POLICY AND LINGUISTIC CONSIDERATIONS IN THE PROPOSED RENAMING OF WEST JAVA PROVINCE TO TATAR SUNDA

Sarip1, Diana Fitriana2, Aidul Fitriciada Azhari3, Absori4, Elya Kusuma Dewi5, Hanif Nurcholish Adiantika6, Nurkhaeriyah7

1Faculty of Law, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Indonesia, E-mail: sarip@umc.ac.id
2Faculty of Law, Universitas Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya, Indonesia, E-mail: diana.fitriana@dsn.ubharajaya.ac.id
3Faculty of Law, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia, E-mail: aidul.f.azhari@ums.ac.id
4Faculty of Law, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia, E-mail: abs154@ums.ac.id
5Faculty of Law, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Indonesia, E-mail: elya.kusuma.dewi@umc.ac.id
6Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Indonesia, E-mail: hanifadiantika@gmail.com
7Faculty of Islamic Religion, Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Indonesia, E-mail: nurkhaeriyah@umc.ac.id

Submitted: May 3, 2024; Reviewed: May 17, 2024; Accepted: June 7, 2024, DOI: 10.25041/cepalo.v8no1.3464

Abstract

This legal study investigates the implications of the proposed renaming of West Java Province to Tatar Sunda Province, employing the approach of intuitive semantic dualism to address issues of language, territory, ethnicity, and national identity. The research draws on data from academic journals, books, media reports, and interviews, comparing secondary data with field opinions on the languages and bordering regions of the Sundanese dialect. The findings reveal that, although the Sundanese linguistic system was expected to play a crucial role in the renaming process and promote territorial unity, it falls short due to the inclusion of regions such as Banten, pre-independence Batavia, and bilingual border areas in the east and north. This geographic and linguistic complexity means that the name "Tatar Sunda" does not accurately reflect the distinct linguistic, cultural, and territorial identities of the Sundanese people as described by J. van Baal. Legally, while there are no barriers to the renaming policy, the proposed name fails to adequately represent the region’s diverse identities. Consequently, the study recommends further exploration of more representative alternatives that align with the existing legal framework, ensuring that the name change is not only legally valid but also appropriately reflects the region's identity.

Keywords: Tatar Sunda, Tribe and Nation, Policy.

A. Introduction

The possibility of renaming a province requires careful consideration of history, culture, customs, and academic research. On December 2, 2020, a Sundanese Provincial Academic Paper and a URL for the Sunda Province Support Questionnaire were shared in the WhatsApp group of the Cirebon Arts Caucus.1 These documents demonstrate the seriousness with which

the proposal to rename West Java Province to 'Tatar Sunda'—a name perceived as elegant and representative—is being considered. The academic manuscript lists 'Sunda Province', 'Pasundan Province', 'Tatar Sunda Province', and 'Priangan' as synonyms, highlighting the regional identity and language affiliation of the area. Regarding the name change, the Kanoman Palace has expressed no objections, emphasizing that Cirebon's historical ties to the Kingdom of Padjajaran must be considered. However, some cultural observers from Cirebon oppose the renaming to 'Tatar Sunda', citing that since 2003, Cirebon has been recognized as a distinct ethnic group as reaffirmed by its separate listing in the 2010 population census.

Bekasi has also expressed interest in becoming part of the new Indonesian capital region. Interestingly, the Presidium for the Establishment of the Cirebon Province (P3C), which initially sought separation from West Java, later endorsed the outcomes of the Sundanese Congress on October 12, 2020, prioritizing the welfare of the people. Anthropological studies have proposed that the criteria for statehood—specific language and customs—do not strictly apply to the Sundanese, who possess a clear unity and power structure. Nina Herlina Lubis' dissertation illustrates that in the 19th century, the Priangan region constituted only one-sixth of Java Island's territory, excluding areas such as the Batavia Residency, Cirebon Residency, Banyumas Residency, and Banten. Edi S. Ekadjati, who provided an introduction to Lubis' work, concurs with these defined boundaries of the Priangan area. The contributions of Nina Lubis and Kusnaka Adimihardja have also been pivotal in the establishment of Banten Province on October 4, 2000, particularly through their research on the socio-cultural dynamics of Banten.

These historical and anthropological insights have significant legal implications for the proposed renaming of West Java Province to 'Tatar Sunda Province. The exclusion of certain regions from the traditional boundaries of the Sundanese territory raises questions about the legal and cultural appropriateness of the new name. Legal analysis must consider whether the proposed name accurately reflects the historical and socio-cultural identities of the regions involved and aligns with existing legal frameworks. Furthermore, the establishment of Banten Province, supported by comprehensive socio-cultural research, sets a legal precedent for evaluating regional identity and territorial nomenclature. Thus, thorough legal scrutiny and possibly new legislative measures are necessary to ensure that the renaming process respects historical boundaries and cultural identities while fulfilling legal criteria.

