

The Historical Background of Physical Changing Towards Ancient Mosques in Aceh, Indonesia

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Abstract : Aceh province, into which Islam convinced to have entered Indonesia in the 12th Century before spreading throughout the archipelago and the rest of Southeast Asia, has several early Islamic mosques that still exist until today. However, due to some circumstances, the restoration and rehabilitation towards those mosques have been made in some periods, while the background was diverse. Concerning this, the research will examine the physical changing aspects of 3 prominent historical mosques in Aceh Besar and Banda Aceh; those are, Indrapuri Mosque, Baiturrahman Grand Mosque, and Baiturrahim Mosque built coincided with the beginning of Islam's development in Aceh and regarded as eventful mosques. The existence of Indrapuri Mosque built on the remains of the Lamuri Kingdom's temple is a historical trace that there was Hindu-Buddhist civilization in Aceh before Islam entered and became the majority religion about 98% from Aceh total population. Also, there was the Dutch who colonized Aceh behind the existence of two famous mosques in Aceh, namely Baiturrahman Grand Mosque and Baiturrahim Mosque, as the colonizer also assisted to rebuild those 2 sacred Mosques to quell the anger of the Acehnese people because their mosque was burnt by the Dutch. Interestingly, despite underwent a long history successively since the rise of Islam after the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom had collapsed, colonialization, conflict, in Aceh, and even experienced the earthquake and tsunami disaster in 2004, those mosques still exist. Therefore, those mosques have been considered as historical silent witnesses. However, it was not merely those reasons that led the mosques underwent several physical changes, otherwise economic, political, social, cultural and religious factors were also highly influential. Instead of directly illustrating the physical changing of those three mosques, this research intends to identify under what condition the physical appearance continuously changing during the sultanate era, the colonial period until post-independent in terms of the architectural style, detail elements, design philosophy, and how the remnants buildings act as medium to bridge the history. A framework will use qualitative research methods by collecting actual data of the mosque's physical change figures through field studies, investigations, library studies and interviews. This research aims to define every trace of historical issues embedded in the physical changing of those mosques as they are intertwined in collecting historical proof. Thus, the result will reveal the characteristic interrelation between history, the mosque architectural style in a certain period, the physical changes background and its impact. Eventually, this research will also explicate a clear inference of each mosque's role in representing history in Aceh Besar and Banda Aceh specifically, as well as Aceh generally through architectural design concepts.

Keywords : Aceh ancient mosques, Aceh history, Islamic architecture, physical changing

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