

## THE CULTURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM OBJECTS IN PALEMBANG

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**Abstract :** This paper presents a study on potentialities of old buildings in seven historical areas of Palembang: Fort Kuto Besak, Ampem Bridge, Grand Mosque, Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin I Museum, Mayors Office Building, and Kampung Kapitan, that can be explored deeper to be cultural and heritage tourism. To conduct this study, research area was used and to collect data and information, publications, reports, and observation were the main tools to collect the data. The results indicate that the old buildings of cultural and heritage tourism in Palembang are reflections of the multi-ethnic societies of the era such as Dutch, Arab, Indian, and Palembang Darussalam Sultanate, and dominantly they lie at riverside of Musi river as being the earliest settlements. It also shows that people from other ethnicities can live in harmony and tolerance.

**Keywords:** *Cultural and heritage tourism, research area, Palembang*

### INTRODUCTION

Palembang is the capital city of the South Sumatra province in Indonesia. Located on the Musi River banks on the east coast of Southern Sumatra island, Palembang has an area of 400.61 square kilometres and a population of 1.7 million. Palembang is the second-largest city in Sumatra after Medan and the seventh-largest city in Indonesia. Palembang landmarks include the Ampem bridge and the Musi River, the latter of which divides the city into two, Seberang Ilir to the north and Seberang Ulu to the south. The Seberang Ilir is Palembang's economic and cultural centre and the Seberang Ulu is its political centre.

Palembang is one of the oldest cities in Indonesia, and has a history of being the capital city of the Kingdom of Sriwijaya, a powerful Malay kingdom, which influenced much of Southeast Asia, and was once the capital of the ancient Buddhist kingdom of Sriwijaya, which controlled a large part of what is now Indonesia, Malaysia and Southern Thailand. In 1025, it was conquered by the Chola Empire (In the period of Emperor Rajendra Chola I) of Southern India. Sriwijaya's capital eventually moved northward to Jambi. Palembang is also the origin of Parameswara, founder of the Malacca Sultanate. The architectural legacy of Dutch colonization is still visible in the city.

Visits to historical settings have been established as one of the most significant and fastest growing component in the tourism industry (Timothy and Olsen, 2006). Not surprisingly, cultural and heritage tourism is one of the most commonly studied forms of tourism. Thus, the major objective of this study is to identify the potentialities of cultural and heritage tourism in Palembang city.

There are differences between heritage tourism and cultural tourism. The primary difference between the two is that heritage tourism is usually based on a place. It is history in context. Cultural tourism focuses more on the social history, on human experience. Cultural tourism may be considered more mobile as we have experienced through travelling exhibits. Community festival and performances would also be considered cultural tourism since the focus is on the shared experience of the event.

The result from an informal nationwide survey reveal that heritage programs are generally found outside metropolitan areas while cultural programs are most found in urban settings. Groups whose focus is preservation, according to Bender (1999), are most likely to refer to their resources as heritage tourism while museums and arts groups are likely to refer to an event or activity as cultural tourism even though both may be quite similar. Again it can be seen the connection between heritage and cultural tourism.

According to Dahles (2001), heritage tourism program create a sense of place rooted in the local landscape, architecture, people, artifacts, traditions, and stories that make a particular place unique. Cultural tourism programs celebrate the same kinds of experiences yet with less emphasis on

place. Viewing a master sculptor or artist in their studio would be heritage experience while viewing those same works of art in a travelling exhibit or art gallery would be a cultural tourism experience. Further, Dahles (2001) and Tanbridge and Ashworth (2006) explain that the content of cultural and heritage tourism is the same but the context of cultural and heritage tourism is different.

In short, it can be taken a conclusion that cultural heritage tourism can be defined as travel concerned with experiencing the visual and performing arts, heritage buildings, areas, landscapes, and special lifestyles, values, traditions, and events.

### What is Included in Cultural and Heritage Tourism?

The concepts of cultural and heritage tourism according to Ashworth and Voogd (2009) include place promotion, cultural districts, legacy tourism, cultural and heritage routes. Place promotion refers to the use of heritage tourism as an approach to place promotion. This is typically focused upon an historic town and known for some particular set of historic events, common heritage, historic buildings and/or special events. In each case the objective is to attract groups of tourists both from the common heritage and others, to visit a community to observe and/or participate in activities, museums, festivals, etc., that celebrate the community's lineage and historic significance. Place promotion is an additional vehicle for motivating travelers. Closely related to place promotion is the concept of "hard branding" a cultural city based upon mega events such as a World Fair or a sporting event or a major annual festival. The concept of a cultural district within a community is designed to create a physical space in which individuals may easily recognize a concentration of both institutional and indigenous tourist opportunities focusing upon art markets, performing arts, museums and cultural heritage. The cultural district is intended to create economic growth through the development of small and medium sized firms which are integrated within the area and the local community (Santagata, 2002). Santagata indicates that there are four models: *industrial cultural districts*, *institutional cultural districts*, *museum cultural districts*, and *metropolitan cultural districts*.

