

# Traces of the Spice Route in the Architecture and City of Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan, Indonesia

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## Abstract

The spice route is a highly valuable trade route, influencing human civilizations, particularly trade cities along this route from the XIII -XVIII AD. Banjarmasin is one of the cities traversed by this spice route, with its primary commodity being pepper. This research retraces the influence of this trade, juxtaposing it with the formation of the city and the architectural character of the buildings in Banjarmasin up to the present day.

This research employs historical qualitative methodology and is located in the city of Banjarmasin, covering the period from the initiation of the spice trade during the Banjarmasin sultanate era to the end of the colonial period in Banjarmasin (1500–1900 AD). The research steps are secondary data collection which serve as raw data for an in-depth study, primary data collection conducted to confirm the previously gathered secondary data, data analysis and interpretation which organized according to the historical context and the environment of the city of Banjarmasin in chronological order until a common thread is obtained. Subsequently, Findings and Compiling research conclusions which the results of the analysis are discussed in relation to various theories or concepts to derive interpretations from the research.

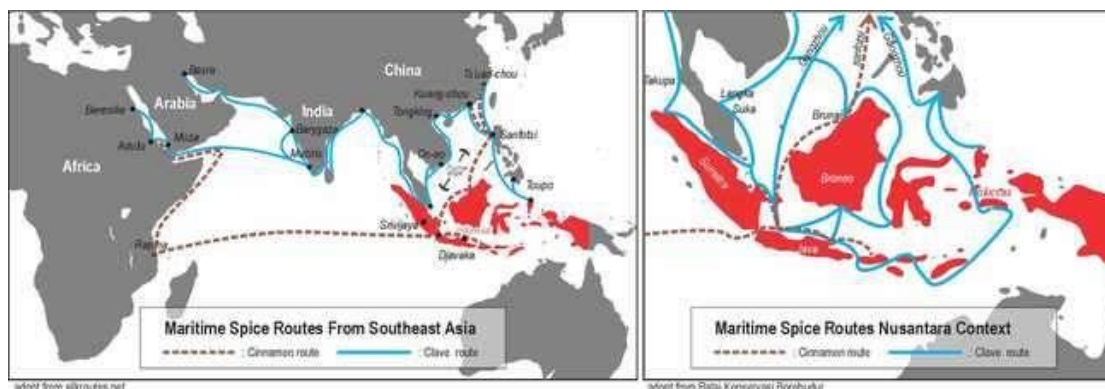
It concludes that the spice route played a crucial role in the formation of Banjarmasin, consisting of three stages: the stage where Kampung Keraton evolved into the center of the Banjarmasin sultanate, the stage of the establishment of territorial arrangements due to the spice trade contract between the kingdom and the Dutch East India Company, and the stage of territorial control by the colonial government. The development of local architecture varied, influenced by the knowledge acquired by merchants before colonization, which was applied to their residences, and modern architecture built by the colonial government in the form of various facilities and infrastructure.

**Keywords:** Spice route, Pepper, Banjarese house, Banjarmasin sultanate.

## Introduction

Since BC, spices have been known as a symbol of exoticism, wealth, prestige, and sacredness. The Egyptians, Chinese, Mesopotamians, Indians, Romans, and Arabian peninsulas used spices as healing drugs or panacea. Spices were also used as food ingredients, both to remove odors and preserve food. The importance of spices makes it seen as a very valuable trade commodity (Rahman, 2019). Cloves, nutmeg, and sandalwood are the three main

commodities of spices that in their heyday were once worth more than gold, so that Run Island in Maluku which is rich in nutmeg spices, was once exchanged for Manhattan Island which is currently known as New York. The spice trade is expanding and increasing all over the world. The intense spice trade between continents eventually created the spice route which is a "silk road" that passes through the maritime and is a trade route and a forum for the exchange of all cultural and religious civilizations (Chong, 2022).



**Fig. 1:** Maritime Spice Routes from Southeast Asia  
Source: (left) <https://silkroutes.net> (right) Balai Konservasi Borobudur

Spices have become the main commodity in trade through maritime routes between China and Europe including the archipelago (Sulistyono, 2017). Pires recounted his experiences in the archipelago in the early XVI AD where Malay traders said that God had created Timor for sandalwood, Banda for nutmeg, and Maluku for cloves. They also said that these three merchandises could not be found anywhere else in the world except in these three places. (Pires, 1944). Very high prices and huge profits encouraged the race to find sources of spices throughout the archipelago. One of the areas that became a stopover in the spice trade route in the archipelago was the Banjarmasin Sultanate, present-day South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. Pepper exports from the port of Banjarmasin have been going on since before the establishment of the Banjarmasin Sultanate in the XVI AD.

