

# Didin Nurul Rosidin

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## THE RISE OF AT-TAQWA AS THE GRAND MOSQUE AND AUTHORITY CONTESTED IN CIREBON-INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims at elaborating the rise of The At-Taqwa Grand Mosque as the Jami' mosque in addition to the long standing great mosque of Sang Cipta Rasa in Cirebon, West Java, in 1963. The emergence of the At-Taqwa not only drove the rise of new Jami' mosques in the of Cirebon in following years, but also brought about the contestation of religious authority since mosques functioning as source of religious authority in Islam. The study rests on the history of the Great Mosque of Sang Cipta Rasa as the first jami' mosque in Cirebon, the emergence of the At-Taqwa as the Grand Mosque, and the implications of the two jami' mosques in the context of contesting the authority of religiosity in the Muslim community in Cirebon. The method used in this study based on historical analyze approach. The result of study shows that for long period the Sang Cipta Rasa enjoyed as the source of religious authority in Cirebon and neighborhood areas. However, the rise of Grand Mosque of At-Taqwa not only but also diminished the stature of the Sang Cipta Rasa mosque as the sole source of religious authority, but on the other hand further strengthened the process of spreading religious authority in Cirebon based on mosques.

### KEYWORDS:

Great Mosque of Sang Cipta Rasa, Grand Mosque of At-Taqwa, Religious Authorities, Cirebon

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### INTRODUCTION

Until two decades after Indonesia's independence, Masjid Agung Sang Cipta Rasa, the Great Mosque of Sang Cipta Rasa (MASCR) was still the only Jami' "official" mosque for Muslims in the city of Cirebon. However, the situation changed when the At-Taqwa Grand Mosque (Mesjid Raya At-Taqwa), which was officially established in 1963, functioned as it had been "enjoyed" by MASCR. The emergence of At-Taqwa marked the contestation of two Jami' mosques with almost the same function and authority in Cirebon.

The emergence of At-Taqwa as Jami' mosque was in fact the starting point for the birth of several Jami' mosques in Cirebon in the following years, both

through the process of transformation and new development altogether. One example of new Jami' mosque is Tajug Agung Panjunan transformed into the Jami' Panjunan mosque. So is what happened to the Jami' Pangeran Kejaksan Mosque. The peak occurred when Tajug Agung Kanoman transformed into Kanoman Great Mosque (Mesjid Agung Kanoman). In short, the emergence of several new Jami' Mosques marks a change in religious patterns as well landscapes in Cirebon in relation to the position and function of Jami' Mosque as the center of Islamic life and religious activities.

The appearance of some Jami' mosques is certainly directly or not presents a contest of religious authority in the Muslim community, at least in Cirebon.

The Jami' mosque is not only a place of mass regular worship such as Friday Prayer and 'led prayers, but also a symbol of religious authority in a region and for certain Muslim communities. Religious leaders in certain areas gathered and or gathered in the Jami' mosque which serves as a reference place for religious authorities for Muslim residents of the region [1]. From the Jami' mosques, religious fatwas are sourced for Muslims in the surrounding area. For example, when the beginning of the development of Islam in Medina, the Nabawi Mosque was the first religious symbol built by the Prophet Muhammad [2] and served as the religious center and the center of the earliest Islamic government [3][4].

Studies on mosques in Cirebon have been done a lot. The study can generally be divided into two categories. First, a study that discusses the history of Islamic civilization and culture in Cirebon which one of the main icons is mosque both old and new such as Didin Nurul Rosidin [5]. Second, studies that specifically discuss about old mosques in Cirebon such as MASCR, Panjunan Red Mosque, Kanoman Great Mosque, Trusmi Mosque and others such as Handinoto and Samuel Hartono[6], Nastiari [7], and Muffid[8]. Those studies focus more on three main aspects, namely the history of the establishment, the architectural aspect, and its position as a cultural heritage. Few, not even yet, focus on the main role aspects of mosques in the context of religious authority sources as well as contestation.