- 1) *The industrial cultural district* has positive externalities and is based heavily upon a specific strong, pre-existing localized culture that has a tradition in arts and crafts which are not standardized, but rather are unique.
- 2) *The institutional cultural district* is an area with a distinctive label that gives it exclusive naming rights and instant or near-instant recognition (feta cheese, Italian wines, French Champagne within Europe). This area will include an abundance of fairs and festivals linked to cultural local products and traditions such as wine, local cuisine, food, history of castles, country manors and houses, landscape, cultural parks and tourist cultural itineraries and a tourist-hotel industry. These districts may be based upon music, arts and crafts, figurative and plastic arts and designed goods.
- 3) *The museum cultural district* is a localized area usually located in a historical downtown area with density and critical mass. Public policy is clearly needed to create these districts, as they are dependent upon city zoning and planning policies. The creation of a museum cultural district will result in a demand for hotel services, as well as crafts and other cultural services.
- 4) *A metropolitan cultural district* is a spatial agglomeration of buildings dedicated to performing arts, museums, and organizations which produce culture and related goods, services, and facilities.

While heritage tourism is important, its boundaries are not at all clear. Heritage may include connections to history, art, science, lifestyles, architecture and scenery. It may be a part of a collective history and thus have broad appeal, but there is a subset referred to as "legacy tourism" where travel is linked to genealogical interests and a search for information or a desire to feel connected to ancestors and ancestral roots.

*Cultural and heritage routes* have been themed to include pilgrim pathways, rural habitats, historical and legendary figures and many others. Specific examples include Mozart Route, the Silk Road, and Roads of the Al-Andalus Heritage. In short *cultural and heritage routes* are intended to provide opportunities for individuals and communities to analyze global transformations, enrich the debate on the future of intercultural dialogues, promote new types of cooperation, become more familiar with the heritages of different areas, and contribute to economic and human development.

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## METHODOLOGY

### Research Area

This study took place in Palembang city and was conducted on six study areas, For: Kuto Besak (BKB), Ampera Bridge, Grand Mosque, Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum, Mayors Office Building, and Kampung Kapitan.

The six study areas have socio economic and culture values related with the life and activities of local community who live in and surrounding the areas. Recorded data showed that about more than 18000 household stay in six study areas. They consist of "Melayu" (Malay), Arabic, Chinese, and Javanese communities who stay near the six study areas.

### Data Collection

The writer collected data and information from various publications, reports, and observation.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Fort Kuto Besak (BKB)

The building of the Kuto Besak Fortress was initiated by Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin I, who reigned from 1724 to 1758. The construction started in 1780 during the era of Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin. The fort was meant as a palace, which was built to replace the old *Keraton Kuto Lama* or *Benteng Kuto Lama* which did not look sufficiently grand. Today, the Benteng Kuto Lama is used as the Museum Sultan Mahmud Badarudin II It took 17 years before Kuto Besak Fortress was finally used officially as the Sultanate's governmental center from February 21st 1797.

Kuto Besak Fortress is a reflection of the multi-ethnic society of the era of the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate. Supervision of its construction was entrusted to a Chinese supervisor, while laborers were both native Palembang and Chinese who worked hand in hand in harmony. This is also one of the legacies that is passed down to this day as illustrated in many of the city's special events such as at the Cap Go Meh and Imlek (Chinese New Year) Celebrations. Each corner of the fort is strengthened with bastions. The Bastion in the west corner is larger and similar to other forts in Indonesia while the other three bastions are architecturally unique, and are unlikely found elsewhere. The main gate, called *lawang kuto*, is located in the south facing the Musi River, while the other gates, called *lawang borstan* are located in the west and the east, although the west gate is today the only one that is still standing. Today, the Kuto Besak Fortress is, unfortunately, closed to the public since it is used as a military base. However, the Fortress remains an attraction.

Figure 1

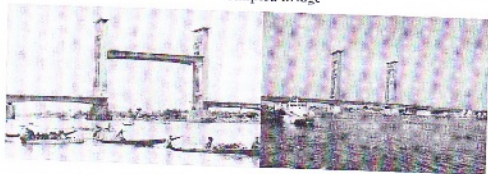
Fort Kuto Besak (BKB)



### **Ampera Bridge**

Ampera Bridge was constructed in April 1962, after getting approval of President Soekarno. At first, this 1,177 meters long and 22 meters wide bridge was called Bung Karno Bridge. It was officially opened on 30 September 1965 by Lt. Gen. Ahmad Yani. However, following a political turmoil in 1965 i.e., when anti Soekarno movement was stronger, the bridge was renamed to Ampera Bridge. Palembang citizens, however, prefer to call it "Musi Project". Parts of this 944 tons bridge can lift up and down about 10 meters per minute. It has two lifting towers of 63 meters tall. Distance between these two towers is 75 meters. They have two pendulums, weighing about 500 tons each. When the middle spans of the bridge is lifted, wide ship of 60 meters wide and a maximum of 44.50 meters tall can pass to ford of Musi River. And when the middle spans of this bridge is not lifted, maximum height of ships that can pass under the bridge is only nine meters above the water level. Since 1970, the bridge shall no longer fluctuate again. Time used to lift this bridge that is about 30 minute, assumed to bother traffic current between defecting Ulu and Ilir, two Town of Palembang area dissociated by Musi River.

