

Java

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Java (Indonesian: ***Jawa***; Javanese: ꦗꦮ; Sundanese: ᮊᮥ) is an island of Indonesia. With a population of over 141 million (the island itself) or 145 million (the administrative region) as of 2015 Census released in December 2015,^[1] Java is home to 56.7 percent of the Indonesian population and is the most populous island on Earth. The Indonesian capital city, Jakarta, is located on western Java. Much of Indonesian history took place on Java. It was the center of powerful Hindu-Buddhist empires, the Islamic sultanates, and the core of the colonial Dutch East Indies. Java was also the center of the Indonesian struggle for independence during the 1930s and 1940s. Java dominates Indonesia politically, economically and culturally.

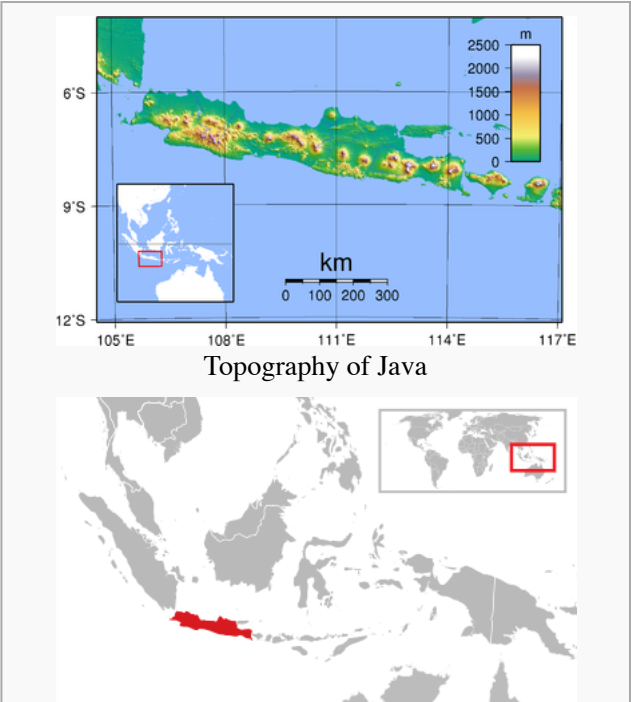
Formed mostly as the result of volcanic eruptions, Java is the 13th largest island in the world and the fifth largest in Indonesia. A chain of volcanic mountains forms an east–west spine along the island. Three main languages are spoken on the island: Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese. Of these, Javanese is the dominant; it is the native language of about 60 million people in Indonesia, most of whom live on Java. Furthermore, most residents are bilingual, speaking Indonesian (the official language of Indonesia) as their first or second language. While the majority of the people of Java are Muslim, Java has a diverse mixture of religious beliefs, ethnicities, and cultures.

Java is divided into four provinces, West Java, Central Java, East Java, and Banten, and two special regions, Jakarta and Yogyakarta.

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Java
Jawa (Indonesian)
ꦗꦮ (Javanese)
ᮊᮥ (Sundanese)



Geography

Location	Southeast Asia
Coordinates	7°29′30″S 110°00′16″E
Archipelago	Greater Sunda Islands
Area	128,297 km ² (49,536 sq mi)
Area rank	13th
Highest elevation	3,676 m (12,060 ft)
Highest point	Semeru

Administration

Republic of Indonesia

Provinces	Banten, Special Capital Region of Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java, Yogyakarta Special Region
Largest settlement	Jakarta

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	Demographics
Population	145 million (2015)
Pop. density	1,121 /km ² (2,903 /sq mi)
Ethnic groups	Javanese (inc. Tenggerese, Osing, Banyumasan, Cirebonese), Sundanese (inc. Bantenese, Baduy), Betawi, Madurese