The spice trade in the archipelago also left traces of civilization in the form of relics of historical sites, cultural rites, and gave birth to a variety of cultural products inspired by the rich nature of the archipelago. During the heyday of spices, explorers or traders from various nations flocked to the archipelago not only to trade but also to build civilization. Starting from the port of Barus in North Sumatra which is estimated to be more than 5,000 years old, to the era of kingdoms in the archipelago with cities, such as Lamuri, Padang, Bengkulu, Lampung, Banten, Jepara, Tuban, Gresik, Banjarmasin, Makassar, Bali, and Ternate-Tidore in Maluku. All were formed due to the spice trade or spice route.

In this context, this study examines the traces of the spice route in the architecture and city of Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. Its aim is to reveal the extent of the influence of the spice trade in the Banjarmasin Sultanate on the formation of the city of Banjarmasin and the development of its architecture. Its objectives are:

1. To identify the spice routes that entered Banjarmasin City,
2. To clarify the territory of the Dutch government with the sultanate before colonization and after colonization,
3. To find out the phase of the formation of Banjarmasin City which was influenced by the spice trade, and
4. To find the diversity of architectural forms based on the spice trade period.

### Theoretical Framework

City is a highly complex human-made artifact. The formation of a city can be studied from various approaches such as religious, political, and social (Kostof, 1999). In the

components of built environment formation, humans are the actors determining a change from social order to the physical form of the environment or its container (Doxiadis, 1977). In the framework of this research, the complexity of city formation is focused on aspects related to the spice trade, making the motive for city formation more dominant due to trade relationships. European port cities generally transformed the industrialization era, starting as traditional port cities formed by past trade relationships between Europe and Asia (Warsewa, 2017). Port cities are located in coastal areas and the banks of large rivers are traversed by trade routes, producing port cities, especially in Asian regions (Yassin, 2010). Historically, Indonesia is a maritime nation that was a stopover for trade routes, especially the spice trade (Rukayah, 2021). Indonesia's strategic position and its historical territories consisting of various kingdoms engaged in trade relations are evidenced by various types of foreign currencies circulating, with the oldest dating back to 647 AD (Iskandar, 2005).

According to Saleh (1981), Banjarmasin City was formed due to the presence of the Banjarmasin sultanate, a relative of the Demak Kingdom. These two kingdoms had a close relationship as fellow Islamic kingdoms, connected through trade relations. Pepper was the main commodity from the kingdom era to the rule of the Banjar kingdom under the Dutch East India Company (Schrieke, 1956; Burger, 1983). The formation of Banjarmasin City occurred on the riverbank (Mentayani, 2013). In Southeast Asian history (Hall, 1955; Soewarsha, 1988; Brunero, 2021), it is explained that the development of colonial port cities is closely related to port communities. These colonial port cities were not only hubs for trade and travelers. Still, they served as gateways or imperial bridgeheads connecting maritime centers to the peoples and economies of the port hinterlands, drawing them into a global (imperial) economy. This explanation is highly relevant to this research.

## Literature Review

The spice route developed around 3000 BCE and existed 2000 years before the silk route (Khan, 2018). This spice route involves the Indian Ocean which plays an important role in trade relations. According to Effendy (2020) the Spice Route does not merely mean literally that the goods traded are spices, but also other commodities such as rice, diamonds, and sandalwood from the archipelago as well as external commodities brought by Indians and Chinese such as cloth, silk, and ceramics. According to Hamid (2022) the spice route was not only a shipping and trade route, but also the growth path of cosmopolitan port cities, the development of major religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity), the exchange of ideas and the birth of enlightened people. This is in line with Fahmi's (2022) explanation that ports in the royal era such as the Majapahit Kingdom developed into places for merchant communities while waiting for the anchoring season and participating in community activities such as ritual ceremonies and enlivening the market. According to Jafar (2022) in the 13th to 14th centuries trade from India increased so that trade relations between kingdoms in the archipelago had become a network with the Indian region.

In addition to port cities, according to Marihandono (2008), forts in the context of urban planning in Indonesia play an important role when there is a change in power from the company's trade relations with the kingdom to the colonial government with consumer countries, especially in Europe. Ports and forts in general as well as other facilities developed in the port area as explained by Rabbani (2020), that ports were also not only built facilities related to trade but were equipped with educational and health facilities, especially in the 19th and mid-20th centuries. Studies on cities do not relate them much to the spice trade even though the city grew on the coast and developed as a local port. According to Fahmi (2022) the spice route can be traced back based on architectural artifacts and layouts in old ports such as Nassau harbor in Banda Neira, Syahbanar Tower in Batavia and Surabaya, and mosque facilities around the harbor.

There are very few studies that discuss the development of port cities in Indonesia that relate the spice route as one of the causes of the formation of port cities and cities that are growing today, and the discussion of the spice route in Indonesia generally focuses on anthropological, economic, social and cultural studies. According to Kusumawijaya (2023), the

learning of cities in Indonesia is diverse so that each city has diverse learning. According to Baiqui (2022) and Kumoratih (2021), the discussion of the spice route focuses on the types of spices, routes, commodity reconstruction efforts, and places in Indonesia.

