

Research Article

Social Cohesion Construction in the Space of the Astana Gunungjati

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ORCIDI H Agustina: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8699-440X>**Abstract.**

Astana Gunungjati is a complex of cemeteries for Cirebon Sultanate kings and their descendants. The Kasepuhan Palace, Kanoman Palace, and Kacirebonan Palace are the three palaces or known as *keraton* that still serves as the current physical representation of the Cirebon Sultanate. Sunan Gunungjati, one of the kings, is also a Muslim evangelist or the *Wali Songo*, who is interred at Astana Gunungjati. One of the pilgrimage tourism attractions in Cirebon Regency is the tomb complex. Although the heritage values of the buildings and traditions are still well preserved, the social cohesion that is formed from the existence of the cemetery which has been established since the 14th century is not well documented. A component of the area's intangible assets that must be documented for area conservation is social cohesion. The purpose of the research is to describe how the Astana Gunungjati space was built and how it contributed to social cohesiveness. The Assabiyah Concept from Ibn Khaldun is the approach method that is applied, along with the hermeneutic approach. The findings show the quality of the community such as (1) obedience to unwritten rules; (2) pride and sincerity to be a *kuncen*; (3) recognition of the existence of Sunan Gunungjati as King and Guardian who brings the truth of Islam. The study findings in the form of the construction of social cohesion became the material for the documentation of intangible heritage in this area.

Keywords: cohesion-social-Assabiyah, hermeneutics, intangible-heritage.

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1. Introduction

The Astana Gunungjati area is a grave complex for the descendants of the Cirebon Sultanate. One of the kings was Sunan Gunungjati. Sunan Gunungjati, apart from being a king, acts as a member of the Walisongo who is in charge of spreading Islam in the West Java Island [1]. The statue of Sunan Gunungjati continues to attract pilgrims to this region. This area is one of the cultural heritage areas in Cirebon Regency. Everything

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associated with this place, including the kuncen community or grave guards in charge of maintaining it, is a part of the cultural heritage.

The Keraton Kasepuhan and the Keraton Kanoman are in charge of maintaining the Astana Gunungjati region. The heads of the cemetery officials, locally known as *kuncen*, are referred to as *Jeneng*, while the members are all referred to as *Bekel* and *kraman*. There are 121 total persons. According to the names of the two palaces, Keraton Kasepuhan and Keraton Kanoman, there is *Bekel Sepuh* and *Bekel Anom*. The Astana's graveyard guard community develops close bonds with one another there, for instance being supportive, sympathetic, respectful, and proud of their career. Although their salaries are unclear, and they are unsure if they will be paid each month. Their wages are below the Regional Minimum Wage (UMR) in Cirebon. Wages are considered by them as God's decision that must be accepted sincerely.

The Astana Gunungjati space has shown the social ties of the grave officers. Social cohesion in the symbol "Guardian of Waliyullah Sunan Gunungjati". The disclosure of the symbol becomes new knowledge that is formed in space. Social cohesion is a valuable human resource [2]. Social cohesion is a form of cultural identity in the Astana Gunungjati space. The Astana Gunungjati community's values are derived from their notion of space as it relates to the Astana Gunungjati space [3]. According to Bourdieu's Habitus Theory, "habitus" is a collection of traits that are embodied in routine social behavior, the categorization of space and time into objects connected to the subconscious, and the way in which people think about or interpret their activities [4]. Social cohesion in the Assabiyah concept initiated by Ibn Khaldun is a feeling of similarity in an interest called group solidarity [5]. Studies on space in forming social cohesion like this have never been studied, especially in a heritage space. Based on this phenomenon, the aim of this research is to construct the Astana Gunungjati space in forming social cohesion.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Context

The study's context is constructing the Astana Gunungjati space to develop social cohesion. The area under dispute is the Astana Gunungjati burial complex, which is located in the West Java Province's Cirebon Regency's Astana Village and Gunungjati District. The area is located in the Cirebon city 7 kilometres to the north of the palaces. Figure 1 below shows the location of the research site.

