



ACCULTURATION ELEMENTS ON SANG CIPTA RASA AND PANJUNAN RED MOSQUE

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ABSTRACT

Acculturation is a phenomenon of mixing up the local culture with one or more external cultures, which produces a unique new culture without leaving its original cultural identity. In architecture, acculturation can form new styles that can then develop into a more contemporary architectural form. Cirebon, as one of the geographically strategic areas, is a place where acculturation often occurs. As a city that holds a lot of history, including architecture, the mosques in Cirebon can be the forerunner of the Old Javanese Mosques throughout the Archipelago. The style of the old Cirebon mosques is the result of the acculturation of various cultures. This research explores acculturation in ancient mosques in Cirebon through the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque and the Panjunan Red Mosque. This research aims to identify acculturation in the object of study through physical element analysis. It can be seen what makes these two study objects become the "face" of the old mosque in Cirebon. Through literature review and observation, it is found that the physical elements of the two study objects were the result of a synthesis of Javanese, Islamic, Hindu-Buddhism, and Chinese architecture.

KEYWORDS: Acculturation; culture; Cirebon; mosque; physical element

INTRODUCTION

Cirebon became an important base in inter-island trade routes in the 15th and 16th centuries. Thanks to its strategic location on the north coast of Java Island, Cirebon then became one of the central residences for Javanese people in the land of Pasundan [1]. These said geographic locations then lead to Cirebon being the center of merchants from various parts of the world, with their respective cultures and civilizations. Cirebon became a gathering place and synthesis of multiple cultures, including Hindu culture, which had existed since ancient times, Chinese culture brought by merchants, Islamic culture brought by religious leaders, and so forth.

The development of Cirebon indeed cannot be separated from Islam's influence during the Sundanese Kingdom period. The spread of Islam in Cirebon was preceded by the arrival of Syarif Hidayatullah or better known as Sunan Gunung Jati. Arriving at Cirebon in 1475 AD, Sunan Gunung Jati came from Arab to spread Islam on the island of Java, which was still dominant with Hindu followers [2].

As the most important building in Islam, the mosque always accompanies the Muslim community's condition and history where it was built. Like an architectural form in general, the character of a mosque can also change in specific periods. There are many

mosque styles in the Islamic world, namely the Syrian-Egyptian style, the Arabic-Spanish style, the Persian style, the Turkish Ottoman style, the Indian style, the Chinese style, and the Archipelago style [3]. The existing style is more or less influenced by the surrounding community's environment and culture or other cultures' acculturation [4].

Acculturation is the phenomenon of mixing two or more cultures that meet and influence one another [4]. Acculturation occurs when certain cultures are confronted with foreign cultural elements so that the process of acceptance and processing of that culture occurs without losing the original culture's identity. Even though it has formed an intact culture, the results of acculturation can still be traced to its constituent elements [5]. It includes its physical features.

The mosque's physical elements include a *mih-rab*, pulpit, dome, minaret, and *dikka* [6]. Javanese type mosque has specific characteristics; it has a high square-shaped building foundation stands on flat ground, two to a five-storey roof, a mihrab in the west or northwest side, a porch in front or on both sides, a gate bounds the surrounding yard, a rectangular plan, uses perishable materials, surrounded by a moat, and was once built without a porch [7].

As one of the centers of Islam's spread on Java, there are many old mosques in Cirebon [1]. However, of the many ancient mosques, only a few are famous,

mainly because of their physical characteristics. Physical characteristics possessed by old mosques in Cirebon have something in common: the acculturation of the present culture during the construction of these mosques.

One of Cirebon's renowned old mosques is the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque located on the west side of the Keraton Kasepuhan square and contains symbolic and historical values of Islamization in Cirebon in its physical elements [8]. In addition to the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque, there are also other important mosques mentioned from the early days of the spread of Islam in Cirebon, one of which was the Red Mosque in Panjunan. Panjunan Red Mosque is an old Cirebon mosque whose building is even older than the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque [4]. Sang Cipta Rasa mosque and Panjunan red mosque have something in common where both buildings are physically dominated by displaying red color produced by bricks, which are the mosques' primary material.

