



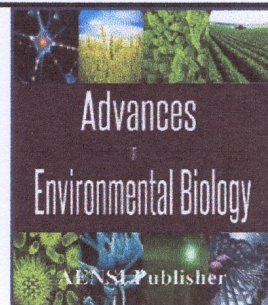
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## The Influence of Social-Culture of Banten Towards The Changes of Banten Great Mosque Complex

Tessa E.K.A. Darmayanti and Azizi Bahauddin

School of Housing, Building and Planning, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

Initially, Banten was blessed with the abundance of blackpepper plants that became the attraction for foreign Nations, particularly the Europeans. Banten, is located strategically in the west of Java island. Banten is known to have numerous interesting stages of cultural development; Hinduism cultural before 1525, then became the important part of the dissemination of Islam in West Java and the Islamic Sultanate of Banten was established in 1527 in Banten Lama. In 1832, the centre of Banten government was moved to Serang from Banten Lama by the Dutch, since their power have been raised in Banten. The Banten Great Mosque complex is an icon with great historical significance, an important evidence of the Banten Sultanate's presence in Banten Lama. In 1945 the Indonesian government decided to 'reactivate' the Mosque by providing more colours in the changes and development surrounding the complex, especially the architecture, interior design, and social circumstances which affected one another. The research will employ qualitative method and intended to review the changing of the Banten Great Mosque Complex as the concrete evidence of the development of society and environment in particular and the development of Banten, in general. In conclusion, the influence of social-culture which are two basic support elements of heritage buildings – Banten Great Mosque complex is impossible to be separated, because they are identity of civilization in Banten. Secondly is the social-culture issue has changes the component of Banten Great Mosque complex, both in function and meaning.

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### INTRODUCTION

Animism is one of the earliest beliefs in Indonesia, which respects nature and believes everything in nature to have spirit and power. However, since the coming of various foreign Nations to this country and spread their faith through their cultures, the Indonesian people started to believe in God. The religions of Hindu-Buddha, Islam and Christianity (Protestant and Catholic) influenced the local culture of Indonesia, especially Hindu-Buddha and Islam. The influence of religions in Indonesia fused into various aspects of life such as art, food, social relations, and architecture [1]. Islam is the religion of the majority in Indonesia and mosque is a common building in any area, with various architectural styles. The design of these mosques depends on many factors such as technology, political, social, and cultural influences.

Islam came to Indonesia from various countries including Saudi Arabia and China. In general there are three theories of Islam's dissemination in Indonesia, the Gujarati theory, the Arab theory, and the Chinese theory. All Europeans – Portuguese, British and Dutch first came to Indonesia through Banten, and the Dutch was the one that mostly controlled Indonesia for over 300 years, they gave a huge influence to many aspects of life in Indonesia. The Dutch built a trading enterprise in East Asia called VOC (*Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*) in 1602 in Banten and was spreading around Indonesia until 1799 with the trade monopoly on spice [2].

The fall of Majapahit Kingdom in East Java, the victory of Demak Sultanate in Central Java, and the fall of Padjajaran Kingdom are parts of Banten Sultanate history. The Demak Sultanate sought help from Sunan Gunung Jati – one of *wali* or pious people in Java, to conquer Banten Girang as the centre of Banten which was, at that time, under the Padjadjaran Kingdom [3]. Banten Girang or Wahanten Girang was situated 13 km from

**Corresponding Author:** Tessa E.K.A. Darmayanti, School of Housing, Building and Planning, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia.

E-mail: [tessaeka82@yahoo.com](mailto:tessaeka82@yahoo.com)



Banten Lama and it was taken over by Islam in 1525. When Demak's power diminished, Banten developed gradually. Sunan Gunung Jati entrusted power to his son, Maulana Hasanuddin. At that time, Banten was officially separated from Demak to be an independence Islamic city and Maulana Hasanuddin as the first Sultan of the Banten Sultanate [4].

In general, an Islamic City always had the '*alun-alun*' known as the town square and other supporting components such as palace called *keraton*, market called *pasar*, great mosque, and religious school called *madrasah*. The supporting components always have specific locations, the palace is in the south of the town square, the market is in the north, the great mosque is in the west and the religious school that is not far from the mosque complex [5]. The focus of this paper is the Banten Great Mosque Complex as an Islamic heritage building from the Wali Period, called Indonesian traditional mosque. The changes era in Banten surely give influence on its cultural activity and also the appearance of the buildings in the Banten Great Mosque complex, especially on the main building of the Great Mosque as a religious space. The *Tiyamah* buildings where gatherings are held serve as social space whereas the cemetery area with royal grave serves as an embodiment of the cultural tradition.

#### Methodology:

The analysis is aimed at understanding the changing that was occurring in Banten Great Mosque complex during the Islamic period to the post-colonial period from the embodiment of its architecture and interior design that were influenced by local and foreign cultures. This study was conducted at the Banten historical site, the location of the Banten Great Mosque Complex in Banten Lama, part of Banten Province. The process of identifying the research framework was based on a survey to the actual site to investigate the facts in the research field. Data has been collected from Banten Lama museum, library in Serang Heritage Relics Protection Centre - BPCBS (designation for historic preservation matters), Bantenologi as the organization that focuses on Banten, and interviews the experts regarding the Banten Great Mosque and its socio-cultural condition in that area. In addition, the collection of visual data in detail during field research was also performed, such as photos and videos.

