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VISITORS' PERCEPTION: THE LANDMARKS OF BANTEN LAMA

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Abstract

Banten Lama District, the centre of Banten Sultanate, has several preserved historical buildings and sites. One of the historical buildings is Masjid Agung that is considered as Banten Lama Landmark referring to its nickname 'santri city'. This visual research aimed to identify Banten of 40 visitors of Banten Cultural Festival that randomly chosen. Quantitative analysis using the Osgood scale was used to obtain the landmark priority. The result shows that according to visitor's perception, Masjid Agung, Avalokitesvara Temple, and Surosowan Palace are the most suitable to be Banten Lama landmarks. The main reason for choosing these buildings and site as Banten Lama Landmarks is its intangible factor of pilgrimage place. Landmark through the visitors' perception by using 14 historical buildings and site as the objects studied. Multilevel selection was applied to select buildings and sites that could be perceived as Banten Landmark. Respondents consist

Keywords: Visitors' Perception, Landmarks, Banten Lama

BACKGROUND

According to Lynch theory (1960), Landmark is one of the important principals in indentifying the region or city that influences its development. Landmark represents the image and attraction of the city or region. Banten Province has several landmarks that reflect the image of the region.

Banten Lama Heritages present a visual image of Banten architectural splendour in the past (Guillot, 2008). Referring to Inovasee (2016), Banten is entitled as one of the *santri* cities in Indonesia because many people have come to enhance their Islamic knowledge and understanding in this city. Religious atmosphere coincides with Islamic pilgrimage around the Masjid Agung reinforces the designation. The heritages of Banten Lama become important because they can be used as a landmark, as a pointer or as a marker of the location that can be recognized easily by the community, both citizens and visitors.

Banten Lama Area is located in Banten Province, precisely in Banten Lama Village, Kasemen District in the northern city of Serang. Banten Lama Area is a Cultural Heritage Area with a population of 92,988 inhabitants (BPS, 2016 Serang city) with approximately eight hundred hectares, with various historical relics. Communities in this region mostly make a living in agriculture, fisheries and trade. In the XVII century (European penetration) many immigrant Chinese traders stopped and settled in Banten and established a temple place (Michrob, 1993).

Banten Lama was designated as a cultural and social strategic area confirmed by Banten Provincial Regulation No. 2 of 2011 article 64. Based on that regulation, Banten Lama Heritage greatly influences the image of Banten Province. Wikantiyoso (2006) stated that, the image of the city is important in urban planning and designing. BP3 (2005: 93-164) mentioned that several landmarks found in Banten Lama area including Surosowan Palace, Sultan Hasanuddin's Tomb, *Masjid Agung*, *Masjid Pecinan Tinggi*, Kaibon Palace, Fort Speelwijk, Dutch Tomb (kerkhoff), Avalokitesvara Temple, Gedong Ijo, Watu Singayaksa, Pangeran Sabrang Lor's Tomb, Archaeological Museum, and Karangantu Bridge. Imaging of a city cannot be built but be formed by itself through the introduction of physical objects (buildings and other physical elements) as well as non-physical objects (social activities) over time. The historical aspect and the introduction of the "image" captured by the urban community become important in interpreting the meaning of the regional image (Wikantiyoso, 2006).

There is very limited research conducting in relation to Banten Lama Landmark. This study aimed at identifying Banten Lama Landmark through the visitors' perception. However, the similar topic has been conducted by previous studies in the cities such as Maumere, Cimahi, and Malioboro. The image of the city of Maumere in NTT according to