Unlike Ajip Rosidi, who, as cited by Nasehudin, defines the Sundanese ethnic group as encompassing both West Java and Banten, Ajip's statement particularly emphasizes the areas where Sundanese is spoken. Reiza D. Dienaputra makes a distinction in defining 'Urang Sunda' or 'Tatar Sunda', using the word 'or' as a connecting choice that leads to two interpretations: one


2 Asep Saeful Muhtadi et al., ‘Naskah Akademis Kajian Perubahan Nama Jawa Barat Dengan Nama Yang Nyunda’ (Bandung, 2015).


6 Lubis.


based on descent (ius sanguinis), which determines or grants citizenship based on one's lineage, and the other on birthplace (ius soli), where a person is considered ‘Urang Sunda’ if they are born in the Sunda region. Reiza's approach, which combines aspects of ethnicity with concepts of nationality and citizenship, however, overlooks the geographic connotations of 'Tatar Sunda'. Language use in daily social practices further illustrates the cultural and geographic overlaps. West Java and Banten are commonly referred to as ‘Tanah Pasundan’ or 'Tatar Sunda'. Indrawardana’s research into language usage confirmed that Sundanese speakers predominantly populate the targeted areas.

Language usage in everyday social practices significantly defines cultural regions, with West Java and Banten often referred to as ‘Tanah Pasundan’ or ‘Tatar Sunda’. Research by Indrawardana highlights that Sundanese speakers are prevalent in these areas, a fact supported by a 2011 research from the Faculties of Letters at Padjajaran University that aligns West Java with 'Sundanese Tatars'. Contrasting findings from Muhsin's team suggest differences in the geographic spread of Sundanese speakers. Further studies, such as those by Holy Rafika Dhona on Sundanese newspapers during the Colonial era, identify natural boundaries between Sundanese and Javanese language areas, confirming the Sundanese speakers within their traditional region. The Sri Baduga Museum's mappings include all of West Java, which encompasses Cirebon City, Cirebon Regency, and Indramayu Regency, adding to the complexity of defining 'Tatar Sunda' boundaries in terms of language, culture, or geography.

The ambiguity surrounding the exact borders of 'Tatar Sunda' prompts significant legal debates, particularly regarding proposals to rename West Java Province to 'Tatar Sunda' to avoid confusion from dual interpretations. This duality is further accentuated following the establishment of Banten as a separate province, which redefined the geographical notion that West Java is no longer the westernmost area on the island of Java. Historian J. van Baal’s comments on distinct Sundanese groups with defined, albeit unspecified, territories, alongside Nina Herlina Lubis' historical analysis of 'Priangan', raise critical legal questions about whether the broader 'Tatar Sunda' region should include both West Java and Banten in renaming considerations. These issues necessitate a thorough legal examination of the historical and cultural identities of the regions involved to determine the appropriateness and legal validity of the proposed name change, ensuring it aligns with existing legal frameworks and accurately represents the territorial boundaries and cultural heritage of the Sundanese people.

This research explores the concept of intuitive semantic dualism in the discourse surrounding the proposed name change of the province to 'Tatar Sunda'. The conceptual framework for this analysis leverages J. van Baal’s argument on the distinct ethnic and national identities of the Sundanese, which are demarcated by unique language, traditions, and geographic areas that set them apart from other groups such as the Javanese, Madurese, and

---

10 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
Buginese. Furthermore, the research incorporates Nina Herlina Lubis’ perspective, which characterizes the Sunda region as encompassing one-sixth of the area of Java Island. It is important to note that this research explicitly excludes Banten from the West Java region, recognizing it as a separate province. Intuitive semantic dualism is employed to examine how ethnicity and nationhood relate to the proposed new name 'Tatar Sunda,' which is intended to replace 'West Java'. The research generally covers the entirety of West Java, applying Sundanese language and territorial standards to explore these concepts.

B. Discussion

The research on the proposed renaming of West Java to 'Tatar Sunda' critically examines the legal and territorial implications of the absence of defined boundaries for the Sundanese people, as initially articulated by J. van Baal and later clarified by Nina Herlina Lubis. The research methodology employs a comprehensive legal analysis of secondary data sources, including historical and contemporary legal documents, statutes, and case law related to the ethnicity and nationhood of the Sundanese. Additionally, regional and language distribution maps of West Java are utilized to provide a foundational understanding of the regional dynamics and linguistic characteristics. This method ensures a thorough legal examination of the historical, cultural, and territorial considerations pertinent to the renaming proposal, aligning with existing legal frameworks and principles of territorial integrity and cultural representation.