Etymology

The origins of the name "Java" are not clear. One possibility is that the island was named after the *jáva-wut* plant, which was said to be common in the island during the time, and that prior to Indianization the island had different names.^[2] There are other possible sources: the word *jaú* and its variations mean "beyond" or "distant".^[3] And, in Sanskrit *yava* means barley, a plant for which the island was famous.^[3] "Yawadvipa" is mentioned in India's earliest epic, the Ramayana. Sugriva, the chief of Rama's army dispatched his men to Yawadvipa, the island of Java, in search of Sita.^[4] It was hence referred to in India by the Sanskrit name "yāvaka dvīpa" (dvīpa = island). Java is mentioned in the ancient Tamil text *Manimekalai* by Chithalai Chathanar that states that Java had a kingdom with a capital called Nagapuram.^{[5][6][7]} Another source states that the "Java" word is derived from a Proto-Austronesian root word, *Iawa* that meaning "home".^[8] The great island of Iabadiu or Jabadiu was mentioned in Ptolemy's *Geographia* composed around 150 CE Roman Empire. *Iabadiu* is said to mean "barley island", to be rich in gold, and have a silver town called Argyra at the west end. The name indicate Java,^[9] and seems to be derived from Hindu name Java-dvipa (Yawadvipa).

Geography



Mount Bromo in East Java

Java lies between Sumatra to the west and Bali to the east. Borneo lies to the north and Christmas Island is to the south. It is the world's 13th largest island. Java is surrounded by the Java Sea to the north, Sunda Strait to the west, the Indian Ocean to the south and Bali Strait and Madura Strait in the east.

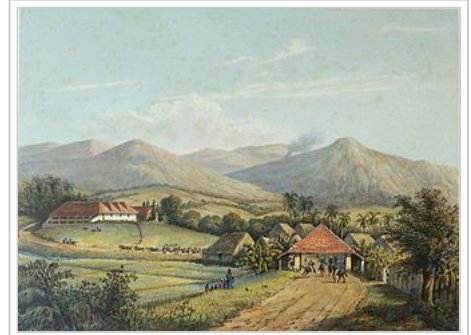
Java is almost entirely of volcanic origin; it contains thirty-eight mountains forming an east–west spine that have at one time or another been active volcanoes. The highest volcano in Java is Mount Semeru (3,676 m). The most active volcano in Java and also in Indonesia is Mount Merapi (2,930 m).

More mountains and highlands help to split the interior into a series of relatively isolated regions suitable for wet-rice cultivation; the rice lands of Java are among the richest in the world.^[10] Java was the first place where Indonesian coffee was grown, starting in 1699. Today, *Coffea arabica* is grown on the Ijen Plateau by small-holders and larger plantations.

The area of Java is approximately 150,000 km².^[11] It is about 1,000 km (620 mi) long and up to 210 km (130 mi) wide. The island's longest river is the 600 km long Solo River.^[12] The river rises from its source in central Java at the Lawu volcano, then flows north and eastward to its mouth in the Java Sea near the city of Surabaya. Other major rivers are Brantas, Citarum, Cimanuk and Serayu.

The average temperature ranges from 22 °C to 29 °C; average humidity is 75%. The northern coastal plains are normally hotter, averaging 34 °C during the day in the dry season. The south coast is generally cooler than the north, and highland areas inland are even cooler.^[13] The wet season begins in November and ends in April. During that rain falls mostly in the afternoons and intermittently during other parts of the year. The wettest months are January and February.

West Java is wetter than East Java and mountainous regions receive much higher rainfall. The Parahyangan highlands of West Java receive over 4,000 mm annually, while the north coast of East Java receives 900 mm annually.



Parahyangan highland near Buitenzorg, c. 1865–1872

Natural environment



Tanjung Gelam, a beach in Karimunjawa

The natural environment of Java is tropical rainforest, with ecosystems ranging from coastal mangrove forests on the north coast, rocky coastal cliffs on the southern coast, and low-lying tropical forests to high altitude rainforests on the slopes of mountainous volcanic regions in the interior. The Javan environment and climate gradually alters from west to east; from wet and humid dense rainforest in western parts, to a dry savanna environment in the east, corresponding to the climate and rainfall in these regions.

Originally Javan wildlife supported a rich biodiversity, where numbers of endemic species of flora and

fauna flourished; such as the Javan rhinoceros,^[14] Javan banteng, Javan warty pig, Javan hawk-eagle, Javan peafowl, Javan silvery gibbon, Javan lutung, Java mouse-deer, Javan rusa, and Javan leopard. With over 450 species of birds and 37 endemic species, Java is a birdwatcher's paradise.^[15] There are about 130 freshwater fish species in Java.^[16]

Since ancient times, people have opened the rainforest, altered the ecosystem, shaped the landscapes and created rice paddy and terraces to support the growing population. Javan rice terraces have existed for more than a millennium, and had supported ancient agricultural kingdoms. The growing human population has put severe pressure on Java's wildlife, as rainforests were diminished and confined to highland slopes or isolated peninsulas. Some of Java's endemic species are now critically endangered, with some already extinct; Java used to have Javan tigers and Javan elephants, but both have been rendered extinct. Today, several national parks exist in Java that protect the remnants of its fragile wildlife, such as Ujung Kulon, Mount Halimun-Salak, Gede Pangrango, Baluran, Meru Betiri and Alas Purwo.