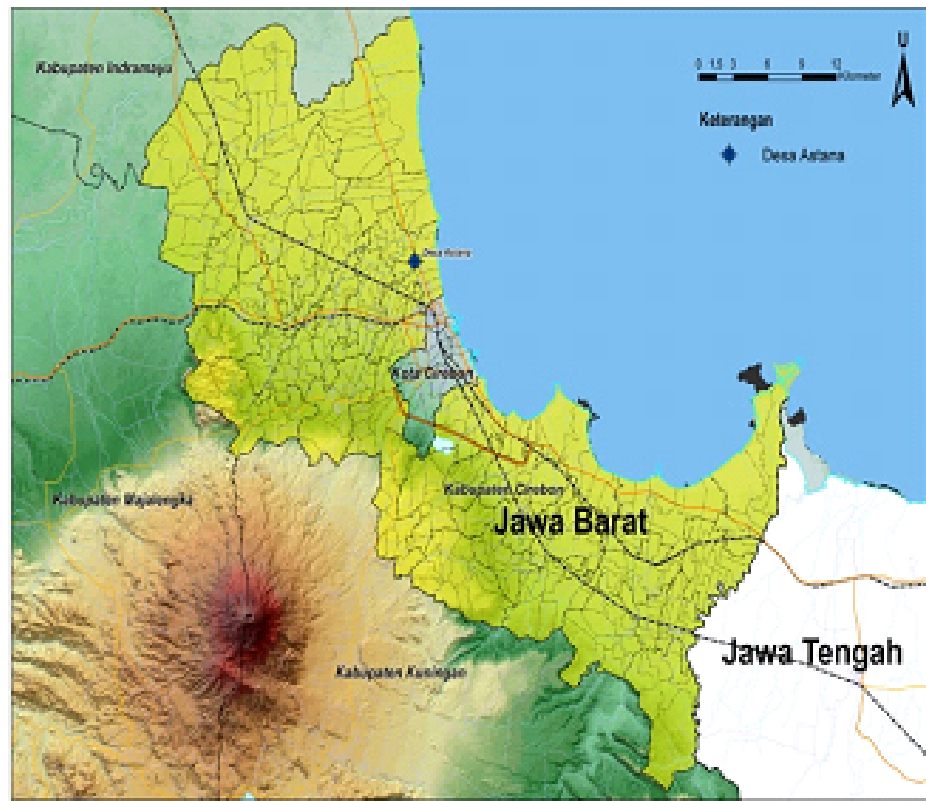


Figure 1: Research Position and Location.

2.2. Data Collection

Survey preparation was carried out for one day, then carried out for 3 days to get an initial impression and the situation in the field. Then 7 days for a more detailed and in-depth survey. Respondents from the kuncen community—the protectors of the Astana Gunungjati grave—as well as Astana Village officials were used in the data collecting. After giving a thorough introduction, a total of 3 respondents were selected. The interviews were conducted in-depth from materials related to the Astana space, activities to their understanding of the Astana space and its management. All attitudes, actions, and movements of the respondents were closely observed during interviews, which were also recorded. The results of interviews and observations were written in the form of transcription and documented through a camera.

2.3. Analysis Methods

The approach method uses the concept of Assabiyah, namely social cohesion that comes from the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun, whilst the hermeneutic method is used in the

analytical phase. The hermeneutic method is a method of interpreting. Steps of The hermeneutic method is carried out:

1. Use the responses to the stories and sentiments of respondents related to social cohesion to understand each text
2. to interpret into a comprehensive whole, a process known as the hermeneutic circle.
3. analyzing the elements of the story's general context and the respondent's body language in relation to social phenomena and social cohesion
4. Recognize the participation and transparency of the existing stories, not the respondents' manipulation and control.
5. Extensively examine the literal meaning of the transcription of all respondents' interview results.
6. In addition to examining the meaning in light of the situation and circumstances at hand, understanding through interpretation turns into an activity of reconstructing and recreating the text's meaning in relation to the social cohesion that is created.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Result

The kuncens are in charge because they are descendants of their fathers who used to serve in Astana Gunungjati. The task schedule is determined by a chairman called *Jeneng*. The shift of the task group is carried out with the handover procedure through a "tampan" ceremony (meaning: handing over of tasks). Even today, this method is still viable. Every two weeks, this "tampan" procedure is carried out. In the literal sense that tradition, the procedures for managing the Astana Gunungjati space are still carried out according to past procedures. The procedure is not documented and not published, but this procedure is a historical tradition. The three primary things that need to be recorded down in history are: (1) past events (historical material); (2) a description of the past; and (3) historical figures or historians [6]. The history of the "tampan" tradition in the Astana Gunungjati space is a past event that is preserved through the character of a guardian, namely Sunan Gunungjati. The history of the "tampan" tradition is an intangible heritage value.

The Astana Gunungjati Space is where the connections between the kuncen are developed. They discover connections as a result of spending a lot of time together in the same location [7].

Humans can identify connections in this world of diversity, but they also share these similarities with one another and work together to coordinate their actions. The similarity felt by the kuncen forms a kinship pattern.