In order to deepen the analysis and enhance the validity of findings, primary data were also collected through structured discussions with individuals from various regions of West Java, including Ciamis, Kuningan, Cirebon, Karawang, Indramayu, Bekasi, and Jakarta. These discussions facilitated the conversion of conversational insights into documented data and facilitated an exploration of intuitive semantic dualism—the core analytical framework of the research. This approach proved crucial in establishing connections between documented evidence and personal perspectives, thus furnishing a richer context for addressing the research question concerning the proposed provincial name change.

Furthermore, the research extends to examining border areas to scrutinize how ethnicity and nationhood are expressed through language use and cultural traits among the people living on the fringes of the proposed 'Tatar Sunda'. The combined use of documents, discussions, and border area data aims to yield comprehensive insights. This rigorous triangulation of data sources serves to substantiate the research’s findings and to develop a consensus among academic texts and public opinion regarding the renaming of West Java to 'Tatar Sunda'. The ultimate goal is to reconcile academic perspectives with societal views, thereby providing well-rounded answers to the issues surrounding the proposed name change.

The Conceptual Framework of Language and Territory Intuitive Semantic Dualism

The use of a conceptual framework rooted in intuitive semantic dualism may be perceived as unconventional by some within the legal community. However, this framework is intentionally employed to navigate potential legal complexities and avoid contentious political debates. As highlighted by Samford, failures in system formation often result from a lack of thoughtful reflection before instituting changes. Given the inherent sensitivity of discussions surrounding language and territory, they are approached with caution to prevent the emergence of mutual blame or justifications. Semantic dualism offers a lens through which to analyze the

17 Lubis, Kehidupan Kaum Menak Priangan 1800-1942.
reciprocal relationship between symbols, with language and territory serving as primary objects of inquiry in this research. From a legal perspective, language and territory are integral to the formation of national identity and citizenship, with elements such as language, culture, and geographic region playing pivotal roles in shaping these concepts. Therefore, the proposed conceptual shift, exemplified by the renaming of West Java Province to 'Tatar Sunda', represents a significant legal and cultural redefinition that warrants careful consideration within the legal framework.

This research builds on a conceptual framework that addresses intuitive semantic dualism and explores nation formation and national components as outlined by J. van Baal. Although van Baal hesitated to definitively describe a nation, he managed to clarify the concepts employed in his research. This is evident in his differentiation between 'ethnicity' (stam) and 'nation' (volk, people), where the term 'tribe' refers to autonomous regions, and 'nation' more strongly relates to state dynamics. The conceptual framework is further supported by John Gilissen and Frits Gorle, who underscore the cultural criteria that define a nation. This approach provides an alternative to the structured positivistic-systemic paradigms commonly used to constrain knowledge.

Julaina Nopiah utilizes semantic dualism to describe life experiences by distinguishing between two equal yet contradictory traits, exemplified by the words "Čempedak" and "jackfruit." Despite their superficial similarities, discerning the differences between these fruits requires a deep understanding of their characteristics. To avoid conflating their form and nature, intuitive reasoning allows for a nuanced interpretation of an object's form and properties. Discrepancies are analyzed across dimensions such as quantity, quality, relationship, place, time, position, condition, passion, and action.

The terms "tribe" and "nation" also exhibit many similarities at first glance, and are often used interchangeably in studies, which can lead to confusion. However, intuitive semantic dualism is crucial for identifying subtle differences, focusing on nuances of language and the idea of borderless territories, even though these distinctions are sometimes viewed as unconventional. In the Indonesian Dictionary, "ethnicity" broadly refers to a group of people or families of the same descent, similar to clans or lineages, while a "nation" is defined by shared ancestry, kinship, customs, language, history, and self-governance.

J. van Baal differentiates between ethnicity and nation by emphasizing that ethnicity focuses on autonomous areas while the concept of a nation encompasses similarities in government or, in van Baal's terms, the state. Understanding these differences allows for a

22 Otje Salman, Teori Hukum Menginat, Mengumpulkan, Dan Membuka Kembali.
28 Kebudayaan, ‘Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Online’.
clearer recognition of how language, tradition, and territory manifest in reality. National ties often overlook specific territorial boundaries, ultimately fostering national values as a form of ideological expression. Ethnic groups within a given territory cultivate ties among citizens, which, at a modern level, evolve into citizenship. Although such ties may not be universally applicable, their relevance cannot be dismissed in specific research contexts.