Kabupung (2012) was formed through the main route of the city, the dead river which divides the city centre of the Gelora Samador stadium, and trading area. On the other hand, Citra Cimahi City (Wiryawan, 2003) is perceived as a Military Area because of the city's historical buildings heritage. Furthermore, the image of Malioboro Corridor Street of Yogyakarta (Winandari, 2002) is identical with extending pedestrian way of the row columns, the two-storey buildings, the gavel walls facades. The corridor enriched by rectangles with colonial triangular towers style and billboards that appropriately placed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Lynch (1960), landmarks are an important element of the city form; an external element and a visual form that stands out from the city. It helps people to orient themselves in the city and recognize environmental urban elements. Landmark is considered to have better features if the city shape is perceived clearly and uniquely by its surrounding inhabitants. The sequences of several landmarks influence the feeling of the people' comfortably which leads to their orientation with appropriate scales. Suwarno (1986) stated that the city image can be physical (visible) and non-physical (invisible). Physical form through visual perception can be grouped into figure and ground, similarity, proximity, closure,

symmetry, continuity, and simplicity (Thorne and Henley, 2005). The non-physical aspect is related to spirit of the place (memorable values, historical values, and other cultural values).

Figure and ground principle is used to identify objects as a form of building and its surrounding environment as a background. Meanwhile, the same principle states that the closed objects which have similar shape are considered in the same group, yet the most prominent one is perceived as a unique object. The principle of *proximity* states that the various objects considered as a group because of the similarity in shape, colour and quality. *Closure* states that people accept the objects as letters and images as a whole and intact eventhough the object is presented in a non-intact form. *Symmetry* states that the human mind tries to see the centre of the objects and considers all to be symmetrical. *Continuity* states that if an object is located straight, the object is considered a group. *Simplicity* states that a person tends to see things from the simple to the complex.

VISUAL PERCEPTION METHODS

Visual research with quantitative data processing and qualitative analysis is used as the research method. The steps taken are; object selection, participant selection, questionnaire making, data collection, data processing, and analysis (Sanoff,

1991; Winandari, 2002). The object of research is a landmark in Banten Lama Region with a research locus along the way of the Masjid Agung Street and Bio Banten Street. The focus of the research is the identification of landmarks in the Banten Lama Area in terms of visitor perception. The research case was based on a multilevel selection on the selection of landmark objects and participants based on location and BP3's data as the result of Banten Lama History research. The research objects spread along *Masjid Agung Banten Street* and *Bio Banten Street*, ranging from the Surosowan Palace to Avalokitesvara Temple. There are 14 landmarks in that location which were chosen as cases.

Respondent consist of 40 visitors that have already visited Banten Lama and chosen randomly. The questionnaire consists of 2 parts, namely the respondent's data and landmark selection. The respondent's data contains of address, age, education, occupation, gender, interview date, hometown, and ethnic. In second part, respondent choose 3 buildings or sites that were considered as the most appropriate Landmarks and 3 buildings that were considered as the most inappropriate Landmark.

Quantitative methods are used to determine the magnitude of the numbers related to public perception of landmarks in the Banten Lama region via the questionnaire. Qualitative methods are used to describe the reasons for choosing a

Landmark that are considered appropriate or not in accordance with the image of the Banten Lama Region. The analysis process is carried out by Osgood Scale (Winandari et.al. 2002). The respondent selected the landmark priority based on the rank value. The analysis process is carried out by organizing and functioning statistics, seeing the trends that occur, and interpreting the results and trends.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on BP3 Serang (2005), heritage buildings in this area include the *Masjid Agung*, Surosowan Palace, Kaibon Palace, Masjid Pecinan Tinggi, Avalokitesvara Temple and the spellwijk fortress. In addition to the six buildings, there are 8 other landmarks that are unique. The eight landmarks are Gedong Ijo, Karang Antu Bridge, Watu Singayaksa, Archaeological

Museum, Tomb of Sultan Hassanuddin, Sultanate of Banten, Kerkoff, and Tomb of Pangeran Sabrang Lor. (See Figure 1).

The results revealed that the *Masjid Agung* was considered the most suitable for Banten image. This building was chosen by 30.42% of participants. The next sequence is Avalokitesvara Temple at 21.25% and Surosowan Palace 14.58%. Buildings that are not chosen by visitors and considered not representing the image of Banten Lama are Watu Singayaksa, Kerkoff, and Tomb of Pangeran Sabrang Lor (see Table 1 and Figure 2).