The acculturation physical elements found in Sang Cipta Rasa and Pajunan Red mosque are why these two mosques are better known and are often used as research objects. However, as two architectural buildings that are physically similar, it is necessary to identify the physical elements that form them more deeply.

This study aims to identify the acculturation in the old Cirebon mosque through the Sang Cipta Rasa mosque and the Panjunan Red Mosque as the object of study. An understanding of these aspects of acculturation is needed to be more able to appreciate architectural works that are at the root of current and future architectural styles. Furthermore, research to better recognize architectural elements in the old Javanese mosque building in Cirebon as an acculturation product is expected to understand the archipelago's architectural roots better.

METHODS

This study identifies acculturation in old mosques in Cirebon through literature study and observation of two study objects. The two objects of research in this study are the Sang Cipta Rasa mosque and the Panjunan Red mosque, the two oldest mosques in Cirebon. Acculturation in the object of study is then studied through physical elements that can be seen in architectural or interior aspects of the object of study.

The data used for analysis comes from previous literature concerning the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque and the Panjunan Red Mosque. An analysis was made based on the physical elements that formed the mosque; the floor plan, roof, mihrab, structural frame, interior walls, exterior walls, gates, towers, and other ornamentations to identify the architectural elements of the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque and the Panjunan Red Mosque that were affected by acculturation

SANG CIPTA RASA MOSQUE

Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque, also known as the Great Mosque of Kasepuhan, was built in 1480 AD and is located within the Kasepuhan Keraton complex, Cirebon (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque [9]

The name of the mosque itself is called Sang Cipta Rasa because it has a meaning, namely the word "Sang" which means majesty, "Cipta" which means it is built, and "Rasa" which means it is used, the overall meaning of this mosque is "built based on feeling and faith" [10].

According to historical sources, this mosque was built by a force of around five hundred people brought in from Majapahit, Demak, and Cirebon. As ruler at the time, Sunan Gunung Jati appointed Sunan Kalijaga to be the architect of this mosque, while Raden Sepat was sent to help him.

PANJUNAN RED MOSQUE

Located in the village of Panjunan, Lemahwutut, Cirebon, the Panjunan Mosque is also known as the Red Mosque (Figure 2) because it is surrounded by a fence made of red brick [11].



Figure 2. Panjunan Red Mosque [12]

The mosque that was once named Al-Athya Mushala was founded in 1480 AD by Prince Panjunan or Syarif Abdurrahman, one of the top spreaders of Islamic teachings Sunan Gunung Jati [13].

The mosque, a blend of Hindu-Buddhist culture [11], is a development of a simple musala driven by environmental factors and its function as a meeting place for traders from various ethnic groups.

**DISCUSSION
FLOOR PLAN**

Both Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque and the Panjunan Red Mosque, like other mosque buildings in Java, have rectangular plans (Figures 3 and 4).



Figure 3. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque Floor Plan [9]

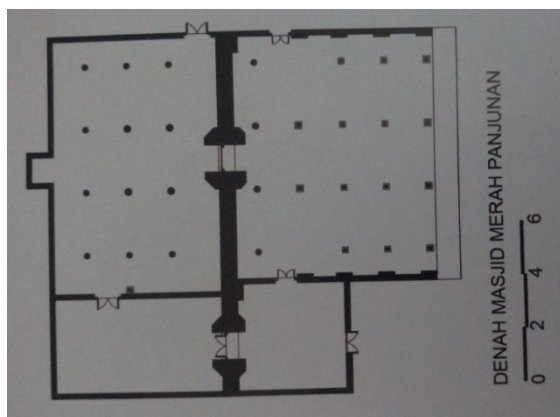


Figure 4. Panjunan Red Mosque Floor Plan [1]

This rectangular floor plan model refers to the traditional Javanese building model, *pendapa* (Figure 5). This model was originated from Pre-Islamic Hinduism, which was later accepted by the locals, together with the Indian buildings and their building knowledge [14].