Language and region play crucial roles in the success or failure of renaming new provinces, serving as symbolic representations of cultural and regional identity. The proposed renaming of West Java to 'Tatar Sunda' exemplifies how academic discussions can evolve when examined through the lens of language, thereby reaffirming ethnicity and national identity and potentially legitimizing the new name. This process underscores the dual possibilities of success or failure in renaming endeavors. From the perspective of administrative law, the proposed name change would necessitate a comprehensive legal framework to address procedural requirements and ensure compliance with constitutional principles. This includes considerations of public participation, legal validity, and the preservation of historical and cultural heritage. Additionally, from a constitutional law standpoint, the consequences of the renaming extend to questions of territorial integrity, state symbols, and the balance of power between central and regional governments. Success in the renaming process could establish a precedent for similar initiatives, reshaping the legal and administrative landscape, while failure may result in legal challenges and political implications, potentially reverting the province to its former name. Hence, the renaming of provinces involves intricate legal and constitutional implications that warrant careful examination and deliberation.

The decision to rename a province should not disregard the significance of geographic factors. However, the success of a name change depends on its alignment with local language, traditions, and territorial context. The relationship between failure and success in renaming is intricate; it transcends superficial analyses or lack of support for change. Rather, objective assessments of the impacts of such changes are vital in guiding these decisions. These assessments, however, possess their own strengths and weaknesses, such as an overreliance on intuitive semantic dualism, which may fall short of academic standards. Despite this, the conceptual approach shifts the discourse from mythological claims to a more rational framework, potentially garnering acceptance across diverse groups, including both proponents and opponents of the name change. In terms of legal research, a thorough examination of relevant administrative and constitutional law is imperative to understand the procedural requirements, legal implications, and potential consequences of renaming a province. This includes analyzing precedents, constitutional provisions, and administrative procedures governing territorial changes, ensuring that any proposed name change complies with legal standards and respects constitutional principles. Additionally, legal research should consider the implications of renaming on administrative structures, political dynamics, and citizen rights, providing insights into the broader legal ramifications of such decisions.

J. van Baal posits that a nation is defined by its language and traditions. In Indonesia, however, the concept of a nation also encompasses territorial aspects, as seen with the Sundanese. For a group to be considered a nation in its own right, there must be unity rather than division or conflict. In the context of the Sundanese, being a nation pertains to the language and traditions prevalent in the community, along with the geographical region. Conversely,
tribal identity relates more to specific regional or area names within West Java. The simultaneous use of 'nation' and 'ethnicity' merits careful consideration in the renaming process of the province.

Research, including works by J. van Baal and Nina Herlina Lubis, highlights that the term "Tatar Sunda" or the current Sundanese region primarily encompasses the Western and Eastern Priangan areas. However, if defining Sundanese by its language, the scope extends further, including Banten. Therefore, this research will explore the renaming of the province to 'Tatar Sunda' by analyzing policy implications, geographic scope, and linguistic factors.

**Supporting Policy of Changing Province Name**

The emergence of the concept of regional autonomy within the unitary state framework of Indonesia reflects a significant development rooted in both legal anthropology and legal history. As the founders of the nation deliberated on its governmental structure, including options such as a unitary state, federal system, sultanate, or kingdom, their ultimate choice of a unitary model did not inherently negate diversity. Rather, their vision and astuteness in crafting such a governance structure deserve profound acknowledgment. This decision to adopt a unitary state model laid the foundation for Indonesia's embrace of the concept of regional autonomy, leading to the subdivision of its territory into provinces, districts, and cities. This decentralization was aimed at harnessing the unique potentials of each region across the Indonesian archipelago.

Central to the central government's policies was the renaming of regions, be they provinces, districts, or cities, reflecting the profound objectives of these reforms. From a legal anthropology perspective, the adoption of regional autonomy underscores the cultural and social diversity inherent in Indonesia, as well as the legal frameworks developed to accommodate and regulate this diversity within the unitary state structure. Additionally, from a legal historical standpoint, the evolution of regional autonomy and the renaming of regions reflect the dynamic interplay between legal traditions, colonial legacies, and indigenous governance systems, shaping the contemporary legal landscape of Indonesia. Therefore, a comprehensive examination of legal anthropology and legal history is essential to understand the cultural, social, and legal dimensions of Indonesia's regional autonomy and the renaming of regions.