In this study, Banjarmasin plays a role as one of the cities through which the spice trade route passed and developed in line with similar cities, but there are not many studies that discuss the influence of this spice route on the development of the city, especially in the early days of the formation of Banjarmasin city. The transformation of Banjarmasin City consists of four important eras: the royal era, the colonial era, the post-colonial era, and the autonomy era (Hadinata, 2017). In another explanation, the formation of Banjarmasin City's landscape during the sultanate period (1526-1860) was influenced by the political aspects of the trade economy where Banjarmasin City acted as a port-politi to become a colonial city in the colonialization era (Damayanti, 2019). In the study of river shipping, Subiyakto (2004) explained that river transportation routes became the backbone of the economy in Banjarmasin City in the past. In line with the objective of this research, which will sharpen how architecture and cities are related to the context of the spice route in Banjarmasin City.

### **Research Methodology**

This research examines the phenomenon of the influence of the spice trade on the formation of the city of Banjarmasin and the development of its architecture as a socially constructed reality that cannot be generalized, so understanding it can only be achieved by closely examining the built environment itself on an intimate/individual level. In addition, this phenomenon is closely related to aspects of cultural anthropology and ethnography, making this research classified as qualitative research (Groat & Wang, 2013). The research is conducted by examining data and historical contexts that occurred throughout the time or diachronic of the spice trade in the Sultanate of Banjarmasin. This research step is as follows.

1. Secondary Data Collection

The study starts with secondary data collection from various sources: books, journals, private collector collections, museum collections, libraries, and other sources. These data serve as raw data for an in-depth study.

2. Primary Data Collection

Primary data collection in the field is conducted to confirm the previously gathered secondary data. The process of observing and identifying primary data in the field is carried out through field visits, interviews with informants, and recording (photos, sketches, etc.).

3. Data analysis and Interpretation

All collected data is organized according to the historical context and the environment of the city of Banjarmasin in chronological order (historical diachronic) until a common thread is obtained. Subsequently, the results of the analysis are discussed in relation to various theories or concepts to derive interpretations from the research.

4. Findings and Compiling research conclusions.

The final step involves composing and formulating a qualitative description of the phenomenon of the influence of the spice trade on the formation of the city of Banjarmasin and the development of its architecture.

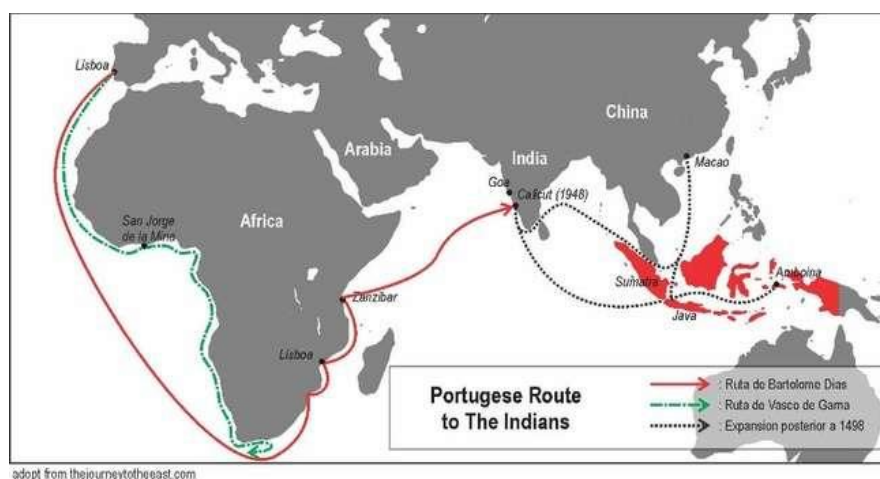
### **Finding and the Discussion**

#### **History of The Spice Trade in The Archipelago**

The emergence of the spice trade route in the archipelago was initiated by Portuguese voyages in search of spice sources around the XVI AD. Before the Portuguese, the quest for spices was carried out by traders from India, China and Arabia and until the XIII AD Chinese traders were the key distributors of the spice trade from the spice center in Maluku. Chinese traders traveled from Banda, westwards through Sulawesi, Kalimantan and Java across the Straits of Malacca, and continued to India to the spice market in Malabar. After that, ships from Arabia shipped spices across the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf and Red Sea. Starting from

the XIV AD, spices reached the hands of Europeans and the XV AD can be regarded as the "Century of Spices" (Freedman, 2008). Previously spices were considered as medical ingredients, then starting from the XV AD spices shifted to enhancing the flavor of dishes in European monarchies. At that time, awareness began to awaken to renew the dark image of unappetizing food during the Middle Ages (Turner, 2004; Freedman, 2008).