Male Javan rhino shot in 1934 in West Java. Today only small numbers of Javan rhino survive in Ujung Kulon; it is the world's rarest rhino.

Administrative division

The island as well as nearby islands are administratively jointly, divided into four provinces:

- Banten, capital: Serang
- West Java, capital: Bandung
- Central Java, capital: Semarang

- East Java, capital: Surabaya

and two special regions:

- Jakarta
- Yogyakarta

and 4 cultural zones:

- Western Java (Banten, West Java, and Jakarta)
- Central Java (Central Java and Yogyakarta)
- East Java excluding Madura Island
- Madura Island

History

Fossilised remains of *Homo erectus*, popularly known as the "Java Man", dating back 1.7 million years were found along the banks of the Bengawan Solo River.^[17]

The island's exceptional fertility and rainfall allowed the development of wet-field rice cultivation, which required sophisticated levels of cooperation between villages. Out of these village alliances, small kingdoms developed. The chain of volcanic mountains and associated highlands running the length of Java kept its interior regions and peoples separate and relatively isolated.^[18] Before the advent of Islamic states and European colonialism, the rivers provided the main means of communication, although Java's many rivers are mostly short. Only the Brantas and Sala rivers could provide long-distance communication, and this way their valleys supported the centres of major kingdoms. A system of roads, permanent bridges and toll gates is thought to have been established in Java by at least the mid-17th century. Local powers could disrupt the routes as could the wet season and road use was highly dependent on constant maintenance. Subsequently, communication between Java's population was difficult.^[19]



Mount Sumbing surrounded by rice fields. Java's volcanic topography and rich agricultural lands are the fundamental factors in its history.

Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms era

The Taruma and Sunda kingdoms of western Java appeared in the 4th and 7th centuries respectively, while the Kalingga Kingdom sent embassies to China starting in 640.^{[20]:53,79} However, the first major principality was the Medang Kingdom that was founded in central Java at the beginning of the 8th century. Medang's religion centred on the Hindu god Shiva, and the kingdom produced some of Java's earliest Hindu temples on the Dieng Plateau. Around the 8th century the Sailendra dynasty rose in Kedu Plain and become the patron of Mahayana Buddhism. This ancient kingdom built monuments such as the 9th century Borobudur and Prambanan in central Java.



Prambanan Hindu temple

Around the 10th century the centre of power shifted from central to eastern Java. The eastern Javanese kingdoms of Kediri, Singhasari and Majapahit were mainly dependent on rice agriculture, yet also pursued trade within the Indonesian archipelago, and with China and India.

Majapahit was established by Wijaya^{[20]:201} and by the end of the reign of Hayam Wuruk (r. 1350–89) it claimed sovereignty over the entire Indonesian archipelago, although control was likely limited to Java, Bali and Madura. Hayam Wuruk's prime minister, Gajah Mada, led many of the kingdom's territorial conquests.^{[20]:234} Previous Javanese kingdoms had their power based in agriculture, however, Majapahit took control of ports and shipping lanes and became Java's first commercial empire. With the death of Hayam Wuruk and the coming of Islam to Indonesia, Majapahit went into decline.^{[20]:241}

Spread of Islam and rise of Islamic sultanates

Islam became the dominant religion in Java at the end of the 16th century. During this era, the Islamic kingdoms of Demak, Cirebon, and Banten were ascendant. The Mataram Sultanate became the dominant power of central and eastern Java at the end of the 16th century. The principalities of Surabaya and Cirebon were eventually subjugated such that only Mataram and Banten were left to face the Dutch in the 17th century.