Masjid Agung is considered most suitable as Banten landmark (chosen by 30.42% respondents). Most visitors choose this historic building because of the intangible factor as a pilgrimage place as well as its unique form. This reinforces the previous assumption that Banten is famous as

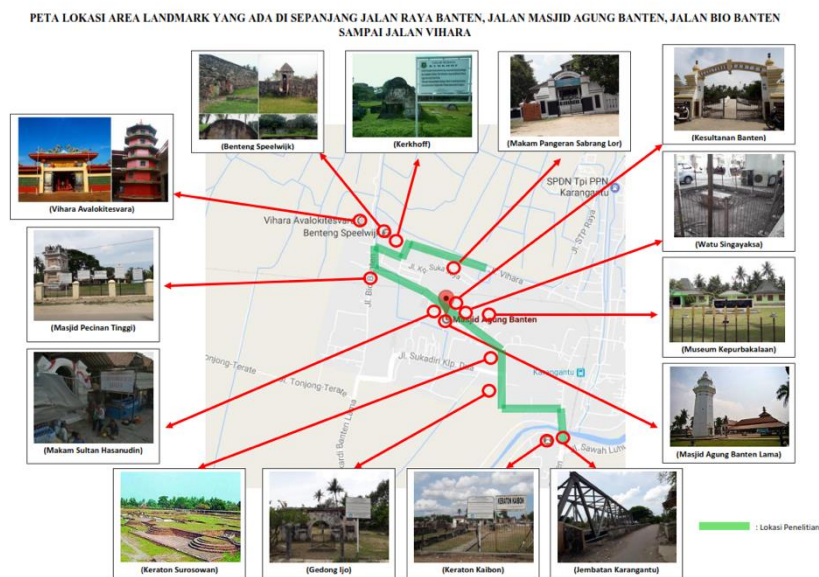


Figure 1. *Landmark* in Banten Lama Area based on BP3
Source: modified from Google Earth, 2017

Tabel.1 *Landmark* Banten lama
 Note: (1) the most priority- n; (2) second most priority; (3) third most priority

No	Landmarks	Visitors			Value	Rank
		First (1)	Second (2)	Third (3)		
1	Kaibon Palace	12	6	2	20	4
2	Surosowan Palace	6	16	13	35	3
3	Gedong Ijo	-		1	1	11
4	Karang Antu Bridge	3	4	2	9	9
5	Masjid Agung Banten	57	14	2	73	1
6	Watu Singayaksa				0	-
7	Museum Kepurbakalaan	3	6	2	11	6
8	Sultan Hassanuddin Tomb	6	6	2	14	5
9	Kesultanan Banten	3	6	1	10	7
10	Masjid Pecinan Tinggi	-	4	2	6	10
11	Spellwijk Fortress	-	6	4	10	7
12	Avalokitesvara Temple	30	12	9	51	2
13	Kerkoff	-	-	-	-	-
14	Pangeran Sabrang Lor Tomb	-	-	-	-	-