Although the road to the spice center had been opened by Ptolemy since the beginning of Christ, it was not until the XV AD that Europeans began to explore or find the spice islands. For centuries, the route to the spice center was only known by Chinese, Indian and Arab traders, but after the Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511 AD, Alfonso de Albuquerque as the ruler in Goa, India ordered Antonio de Abreu and Francisco Serrao to discover the location of these spice islands (Pires, 1944; Amal, 2016). This moment was the beginning of the arrival of other European nations, such as Spain, England and the Dutch, to Asia, especially to the archipelago. The spice trade had created trade routes that were not only transcontinental, but also cross-cultural (ethnicity, language, exchange rate, technology, even beliefs). The route of the Portuguese in search of spices to Asia and especially the archipelago by Vasco de Gama is shown in the following Figure.



**Fig. 2:** Portuguese route to the Indians  
Sources: <https://thejourneytotheeast.com>

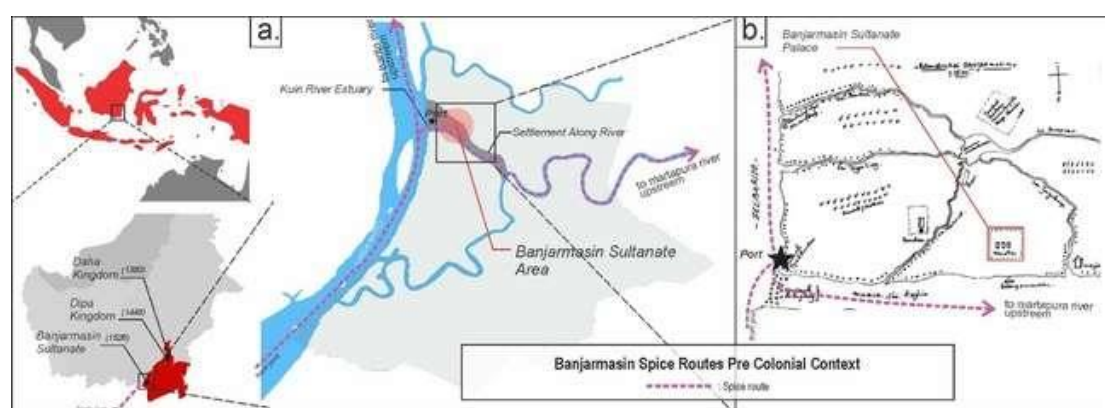
One of the areas that became a stopover for traders on the spice trade route in the archipelago was the territory of the Banjarmasin Sultanate located in South Kalimantan. Banjarmasin Sultanate was founded by Pangeran Samudera in 1526 AD, then titled Sultan Suriansyah after Banjarmasin Sultanate was established and Islam became the official religion. The emergence of the Banjarmasin Sultanate as one of the centers of pepper trade began during the expansion of the Mataram Sultanate to the north coast of Java at the end of the XVI AD. Trade on the north coast of Java practically died because trading cities were destroyed by the Mataram Sultanate so there was a massive migration of traders to safer areas, including to the Banjarmasin Sultanate (Graaf, 1990). Another thing that encouraged the emergence of the Banjarmasin Sultanate as a center of spice trade was the monopoly of the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), a trading company owned by the Dutch East Indies government, over several trading centers in the archipelago (Rakhmanita, 2022). In the XVII AD precisely in 1669 AD, the VOC established a monopoly in Aceh, Palembang, Jambi, Banten, and Makassar (Schrieke, 1956; Burger, 1983). This had an effect on Chinese traders who had difficulty obtaining pepper in the western part of the archipelago, looking for other places that had not been controlled by the VOC, namely in the territory of the Banjarmasin Sultanate (Sulandjari, 1991). The impact of the rapid pepper trade in the Banjarmasin Sultanate was the emergence and development of the city of Banjarmasin at that time.

Before the XV AD, several regions in South Kalimantan were already known as pepper-producing areas. Pepper or in Banjar language known as *sahang* became the most important export material of the Banjarmasin Sultanate (Sulandjari, 1991). Therefore, pepper trade in Banjarmasin has been going on since before the XV AD with traders from China. The cultivation and trade of pepper nicknamed the king of spice reached its peak in the political and economic dynamics of the Banjarmasin Sultanate from the XVII AD to XVIII AD. After the entry of European traders and rulers, the power struggles over spice resources in several regions began (Sulandjari, 1991; Mansyur, 2019).

### Kampung Keraton as the Beginning of Banjarmasin City

Before the Banjarmasin Sultanate appeared in the XVI AD, the ruling kingdoms in South Kalimantan were the Kingdom of Dipa and the Kingdom of Daha. Therefore, Banjar historians say that the Banjarmasin Sultanate was the 3rd kingdom that ever existed in South Kalimantan. The history of the establishment of the Banjarmasin Sultanate occurred through a power struggle won by Prince Samudera as one of the heirs of the Kingdom of Daha that was exiled. After Prince Samudera became king, the capital of Banjarmasin Sultanate was moved to an area called Kampung Keraton which is around the mouth of the Kuin River. The emergence of Kampung Keraton as the center of government officially marked the emergence of the city of Banjarmasin.

