of raw timbers.

The villagers who lived within six up to seven *pals* (1 pal = 1.5 km) from the forests in Bojonegoro region were used to stealing timbers which were subsequently made house for the sake of security in illegal logging activities. Even there were frequent secret collusions between the security officers and the thieves. The case of a police orderly and a forest ranger of being terminated from duty due to their involvement in an illegal logging in a forest in the territory of Payaman of Blora and in the forestry companies in Ledok, Kedinding, and Panunggalan in 1922 was an example. There were also the cases in which some village heads in Tuban region forced the villagers to steal timbers from the forest (*Verslag van Dienst van het Boschwezen in N.I. over het Jaar 1921-1922:27*).

According to the Vice Regent of Blora, the illegal logging cases which were committed in order to build the houses of the Europeans who lived in the city of Blora in 1880s were quite rampant. A piece of teak wood was sold for f 0.25 on home delivery. That was why tens of hectares of forest became devastated in a short time. At the beginning of the 20th century,

illegal logging for housing still kept on occurring just as intensively as it had been before. During the year of 1903, permit letters to permit the transportation of the houses which were made of teak wood taken from the forest district of Bojonegoro were given to 137 people who lived within the distance range of 4.5 kilometers from the forest (MWC, section 2, 1914:43). However, the timber material of the houses was suspected to have been stolen from the state forest. In addition to its source from theft, teak wood could be procured in cheap price from the forest farmers who grew teak plants in the state forests.

Such structural pressures as poverty, conditions of being underdeveloped, limited resources, and people's loss of access to the forest became the factors that triggered illegal logging and other violation acts against the forestry regulations. As any one of the pressures got more intense, the people got more determined to act in opposition against the security officers no matter what the consequences are as reported below:

Some police orderlies in charge of the security of the forests get accidents in which the thieves are the ones to be blamed for. The characteristics in number of the thieves can indeed discourage other people because, firstly, they do not act individually but collectively in group of four or five people; and, secondly, they bring sharp weapons (*Pemberita Betawi*, June 15th, 1916).

The forest rangers and forest superintendents were frequently regarded as "enemies" by the villagers. On the other hand, the lower rank forestry employees also had complaint about their small salary which was not in proportion to the burden of duty that they had to bear. To eradicate illegal logging was the heaviest task for the lower rank forestry employee since they dealt directly with the poor people (*Het Bosch* jg. VI, June–August 1938, Number I/2:385-390). Every evening, there were always 20 up to 30 cases of illegal logging which came into report. The patrol of the forest police which was only done by some forest police officers often failed to catch the thieves. The joint patrols in large scale were even done frequently. However, the illegal logging started to emerge rampantly as soon as the police force was withdrawn. The approach through power was in point of fact ineffective to repress illegal logging.

According to Koestijo Sastropoerojo (1938), the security approach was not effective so that the social and cultural approaches had to be made in order to decrease illegal logging. This method could be carried out directly and indirectly. The former method was carried out by making people realize through: (1) fulfilling their subsistence; and (2) building mutual trust and good relationship between the people/villagers and the

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forest security officers. The villagers had to be provided with employment as their source since unemployment had endangering threat. The latter method could be carried out by having cultural approach in which mutual respect and good communication with the villagers had to be built. The forestry security officers had to be willing to address villagers friendly. The modest villagers felt that they gained respect when they were invited to a friendly conversation with the people from the upper class. Once in a while, the villagers should be invited to talk about the conditions in the field of agriculture, the villagers' crop and its sale, and the simple things that made them interested. The forestry officers could build mutual trust and respect thereby. Such a supple cooperation brought positive impact to the efforts to overcome illegal logging (*Het Bosch*, jg.VI, June-August 1938, Number I/2:385-390).

In the legal system in the Netherlands Indies, illegal logging or other violations against the security of forest was not included in the kinds of general crime such as *kampak*, *kecu*, *begal*, murder, and other kinds of theft. Not until 1920s was illegal logging explicitly declared as part of criminal acts just like other kinds of crime.

Table 4:
Number of Crimes in Rembang, 1920-1926

Year	<i>Kecu and Kampak</i>	<i>Begal</i>	Theft of Valuable Cattle	Illegal Logging	Theft of Oil
1920	166	61	147	-	-
1921	140	65	90	4,189	34
1922	51	36	30	7,156	69
1923	14	24	19	5,913	71
1924	12	16	12	5,782	13
1925	11	20 (\$)	20 (\$)	6,028 (\$)	20 (\$)
1926	10	22	14	5,528	10

Source: M.v.O. Kloprogge (1927).

Notes:

(+): The number of the second year.

(\$): Severe drought which caused crop failure and subsequently drove the increase of crimes.