Regional autonomy, a cornerstone of Indonesia's governance framework, has played a pivotal role in driving economic prosperity and is closely intertwined with the unitary state model. The implementation of autonomy across such a vast and diverse area presents considerable challenges, prompting the government to establish policies serving as benchmarks for regional development. These guidelines not only assist regions in their development initiatives but also aid in the cultivation of local identities aligned with their aspirations. From a legal perspective, the concept of regional autonomy reflects the dynamic interplay between central authority and local governance structures within the unitary state framework. This legal framework aims to balance the need for centralized governance with the recognition of local autonomy, fostering socio-economic development while preserving cultural and regional diversity.

Moreover, from a historical standpoint, the evolution of regional autonomy in Indonesia reflects the nation's efforts to reconcile diverse cultural and socio-political identities within the framework of a unified state, drawing upon historical precedents and indigenous governance practices. Therefore, a holistic understanding of the legal, historical, and socio-economic dimensions of regional autonomy is essential for comprehensively assessing its impact on

Indonesia’s governance structure and national development. It is crucial for the government to ensure ongoing developmental success and to accommodate regional desires through supportive policies. These government measures are instrumental in organizing urban areas and enhancing the quality of life for both residents and migrants.\textsuperscript{34}

One notable policy was the renaming of the province in West Java to 'Tatar Sunda.' This change, authorized on March 26, 2012, by Gamawan Fauzi, who signed guidelines on the naming of regions\textsuperscript{35}, was later ratified by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia on April 3, 2012. This initiative aimed to ensure administrative coherence in local governance, particularly in decision-making processes concerning regional officials. Regional governments and communities are encouraged to propose name changes for their areas based on historical, cultural, customary considerations, or to avoid confusion with similarly named regions.\textsuperscript{36}

In addition to the points previously mentioned, several specific requirements and procedures need to be adhered to when changing a name: (1) the process should respect the desires of the local community; (2) an academic research detailing the rationale for the name change must be completed; (3) the governor of West Java is required to submit a formal request to the Provincial Regional People's Representative Council; (4) subsequently, the Regional People's Representative must make a formal decision to either approve or reject the name change; (5) furthermore, the governor needs to forward a formal notification regarding the proposed name change. These steps are designed not only to ensure systematic administrative procedures but also to avoid any arbitrary decisions that might suggest a ruler's infallibility, a notion summed up in the old saying "the king can do no wrong."\textsuperscript{37} Failure to adhere to these steps signifies a lack of administrative discipline and a deficiency in regional development initiatives.

The endorsement of local communities and the preparation of scholarly documents are crucial in renaming a province. These academic documents should involve local universities and/or professional associations to ensure an understanding of the region's history, culture, and traditions. Utilizing institutions or associations from outside the area could lead to misunderstandings. The broad support of the public is critical in the renaming process, and without it, the Directorate General of Public Administration at the Ministry of Home Affairs may withhold approval. While proponents might advocate for renaming the province to 'Tatar Sunda', such a change is legally permissible under the current framework.

The Territory of West Java and Tatar Sunda Provinces

A province cannot exist without a defined territory, just as a country must possess land to be recognized officially. Likewise, a region without a name remains anonymous and unrecognized.\textsuperscript{38} This illustrates an intuitive semantic dualism used to align identities with specific areas and names to achieve harmony. If an identity does not resonate with the local community, it creates a region lacking strong citizen ties, essential for forming bonds of

citizenship. These bonds, derived from national affiliations, generally transcend administrative definitions such as citizenship alone. National identity often evolves into ideological connections, highlighting the importance of regional boundaries and language as key elements in binding identities, especially in the context of renaming West Java Province.

Java Island is divided into three major administrative regions: East Java Province, Central Java Province, and West Java Province, located along the latitude of 6° S to 10° S and longitude of 96° E to 115° E. Geographically, West Java spans from 5° 50' to 7° 50' South Latitude and from 104° 48' to 108° 48' East Longitude. It is bordered to the north by Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, and the Java Sea; to the west by Banten Province; to the east by Central Java Province; and to the south by the Indian Ocean. West Java covers an area of 37,851.11 km², with Bandung as its capital. The province was officially established post-independence on August 19, 1950, under Law no. 11/1950 concerning the Establishment of West Java Province, which is celebrated annually as its anniversary. It is pertinent to note that in discussions of regional autonomy, the focus is more on terrestrial rather than maritime or aerial extents.