From the above exposure, it is interesting to know more about the transformation process of MASCR and At-Taqwa, as well as to further analyze the implications of the transformation process of the two mosques in the context of contesting religious authorities in Cirebon[9]. Several academic issues are discussed in this paper, including the history of MASCR and At-Taqwa as the center of religious life in the city of Cirebon, the factors that led to At-Taqwa being elevated to the status of the Grand Mosque in Cirebon, and the impact of elevating At-Taqwa to the status of the Grand Mosque on the status of MASCR in the context of religious authority in Cirebon.

## METHODS

Methodologically, this paper uses a historical approach to analyse the raising contested authority of two important mosques existing in Cirebon, The Sang Cipta Rasa and The At-Taqwa. The data collection methods are conducted through library research, observation, and interview. Library research was conducted through exploring historical sources and other relevant studies. Observations were made at the sites of two mosques, Sang Cipta Rasa and At-Taqwa. The interview was especially conducted with the Dewan Kemakmuran Masjid (Mosque Prosperity Council or DKM) of both mosques, and other related parties[10].

## DISCUSSION

### Great Mosque of Sang Cipta Rasa

Discussion of Islamization processes in Java Island can't be released from the existence of mosques that become its center. The early development of Islam in

Central Java could not be separated from the work of the Great Mosque of Demak. In fact, the role of this mosque was also not only in the religious realm, but also in the political realm where the center of the Islamic Kingdom of Demak was in the mosque. The role model of The Great Mosque of Demak is similar to the role of the Prophet's Mosque in the early days of Islamic development in Medina. Although slightly different from the Great Mosque of Demak, other mosques built by the Java based early Muslim preachers known as Walisongo (literally means Nine Saints) have a very vital role in the Islamization movement of Java. Members of Walisongo commonly built a mosque at the center as well as the base of their movement [5]. Through mosques, they acquired their religious credentials and authority before the mass in the field of religion.

The role of the mosque as the center as well as the basis of the Islamization movement is also seen in Cirebon, one of the main references of the Islamization movement in Java island. Sheikh Nurjati, Pangeran (prince) Cakrabuana, Pangeran Kejaksan, and Pangeran Panjunan built mosques or the like as the basis of the Islamization movement as well as the source of their religious authority. As the basis of the Islamization movement, the mosque they built had at least three main functions, including the center of Islamic da'wah, the center of ritual worship activities and the center of training and religious education for new Muslim converts. Through this mosque, the early Muslim preachers managed to build an image as a source of religious authority for the surrounding Muslim community to study, ask, and seek religious advices (fatwa) on religious issues, not even infrequently non-religious issues.

The establishment of the Islamic kingdom of Cirebon in the mid-15th century under the leadership of Sunan Gunung Jati, one of the Walisongo members, slightly changed the map of religious authority. Like the Islamic Kingdom of Demak, the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon built the Great Mosque as the center of Islamic da'wah [11]. But unlike the Great Mosque of Demak which also serves as a palace, the Great Mosque of Cirebon had been since the beginning separate from the Palace [12]. The construction of this Great Mosque was at once as a part of the centralization of religious authorities that were previously spread in various mosques. The status of mosques that had existed before had become lower in the presence of the Great Mosque and, therefore, decreased their authorities in the field of religion. Those old mosques changed their status from the Jami' mosques to ordinary mosques with the changing the name into only Tajug Agung or Langgar Agung. Furthermore, they no longer had the authority to hold mass worships such as Friday Prayers and 'led Prayers and other major religious ceremonies. Their main roles were only to hold daily routine worship such as daily five times obligatory prayers and some minor religious ceremonies that were small in a number of people involved and limited in scale.

The above mentioned Great Mosque was originally named the Pakungwati Great Mosque. The name refers to the palace of the Islamic Kingdom of

Cirebon built by Pangeran Cakrabuana, the early founder of the Islamic political realm before being transformed into a full independent Islamic Kingdom by Sunan Gunung Jati in the last decade of the 15th century [13]. This name refers to an inscription inscribed with Arabic letter with Javanese language (pegon) on one of the wooden beams in the south porch of the mosque containing the record of the making of the mosque [14]. The inscription reads "*Dugi Hindini Masjid Pakungwati Ing Martabate Insan Kamil Babad Pelestoni Ing ngerekepe masjid den tata, dugi ing bumi hijrah Prophet Muhammad saw min shahri jumaddil awal min syahril muharram*". The inscription clearly mentions Pakungwati as the official name of the Great Mosque. But to distinguish from the palace, Sunan Gunung Jati finally renamed this Great Mosque as the Great Mosque of Sang Cipta Rasa (MASCR). The name Sang Cipta Rasa is a manifestation of the taste and belief in the Creator. Other narrations mention that the word Sang means majesty, Cipta means being built and Rasa means being used. Thus, the whole meaning of Sang Cipta Rasa is that a Great Building is built to worship the Creator, the Ultimate Majesty.