Figure 5. Pendapa Building [15]

ROOF

Both mosques have overlapping roofs (Figures 6 and 7). However, the number of overlapping roofs differ. While Sang Cipta Rasa has three overlapping roofs, Panjunan Red Mosque only has two overlapping roofs.



Figure 6. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque Roof [9]



Figure 7. Panjunan Red Mosque Roof [16]

Overlapping roofs, as found in the two study objects, date from the 16th to 18th centuries and take the form of pre-Islamic buildings called *Meru* [17]. This particularity is only owned by old mosques in Indonesia, influenced by temple building elements (Figure 8). The number of roofs overlapping the old mosque itself

has been reinterpreted according to the Islamic faith. Three overlapping roofs are interpreted as faith, Islam, and *ihsan*, while five overlapping roofs are interpreted as the number of Islam pillars.



Figure 8. Meru Roof [15]

There are several considerations for using overlapping roofs. The first consideration is ecology, where an overlapping roof can make it easier for water to fall when it rains. The roof connection can serve as ventilation to supply air into the mosque's room on hot days, suitable to the tropical climate. During the Hindu-Buddhist era, the other consideration is that the *meru*-shaped building was considered a sacred building to the gods. The form is then adopted in the mosque building and is an essential factor in creating an attraction for those who transition from Hinduism to Islam, as there is a reduced risk of cultural shock [17].

MIHRAB

At the mihrab of the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque, it is heavily dominated by elements of Hindu-Buddhist culture, including lotus flowers, Majapahit solar, and tendrils (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque Mihrab [9]

At the Panjunan Red Mosque, the mihrab is adorned with an arch with a floral pattern, which comes in the form of *paduraksa* and is illustrated with Chinese ceramic plates (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Panjunan Red Mosque Mihrab [11]

The variety of decorations on both mihrabs uses floral ornaments. It is because Islam forbids the depiction of animals in places of worship [4]. Floral decoration usually uses a repeated and multiplied pattern continuously. Furthermore, the lotus ornament variety developed in tune with the influence of Hinduism. Most of the ornaments that depict plants and relate to Hindu-Buddhist statues are lotus ornaments. Lotus plants in Hindu-Buddhism are seen as sacred plants because they represent the upper and lower worlds [18].

FRAMEWORKS

For the structural framework, both Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque and Panjunan Red Mosque use wooden frames with local construction culture. The main pillars or *sakaguru* that support the roof frame stand on the base's foundation (Figures 11 and 12).



Figure 11. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque Sakaguru [9]



Figure 12. Panjunan Red Mosque Sakaguru [11]

INTERIOR WALL

The two mosques' interior walls both use red brick walls in which construction is separated from the roof structure (Figures 13 and 14). This configuration is known as the main characteristic of traditional Javanese buildings.

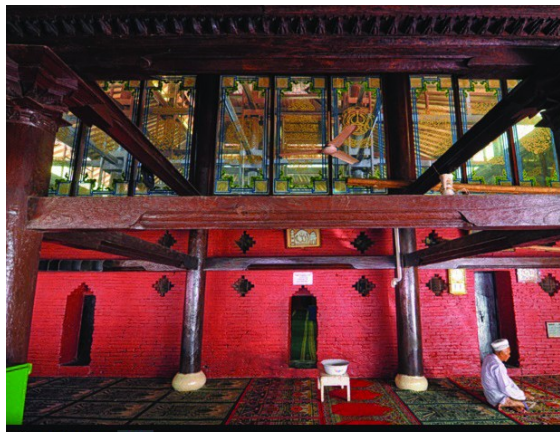


Figure 13. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque Interior Wall [19]



Figure 14. Panjunan Red Mosque Interior Wall [12]

EXTERIOR WALL

The habit of building a wall around a mosque is not a characteristic of Islamic architecture. Still, rather acculturation of the Javanese-Hindu building tradition, namely village temples in Bali, or also called *pura desa* [10]. Furthermore, *Bajangratu* temple ornaments (Figure 15) are also found on the mosque walls (Figures 16 and 17).