On January 1st, 1926, the regions were officially named Province Oost Java, Province Midden Java, and Province West Java, as per Staatsblad 1925/378 dated August 14, 1925, with amendments following under Staatsblad 1925/661, 1926/326, 1928/27 Jo. No. 28, 1928/557, 1930/438, and 1932/507. During this period, the Sundanese referred to it as 'Pasundan Province,' which automatically became a province on August 19, 1945. However, the name 'Pasundan Province' was not officially recognized, as researchers have yet to find a legal basis to substantiate it. Furthermore, historical records do not show that the Sundanese tribes and people were ever integrated into the youth movements of West Java. This includes during the period when Budi Utomo and other organizations were nurturing a sense of nationalism without succumbing to regionalism, as evidenced by the absence of regional names like 'Sekar Roekoen' in their titles.

A prevailing sense of nationalism was evident during the National Youth Organization Conference (KOPN) held on August 15, 1925, in Lux Orientalis (Jakarta), where the organization’s name remained unchanged. This sentiment persisted through the first Youth Congress from April 30 to May 2, 1926, and the second congress on October 28, 1928, which both refrained from adopting Sundanese names, underscoring a continued commitment to national unity.

Despite modern claims by some media and cultural observers from the Cianjur

---

48 Yoga Fernando Rizkqi Endah Puspita Sari, ‘Smith’s Natopnalism Persepektive in the Indonesian History Textbooks on the Youth Oath 1928 Naraative,’ *Historika* 7, no. 2 (2019).
Region advocating for a name change to 'Sunda Province' or 'Pasundan Province,' due to the predominant Sundanese ethnicity, researchers argue this perspective does not align with the Indonesian ethos, where the majority language is not used as the language of unity. Additionally, the historical narrative of youth organizations in West Java reflects a national character that eschews regional self-interest.49

When West Java Province had its capital in Batavia, there were five Residency and six Stadsgemeenten. Banten Residency consists of three districts: Serang (Stbl.1925 / 379); Pandeglang (Stbl.1925 / 380); Lebak (Stbl.1925 / 381). Karesidenan Batavia, consisting of three districts: Batavia (Stbl.1925 / 382); Meester Cornelis (Stbl. 1925/383); Karawang (Stbl.1925 / 385). Karesidenan Buitenzorg (Bogor), consists of three districts: Bogor (Stbl.1925 / 384); Sukabumi (Stbl.1925 / 386); Cianjur (Stbl. 1925/387). Priangan residency consists of five districts: Bandung (Stbl.1925 / 388); Sumedang (Stbl.1925 / 389); Garut (Stbl.1925 / 390); Tasikmalaya (Stbl.1925 / 391); Ciamis (Stbl. 1925/392). Cirebon residency consists of four districts: Cirebon (Stbl.1925 / 393); Brass (Stbl.1925 / 394); Indramayu (Stbl.1925 / 395); and Majalengka (Stbl.1925 / 396). The township (Stadsgemeente) consisted of six: Batavia (Stbl.1926 / 366 and 1929/314); Meester Cornelis (Stbl.1926 / 367); Buitenzorg (Stbl. 1926/368); Bandung (Stbl.1926 / 369); Cirebon (Stbl.1926 / 370); and Sukabumi (Stbl. 1926/371).

In 1862, the Cirebon Residency included the areas of Cirebon, Indramayu, Majalengka, Kuningan, and Galuh, but not Kandanghaur.50 This configuration is a topic that remains underexplored and is not widely discussed. Consequently, it may be more pertinent to focus on contemporary issues rather than delving into a distant past still shrouded in debate. Historically, when the Dutch East Indies governed this region in Indonesia, it was part of what is now West Java province, often referred to at the time as 'Pasundan Province'. The use of the name 'Pasundan' might have been considered inappropriate since regions such as the Batavia Residency outside Karawang and the entire Banten Residency were distinct and later became separate provinces. The term 'Priangan' geographically covers only one-sixth of Java Island, highlighting the inconsistency in regional nomenclature. As of October 20, 2020, the westernmost area of Java Island officially became Banten Province. This change reflects historical ties to the Sundanese kingdom, emphasizing geographical rather than tribal distinctions.51

The concept of 'Tatar Sunda' has evolved significantly over time, particularly with the geographical developments and administrative changes in West Java. Originally, 'Tatar Sunda' encompassed all areas of western Java, including what are now known as Banten, Galuh, and Kalapa (modern-day Jakarta), according to Shrimp Ahmad Darsa's research which references the character Haji Purwa from around 1363 AD, identifying Cirebon as part of Galuh Pakwan.52 Further studies by Weishaguna highlighted prehistoric sites across Parigi (Ciamis), Jampang (Sukabumi), Bandung, and Banten as part of 'Tatar Sunda', focusing on Karawang, under the Batavia Residency during the Dutch East Indies period, rather than including Jakarta.53