In the process of MASCR construction, Sunan Gunung Jati rested on his fellow Walisongo member, Sunan Kalijaga, as the architect. Sunan Kalijaga in the process of working was assisted by a team led by Raden Sepat, a former warlord of Majapahit Hinduism Kingdom who converted to Islam and served the Islamic Kingdom of Demak. This team of workers numbered by 500 former Majapahit army soldiers who had also converted to Islam. Another narration mentions the number of 200 people bought not directly from Majapahit but from the Islamic Kingdom of Demak [15][16].

The construction of MASCR is yo be the third stage after Sunan Gunung Jati managed to liberate the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon from the rule of the Sunda as well as Hindu based Kingdom of Pajajaran and managed to spread Islam massively [17]. It seems that the increasing political status of the kingdom and the increasing number of Muslims became the basis of the need to build a more representative Great Mosque. Although factually there have been at least three small mosques in Cirebon at that time, namely Pejalagrahan Mosque, Panjunan Mosque and Pangeran Kejaksan Mosque. Apparently, the three mosques were no longer considered worthy to be seen as symbols of the mosque of the newly declared independent kingdom and unable to accommodate the growing number of Muslims. In addition, geographically, the location of these three mosques, especially Panjunan Mosque and Pangeran Kejaksan Mosque, were far from the Pakungwati palace as the center of government. Meanwhile, Pejalagrahan Mosque built by Pangeran Cakrabuana was too small and located behind the palace instead of standing side by side the palace as being ideally constructed.

The construction of MASCR was in fact done gradually. That is as explained in the Mertasinga based manuscript which explains that following this coronation, Sinuhun Gunung Jati plans to construct the

Great Mosque of Pakungwati, which he hopes will one day be passed down as a family heirloom in Carbon. His father-in-law tasked him with collecting materials for the mosque's construction. It has been collected from all corners of the country to make a pole out of good wood. Sunan Rangga had already figured out what his son wanted. He went out right away and gathered a large quantity of (fine) woods that were required. The number of builders was one hundred, which was equal to the number of materials available. Shingle roofs were chosen, and nails and bricks were gathered in Pakungwati to be used in the construction. Sinuhun Jati then instructed Sheikh Datuk Khapi, "Datuk Khapi's brother, please write a letter to be sent to Bani Israil country. Tell Nurullah's sister to work on teak woods. Ask the main one, the long one, to be made his sakaguru (main poles). Only four pieces were required: one from Egypt as Babu Dampul's donation, one from Bani Israil as his contribution to Nurullah [18].

The Mertasinga Manuscript will provide a more detailed explanation of this progressive development process, when Sinuhun Jati arrived in Dalem Agung, he immediately set about establishing a mosque in the area that had previously been established. All of the Walisongo members are extremely enthusiastic about assisting with the construction of this mosque. They have worked together to assemble the skeleton. The following day, there was yet another disagreement over the direction of the Qibla. Some believe it should be further south, others believe it should be further north, and still others believe it should be in the correct direction of Qibla. As a result, the mosque's framework was raised, allowing it to change direction whenever a new point of view was heard. As a result, it continues indefinitely. Sunan Kalijaga provided his completion, just as he had done in Demak the day before [18].

It is clearly stated in the preceding text that the first stage was to place greater emphasis on the development of the patakan (site arrangement). The construction of the frame was the next step in the process. It was during this process that the Walisongo members first became involved in a more direct way. However, one factor that contributed to the length of time it took to complete this development was the change in qibla direction as a result of the heated debate between the Walisongo members. As a result, the mosque's structural framework had been altered and shifted numerous times over the years. Nonetheless, Sunan Kalijaga was able to successfully resolve the debate over the direction of the Qibla, just as he had done during the construction of the Great Mosque of Demak.