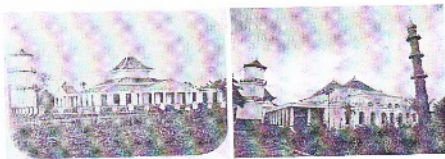
**Figure 2**  
**Ampera Bridge**



### **Grand Mosque**

Palembang Grand Mosque is one of the inheritances of the Palembang Sultanate. This mosque is known as the center of Palembang city. It was built from 1738 to 1748 by Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin I, also known as Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin Jaya Wilramo. Some say it was the largest mosque in Indonesia at that time. When it was first built, it covered a land area of 1,080 square meters (about 0.26 acres) with a capacity of 1,200 persons. It was then expanded by Sayid Umar bin Mahammad Assegaf Alroha and Sayid Aclmuad bin Syech Saibah under the leadership of Prince Natagama Karta Mangala Mustafa Ibnu Raden Kamaluddin. From 1819 to 1821, a renovation was made by the Dutch colonial government. After that, further expansions were made in 1893, 1916, 1950s, 1970s, and lastly in 1990s. During an expansion in 1966-1969 by the Grand Mosque Foundation, its second floor was built covering a land area of 5,520 square meters with a capacity of 7,750 persons. During renovation and development in 1970s by Pertamina, towers were constructed. The original Chinese style tower was maintained as it is now. This mosque is very typical of Palembang tradition. Most of its timbers have Palembang typical carvings called *Lekeur*. At present, the original building of this mosque is located in the middle of a new building.

Figure 2  
Grand Mosque



#### Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum

Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum was erected in 1977 only; however, its collection of around 2000 relics and antiquities originating from the province would make a real treat for the visitors who would come here. We can see ancient household articles, utensils, looms, hunting tools, a bridal room and some preserved animals of the region. Museum of Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II was used as the palace of Sultan. It has an imposing semi circular staircase and was built by the Dutch in 1823, which located near Musi River.

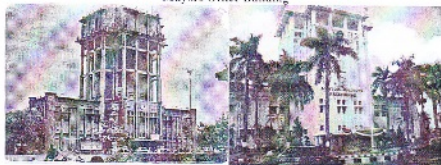
Figure 4  
Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum



#### Mayors Office Building

Mayors Office Building is located in the city center, this building originally functioned as a water tower because it serves to drain the water throughout the city so well known as the Office of Plumbing. Today this building serves as the Office of the Mayor of Palembang and there are spotlights on the top of the building that beautify the face of the city at night. The Palembang Mayor's Office was built in 1929 in a cube-based shape with flat roof, unique style. It was labeled the plumber office due to the former 35m reservoir tower built on the top of the building, holding 1200 cubic meters of clean water. The Palembang city government has begun to restore this historical building since the preparation of the 2004 PON activity of which lighting was one of the main renovation projects

Figure 5  
Mayors Office Building



### Kampung Kapitan

Kampung Kapitan is a heritage village or stills reflects the blend of Palembang, Chinese and Dutch cultures. In the main part of Kampung Kapitan, located in 7 Ulu subdistrict of Seberang Ulu district, three of these houses still stand. The captain and his large family used to live in the first house - the biggest one facing the Musi river - and the third house. The second house in the middle was where parties and meetings with many guests were usually held. Smaller houses were built nearby for the captain's employees and their families. They formed a complex measuring 30 meters by 50 meters. One of these three main houses, however, no longer belongs to the captain's family as it was long ago sold to an outsider.

The second house, which has four main rooms and two small ones, now serves as a place where family ashes are kept for people who share the captain's family name, Tjoe. The ash house is furnished with an ash table and a family altar adorned with statues of deities. There are also dozens of old pictures on the wall, including photos of captain Tjoe Ham Hin's wedding and a funeral procession alongside the Musi. The other house, which has eight main rooms and four small ones, is the home of 75-year old Tjoe Kok Lim, popularly known as Kehar, the 11th captain in the dynasty.

Unfortunately, these historical buildings are somewhat the worse for wear. They are dilapidated and their wooden structure is showing signs of decay. The kampung is also home to people from other ethnicities, including Arabs and Indians, who all live in harmony. Some Indian descendants who are also members of the captain's expansive family live in the house called Rumah Nyonya, or Lady's House.

Figure 6  
Kampung Kapitan



### CONCLUSION

Providing information about cultural and heritage resource potentials in Palembang city is very important to bring basic knowledge of understanding potentials for further development of cultural and heritage tourism in this area. The cultural and heritage tourism offer many opportunities to reflect on the importance of sustainability. Although there might be significant obstacles, it is possible to contribute to the income and local development of the people by developing cultural and

heritage tourism. Besides, with the sustainable use and preservation of the cultural-heritage assets, the damage of the cultural and heritage environment could be reduced.

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