Despite Banten becoming a separate province and developing its own identity, it retains linguistic and cultural ties to the Sunda region, indicating that 'Tatar Sunda' traditionally spans beyond the current boundaries of West Java. This is supported by the works of Budi Sujati and Abdul Syukur who still apply 'Tatar Sunda' to include Banten in their studies about West Java. The notion is further affirmed by researchers from the Galuh region, asserting that 'Tatar Sunda' includes both West Java and Banten, without regional conflicts. This acknowledgment of a broader historical and cultural 'Tatar Sunda' reflects the dynamic nature of regional identities in Indonesia, important in both academic and cultural contexts.

Geographical Language Speakers in West Java

Language is intricately connected to the geographical contexts in which it is spoken, reflecting the circumstances and realities of life. This idea suggests that language not only expresses facts but is also shaped by the specific conditions of ethnicity, nation, and region, which serve as criteria for establishing truths about language use. For instance, when we consider the statement "Your smile is so charming," it is not only about the smile itself but also involves societal perceptions of what constitutes a charming smile.

The work of Van Baal plays a crucial role in identifying geographical distinctions among Sundanese speakers, which sets them apart from other ethnic groups in Indonesia. The Sundanese language, with its unique cultural and territorial identifiers, differs from other regional languages. Although comprehensive research has yet to pinpoint clear divisions, there is some knowledge about the dialectical variations within the Sundanese language. These include: (1) the Eastern dialects found mainly in the Cirebon and Majalengka areas; (2) the Northeastern dialect prevalent in much of Kuningan Regency; (3) the Southeastern dialect most common in the Ciamis region; (4) the Southern dialect in the Bandung area; (5) the Northern dialect around Bogor; and (6) the Western dialect, characteristic of the Banten province.

In the regions of Cirebon and Majalengka, the Eastern dialect of Sundanese is spoken primarily in elementary schools (SD) and junior high schools (SMP), where the Sundanese language is part of the curriculum. Despite this formal education in Sundanese, many locals prefer to identify themselves as Majalengka or Cirebon people rather than Sundanese, favoring the Cirebon language in their daily interactions. This preference underscores a distinct cultural identity that, while influenced by Sundanese, remains uniquely their own. Ahmad Zein from the Ciledug area also noted that the Sundanese spoken there varies from that in other areas like Kuningan, further illustrating the regional linguistic diversity. Both Cirebon and Sundanese languages are taught in schools, yet the inclination to not identify as Sundanese among Cirebon residents strengthens Erna Tresna’s observations regarding the distinct identity of the Cirebon tribe.

61 Sawabi, ‘Suku Bangsa Ini Bernama Cirebon’.
In Kuningan Regency, the local variant of the Sundanese language falls into the category of Northeast Sundanese dialect, as identified by Mumun Munawar. Unlike Cirebon, Kuningan does not include the Cirebon language in its educational system, focusing instead on Sundanese as local content. The presence of the Cirebon language in Kuningan has primarily emerged through trade interactions rather than formal education. Hanif Nur출 noted that while the Cirebon language is understood by many in Kuningan due to these interactions, it is not formally taught in schools where Sundanese prevails.

Brebes area was historically under Kasultanan Cirebon and it shares closer ideological ties with Cirebon than its administrative alignment with Central Java Province. The genesis of the Sundanese spoken language in this region, particularly in the Kersana area (formerly known as Ketanggungan West), can be attributed to the influence of Brebes Javanese, which also shares linguistic ties with neighboring areas like Banjarhardjo and Kobokan. These areas exhibit a mix of Sundanese influences from Cirebon and Kuningan. In Brebes, while Sundanese, which affects both the eastern and northeast dialects, is not formally taught in schools, it is acquired through daily interactions within the community.

In Garut, situated near the ancient Galuh kingdom, several traditional Islamic boarding schools predominantly use the Javanese language, influenced by Kyai (religious teachers) who have studied extensively in Javanese regions. However, most modern boarding schools in Garut now use Indonesian as the primary language of instruction, with occasional use of Sundanese for communication. By contrast, in Ciamis Regency, especially in the areas bordering Central Java, Javanese is more commonly used in daily life, while Sundanese is included in the school curriculum.

In the Karawang area, once part of the Batavia Karasidenan, the linguistic landscape is diverse, incorporating Sundanese, Cirebon, and Betawi languages in everyday life. Educational institutions in Karawang offer Sundanese language courses, whereas Javanese and Betawi are learned through local community interactions. Meanwhile, in Bekasi, Betawi language predominates in daily use, but Sundanese is also part of the educational curriculum, reflecting the area's cultural integration.