Among the factors that supported the establishment of the Banjarmasin Sultanate was the support of Patih Masih or Malay people leaders who were living in the coastal areas and dissatisfied with the regulated trade and the tribute that had to be paid to the Kingdom of Daha. Therefore, the settlement areas controlled by these Patih Masih were chosen to be the location of the Banjarmasin Sultanate administrative center after its establishment. The Muara Bahan area, which had been the center of the Kingdom of Daha, was abandoned. This power struggle also received support from the Demak Sultanate in Java, which at the time controlled the spice trade in the port of Batavia. Thus, since the formation of the city of Banjarmasin, the spice trade has been involved.



**Fig. 3:** (a) Illustration of Kampung Keraton on 1526 AD (b) Location at Banjarmasin  
Source: (a) Author. (b) Saleh, 1981

After the Kampung Keraton was established as the center of the Banjarmasin Sultanate, the trade-port was also moved to Bandar Masih or the port of the Malays people. The name of Banjarmasin was previously known as Bandarmasih. In the documents of the Banjarmasin Sultanate as well as the VOC and Dutch East Indies governments before 1664 AD, it was still written as Bandarmasih. After 1845 AD it was changed to Banjarmasin (Saleh, 1981). Among the Banjarese people today, there are two understandings regarding the origin of the name Banjarmasin, namely:

1. Bandar Masih, which means harbor or port in the Malays settlement. This is a description of the condition of the settlement before it became Kampung Keraton

as the center of government of the Banjarmasin Sultanate. This also mean that this village already existed and it was a traditional settlement with a port or *Bandar* in local terms. These settlements were inhabited by Malays people and led by a Patih. The word "Masih" comes from the name of Patih Masih or leader of Malays people, which in the Ngaju tribe language means Malays people, so "Banjar Masih" means port of Malays people. According to the Hikayat Banjar (Ras, 1968), Patih Masih's house was later converted into a palace or king's residence. The house was expanded with Pagungan, Sitiluhur and Paseban. The Kampung Keraton can only be reached via the Kuin River via the Barito River. Before reaching the Kampung Keraton, there is the *cerucuk*, which is the mouth of the river that is installed with wood with sharpened ends and stuck from the riverbed to the surface of the river to form a defense fence (called *cerucuk*). At the mouth of the Barito River was the house of Syahbandar Goja Babouw, a Gujarati with the title Ratna Diraja, who controlled trade. Across the river from Jagabaya was the first mosque, now known as the Sultan Suriansyah Mosque.

2. Banjar Masih is a settlement consisting of houses positioned in rows which in Banjar language is called *banjar*. This argument is supported by Ras (1968), who mentions that Banjarmasin means *banjar* on the seashore. According to Saleh (1981), the name Banjarmasin comes from the word *banjar* which means the location of housing in rows or *kampung* or villages on the water along the riverbank. An illustration of the settlement conditions during the Banjarmasin Sultanate can be seen in the following picture, which remains partially unchanged and can be found in several parts of Banjarmasin City. The natural atmosphere of the past can still be found in some locations although the number has decreased or many have been damaged.

### The Emergence of Tatas Island

Since the capital of the Banjarmasin Sultanate was moved to Kampung Keraton located at the mouth of the Kuin River, the village grew bigger along the Kuin River starting at the mouth of the Barito River to the mouth of the Martapura River (Fig. 3(b)). The village is filled with people's houses in the form of floating houses and houses on stilts on the banks of the river. This condition can still be found and seen in several areas of Banjarmasin city today.

