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# The restoration of old mosques heritage in Pekojan, Jakarta

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**Abstract.** Recent efforts of restoration on the Muslim religious sites in Jakarta take place in several old mosques that were built around the old settlements (*kampung*) of creole communities in Pekojan. This historic *kampung* is situated on the western fringe of Jakarta Old Town since eighteenth century and adjacent to the other diverse ethnic groups' neighbourhood. The challenges emerge when the old mosque continues to expand its space volumes and adapt to accommodate the users' needs and so the expansion impacts the ethics of restoration. This research specifically took a case study in Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru as one of the heritage mosques built in Pekojan. The early process of the documentation and historical research found various levels of deteriorations and extensions in the building. By applying participatory action research, it showed the early efforts of restoration led by locals. This research also concerned with the responsibility of the owners, functionaries, community officials, and users towards the cultural heritage to be contested. It also extended the conceptual meaning of "ownership" of cultural heritage by definition in terms of religious building in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru, Moor, mosque heritage, Pekojan, restoration

## 1. Introduction

Old mosques as living monuments contain universal heritage values of material culture while also serving as contemporary spaces of worship. Having closely linked to Muslim's everyday, mosque tend to have the same function and be developed overtime both in increasing volume and supporting facilities. This is a main challenge for conservation architects holding a restoration project on old mosque architecture as the physical damage and additions to the building's original parts become routine and inevitable. The restoration by definition here is aimed to address the damaged quality in regards with the authenticity of its materials, form, layout, style, and working techniques [1].

However, the concern towards preserving authentic elements only is incomplete without considering the community as an integral part of cultural heritage, in which the conservation is often be done 'on', not 'with', 'for', 'by' locals whose voices are least to be heard. On the other hand, restoration action led by community alone runs the risk of violating the law and physical qualities of the building, due to lack of skilled craftsmen who value heritage and knowledge of reparation techniques, minimum supervision and no consulting service from the experts. Or if any, they do not fully involve the experts much for work effectively so that the restoration remains rather exclusive otherwise [2].

This dilemma fits what actually happened in old mosque heritage of Pekojan. Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru held the renovation just months earlier to fix the striking damage at roof and plafond due to the heavy rain season in Jakarta. The mosque is located on Bandengan Selatan Street, No. 34A,



RT 12 RW 5, Pekojan, Tambora, West Jakarta 11240. Registered Cultural Heritage Building (*Bangunan Cagar Budaya*) in Jakarta municipality, the site is also situated within rushing highway traffic, by dense settlements and shop houses [3].

Therefore, this research narrated the participatory actions of local community on the emerging programme of restoration to several old mosques in Pekojan, specifically with Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru. It also paid attention to others, including Langgar Tinggi, which was initiated by Dasaad CSR and a successfully restored Mosque of Al-Anwar Angke both in this year (2019). According to the officials of *Masjid Jami*, the mosque accommodates education, health, sport, and economy yet "...fully funded by local community's self-help." [4] A research in 2009 prior pointed out the causes of the deterioration that include the shifting land uses, minimum support of community and local government of regulations on conservation techniques. [5] But it remains unclear to what extent the role of community supports outside material. This research would like to investigate that issue by fully involved with the locals to receive better results.

## 2. Methods

The approach was conducted through participatory action research to obtain information, data and information to support the preservation of cultural heritage. According to the initial findings on site, we formulated three main requirements to address the restoration program of mosque heritage in Pekojan beside the authenticity consideration. They were: (1) historical research and documentation (year built and restored), (2) the involvement of experts to educate craftsmen on working techniques, and (3) the funding and financial support for material expenditure.

## 3. Results and Discussions

In understanding the circumstances of mosque heritage in Pekojan, it is important to have a look at a short historical background of the establishment of Moors and mosques in Jakarta. Afterwards, the discussion extends to the recent restoration efforts done by locals with a reflection about sense of responsibility towards the ownership of religious old building as historical site and cultural heritage.

### 3.1. Historical Context of Pekojan, Moors, and Old Mosque Heritage

Since the early seventeenth century in Batavia, the Moors community had formed settlements of Pekojan as a neighbourhood of *koja*, a Persian word for 'trader' [6], while 'Moor' was etymologically rooted from a Portuguese word *mouro*, to name Muslims living in the Iberian Peninsula, Spain, Morocco and Northwest Africa. The Dutch used later to generalize dark-skinned Muslims. [7] Both 'Koja' and 'Moor' terms were related to call for Indian Muslim descents who migrated to East Indies from Gujarat, Bengali, Coromandel and Malabar [8]. The majority of Moors predominantly worked as merchants. They passed by canals as transportation modes and were regarded as foreign East groups (*Vreemde Oosterlingen*) with Arabs and Chinese who lived in Batavia, Semarang and Surabaya [6].