Colonial periods

Java's contact with the European colonial powers began in 1522 with a treaty between the Sunda kingdom and the Portuguese in Malacca. After its failure the Portuguese presence was confined to Malacca, and to the eastern islands. In 1596, a four-ship expedition led by Cornelis de Houtman was the first Dutch contact with Indonesia.^[21] By the end of the 18th century the Dutch had extended their influence over the sultanates of the interior through the Dutch East India Company in Indonesia. Internal conflict prevented the Javanese from forming effective alliances against the Dutch. Remnants of the Mataram survived as the Surakarta (Solo) and Yogyakarta principalities. Javanese kings claimed to rule with divine authority and the Dutch helped them to preserve remnants of a Javanese aristocracy by confirming them as regents or district officials within the colonial administration.

Java's major role during the early part of the colonial period was as a producer of rice. In spice producing islands like Banda, rice was regularly imported from Java, to supply the deficiency in means of subsistence.^[22]

During the Napoleonic wars in Europe, the Netherlands fell to France, as did its colony in the East Indies. During the short-lived Daendels administration, as French proxy rule on Java, the construction of the Java Great Post Road was commenced in 1808. The road, spanning from Anyer in Western Java to Panarukan in East Java, served as a military supply route and was used in defending Java from British invasion.^[23]

In 1811, Java was captured by the British, becoming a possession of the British Empire, and Sir Stamford Raffles was appointed as the island's Governor. In 1814, Java was returned to the Dutch under the terms of the Treaty of Paris.^[24]

In 1815, there may have been five million people in Java.^[25] In the second half of the 18th century, population spurts began in districts along the north-central coast of Java, and in the 19th century population grew rapidly across the island. Factors for the great population growth include the impact of Dutch colonial rule including the imposed end to civil war in Java, the increase in the area under rice cultivation, and the introduction of food plants



The 9th century Borobudur Buddhist stupa in Central Java



Tea plantation in Java during Dutch colonial period, in or before 1926

such as casava and maize that could sustain populations that could not afford rice.^[26] Others attribute the growth to the taxation burdens and increased expansion of employment under the Cultivation System to which couples responded by having more children in the hope of increasing their families' ability to pay tax and buy goods.^[27] Cholera claimed 100,000 lives in Java in 1820.^[28]

The advent of trucks and railways where there had previously only been buffalo and carts, telegraph systems, and more coordinated distribution systems under the colonial government all contributed to famine elimination in Java, and in turn, population growth. There were no significant famines in Java from the 1840s through to the Japanese occupation in the 1940s.^[29] However, other sources claimed the Dutch's Cultivation system is linked to famines and epidemics in the 1840s, firstly in Cirebon and then Central Java, as cash crops such as indigo and sugar had to be grown instead of rice. Furthermore, the age of first marriage dropped during the 19th century thus increasing a woman's child bearing years.^[29]

Independence

Indonesian nationalism first took hold in Java in the early 20th century, and the struggle to secure the country's independence following World War II was centered in Java. In 1949, Indonesia became independent and the island has dominated Indonesian social, political and economic life, which has been the source of resentment of those residents in other islands.

Demography

Demographic profile



Java has been traditionally demographically dominated by an elite class, while the masses remained agriculturally and fishing bound and thus were sustained by high birthrates. This elite class has changed over the course of history, as cultural waves after waves lapped the island. There is evidence that South Asian emigres were among this elite, as well as Arabian and Persian immigrants during the

Islamic eras. More recently, Chinese have become part of the economic elite of Java, although politically they generally remain sidelined, there are notable exceptions such as the governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. Today, Java is increasingly urban, modern culture has arrived in Java, yet only 75% of the island is electrified, villages and their rice paddies still are a common sight, as well as a youthful population. Central Java unlike the rest of the island registers very slow population growth, yet it maintains a more youthful population than the national average,^[32] this is explained by heavy outflows from the countryside or from lesser cities in search of larger incomes as the region remains economically depressed.^[33] Java's population continues to relentlessly



Japanese prepare to discuss surrender terms with British-allied forces in Java 1945

Historical population		
Year	Pop.	±%
1971	76,086,320	—
1980	91,269,528	+20.0%
1990	107,581,306	+17.9%
2000	121,352,608	+12.8%
2010	136,610,590	+12.6%
2015	145,013,583	+6.2%

sources:^[30]^[31] refers to the administrative region

increase despite masses of Javans leaving, the island is the business academic and cultural hub of the nation and therefore attracts millions of non-Javans to its cities, the inflows are most intense in regions surrounding Jakarta and Bandung and diversity of demographics reflect this in those areas.