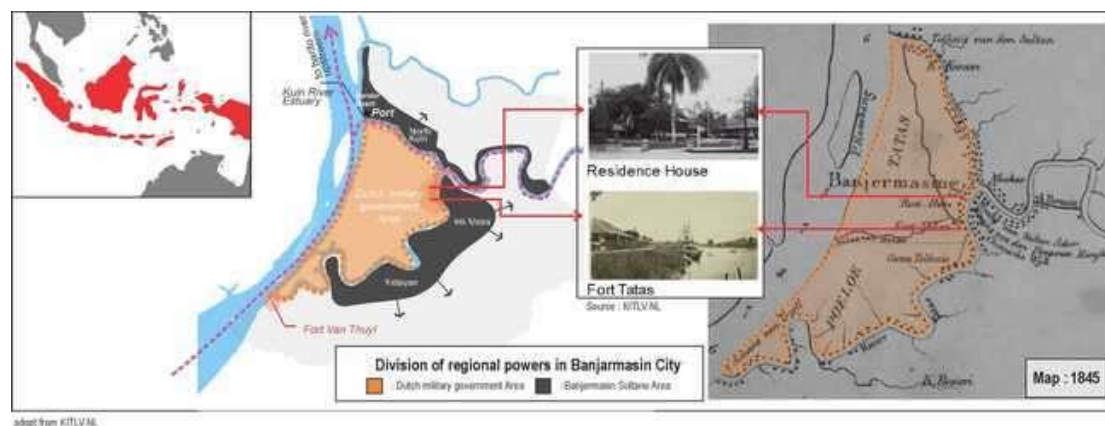


**Fig. 4:** Settlements on water and on river banks

Source: KITLV Collection

The increasing pepper trade in the Banjarmasin Sultanate attracted the arrival of the VOC who wanted to obtain a monopoly on pepper trade. The impact of this very profitable spice trade caused many conflicts, especially internal conflicts between princes and regional rulers as well as trade conflicts with other traders, such as Bugis traders. For this reason, in 1756 AD, the Sultan of Banjarmasin asked for VOC support to fight and ensure the security from the Bugis traders. In an agreement between the Sultan of Banjarmasin and Johan Andreas Paravinci in October 1756 AD, the VOC obtained permission to build a stone fort to protect the interests of the VOC and the security of the sultan, namely Fort Tatas. The Tatas Fortress is a polygonal structure with a posse of wooden bollards surrounding the fort. 3 bastions are facing the river and 2 bastions facing the mainland (Wasita, 2017).

On May 4 1826, the Dutch East Indies government signed a new contract with Sultan Adam in which the territory of Tatas Island and several other Banjarmasin sultanate territories were handed over. With this contract, the city of Banjarmasin was separated into two parts, where the Tatas Island area became the center of Dutch military government, trade, and shipping activities up to South Kuin, while the Kampung Keraton from the Mesa River to Kalayan and North Kuin became the center of government, shipping and trade activities of the Banjarese people.



**Fig. 5:** Division of regional powers in Banjarmasin City  
Source: Author

After taking control of Tatas Island, the Dutch East Indies government began to develop Tatas Island into a new area. Based on Staatsblad Number 84 of 1888 AD, the Dutch East Indies government made Tatas Island a white elite residential area, and also divided several zones. The first facilities to be built were a defense fort, the resident's house, the resident office, government employee housing, customs office, prison, hospital, entertainment venue "Societe De Kapel", market, and roads. Roads on land were made at the same time as canals or waterways were made to control the water system because Tatas Island is mostly a swampy area. The first road to be built was along the Tatas River from the mouth of the Kuin River to the warehousing area, approximately 2 km long. As with the city planning in Batavia, residential areas were divided into clusters based on ethnicity, such as Bugis, Javanese, Malay and Chinese settlements. The development of white or Dutch settlements was located in the most elite areas close to the fort and separated by canals from other residential areas, making Fort Tatas the center of Banjarmasin's city planning in the early days of its formation on Tatas Island.

### Formation of Banjarmasin City

After initially leasing the status of Tatas Island, it was later fully handed over to the Dutch East Indies government. The release of Tatas Island from the rule of the Banjarmasin Sultanate was an important phase in the formation of the city of Banjarmasin because previously the power of the Dutch East Indies Government was only limited to Tatas Island, while across the river was the territory of the Banjarmasin Sultanate. Later on, the entire Banjarmasin city area was controlled by the Dutch East Indies Government.

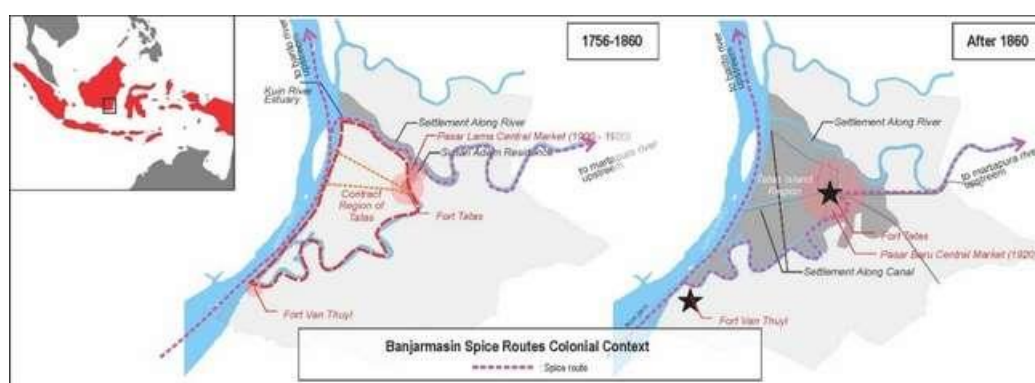
To maintain power over Tatas Island and against the Banjarmasin Sultanate, a stronger fort was built. In April 1876 AD it was decided to build a new fourth-class fort to deal with enemies from among the natives who began to appear frequently at the location of Fort Tatas. Along with the stronger defense of the Dutch East Indies Government, the Tatas Island area began to be built in a more planned manner. Fort Tatas is a fort built since before the colonial era (colonial) by the VOC which is a trading company representing the interests of the central government. Fort Tatas was then taken over by the Dutch East Indies Government, and as a fortress it was of course exclusive in nature where outside the fort area was considered



dangerous for their interests. Fort Tatas during the Dutch East Indies era changed its function into a military complex (garrison). In general, fortifications in the context of urban spatial planning in Indonesia during the colonial period played an important role. There are even allegations that some cities in Indonesia have grown and developed with fort buildings as the center (Marihandono, 2008).