#### The Changing of Banten Great Mosque Complex: During The Islamic Period to the Post Colonial Period:

Banten Great Mosque was initially built as a place to meet the needs of Muslims for religious activities which were increasing at the time, when many people converted to Islam. Beside that, the mosque was used for social purposes i.e. as meeting point, making deliberation among imam, or as resting facility for foreign muslim traders.

In design, Banten Great Mosque has special shape, that includes the Indonesian traditional mosque. In general, the shape of Indonesia traditional mosque has cultural influences from Hindu-Buddha culture and religion. It is purposed for the psychological approach on people who are newly learning Islam that had previously embraced the Hindu-Buddhist as the remnants from Hindus's kingdom of Padjajaran. The square shape and simple design of the mosque layout has similarities to their previous religious place, and the tiered roof has similarities to the hindu's temple called Pura, that still exist in Bali and has philosophy value as representation of Meru, the holy mountain in Hindu's belief. In Islam approach, [6] There is fact that the triangle shapes of the Banten Great Mosque roof represents the Islamic belief, saying that on the top of the triangle is the place of Allah The All Mighty [9]. It means that 'the higher it is built, the closer we are to the creator.' As time goes by, the changing circumstances of Banten social and cultural, as well as religion, is also influenced by the political circumstances at that time. Those changes take effect on the buildings in the *Masjid Agung Banten* complex.

In the begining, Banten Sultanate has a mutual relation with Dutch, until Dutchman named Hendrick Lucazon Cardeel became the architect of the *Indische* style building in the south side of great mosque – tiyamah. Buildings with Dutch style are known as *Indische style* or 'gaya indis' *Indische* being the term for the Europeans who lived in Indonesia and had blended with the local socio-culture [7]. *Indische* was related to the issue of hybrid or mixed culture showing the historical process in Indonesia especially in Java. The changes also occurred when Banten Lama was deserted, the conditions was removed from the attention of the public. It was abandoned in 1832 because the government system was changed by the Dutch, from the Sultanate into the Residency – '*keresidenan*' and the centre of the Government activity was moved to Serang.

In 1945, when Indonesia got the independence from the Dutch and the Indonesian government decided to reactivate the Banten Lama, they found that the layout of the great mosque looked rectangularly-shaped, with the size of 25x19 metres. It is different from the other ancient mosque forms that are usually square. This happened because the mosque interior is divided by *pewastren* – praying area for women and the south tomb; with eleven tombs inside. However there is no record in history when the tomb was built. It was suggested that the tomb might have been built after the destruction of the Banten Sultanate by the Dutch. However, there is the information about *pewastren*, which was built between the years of 1580 to 1586; at the time of Sultan Maulana



Muhammad [8]. There is a royal tomb area in the north side of Banten Great Mosque, it has mausoleum called ‘cungkub Hasanuddin.’ The cungkub have been there since Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin passed away in 1570. A philology expert from Bantenologi said that initially the area around the *cungkub* did not have a roof, and the floor was not covered by tiles, but the pilgrimage activity in the north tomb has been increasing everyday [8]. This probably was the reason for the renovation in the porch and in the surrounding area of the *cungkub* – covered by white and brown tiles; merely purposed to make the visitors comfortable. This situation can be recorded as an evidence that the first Sultan of Banten Sultanate was a very respected and charismatic person who pierced the boundaries of history, to the present.



**Fig. 1:** The Journey of Banten Great Mosque since 1874, 1933, 2013 and 2011 (clockwise). Woodbury&Page Studio England, 1874; Private Collection, 2011, 2013; Bantenologi, 2014.

Fig.1 shows the changing of Banten Great mosque complex. In the year of 1874 when the dutch had already had good position in Indonesia, they gave the culture influence into tiyamah building in the left side of Banten Great mosque. The building with Dutch influence was called *indische* style. The mosque looks more exclusive and ‘private’ with high brick fence surrounding the pond in front of the main porch or *serambi*. The large difference existed inside the complex after 1933 in term of its building condition, design and people activities. Absolutely, it is because of the social and culture issues.

**Summary:**  
This study gives an overview of the condition of Banten Great mosque complex which can be a cultural identity of Indonesia. The Banten Great mosque has experienced changes in its building forms as tangible culture and the tradition activity as intangible culture. Unfortunately, at present the exclusive and sacred value have been demolished. This is the impact resulted from the lack of government policy and action regarding heritage buildings. Though historical artefacts are protected by the Indonesian government under the Law of the Republic of Indonesia, number five year of 1992 on heritage and cultural preservation, the action and policy are said to be less substantial considering the demolition to the exclusive and sacred values. It is possible for historical buildings to undergo changes and to develop through social, technological, economical, and political influences. However, these influences might change the original culture purpose, such as the religious activity changes into tradition activity and possible to erase the originality of the buildings with historical value if it is handled callously. This complex, as a heritage buildings and culture, are two elements that cannot be separated because both act as the foundation to support the cultural identity of a nation and as the mirror of its civilization. Hence it results in a dynamic culture that needs to accept reformation wisely to enable it to be identified locally and internationally. This paper, hopefully, will arise the situation where historical artefacts will get the proper appreciation from policy makers as well as everybody else for the betterment in the future.

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