As seen in table 4 above, during 1920-1926, the number of crimes, particularly illegal logging, in Rembang residency was still sufficiently high. The number of violation against the forestry regulations all around Java, as recorded by the forest police, increased from 20,000 in 1911 up to 24,000 in 1914. This was caused by the increasing number of people who needed timber but could not afford to buy it in the market and by the possibility of

the police making the report of illegal logging. Meanwhile, C.J. Hasselman, who states: *“Illegal logging is likely to have decreased but it still emerges in a great number in the areas rich with teak forests”* (Hasselman, 1914:181; and E.H.B.B., 1915:152-154). There is a significant correlation between the crop failure and the increasing number of crimes, particularly illegal logging. When a crop failure which results in food crisis occurs just like that in the year of 1925, the number of illegal logging increases steadily. This indicates that the economic condition which is underdeveloped becomes a powerful factor to crimes, including those against the security of forest, to occur.

The farmers' resistance, which was indicated by illegal logging, deforestation for farmland, and illegal collecting of other forest products, was declared in sporadical actions and in unorganized manner, and it was often under the control of another party. The activities of the utilization of forest which were subsequently stigmatized as criminal acts or violations against the security of forest were previously done in order to fulfill their relatively limited subsistence.

Up to the end of the 19th century, there had not been any social movement which was directed to having collective movement that was in opposition against the policy on forestry. It was only sporadical actions that had been done as an expression of the dissatisfaction of the people against the policy of the government in the utilization of forest. They opposed the government unopenly, in a small scale, and on daily basis, and their opposition was expressed in soft verbal language. Those were the weapons of people in the lower class as stated by James C. Scott (1985 and 1990). They had not had collective awareness to defy the power hegemony of the foreign country through an ideology that united them under a respected leadership.

Not until the beginning of the 20th century does an external influence start to enter the rural areas through the organizations of SI (*Sarikat Islam* or Islamic Union) and PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* or Indonesian Communist Party). Both mass organizations directly brought new values to the life of rural people, particularly in their efforts to oppose the power hegemony of the foreign country. The Forestry Service which was the representative of the interests of the government was subsequently placed as the shared enemy which prevented the people from accessing forest.

The organization of Sarekat Islam (SI) which had been moving actively in the rural areas of Rembang since the beginning of the 20th century took part to criticize the forestry's policies that were not sided with the native people. Sartono Kartodirdjo (1973:170) mentioned that the press of SI had repeatedly criticized the management of teak forest. In *Pantjaran Warta*, as

quoted by A.P.E. Korver (1985:150), it is mentioned that there was a writer who complained about the fact that the villagers had to pay for the timbers from their own forests. Whoever committed violation, no matter how small it was, got severe punishment. The unused tracts of land which the villagers were going to cultivate were designated for reforestation. In *Oetoesan Hindia's* criticism against corruption was raised to the circle of the officials of the Forestry Service. If any one of the officials received bribery, there was not any verbal process which was imposed on him/her. There was also much despotism in the seizure of furnitures, farming tools, and so on. In this case, if the owner could not prove the legal source of timbers (Korver, 1985:151).

CONCLUSION

Social banditry is a kind of criminal act which is committed by the lower class people in order to fulfill their subsistence. Different from the capital banditry which is well-organized and supported by the capital and the technological power as well as widespread network, social banditry, which occurs continuously and is not well organized, is committed sporadically by either individuals or small groups. The aim of capital banditry is capital accumulation whereas that of social banditry is the fulfillment of subsistence.

The rampant social banditry in the rural areas of Rembang in the later period of the colonial reign was caused by the limited resources and the structural pressure which depressed the lives of the people in majority. The barren land and the pressures in the policy on forestry which closed off the people's access to utilize forest products became the factors that motivated the criminal acts to occur in this region. By the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, the structural pressure was increasingly greater in such a way that an escalation in crimes was inevitable. The escalation took various forms, such as general theft, robbery, *kecu*, *kampak*, theft accompanied by violence, arson against house, and illegal logging. Their targets could be the assets of individuals, groups, or the state/government. When the subsistence of the people was threatened and there was not any solution to survive found, stealing was one of the solutions.

There was a different understanding between the local people and the government in relation to the criminal acts, particularly those related to illegal logging. Stealing or taking away any kind of possession of other people was unacceptable to the local people and it was regarded as a humiliating deed. This was different from illegal logging. The local people regarded that taking away forest products was not a criminal act since forest was their shared possession in such a way that forest could be utilized by anyone. On the other hand, the state regarded that taking away forest

products without permission was a theft or a crime. The state assumed that all forest resources were owned and controlled by the state. This assumption was known as the concept of domain. It was this gap in concept which subsequently caused friction of interests. As long as the people still regarded forest as their shared possession and rejected the control of the state over the forest resources, illegal logging would keep occurring and would be hard to stop. Forest was the source of living for the poor people which had been the support for their lives through generations. Therefore, as long as the poverty problems were unsolved, the cases of illegal logging would keep occurring. The local people were even often exploited by the network of capital bandits to steal forest products.

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