The role of former Moors could be traced back in contributing to the Islamization process of Batavians. Prior to mosques in Pekojan, they had their own living complex in the western part of the city since 1633 along the *Moorsgracht* canal between Jonker trenches. Many upper class Moors owned the extensive land and built prayer spaces. An Indian merchant named Codja Isop, whose name refers after 'Pekojan', was reported in David Reguleth's notary archive in 1663 that he built a small mosque on his own land outside southern gate of Utrecht and at the mouth of Coja Street. In 1670, Cobier's mosque was also built near the Dienst gate and used for Friday prayers [7].

Moor families married by Islamic traditions [9], opened schools and *musala*, despite challenges coming from Christian clerics and colonial authority primarily during VOC Governor-General Joan Maetsuycker and Carel Reiniersz period (1650-1653). A ban to perform prayers in mosques emerged in 1651, although it did not stand for long. The colonials handed over Islamic affairs to the ethnic captains (*kapiten*) and scholars (*ulama*) without knowing its technicalities. Nevertheless, the regulation made was significant and adhered, especially by Moors and Javanese population [7].



**Figure 1.** Pekojan area dated in 1874. Kampung Pejagalan dan Kampung Baru were situated on northern and left side of the map (source: Leiden University)



**Figure 2.** The Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru and Chinese temple location alongside Amanusgracht canal in 1921 Pekojan map (source: Leiden University)

The mosque was a community centre of Moors for performing their *rites de passage*, such as marriage, death and inheritance, festivals, or reconciliation of family matters and social conflicts, while the general affairs would involve city hall authority, notary office, or legal jurist of Batavia. [7] At the northern side of Pekojan, Johannes Amanus a jurist who resided nearby the area was enshrined as a canal of *Amanusgracht* (now Kali Bandengan). [10] Moors population rapidly increased outside the city walls due to migration after the Banten defeat in 1684 and Chinese rebellion in 1740. They built mosques in surrounding neighbourhood to accommodate the congregation of prayers [11].



**Figure 3.** Jami Mosque and masonry walls in 1930 (source: Heri Tirtayasa)



**Figure 4.** The Jami mosque in 1947 (source: Nederlandsche Fotomuseum)

The Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru was the second mosque in Pekojan built from 1744-1748 after Al-Anshor Mosque in 1648, and both were called 'Moorish temples'. It is because the colonial government often coined mosque as Moorish or *Mohammedanische* temple or church, in which 'Muhammedan' later used to call Muslims in general. The mosque plan had a square base with roof construction over a feature of *limasan* (pyramid) that resembled Javanese *pendopo* (tiered roof) style (figure 3 & 4). It somewhat shared similar look with Al-Anwar Mosque in Angke, which becomes a prominent case of a cultural blend between Javanese, Chinese, Balinese, Arabs and colonial [11]. This happened due to the acculturation of cultural elements between colonial settlements of Chinese, Ambon, Bugis, Bali and Banda around outskirts of Batavia (*Ommelanden*). These populations had inter-ethnic marriages and participation in other religious cultural festivals [8].

Some recent elements found on site reflected that many Chinese contractors might help the building process as what happened in Al-Anwar mosque. It was until Pekojan was dominated by Hadramaut Arabs in the early nineteenth century who came later to Batavia. [12] They largely replaced the role of the Moors a century later whose numbers diminished further as a result of British colonialism in India and hampered the Moorish trade and shipping efforts to Batavia. [8] These Arabs then built other now old mosques in Pekojan, such as the An-Nawier Mosque (1760), Langgar Tinggi (1833), and *Zawiyah* as places of recitation of Quranic teachings. In fact, the roles of the Arabs are now obscurely shifted by the presence of Chinese ethnic newcomers from Kalimantan and Sumatra living in Pekojan [13]. People gather more on the crowded southern side of Pekojan, surrounded by other mosques instead of Jami Mosque. Along with that, the Moorish community almost disappeared from Pekojan.

### 3.2. Community's Action in Mosque Restoration, Sense of Responsibility And Ownership

The Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru is currently consisted of 1,050 m<sup>2</sup> land size, with an original size of around 400 m<sup>2</sup>. This mosque still has its original form when compared to the Al-Anshor Mosque. The original building remained the soko guru foundation, with 4 columns in the center of the main hall of the mosque. This mosque previously had a grape-carved pulpit, which is currently stored in the Jakarta History Museum. The mosque is 'officially' maintained under the Yayasan Mesjid Kampung Baru Inpak (short for 'India-Pakistan'), although they did not really routinely attend this mosque. At the time the mosque was built, northern Pekojan was then expanded. The porches (*serambi*) were considered 'new parts', although they were already built before 1982. Some of the surrounding houses were dismantled in the late 1980s to build flyovers [11].