It is explained in the text above that the procession commemorates the completion of MASCR construction with the implementation of the down (*subuh*) prayers as a whole, with Sunan Kalijaga serving as the procession's leader (imam). While the statement that the construction of the Great Mosque was completed at the time of Sunan Gunung Jati was 113 years old, it is important to note that the statement is related to time. This means that if he was born in 1449, the construction process, which had begun in 1500 and

was only perfectly completed in 1562, would have begun in 1449. As a result, the development of MASCR has taken approximately 62 years to complete.

Architecturally, MASCR is part of the model and style of Islamic religious buildings in the archipelago from the 16th to the 18th century. According to Uka Tjandrasamita at least five characteristics of old mosques in Indonesia [19]. First, the floor plan of the mosque is rectangular or square and solid. Second, the shape of the roof is two, three, five or even more with the construction getting more and more tapers (*nyungcup*). Three, the foyer is located in front of or next to the main room of the mosque. This porch has many functions including a place to study religion, a place to recite the Qur'an, where various rituals are held and a place where the jama'ah rest. Four, the pool is in front or next to the mosque that serves to wash the feet of the worshippers who will enter the mosque. Fifth or last, the wall fence is made of layered walls ranging from one to three pieces.

In addition to the main characteristics above, there are other equipment that give a peculiarity as well as an old impression is the existence of *bedug* (huge drum). Achmad Sidiq stated that *bedug* is an old mosque ornament is a characteristic of mosques in Indonesia that do not exist in other parts of the Muslim world and is believed to be one of the pre-Islamic elements that continue to be maintained [20]. The *bedug* serves to remind Muslims of the coming time of prayer and hit with a certain rhythm before the adzan (prayer calls). When the prayer time came in, both were hit with a certain rhythm. In contrast to the *bedug*, the *kentongan* is also used to have profane functions such as fire sign, announcement and so on.

Looking at the above, Indonesian Islamic archaeologists generally agree that MASCR is one of the old mosques in Indonesia along with the Great Mosque of Demak, the Great Mosque of Banten, the Great Mosque of Yogyakarta, the Great Mosque of Surakarta and others. All of these old mosques have been classified into heritage buildings (BCB) that are protected in accordance with applicable regulations [19]. With the status as one of the cultural heritage objects (BCB), MASCR is better known as a cultural site and a place of various religious traditions that have been going on for generations such as the Annual Celebration (*Haolan*) of the death of Sunan Gunung Jati, Annual celebration of the birth of the Prophet (*Muludan*) and others. Meanwhile, along with the strengthening of the role and position of other Jami' mosques in Cirebon, MASCR's status as the sole holder of religious authority in Cirebon that has been enjoyed for a long time has deteriorated significantly.

At the beginning of its history, the management of MASCR was under the control of the Walisongo members. Nevertheless, in the daily context had also been formed the organizational structure in charge of managing this Great Mosque. Pangeran Makdum was the first person to be appointed as the leader of the Friday Prayer, due to which he was the highest official in charge. Pangeran Datuk Khafi, the youngest son of Sheikh Nurjati, acted as a secretary with his main duty

arranging a prayer schedule. He was assisted by Raden Jopak and Raden Bumi. Meanwhile, Sunan Panggung, Pangeran Kajoran and Pangeran Drajat are responsible for providing services for visitors [18]. MASCR's succession system of management is hereditary with equal roles and positions. That is, at the very top level was a descendant of Pangeran Makdum.

That above mentioned management structure of MASCR lasted at least until the end of the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon, when new sultanates like Kasepuhan and Kanoman resulting from internal splits emerged in the last 17th century [21]. Since then, structurally, the management has been altered into the representation of both Kasepuhan and Kanoman. Until now, the combined structure based on the principle of representation is still maintained where all management is under the supervision of Sultan Sepuh of Kasepuhan and Sultan Anom of Kanoman. The administration is managed by 40 people, 20 each representing both Kasepuhan and Kanoman. Acting as the chairman of the mosque are the religious officials of both Sultanates [22].