Population development

With a combined population of 145 million in the 2015 census (including Madura's 3.7 million),^[34] which is estimated for 2014 at 143.1 million (including 3.7 million for Madura), Java is the most populous island in the world and is home to 57% of Indonesia's population.^[34] At over 1,100 people per km² in 2014, it is also one of the most densely populated parts of the world, on par with Bangladesh. Every region of the island has numerous volcanoes, with the people left to share the remaining flatter land. Because of this, many coasts are heavily populated and cities ring around the valleys surrounding volcanic peaks. Thus the physiological density of Java is exceptionally high, even by Asian standards.

Notably, population growth rate more than doubled in economically depressed Central Java in the latest 2010-2015 period vs 2000-2010, indicative of migration or other issues, there were significant volcanic eruptions during the earlier period. Approximately 45% of the population of Indonesia is ethnically Javanese,^[35] while Sundanese make a large portion of Java's population as well.

The western third of the island (West Java, Banten, and DKI Jakarta) has an even higher population density, of nearly 1,500 per square kilometer and accounts for the lion's share of the population growth of Java.^[34] It is home to three metropolitan areas, Greater Jakarta (with outlying areas of Greater Serang and Greater Sukabumi), Greater Bandung, and Greater Cirebon.

Province or Special Region	Capital	Area km ²	Area %	Population census of 2000 ^[36]	Population census of 2010 ^[36]	Population 2015 census (prelim.) ^[1]	Population density in 2015
Banten	Serang	9,662.92	7.1	8,098,277	10,632,166	11,934,373	1,235
DKI Jakarta	-	664.01	0.5	8,361,079	9,607,787	10,154,134	15,292
West Java	Bandung	35,377.76	27.1	35,724,093	43,053,732	46,668,224	1,319
<i>Western Java (3 areas above)</i>		<i>45,704.69</i>	<i>34.7</i>	<i>52,183,449</i>	<i>63,293,685</i>	<i>68,756,731</i>	<i>1,504</i>
Central Java	Semarang	32,800.69	25.3	31,223,258	32,382,657	33,753,023	1,029
Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta	3,133.15	2.4	3,121,045	3,457,491	3,675,768	1,173
<i>Central Java Region (2 areas above)</i>		<i>35,933.84</i>	<i>27.7</i>	<i>34,344,303</i>	<i>35,840,148</i>	<i>37,428,791</i>	<i>1,041</i>
East Java	Surabaya	47,799.75	37.3	34,765,993	37,476,757	38,828,061	812
Region Administered as <i>Java</i>	Jakarta	129,438.28	100%	121,293,745	136,610,590	145,013,583	1,120
Madura Island of East Java	-	5,025.30	3.3	3,230,300	3,622,763	3,724,545**	741**
Java Island ¹⁾	-	124,412.98	96.7	118,063,445	132,987,827	141,300,000**	1,136**

1) Other islands are included in this figure, but are very small in population and area, Nusa Barung 100 km², Bawean 196 km², Karimunjawa 78 km², Kambangan 121 km², Panaitan 170 km², Thousand Islands 8.7 km² - with a combined population of roughly 90,000.

2) Land area of provinces updated in 2010 Census figures, areas may be different than past results.

3) 2015 Census prelim data released only first level administrations only, where not available 2014 Min. Health^[31] estimates are used in their place.

From the 1970s to the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, the Indonesian government ran transmigration programs aimed at resettling the population of Java on other less-populated islands of Indonesia. This program has met with mixed results, sometimes causing conflicts between the locals and the recently arrived settlers. Nevertheless, it has caused Java's share of the nation's population to progressively decline.

Jakarta and its outskirts, being the dominant metropolis, is also home to people from all over the nation. East Java is also home to ethnic Balinese, as well as large numbers of Madurans due to their historic poverty.

Ethnicity and culture



A teenager in Java wearing traditional Javanese attire: blangkon headgear, batik sarong and kris as accessory. 1913

Despite its large population and in contrast to the other larger islands of Indonesia, Java is comparatively homogeneous in ethnic composition. Only two ethnic groups are native to the island—the Javanese and Sundanese. A third group is the Madurese, who inhabit the island of Madura off the north east coast of Java, and have immigrated to East Java in large numbers since the 18th century.^[37] The Javanese comprise about two-thirds of the island's population, while the Sundanese and Madurese account for 20% and 10% respectively.^[37] The fourth group is the Betawi people that speak a dialect of Malay, they are the descendants of the people living around Batavia from around the 17th century. Betawis are creole people, mostly descended from various Indonesian archipelago ethnic groups such as Malay, Sundanese, Javanese, Balinese, Minang, Bugis, Makassar, Ambonese, mixed with foreign ethnic groups such as

Portuguese, Dutch, Arab, Chinese and Indian brought to or attracted to Batavia to meet labour needs. They have a culture and language distinct from the surrounding Sundanese and Javanese.

