

Exploring the Spatial Arrangement of Local Settlement

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Abstract—Karawang, a regency located in West Java province is undergoing a rapid growth, affected by the building of the Purbaleunyi and Cipali tollway system. Interestingly, amid the ever-expanding growth of urbanization that demands for more land acquisition, traditional settlements exist in the mix of this process. One of them is Kampung Salapan in Desa Gempol Kecamatan Banyusari, a village that preserves settlement patterns according to its ancestral customs. The purpose of this paper is to construct values derived from a traditional settlement spatial arrangement through inductive qualitative analysis method. The finding in this research is a local wisdom in spatial arrangement uniquely represents the character of Kampung Salapan. The knowledge gained from this research could be an invaluable input in developing conservation area that preserves traditional values of Sundanese local settlements in Karawang regency.

Keywords—Kampung Salapan; values; local settlement's spatial arrangement

I. INTRODUCTION

Research on native/traditional settlements has been investigated a lot because it has local knowledge that is related to the views of life and old culture that began to disappear due to globalization. The planner cannot ignore the complex interaction of the social and physical environment and, indeed, should not abandon the traditional values of the society in the rush of modernity [1]. Traditional/indigenous/ vernacular settlements are threatened by contemporary values and globalization, whereas native/traditional/ vernacular settlements have cultural aspects that are in harmony with the climate and environment [2]. Even some researchers from various nationalities such as Amir Hosein Ghaffarian Hoseini from Malaysia expressed the meaning of a genuine settlement value; "These vernacular values are comprised of socio-cultural and environmental concerns. The socio-cultural values are the spatial characteristics embodied in the functional spaces of Malay houses representing the cultural backgrounds, social requirements and actual needs of Malays. The environmental values are the spatial characteristics and local environmental trends embodied in the functional spaces of Malay houses representing local characteristics of environment and tropic [3]. The Indonesian state which has more ethnicity and culture certainly needs to understand the

values of native settlements (vernacular), one of which is Kampung Salapan.

Kampung Salapan is located in Desa Gempol Kecamatan Banyusari Kabupaten Karawang, West Java Province. This settlement highly focuses on a primordial and religious system, and has the tendency towards magic. Meaning that the role of a person is structured by the macro cosmos and spiritual realm, quite contrary to the mindset of modern people whose way of life is focusing on the process of humanization and anthropocentric in nature. Kampung Salapan adheres to its primordial tradition, for example in planning the site and landscape, it is inhabited only by 9 houses with 9 families living there. This arrangement is permanent due to the rules and beliefs that if it accommodates more than 9 families, then those who are deemed as surplus must leave. Each house in this settlement is inhabited by 1 family. Total population in this settlement is 27 people, consists of 20 adults and 7 juveniles. If we add the number $2+7=9$. Of 27 inhabitants, 13 are men ($1+3=4$), and 14 are women ($1+4=5$), adding those number ($4+5$) equals 9, a number that is used as an orientation. This phenomenon is interesting to study because of the mindset of the people in Kampung Salapan that is unique and enduring to the present time. Cultural identity lies not in the physical form of the settlement but in the way, they think and work. Therefore, the attempt to explore values regarded by the people of Kampung Salapan is a way to understand the local wisdom of the village. This process is also important in order to document cultural identity of the local Sundanese community. The purpose of this research is to construct local values of Kampung Salapan.

II. METHODS

Research in Kampung Salapan is carried out with inductive-explorative approach. Inductive approach is drawing conclusion based on concrete facts. Inductive approach is classified as a qualitative research which means the exploration process and understanding meanings and individual or group behavior. Explorative approach is a learning process that begins with building knowledge that precedes the quest for information regarding the subject of research based on previous experiences gained from site visits.