Although the existing map delineates certain dialectal divisions of the Sundanese language, it is important to note that these boundaries are not definitive and are open to various interpretations. After the separation of Banten from West Java province, it has become evident that the Sundanese language extends beyond the confines of West Java, challenging traditional perceptions of Sundanese tribal and national identity as proposed by J. van Baal. This suggests a broader, more fluid notion of cultural and linguistic identity that transcends conventional administrative boundaries. Moreover, the linguistic landscape of West Java province itself is diverse, with other languages prevalent in the northern regions such as Javanese, Cirebon, and Indramayu languages, including areas like Karawang and Bekasi, where Sundanese is not the

---

63 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
dominant dialect. This diversity further supports the idea that the concept of the Sundanese as a distinct tribe or nation with fixed territorial boundaries is becoming increasingly outdated.\(^{70}\)

In the eastern parts adjacent to Central Java, Sundanese is also spoken, albeit in a variant that diverges from the Priangan dialect. Historical and geographic evidence ties this variation to the heritage of the Galuh Kingdom\(^{71}\), illustrating that the reach of the Sundanese language spills over into Central Java. Conversely, the Javanese language similarly permeates into West Java, reflecting the fluidity of linguistic boundaries. This perspective aligns with the understanding that language functions not only as a mere reflection of administrative demarcations but also as a vital element of identity for communities.\(^{72}\) It is through language that individuals and groups express their cultural affiliations, which can serve as both a unifying and divisive force.\(^{73}\) Current discussions, including those facilitated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, continue to explore these complex interconnections between language, identity, and territory.

A discrepancy regarding the linguistic identity of certain regions occurs, particularly Indramayu. Contrary to common belief, it was revealed through clarification with a local researcher that Indramayu predominantly uses the Cirebon Javanese language, specifically the Dermayon dialect, rather than Sundanese. This insight, whether arising from previous errors or other reasons, serves as critical evidence for researchers indicating that the Sundanese language and its associated cultural region—traditionally encapsulated within the term 'Tatar Sunda'—extend beyond the current boundaries of West Java province. This broader linguistic and cultural landscape includes parts of Brebes Regency in Central Java and the province of Banten, areas that were historically integrated within the former West Java Province.\(^{74}\)

C. Conclusion

It is evident that a holistic understanding of legal anthropology and legal history is essential. The proposed renaming initiative encountered multifaceted challenges that intersect with both legal and cultural domains. From an anthropological perspective, the proposed name change reflects the intricate interplay between language, culture, and regional identity. The concept of "Tatar Sunda" carries historical and cultural significance, encompassing a broader geographical and linguistic context beyond the current provincial boundaries. This historical depth adds layers of complexity to the renaming process, highlighting the need for careful consideration of cultural heritage and identity preservation. Furthermore, from a historical legal standpoint, the evolution of regional autonomy and the renaming of provinces in Indonesia's legal landscape reveals a narrative of governance structures adapting to cultural diversity and historical legacies. The founders' decision to adopt a unitary state model was not a rejection of diversity but rather a recognition of the nation's complex socio-cultural fabric. This historical context underscores the importance of preserving cultural heritage and identity within the legal framework, even amidst administrative reforms.

In light of these insights, the proposed renaming of West Java Province to Tatar Sunda represents a convergence of legal, anthropological, and historical considerations. While the central government's renaming policy aligns with legal norms, the practical implementation


\(^{72}\) Ibid.

\(^{73}\) Ibid.

faces challenges rooted in cultural and historical contexts. The proposal to reconsider the name or explore alternative options, such as "Sekar Rukun," acknowledges the need for a name that resonates with the diverse identities and linguistic landscape of the region. In conclusion, a comprehensive approach that integrates legal anthropology, legal history, and policy considerations is imperative in navigating the complexities of renaming initiatives. By embracing the rich cultural tapestry and historical heritage of the region, policymakers can ensure that renaming efforts honor the diverse identities and aspirations of the people, fostering unity and inclusivity within the legal framework of regional governance.

REFERENCES

A. Book

B. Journal


Singestecia, Regina, Eko Handoyo, Noorocmat Isdaryanto, Jurusan Politik, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial, and Universitas Negeri. ‘Partisipasi Politik Masyarakat Tionghoa Dalam

**C. Other**

Hanif Nurcolis Adiantika Interview. ‘Wawancara Hanif Nurcolis Adiantika Tentang