Figure 15. Bajangratu Candi [20]



Figure 16. The Enclosure of Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque [12]



Figure 17. The Enclosure of Panjunan Red Mosque [16]

GATE

The gate of both mosques is full of Majapahit architecture influence [21]. It can be seen from the use of *paduraksa* or great *kori* (Figure 18) at the gate of the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque (Figure 19) and the use of the *bentar* temple (Figure 20) at the Panjunan Red Mosque gate (Figure 21).



Figure 18. Great Kori [15]



Figure 19. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque Gate [19]



Figure 20. Bentar Candi [15]



Figure 21. Panjunan Red Mosque Gate [11]

TOWER

Like most old mosques in Java, both Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque and Panjunan Red Mosque do not have towers. This configuration is caused by not erecting a higher building than the Keraton is a form of respect to the Sultan and the Keraton itself [1].

Even so, previously, Panjunan Red Mosque had a tower around the year 1978. Still, then the tower was demolished again to maintain the authenticity of the Panjunan Red Mosque [1].

ORNAMENTATION

In terms of ornamentation, both mosques have Arabic inscriptions on the building. One of the inscriptions in the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque can be seen at the main gate (Figure 22), while at Panjunan Red Mosque, it can be seen on the wooden frame in front of the mihrab (Figure 23).



Figure 22. Inscription on Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque Gate [19]



Figure 23. Inscription on Panjunan Red Mosque [11]

Furthermore, in the Sang Cipta Rasa mosque, there are more ornaments with floral patterns organized in the interior walls of the mosque (Figure 24).

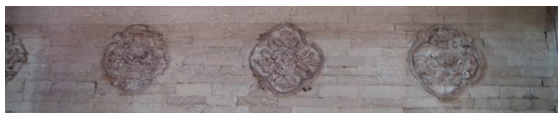


Figure 24. Floral Ornaments on Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque [11]

In contrast to Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque, in Panjunan Red Mosque, the ornaments were dominated by the use of Chinese ceramic plates originating from Europe and China, affixed to the walls of the mosque (Figure 24).



Figure 25. Plate Ornaments on Panjunan Red Mosque [11]



Figure 26. Example of Chinese Plate Ornaments [11]

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings obtained, even though it is loaded with architectural elements heavily influenced by cultures outside the Archipelago, both Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque and Panjunan Red Mosque also have characteristics by old Javanese mosques. Acculturation that occurred in both mosques even became the model of mosque architecture in its time.

Based on the analysis and comparison conducted, it is known that the two objects of study are mostly the result of acculturation from at least 4 (four) architectural styles, namely Javanese, Islamic, Hindu, and Chinese architecture. However, when viewed in more detail, the application of acculturation to the two mosques' physical elements looks different when compared to each other. At the mosque entrance gate, for example, although they both adapt elements of Pre-Islamic Hinduism architecture, the Sang Cipta Rasa mosque implements the grand kori. In contrast, the Panjunan Red Mosque implements the Bentar temple. It might also be influenced by the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque location, which was close to the Cirebon city government center at that time, namely Kasepuhan Palace. A striking difference is in the elements of the mihrab and wall ornaments in the two mosques. Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque tends to adapt Hindu pre-Islamic elements such as floral patterns, especially the lotus, to the mosque's mihrab and interior walls. On the other hand, Panjunan Red Mosque's ornaments are more dominated by Chinese ceramic plates, including on the interior walls to the mihrab.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque was more influenced by pre-Islamic Hindu culture, while the Panjunan Red Mosque was more influenced by Chinese culture.

Furthermore, this research is only carried out based on literature studies. Further research should analyze this phenomenon of acculturation more deeply, especially by conducting interviews with parties who understand the history of the two mosques.

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