Every mosque that existed in the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon at the time of MASCR's construction in the early 16th century has been demoted to a lower status and position than the mosque that was built to replace it. According to the story of the establishment of Tajug Agung Panjunan by Pangeran Panjunan, which is contained in the Martasinga Manuscript, the great-grandfather of Panjunan came face to face with Kanjeng Sinuhun, which is as follows: His arrival was intended to inquire about the status of the mosque in Panjunan, but because it is so close to the Great Mosque, it is considered taboo before God to hold Friday prayers there [18]. According to the story, MASCR was the only Jami' mosque in existence at the time. It is not appropriate for other places of worship to have the same authority as, let alone greater authority than, MASCR. Those locations were added to a new category with the names Tajug Agung Panjunan, Tajug Agung Pejalagrahan, and Tajug Agung Kejaksan, and they were given specific names. Interestingly, the argument for prohibiting the construction of other places of worship in the same manner as Jami' mosque is *pemali*, which literally translates as something that is traditionally very taboo to violate.

As a state Mosque, MASCR certainly had an extraordinarily important role both in the political context and religious authorities. One of the events that proved the importance of the role of the MASCR was the trial of Sheikh Lemah Abang or more popularly called Sheikh Siti Jenar, the teacher of Pangeran Cakrabuana's son, Pangeran Carbon [23]. It was said that due to his theosophical views that were wrongly viewed by most members of the Walisongo council. Because of which, the council decided to punish Sheikh Siti Jenar with the death penalty. After several processes, the punishment was finally carried out and Sunan Kudus was appointed as the executor. Both the trial and the execution took place at MASCR. This story proved the importance of MASCR's position in the

context of maintaining the purity of Islamic teachings as well as the only source of religious authority.

As being said elsewhere, before the internal political splits in the late 17th century, MASCR was the main uniting symbol for Islamic political and religiosity in Cirebon. This Great Mosque was the only religious and scientific reference for Muslims in the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon. This period in the view of was a time when Islamic scientific and educational authorities centered in the palace and MASCR as its main axis [24]. Pilgrims, students and local scholars come to MASCR both for pilgrimage, studying and seeking religious advices (fatwa). As a result, Islamic intellectual networks in Cirebon and its surroundings for approximately 3 centuries (15, 16 and 17) were centered around religious scholars affiliated to MASCR.

Nevertheless, internal political splits massively occurring the last 17th and early 18th centuries brought about MASCR's stature as an uniting symbol of Islamic politics in Cirebon gradually but surely deteriorating. Worse than ever, MASCR is more identical to the sultanate of Kasepuhan, although there was and still is a special room inside the mosque called the *krapyak* (chamber) intended for other royal families. The fact that geographically MASCR is closer to the palace of Kasepuhan instead of that of other palaces is to be the main factor of the rise of this general perception.

At almost the same time, MASCR's status as the sole source of Islamic religious and scientific authority has been slowly but surely fading. Opposing against deep and blatant interventions of the Colonial ruler over a variety of internal affairs of local palaces, many religious scholars opted to go out from the palace circle. They established *pesantren* (traditional Islamic boarding school), which were located far from the center of government such as Buntet, Ciwaringin, Benda Kerep and others. This was to be the forerunner of the birth of *pesantren* in Cirebon area that survives until now. The architects of *pesantren* succeeded at creating a new intellectual network outside the palace, as well as serve as the center of politically resistance movements against the infidel colonial ruler. This new network of Islamic intellectuals was getting stronger with the presence of new scholars who had just returned from Mecca either just performing hajj or studying religion. Some names can be mentioned specifically such as Kiyai Tolkah of Kalisapu, Kiyai Abbas and Kiyai Anas, both from Buntet and others.

In short, MASCR no longer fully serves as the holder and source of a single religious and scientific authorities as being enjoyed since the time of Sunan Gunung Jati up to the last 17th century. Internal political conflicts following the rise of new palaces since the end of the 17th century, the weakening stance of local rulers against the Colonial power and the birth of *pesantren* as a new Islamic intellectual networks in Cirebon had a significant impact on the role and position of MASCR. No wonder that after independence MASCR did not become a reference for the government officials when they sought a new source of legitimacy for an independent Indonesia including in the field of religion. Instead, they initiated a new source of authority by

converting one of the Tajug Agung in Cirebon into the Grand Mosque of At-Taqwa.