The Javanese kakawin Tantu Pagelaran explained the mythical origin of the island and its volcanic nature. Four major cultural areas exist on the island: the *kejawen* or Javanese heartland, the north coast of the *pasisir* region, the Sunda lands of West Java, and the eastern salient, also known as Blambangan. Madura makes up a fifth area having close cultural ties with coastal Java.^[37] The *kejawen* Javanese culture is the island's most dominant. Java's remaining aristocracy are based here, and it is the region from where the majority of Indonesia's army, business, and political elite originate. Its language, arts, and etiquette are regarded as the island's most refined and exemplary.^[37] The territory from Banyumas in the west through to Blitar in the east and encompasses Indonesia's most fertile and densely populated agricultural land.^[37]

In the southwestern part of Central Java, which is usually named the Banyumasan region, a cultural mingling occurred; bringing together Javanese culture and Sundanese culture to create the Banyumasan culture. In the central Javanese court cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta, contemporary kings trace their lineages back to the pre-colonial Islamic kingdoms that ruled the region, making those places especially strong repositories of classical Javanese culture. Classic arts of Java include gamelan music and wayang puppet shows.

Java was the site of many influential kingdoms in the Southeast Asian region,^[38] and as a result, many literary works have been written by Javanese authors. These include *Ken Arok and Ken Dedes*, the story of the orphan who usurped his king, and married the queen of the ancient Javanese kingdom; and translations of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Pramoedya Ananta Toer is a famous contemporary Indonesian author, who has written many stories based on his own experiences of having grown up in Java, and takes many elements from Javanese folklore and historical legends.



Sundanese Gamelan players



Lakshmana, Rama and Shinta in Ramayana ballet at Prambanan, Java.

Languages

The three major languages spoken on Java are Javanese, Sundanese and Madurese. Other languages spoken include Betawi (a Malay dialect local to the Jakarta region), Osing, Banyumasan, and Tenggerese (closely related to Javanese), Baduy (closely related to Sundanese), Kangeanese (closely related to Madurese), and Balinese.^[39] The vast majority of the population also speaks Indonesian, often as a second language.

Religion

Java has been a melting pot of religions and cultures, which has created a broad range of religious belief.

Indian influences came first with Shaivism and Buddhism penetrating deeply into society, blending with indigenous tradition and culture.^[40] One conduit for this were the ascetics, called *resi*, who taught mystical practices. A *resi* lived surrounded by students, who took care of their master's daily needs. *Resi*'s authorities were merely ceremonial. At the courts, Brahmin clerics and *pudjangga* (sacred literati) legitimised rulers and linked Hindu cosmology to their political needs.^[40] Small Hindu enclaves are scattered throughout Java, but there is a large Hindu population along the eastern coast nearest Bali, especially around the town of Banyuwangi.

Islam, which came after Hinduism, strengthened the status structure of this traditional religious pattern. More than 90 percent of the people of Java are Muslims, on a broad continuum between *abangan* (more traditional) and *santri* (more modernist). The Muslim scholar of the writ (*Kyai*) became the new religious elite as Hindu influences receded. Islam recognises no hierarchy of religious leaders nor a formal priesthood, but the Dutch colonial government established an elaborate rank order for mosque and other Islamic preaching schools. In Javanese *pesantren* (Islamic schools), The *Kyai* perpetuated the tradition of the *resi*. Students around him provided his needs, even peasants around the school.^[40]

Pre-Islamic Javan traditions have encouraged Islam in a mystical direction. There emerged in Java a loosely structured society of religious leadership, revolving around *kyais*, possessing various degrees of proficiency in pre-Islamic and Islamic lore, belief and practice.^[40] The *kyais* are the principal intermediaries between the villages masses and the realm of the supernatural. However, this very looseness of *kyai* leadership structure has promoted schism. There were often sharp divisions between orthodox *kyais*, who merely instructed in Islamic law, with those who taught mysticism and those who sought reformed Islam with modern scientific concepts. As a result, there is a division between *santri*, who believe that they are more orthodox in their Islamic belief and practice, with *abangan*, who have mixed pre-Islamic animistic and Hindu-Indian concepts with a superficial acceptance of Islamic belief.^[40]



Languages spoken in Java (Javanese is shown in white). "Malay" refers to Betawi, the local dialect as one of Malay creole dialect.