Social kinship patterns are created through actions. The initiative to visit ill Kuncen and perform their chores in their place is a sign of kinship. In this group, kinship influences empathy and feelings. The act of "imaginatively experiencing another person's feelings, ideas, and events" is what is meant by the concepts of emotion and empathy [8]. In the Kuncen community, kinship has shaped feelings of empathy as well as the social structure of the group [9]. Social patterns are formed from the way of communicating among the kuncen. Speech codes are referred to as social patterns and are defined as "a socially built system of symbols and meanings, premises, and norms, relating to communicative conduct." Interactions with other individuals have an impact on speech styles and patterns. Kuncen spoke softly while maintaining a relaxed and welcoming demeanor. Use a slow, steady voice when conversing with other kuncen. Additionally, when serving the needs of pilgrims, pilgrims will speak in a friendlier and even more respectful manner. The kuncen's social structure depicts a straightforward human symbol that is prepared to assist pilgrims. Their actions demonstrate what simplicity and service mean. The behavior of those who still consider the supernatural power of Sunan Gunungjati, as revealed from the source narrative: "... During Covid, no one here is sick because Waliullah is guarding him." Understanding behavior in a tradition will lead to individual socio-psychological characteristics [10]. Kuncen's socio-psychological traits are a result of their awareness of Sunan Gunungjati's supernatural abilities. This knowledge is part of a custom or unspoken contract. Another statement made by a resource person was, "You can't get drunk, play with women, or gamble here." The kuncen consciousness is connected to this awareness. The resource person's claim is a manifestation of the idea that everyone's life experiences have meaning for social theory [11]. The social phenomenon in Astana Gunungjati forming a kuncen community has the characteristics of a community that is trapped in the old rules but they enjoy it.

In addition to kuncen and pilgrims, the Astana Gunungjati space is also occupied by representatives from the palace, the village administration, and members of the neighborhood. Village government delegates are tasked with maintaining security for pilgrims, while other parties are trying to find producers in Astana Gunungjati. The Astana Gunungjati space is home to a variety of groups, including elders and groups with a focus on pilgrimage tourism as a source of income. The Astana Gunungjati space offers a setting to demonstrate how people behave. In considering how society functions, it emerges from "culture" that "in culture the ideas of the future, as well as

about the past, are embedded and nurtured”, emphasizing that cultural influences can shape social change [12], [13]. The Astana Gunungjati Space represents a cultural shift from a space used for burials to one that generates revenues for the neighborhood [14]

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As a burial complex, the Astana Gunungjati area has demonstrated a pattern of interaction with the elements of the environment that fosters social cohesion among grave officials (kuncen). It is believed that community cohesion is an important human resource. One of the most crucial factors considered while evaluating a community, including the kuncen community in Astana Gunungjati, is social cohesion. By connecting the social interaction pattern with the physical attributes of the place, one can determine the quality that is taken into account from the social pattern and the relationships between actors in the community space.

4. Discussion

The concept of Assabiyah initiated by Ibn Khaldun is basically the concept of a state. Scientifically the principles of the concept that was initiated were the role of a state (dawlah) and civilization (umran) from the ruling [15]. Ibn Khaldun’s model of development involves human development as a whole in addition to economic growth, which promotes human well-being or happiness. Similar to how moral, social, and political aspects of society cannot be isolated, economic development cannot be carried out just by economic forces. The Assabiyah concept arose in relation to this social concept in the form of social cohesion or attachment to a space, especially the state. This social cohesion is beneficial, particularly for preserving the existence of a particular area, namely the state.

According to the study’s findings, Astana Gunungjati’s social cohesion was built on the identity of the kuncen, which includes: (1) respect to unwritten laws, (2) pride and sincerity in being a kuncen, and (3) acknowledgement of Sunan Gunungjati as the King and Guardian who brings the truth of Islam. The Astana Gunungjati space nurtures social solidarity since it depicts the graves of the King and Waliyullah. Even if Waliyullah

is no longer with us, the notion of holiness and magic still permeates the kuncen's worldview since he was a pure and holy person.

5. Conclusion

The Astana Gunungjati Room is imbedded in the view of the kuncen as the area where the Waliyullah Sunan Gunungjati is located, according to the findings of the study with the goal of characterizing the creation of the Gunungjati Astana Room in forming social cohesiveness. Waliyullah for all of his prior achievements. Waliyullah as a saint and a holy person. The Astana Gunungjati space serves as both the kuncen's area of responsibility and the protector of the holy and sacred man.

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