#### **At-Taqwa Grand Mosque**

Historically, the At-Taqwa Grand Mosque or At-Taqwa has been closely related to the local political transformation of Cirebon. In his memoir entitled *Buku Tjoretan dan Catatan serta Sorotan Kabupaten Tjirebon 1966*, R. Soemio stated that Kanjeng Raden Adipati Salom Salam Surdjadiningrat (1902-1918), Regent Cirebon, in 1903, pioneered the development of an area that later became the center of Cirebon district government. The preferred place was in the Kejaksaan area, which was geographically not far from the Resident's office and the port. In the view of Zaenal Masduqi the restructuring of this government was part of the transformation from the traditional royal government to the Colonial government [25]. It certainly also had an impact on the configuration of the central government layout in the community that was not only related to pendopo as the regent's office, but other public main halls such as square (alun-alun) and mosque. With this new construction, local palaces representing traditional powers lost their political significance before the Colonial power. This new governmental structure ranging from the Resident, district (regent) to the township (*gemeente*) emerged as new political sources. Within this context, the city plan designed by Surdjadiningrat can be seen.

In his proposed design, Surdjadiningrat however still paid high admiration to traditional aspects with which he could claim to be the legitimate heir of traditional political power. As a part of the modernizing the city, he inserted modern style into his site map design of the city. Means while, the focus of this restructuring includes the district hall that served as the residence of the regent as well as the center of government, the square as a gathering place for the community and Tajug Agung as the center of religious authority. The establishment of these three chambers clearly ended the palace along with its square located beside the palace and MASCR as the center of political power in Cirebon and more portrayed as a historical heritage and holder of cultural and traditional Authority [26].

In 1905, the *pendopo* was successfully built and officially used. It is located to the south of the *alun-alun* that faces north and where various community activities are held. Both *pendopo* and *alun-alun* are separated by the main road network of Cangkring (now renamed RA Kartini streets). Lastly, Tajug Agung also known as Tajug Agung Kejaksaan serves as the center for religious activities mainly Friday prayers and 'Ied prayers. It is located in the west side of but parallel to the *alun-alun* in the east [27]. This is so that if the number of worshippers are over the capacity of the mosque, they can take place in the yard of the *alun-alun*. This is particularly in the time of 'Ied prayers. This kind of layout of both Tajug Agung and *alun-alun* has been common in various regions in Java Island.

One thing to be boldly underlined just to avoid misperception is the name of Tajug Agung Kejaksaan. The mosque that was later built and transformed into

the At-Taqwa Grand Mosque was named the Tajug Agung Kejaksan [28]. However, this place of worship is different from another Tajug Agung Kejaksan, which was built by Pangeran Kejaksan or Sheikh Syarif Abdurrahim, one of the sons of Sheikh Nurjati, in the late 15th century. The latter is located inside the housing compound just behind the office of the current mayor of Cirebon city. The similarity of this name is more because both are in the same region namely Kejaksan subdistrict. As previously stated elsewhere, one of the old mosques in Cirebon is Tajug Agung Kejaksan, which along with Tajug Agung Panjunan (now known as Panjunan Red Mosque) and Tajug Agung Pejalagrahan was built before MASCR was inaugurated as the only Great Mosque in the Center of the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon. Meanwhile, Tajug Agung Kejaksan Cirebon regency was only built in the early 20th century by Regent Cirebon Surdjadiningrat. Since the second focus of this paper is the At-Taqwa Grand Mosque, the following elaboration will be on the new Tajug Agung of Kejaksan that is located alongside the *alun-alun* instead of the old one.

In spite of having been enlarged in space, the last renovation had no impact over its name as Tajug Agung Kejaksan, although since the inception of its construction its status and function had been as the Jami' mosque like MASCR. Thus, MASCR still remained the only mosque in Cirebon labelled as the Great Mosque (Mesjid Agung). It seemed that at that time there was still a common agreement among political and religious leaders in Cirebon not to justify two mosques with the same name and status located in one particular area. This deal did not last long though. Twelve years after the completion of its renovation, the government changed the name of Tajug Agung Kejaksan into the Mesjid Raya At-Taqwa. Interestingly, it was in 1963 President Soekarno who initiated to change its name.