The flooding seepages during the heavy rain season in 2018 leaked the damaged roofs and porous ceiling construction of the porch (*serambi*) around the main prayer hall of the mosque. The locals as users who consisted of mostly under the *Rukun Warga 05* neighborhood held a meeting in October 2018 to resolve the deterioration. Back then, the majority's ideas were concerned with total replacement of the mosque with a new building. Here, Subandrio as an architect and part of the residents, with RT/RW functionaries presented the idea of 'building restoration' instead, by bringing a concept of dismantling new parts, keeping the originals, and adding a new extension building separated from the originals.



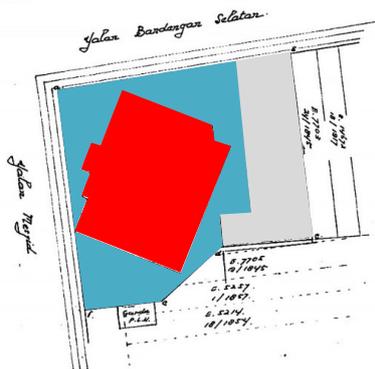
**Figure 5.** Ceiling renovation prior to the demolition (source: Heri Tirtayasa)



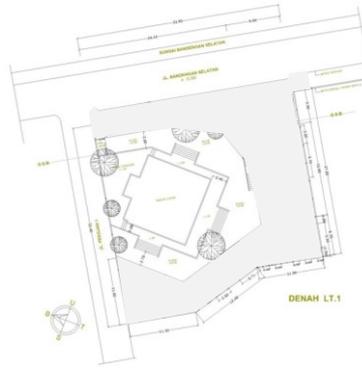
**Figure 6.** After demolition of the intrusive porches (source: Heri Tirtayasa)

At first, the idea received plain rejection due to the gap of knowledge, in which the community countered Subandrio by saying that its practicality was 'too complicated'. After tough debates within several meetings, as well as inviting Candrian Attahiyat (senior archaeologist and heritage expert of Jakarta) and Ariko Andikabina (Secretary of Association of Indonesian architects in Jakarta) to the end forum, community finally agreed to restore the original parts and build a new separated extension. The quintessential purposes of building the extension facility were to fulfill the aim of conservation, give main prayer hall as original building distances within the community activities and minimize physical damages prior the complete restoration. This new building in fact accommodates the worshipers who held recent activities and events during Ramadan month, such as a place of gathering *tarawih* prayer's congregations, communal breaking fast, and festive compensation for orphans.

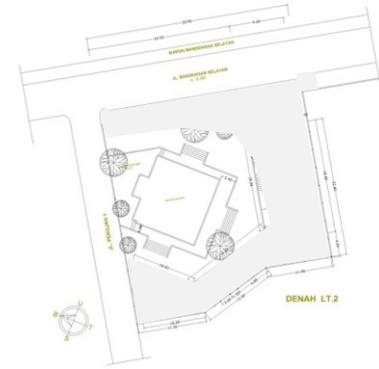
The architects and experts acted only to facilitate community who fully had proposed a kind of participatory design. The design included the history of the mosque gallery, and the concept of "green design". This process was carried out from November 2018. The committee team initiated the steps. The first action was to document and digitalize in remodelling software, to do parallel with dismantling all porches construction around the original hall. It is now replaced with a temporary lightweight steel roof during the building extension process on the east or behind the mosque. The second was to free the land, not concrete. This active process might occur differently in other mosques that had undergone total changes, such as the Al-Anshor Mosque.



**Figure 7.** The existing plan of Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru in Pekojan. (source: *Sertipikat Tanah* year 1984, colored)



**Figure 8.** The first floor plan of proposed design (source: Subandrio, 2019)



**Figure 9.** The second floor plan of extension building part (source: Subandrio, 2019)

The action of this initiative was also collided by legal aspect. The Regional Administrators only later prepared the land and building certificate documents and reaped problems with the administration. In mid-February 2019, a committee meeting with the Archaeological Assembly Team at the Cultural Heritage Conservation Centre without being prepared in front of the Restoration Meeting Team (TSP) was asked to complete the information on Building Floor Coefficient (KDB) GSB (Building Boundary), IKR, and land identification. The role of the Mosque Foundation also became a mystery. They almost never even attended to the progress of the renovation. According to Pak Heri and Pak Yulizar, these Moorish descendants only wanted to meet elsewhere and not at the mosque. That was because the restoration committee still needed permission or information about this. They provided too minimal attendance and material assistance if judged from their position. This Moorish descent only comes to the mosque during the Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha holidays.