After the Banjar war ended in 1905, the Banjarmasin city area was designated as a *gemeente* (region with special autonomy) on July 1, 1919 and then the status of *Stads-gemeente* on July 1, 1938 which further strengthened the power of the Dutch East Indies government and also encouraged development in the city of Banjarmasin to increase rapidly. Reviewing the security conditions, threat level, and advantages of the pepper trade, in 1901 AD, Governor-General Willem Rooseboom (1899-1904) removed Fort Tatas from the list of permanent forts in the Dutch East Indies.

In the early XX AD, the Dutch East Indies government made Banjarmasin a trading city with a population of around 64,000 peoples. The rapid growth of Banjarmasin, especially its political and economic (trade) activities, led the Dutch East Indies government to establish branch offices of De Javasche Bank (DJB), Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij (NHM) and Borneo-Sumatra Handel Maatschappij (Borsumij), which represented the city's economic progress. The presence of these companies has coloured changes in the economic system of the people and the country. The dynamics of Banjarmasin's river-based/maritime economy with abundant natural resources is very potential for the development of financial institutions.



**Fig. 6:** From Tatas Island to Banjarmasin as autonomous region

Source: Author.

### Architectural Diversity in Banjarmasin Architectural City

In addition to its impact on the growth of Banjarmasin from a *Kampung Keraton* to a city built with complete infrastructure, the trade in spices and other natural commodities also influenced the design of Banjarese people buildings. Broadly speaking, the influence of the spice route on architecture can be divided into two, namely the residential buildings of the Banjarese people and public buildings built by the Dutch East Indies Government.

Before the development of roads on land, people's dwelling houses were entirely floating houses (*lanting* houses) or houses on stilts on the riverbank (Mentayani, 2019: Aufa, 2021). Along with the rapid spice trade, it brought prosperity to traders and residents of the Banjarmasin Sultanate giving birth to many new millionaires. In addition to trading spices, various other commodities are also traded both in the form of agricultural products as well as natural products such as diamonds and other precious stones. Many traders from the Sultanate of Banjarmasin were rich and later built very large and beautiful residential houses in their time. Some residential buildings built by wealthy merchants in Banjarmasin can still be found today even though many have been damaged or changed in various parts of the building.

The buildings of residential houses have very diverse architectural designs and none are 100% identical. If viewed carefully, there will always be differences in each section. Some dominant similarities, such as the similarity of roof shapes, the number of building components, or the name of the space ultimately form the classification of buildings. From the diversity and

uniformity of existing residential designs, it is known that there are at least 12 types with mentions referring to the social position of the owner when the Banjarmasin Sultanate was still standing.

**Table 1:** Typology of Banjarese Architecture

Source: Author

No	Type	Social status
1	<i>Bubungan Tinggi</i>	the residence of sultan
2	<i>Gajah Baliku</i>	the residence of the king's <i>warit</i> , i.e., the first or second line escendants, the residence of the Gusti (male descendants after another fourth generation of the male line; when you grow up/get married) and close relatives of the Sultan.
3	<i>Gajah Manyusu</i>	the residence of the king's <i>warit</i> , i.e., the first or second line escendants, the residence of the Gusti (male descendants after another fourth generation of the male line; when you grow up/get married) and close relatives of the Sultan.
4	<i>Palimbangan</i>	residence of the ulama (Islam)
5	<i>Balai Laki</i>	the residence of the courtiers, ministers and commanders of the king's guard soldiers.
6	<i>Balai Bini</i>	the residence of the women's daughters or subjects of the king (third line of family relations).
7	<i>Palimasan</i>	the treasurer's residence
8	<i>Cacak Burung</i>	residence of ordinary people (on land in the form of houses on stilts)
9	<i>Tadah Alas</i>	residence of ordinary people (on land in the form of houses on stilts)
10	<i>Joglo</i>	a residence for Chinese traders or as a warehouse for storing
11	<i>Lanting</i>	residence of common people (on the water)
12	Banjarese-Indies House	the residence of the merchants

Although officially the Banjarmasin Sultanate was abolished by the Dutch East Indies government in 1860 AD, various buildings of various types were still built by merchants who had the economic means. Even the typology of Indies-Banjar buildings that combine the Banjar-Malay architectural style with the Dutch has also been built with countless variations. This building is generally still recognizable by its characteristics of Dutch cultural influences, such as ornaments and Latin writings.

The houses are built using ironwood material, from the foundation structure to the roof. The house is built using a *kacapuri* foundation, which is a type of floating foundation on very soft land. The frame of the building is made entirely of ironwood connected to a hollow peg connection system. The floor and the walls and ceilings use iron board sheets or *bangkirai* wood, while the roof covering uses shingle material, namely ironwood sheets that are thinly split and arranged in layers. All of these building materials are widely available in the natural environment of South Kalimantan. For ornaments, the method of carving on wood is used as building materials, such as poles and beams. In addition, carvings are also widely added to building elements, such as walls, shutters, door leaves, fences, banisters, and others.