Furthermore, it was not the label of Agung (great) as that of MASCR was attached, but Raya (Grand). The use of the Raya was controversial. The category of the Mesjid Raya has been identical with that at the province level like that of Mesjid Raya Jawa Barat in Bandung [29]. The fact that Cirebon is the capitol of any province brought about the label Raya of the At-Taqwa mosque into a question. No further arguments could be referred to the reasons behind the use of this label. It seems that this is to be an accommodating stance taken by the government. On the one hand, Cirebon is a part of a long history of Islamic civilization shown in a number of historical artifacts like traditional palaces and Islamic holy places. On the one hand, as a new political realm either as the successor of the colonial rule or as a part of creating a new landscape as a newly declared independent government, the local government was in a great need for a tradition- as well as religion-inspired public space, that is mosque. Declaring the At-Taqwa as Mesjid Agung was not the right choice since it would provoke negative reactions from traditional corners. Thus, the label of Mesjid Raya meant more plausible.

#### **Mosque As A Source Of Authority**

The rise of At-Taqwa in addition to Sang Cipta Rasa as the Jami' Mosque in Cirebon on the one hand had succeeded in enriching the religious perspectives and understanding of Muslims as well as enabling the emergence of diverse religious authorities. On the other hand, according to Faizin had created an anomaly in terms of religious authority that certainly had a negative impact on the religious life of Muslims in Indonesia [30]. In this context, the concept of the Jami' mosque along with all its derivatives and the concept of religious authority and its dissemination will be used as a starting point in analyzing the history of the emergence of two main Jami' mosques in Cirebon, At-Taqwa and Sang Cipta Rasa and its implications for the position of both mosques within the territory of religious authority.

Interestingly, the change of status of Tajug Agung to the At-Taqwa Grand Mosque in the future was followed also by the change of other Tajug Agung, although it only became Jami' Mosque and not a Grand Mosque as the At-Taqwa such as the Tajug Agung Kejaksan built by Pangeran Kejaksan, the Tajug Agung Panjunan and lastly Tajug Agung Kanoman in the 1980s. The last transformation would be the most intriguing case as it transformed into Masjid Agung Kanoman, which levelled MASCR. Since then, royal families of the Kanoman palace no longer performed Friday prayers and others in MASCR leaving the special chamber (*krapyak*) designed for them inside MASCR vacant before filled by the ordinary people. Another frequently stated main factor of those mosques based alteration is the increasing number of people who are in and around or visiting those Tajug Agung. The change in status certainly has implications for the religious authority. If it is still Tajug Agung status, their bearers do not have the authority to hold mass rituals such as Friday prayers every week and 'Id prayers. The occurrence of this name and status change indicates the contestation of religious authorities as well as the process of spreading religious authority to several places of worship that have been based on mosque.

Throughout the history of Islam, Muslims for one reason or another will always be associated with mosques. The role of mosques is not only a place of worship and various types and forms of worship, but also has a much more complex role, ranging from social, cultural, political to economic. All aspects of Muslim life are not uncommon to take the mosque as a starting point. In addition, the mosque also became a symbol of bond and identic [31].

Mosque was the first physical building and symbol built by the Prophet, when starting the process of establishing an Islamic society in Medina. Muslims regularly gathered and or be gathered by the Prophet in a mosque named the Nabawi Mosque. In addition to being a place to convey various teachings of Islam to his people and perform regular worship, the Prophet's mosque is also not infrequently, or even often, become a medium where various discussions of the government of Medina as well as resolving various complaints submitted by Muslims and preparing various strategies to expand Islamic da'wah. In other words, mosque was

the "heart of Muslims" by serving as a center of worship, education, social, cultural, economic, and business to government [31].

However, compared to other functions such as cultural, social, political and economic centers, religious and educational functions are very prominent. The separation of these functions is in line with the emergence of special institutions related to these functions. The palace for example takes the political function of the mosque[31]. Therefore, in the future, mosques are more involved as a center of religious services such as prayers, religious celebrations and others and religious education centers, especially at the primary and secondary levels. Furthermore, from the last two functions, the function of education also gradually changes with the emergence of independent Islamic educational institutions such as madrasa, pesantren to Islamic universities. As a result, mosques present themselves as the center of religious activities in a narrower sense, namely prayer, both five times and other prayers such as Friday and 'led prayers.