A Hindu shrine dedicated to King Siliwangi in Pura Parahyangan Agung Jagatkartta, Bogor, West Java.

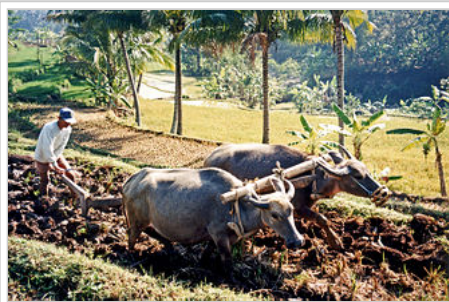


Gedangan Roman Catholic Church in Semarang, Central Java, constructed between 1870 and 1875, is one of the oldest churches in Indonesia.

There are also Christian communities, mostly in the larger cities, though some rural areas of south-central Java are strongly Roman Catholic. Buddhist communities also exist in the major cities, primarily among the Chinese Indonesian. The Indonesian constitution recognises six official religions.

A wider effect of this division is the number of sects. In the middle of 1956, the Department of Religious Affairs in Yogyakarta reported 63 religious sects in Java other than the official Indonesian religions. Of these, 35 were in Central Java, 22 in West Java and six in East Java.^[40] These include Kejawen, Sumarah, Subud, etc. Their total membership is difficult to estimate as many of their adherents identify themselves with one of the official religions.^[41]

Economy



Water Buffalo ploughing rice fields near Salatiga, Central Java

Initially the economy of Java relied heavily on rice agriculture. Ancient kingdoms such as the Tarumanagara, Mataram, and Majapahit were dependent on rice yields and tax. Java was famous for rice surpluses and rice export since ancient times, and rice agriculture contributed to the population growth of the island. Trade with other parts of Asia such as India and China flourished as early as the 4th century, as evidenced by Chinese ceramics found on the island dated to that period. Java also took part in the global trade of Maluku spice from ancient times in the Majapahit era, until well into the VOC era.

Dutch East India Company set their foothold on Batavia in the 17th century and was succeeded by Netherlands East Indies in the 19th century. During

these colonial times, the Dutch introduced the cultivation of commercial plants in Java, such as sugarcane, rubber, coffee, tea, and quinine. In the 19th and early 20th century, Javanese coffee gained global popularity. Thus, the name "Java" today has become a synonym for coffee.

Java is the most developed island in Indonesia since the era of Netherlands East Indies to modern Republic of Indonesia. The road transportation networks that have existed since ancient times were connected and perfected with the construction of Java Great Post Road by Daendels in the early 19th century. The Java Great Post Road become the backbone of Java's road infrastructure and laid the base of Java North Coast Road (Indonesian: *Jalan Pantura*, abbreviation from "*Pantai Utara*"). The need to transport commercial produces such as coffee from plantations in the interior of the island to the harbour on the coast spurred the construction of railway networks in Java. Today the industry, business and trade, also services flourished in major cities of Java, such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Semarang, and Bandung; while some traditional Sultanate cities such as Yogyakarta, Surakarta, and Cirebon preserved its royal legacy and become the centre of art, culture and tourism in Java. Industrial estates also growing in towns on northern coast of Java, especially around Cilegon, Tangerang, Bekasi, Karawang, Gresik and Sidoarjo. The toll road highway networks



Mosque in Pati, Central Java, during colonial period. The mosque combined traditional Javanese style (multi-tiered roof) with European architecture.



Java transport network



Central Jakarta

was built and expanded since Suharto era until now, connecting major urban centres and surrounding areas, such as in and around Jakarta and Bandung; also the ones in Cirebon, Semarang and Surabaya. In addition to these motorways, Java has 16 national highways.

Based on the statistical data by the year of 2012 which's released by Badan Pusat Statistik, Java Island itself contributes at least 57.51% of Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product or equivalent to 504 billion US Dollars.

See also

- History of Indonesia
- List of monarchs of Java

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