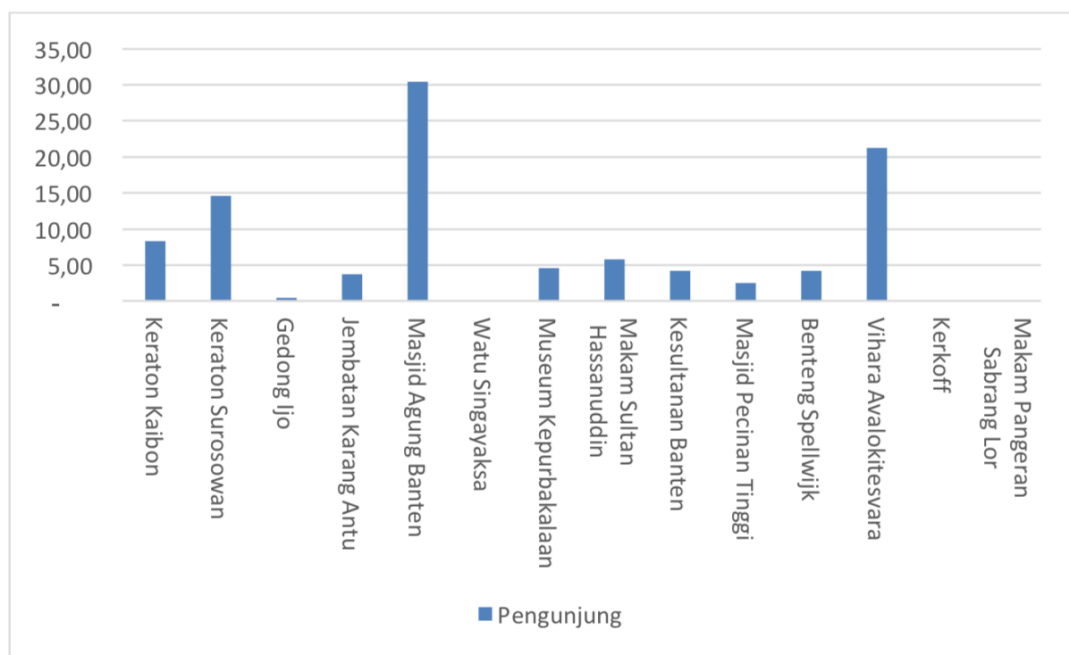


Figure 2. Building and site which were the most appropriate as Banten Lama Landmark

the City of *Santri*. Compared to other buildings around, this mosque has the unique shape because of its 5th-storey roof. Almost all respondents considered the Sultan Hasanuddin Tomb as part of the mosque because

of the location. Both buildings are located side by side and separated by a fence. This reinforces the similarity theory by Thorne and Henley (2005) that adjacent objects are the same. Therefore, some

visitors find it difficult to distinguish that Sultan Hasanuddin Tomb and Masjid Agung are two different objects.

Avalokitesvara Temple was chosen as the next sequence. Many visitors from outside Banten use this place as a place of worship. This place was preserved and supported by its surrounding communities. Similar to *Masjid Agung*, this building has a different form from its surrounding. Chinese style with striking colours dominated by red and yellow and its 7th-layer tower make this building different from others and easily recognizable.

Surosowan Palace was chosen in the third place. The palace location which was passed when going to the mosque or temple caused respondents knows the existence of the palace and some of them were interested in visiting the place. This place is unique by large area and buildings in ruins that reminiscent of glory in the past.

All three buildings that are considered as most appropriate landmarks in Banten Lama reinforce

Lynch's (1960) theory. Based on the theory, the landmark is strongly influenced by the physical shape of a building such as high tower of *Masjid Agung* and Avalokitesvara Temple, magnificent unique of its colours and stacking roof, and easily recognized by the visitors. The three buildings remind visitors of the glory of the past during the Sultanate of Banten and the existence of immigrant Chinese traders.

CONCLUSION

The landmark of the Banten Lama based on visitor's perceptions is displayed through the *Masjid Agung*, Avalokitesvara Temple, and Surosowan Palace. The three buildings were chosen by visitors because of their socio-cultural activities and visual forms of buildings. The main purpose of visitors is to have a pilgrimage and memorable trip. It is supported by the unique building form compared to the surrounding environment. *Masjid Agung* and Avalokitesvara Temple become the first and second choices of buildings that are considered



Figure 3. Masjid Agung and Avalokitesvara Temple

appropriate as the landmark of the Banten Lama. The landmark of Banten Lama exists through its physical shape in all three towers, colours and stacking roof as well as magnificently unique form and memorable place referring to the glory of Banten Sultanate and the existence of immigrant Chinese traders in the past. The landmark of Banten Lama is the objects or sites which are considered as a pilgrimage place.

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