**Fig. 7:** Typology of people's residences  
Source: Aufa et al, 2023

It is unfortunate that most of these residential houses are currently not maintained and many have suffered damages due to the age of the buildings. The high cost of maintenance, the difficulty of obtaining ironwood materials to replace damaged parts of the building and the lack of craftsmen who understand or are able to carry out repairs are the main factors in the extinction of local-style buildings that are relics of the spice trade in Banjarmasin city.

In addition to the development of various typologies of Banjarese people's residences, many new buildings were built by the Dutch East Indies government. Unlike the residential houses built by the Banjarese people, which use wooden construction and were built on stilts, government office buildings or religious buildings built by the Dutch East Indies Government use masonry construction. Some existing buildings such as the Bank De Java Office, the entertainment venue Societe De Kapel, and the telegraph office are examples of some buildings built with brick construction.



**Fig. 8:** (a) De Java Bank, (b) De Kapel, (c) Telegraph Office  
Source: KITLV Collection

In general, the buildings built by the Dutch East Indies Government in Banjarmasin have similarities with similar buildings in other regions. For example, De Java Bank buildings in South Kalimantan and DJB in other areas. The De Java Bank building was built with a construction duration of 25 years, starting from 1910 to 1935 by Fermont-Cuyper Bureau consultants. Evidence of Fermont's involvement during the construction process of DJB since 1921 is explained in correspondence between the head of the DJB Bandjermasin branch and the Director of DJB in Batavia Number 95/1 dated 22 April 1922 concerning Nieuwe Gebouw De Javasche Bank Bandjermasin (new building of DJB Bandjermasin). In total there are 23 De Java Bank buildings throughout Indonesia, starting from the Head Office in Batavia in 1828 to the 23rd DJB branch in Madiun in 1928.



**Fig. 9:** De Java Bank Building in Indonesia

Source: Emalia (ed.)

Unlike other regions in Indonesia that actively preserve their historical buildings, in Banjarmasin City, the historical relics of the spice trade from the time of the Banjarmasin Sultanate to the period of colonialism are left with almost nothing. Although residential buildings still exist, many are in a state of disrepair, or changes that greatly interfere with their authenticity. While the buildings built by the Dutch East Indies government are almost nonexistent. Until the 1950s, there were at least 24 buildings left behind by the Dutch East Indies Government in Banjarmasin, but currently, only one still exist and is maintained according to its original condition, the Banjarmasin Cathedral Church.



**Fig. 10:** Cathedral Church in Banjarmasin (a) New; (b) Old

Source: (a) Author (b) KITLV Collection

As these buildings are mostly gone, the canals that were once built have turned into roadside drainage channels. Many canal paths have been lost because they are covered by buildings and the width of the canal has narrowed and at some points is not connected or cut off. The canal can no longer be passed by boats due to its depth and also many bridges connecting the road and building site are very low. The roads that were once built are all still there but they have become paved roads. Old street names have also been changed, such as Wilhelmina Weg Street, Militaireweg, Marinelaan, Heerengracht, Palmenlaan, Oranjeplein, Kerklaan, Kroesenlaan, Emmastraat, Resident De Haanweg, Havenweg, Schans van Thuijl Weg, Swartplein, Postweg, Coenbrug, and others.

## Conclusion

Traces of the Spice Route in the Architecture and the City of Banjarmasin are clearly visible in the history of the civilization of cities in the archipelago. There are historical similarities and cultural connections between the era of spice trade between kingdoms and also the struggle against colonialism.

In addition to the formation of the city, the spice trade also contributed to the architectural diversity existing and became the basis for the establishment of 12 types of

Banjarese architecture today based on similarities in dominant physical aspects, especially spatial layout and roof shape. The development of local architecture diversity was influenced by the knowledge acquired by merchants before colonization, which was applied to their residences, and modern architecture built by the colonial government in the form of various facilities and infrastructure. Another trace of the spice trade is the emergence of colonial-style building designs with the use of building materials and building techniques that are different from those of the Banjar people, namely buildings made of bricks. This condition was certainly very different in the past, as the city's peat swamps were only suitable for floating or stilted buildings with wooden construction. Unfortunately, due to environmental factors and the policies of local leaders in the past, almost all of the historic buildings from the spice trade era no longer survive, except for one church building that still survives today.

The emergence of the modern city of Banjarmasin, on Tatas Island with Tatas Fort as its center, as well as the emergence of road networks, canal networks, and residential clusters are the beginning of the formation of the city of Banjarmasin. It consists of three stages: the stage where Kampung Keraton evolved into the center of the Banjar Kingdom, the stage of the establishment of territorial arrangements due to the spice trade contract between the kingdom and the Dutch East India Company, and the stage of territorial control by the colonial government.

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