In addition to the functional aspect, the interesting thing about talking about mosques is their categorization. Historically there are at least two categories of mosques,, namely ordinary mosques and Jami' mosques[32]. The first mosque serves more as a place of regular worship, especially five times obligatory prayers, serving the surrounding Muslim community. More importantly, the size of its building is small and simple. In its management is usually done voluntarily by the surrounding community without any special assistance from the government. For this category many terms other than masjid are used to name this holy place such as musalla, tajug, surau, meunasah and langgar[33]. The Jami' mosque category serves as a place of regular worship and also a place to perform mass worship such as Friday Prayers and 'led Prayers. Because it has to accommodate a large number of jema'ah, the construction of jami' mosque building is much larger and grander. It is not surprising that the local government is an interested party in the management and funding of the Jami' mosque [34][32][35].

In Indonesia, the phenomenon of the emergence of new Jami' mosques in addition to the first is also widely seen in several places. One of the main factors of the emergence of the new Jami' mosque is the increasing number of residents and the inability of the old Jami' mosques to accommodate the number of jema'ah that exist. In certain cases religious differences of views also play a role to bring up the new Jami' mosque as happened in Manis Lor, Kuningan, where the Ahmadiyah followers established their own Jami' mosque which is separate from the Jami' mosque that has existed before and been located in the complex of the village government offices. Practical reasons are also often raised related to the number of new Jami' mosques such as in educational institutions and offices. Another reason that can be mentioned are the historical reasons and political policies of local governments as in the case of the emergence of At-Taqwa in conjunction with MASCR.

The religious authority referred to herein as stated by Faizin is a valid legal force to act, rule and judge on the field of religion[30]. If religion is God's creation, religious authority is related to the authority recognized and possessed by a person to act, rule and judge in God's name. Here, the positions of the prophet (nabi), holymen (wali) and religious scholars (ulama) have long been seen as a group of men who deserve to represent God in the possession of religious authority [36].

The issue of religious authority in practice is not as simple as the understanding of religious authority above. The policy of rulers and the choice of political affiliations and differences in religious viewpoints also affect the religious authority owned and or will be owned by a person or group of scholars. For example, when the Colonial government successfully intervened in local politics, many religious scholars differed in addressing that Realty [37]. As a result, there were those scholars who survived as rulers in the palace, although it had to be acting like being servants to the infidel Colonial rulers. On the other hand, there were idealistic scholars who still rejected the actions of this infidel power and chosed to build their credentials outside the palace by opening what later commonly so called pesantren. From this, according to Martin van Bruinessen gave birth to two centers of religious authority that criticized each other as well as fighting for influence in the Community namely palace-based and pesantren based ulama [38].

The development of religious authority in Indonesia in the view of Azyumardi Azra became more massive when the movement for the renewal of Islamic thought emerged and developed in the late-19th and early 20th centuries [30]. Hajj pilgrims and Middle Eastern alumni introduced renewal thoughts that gave rise to a fairly fierce polemic with established local scholars with their old understandings of religion. The increasing number of those who had the opportunity to study in various regions even abroad and the increasing number of mass media to communicate and interact with new ideas and movements had further strengthened the process of the launch of religious authorities in Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

From the above exposure, there are several notes that can be delivered. First, the change in the political constellation also has an impact on the constellation of religious authorities in the Islamic world. Mosques that become one of the symbols of religious authority must be subject to the constellation of rulers of the territory where the mosque is located. The study of MASCR showed that the emergence of MASCR as a Great Mosque was entirely the decision of the ruler of Cirebon at the time. When the ruler changed, the status of MASCR as the sole holder of religious authority for several centuries also changed when the At-Taqwa Grand Mosque inaugurated. Second, the increase of the population and the increasing melting of religious authority in the community implicates the spread of religious authorities to various local religious centers characterized by the transformation of several Tajug Agung into the Jami' mosques such as Tajug Agung



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Kejaksan, Tajug Agung Panjunan and Tajug Agung Kanoman. This transformation on the one hand further diminished MASCR as the sole source of religious authority, but on the other hand further strengthened the process of spreading religious authority in Cirebon based on mosques.

# Didin Nurul Rosidin

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