The committees employed 4-5 people to build extension facilities. They were paid weekly and the payment was prioritized. Purchasing material in instalments as public donations arrived. There were residents who donated money to materials, such as granite. Here, the process was reflected on funding cash flow. The financial problem was solved throughout voluntary moves of functionaries, especially from the local leaders of *Rukun Warga* (RW 05) and *Rukun Tetangga* (RT) where the mosque environment is surrounded. Funding for the construction of new facilities relied solely on donor donations and did not yet involve government official agencies or private Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The striking fact was that more material donations came from native Chinese citizens living in Pekojan from generation to generation, while the migrants or newcomers were relatively indifferent.

By this kind of restoration efforts, it also indirectly supports the program of the Regional Government of DKI Jakarta in the success of the potential of regional tourism in the cultural sector. The DKI Jakarta Tourism and Culture Office held the "Pekojan Arab Kampoeng Festival (FKAP)" for first time in Tambora, West Jakarta on last May 6, 2018. The visitors and tourists were treated to the shows of *ondel-ondel*, Sufi dance, *gambang kromong* and Arabian specialties and signature culinary festivals.

**Table 1.** Comparison of old mosques heritage architectural restoration in Pekojan

	<b>Al-Anshor Mosque</b>	<b>Kampung Baru Jami Mosque</b>	<b>An-Nawier Mosque</b>	<b>Al-Anwar Angke Mosque<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Langgar Tinggi Mosque</b>
Year built	1648	1744-1748	1760	1770	1829-1833
Year restored	-	2018 - on-going	-	2017-2019	2019
Building parts' Authenticity	Mostly new	Partially new	Partially new	Mostly original	Partially new
Experts or architects involved	n/a	Subandrio, Candrian A., Ariko A.	n/a	Lingwa Kotu, Yori Antar, Candrian A.	Danang Triatmoko
Community participation	Full	Full	Full	Minimum	Minimum
Public support, fund/donation	Crowdfunding	Crowdfunding	Crowdfunding	DKI Jakarta, Crowdfunding	CSR Dasaad, Crowdfunding

<sup>a</sup>The mosque is only nearby Pekojan but shares a relevant process of restoration program to be compared.

Unlike other old mosques in Pekojan, Jami Mosque of Kampung Baru so far has managed to implement a visionary architectural restoration by involving full community participation. As comparison, Al-Anshor and An-Nawier have drastically changed their physical appearances with least authenticity, while the restoration program in Langgar Tinggi and Al-Anwar Angke were successful by professional architects but detached from its living environment. Henceforth, the architects, academics, and experts convinced the community as key figures for the success of the restoration. However, in this case, the community's perception and support actively determined mostly all significant decisions on how local religious heritage should be well preserved.

#### 4. Conclusion

The early process of carrying out the participatory mosque restoration in Pekojan has shown indeed a broadening sense of belonging and definition of ownership towards cultural heritage. In the example of JMKB, ownership elevates from religious site level onto a cultural heritage of community outside the Muslims, in which the locals have overstep the role of Yayasan Mesjid Kampung Baru Inpak as the Moorish descendants who built and owned the mosque since the first place. However, we do not emphasize who should contribute more than others, but this only to suggest that users' initiative and the owners' indifference have created a gap of the concern between formal owners, functionaries and users of cultural heritage.

This research concluded that in the case of religious heritage building, users could somewhat have greater responsibility than the owners. The efforts done to prevent genuine physical changes in mosque do not always intend to be either a romanticization of the past or any religious motive, but only as a step to preserve the least authentic styles and elements that reflect history of the absent community. Henceforth, the physical aspect of mosque has become an arena of contestation for the identity of Moors that is constructed by communities from various backgrounds. The reason on culture also becomes an important aspect that strengthens the relationship between mosque and community alongside their devoted contribution for religious motivation, albeit the education on architectural conservation knowledge still needs to be addressed related to apparent local and temporary maintenance.

Mosque heritage here plays a role as not only religious center and social place but also cultural function. The further challenge perhaps is on how to address the current trend of increasing tourism area integration with Jakarta Old Town, which would demand facilities in old mosques of Pekojan to accommodate any cultural activities beside worship and prayers as main uses afterwards.

## 5. Acknowledgments

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