Method in analysis follows a sequential pattern starting from finding facts, interpreting the findings then describing an

event happening at the present, or actual matters. The stages of analysis are as follows:

- Identifying a unique information, interesting and profound concerning space, activity and the people in Kampung Salapan;
- Analyzing in a macroscopic scale that covers areas outside the settlement, how the spatial arrangement outside the settlement compared with Kampung Salapan, how other settlements interact with Kampung Salapan;
- Analyzing in a microscopic scale regarding settlement concepts in Kampung Salapan, the typology of residential and other buildings, their function, form and size, the design of the roof, arcade and building structure.
- Inductive qualitative spatial analysis of Kampung Salapan on a concept of 9 rice stalks symbol;
- Theoretical dialogue concerning the conformity between the concept with background theory.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Kampung Salapan's History and Symbol

Kampung Salapan was found by an archeologist from Arkenas in June 2009 who found the evidence of the remnants in Jungklang site. The archeological site dates back approximately to the same period with Candi Jiwa located in Karawang Regency. Archeologists believed that there must be a populated area/ a settlement nearby in relation to the archeological finding. The settlement mentioned turned out to be what used to be called Kampung Babakan Noclo, such name was given because the settlement seemed to appear in the middle of rice field. As time goes by, this settlement is called Kampung Salapan, due its rigid 9 house rule. This settlement is estimated dates back from around 2nd-3rd century.

The symbol used in Kampung Salapan is "9 rice stalks" which means to protect and preserve agriculture. Agriculture is strongly tied to culture [4]. Rice is the as a staple food is the source of life. It also symbolizes the livelihood of the people in Kampung Salapan. The 9 rice stalks symbol is placed in the facade of the house as an expression of gratitude of the people to the creator especially during harvest time. The image below is an example of how the symbol is placed above a doorway of a house in Kampung Salapan.



Fig. 1. The symbol of 9 rice stalks.

B. Traditional Customs

The people of this village live in a social system like other communities in general, interacting and socializing with neighbors in Kampung Salapan as well as with people from outside. Spirituality is an endeavour to perceive the divine presence in everyday life. It is a sacred quest for the realm of transcendence, a dimension categorically beyond human senses. Spirituality deals with the elucidation of fundamental questions in life [5]. Islam is the system of belief recognized in this village. Offerings are to be offered at certain times and as a symbol of faith. The people of Kampung Salapan used to put the offerings above or around the pandaringan. Pandaringan is used for the rice to be well stored and won't be contaminated by insects. Since the rice is the staple food, the source of life, then its purity must be well preserved. Hence, the people in the village put their offerings around the pandaringan in the form of flowers of 7 kinds, black coffee and other kinds of offerings. The position of pandaringan differs from each house depending on the owner, some are placed inside the bedroom, others are placed in the kitchen.



Fig. 2. Pandaringan as a container to put the offerings.

Culture is another main factor in determining the life and landscape of Kampung Salapan epitomized in ceremonies like Upacara Ngabungbang or Melekan and Upacara Mlipit or Nyalin. Those ceremonies are part of cultural life in Kampung Salapan. Upacara Ngabungbang or Melekan is routinely

performed once a week on Friday night. Melekan is derived from the word “Melek” means not sleeping or staying up late. This ceremony intends to strengthen ties between the inhabitants of Kampung Salapan and also with other communities from outside. It also functions like a nightwatch. It’s an open invitation for whoever is interested in participating, but mostly the participants are men since this event lasts for 2 hours from 00.00 till 02.00. Afterwards, some continue to take nightwatch duty while others decide to take a rest.

It is recommended to take ablution before the ceremony for self purification before the gathering and perform shalawat for prophet Muhammad SAW. After shalawat, they are discussing about their everyday problems and the best way to find solutions. Before the end of the ceremony, they reflect on the conflict between them, their mistakes and guilt before finally sending their gratitude to the creator. After completing all the processions, as closing event they do what is called papahare (eating together) as a form of gratitude for what they have, given by God, and also as a means to hold a conversation, something they lack doing during daytime because of their work in the fields.



Fig. 3. Ngabungbang ceremonial process.

Upacara Nyalin or harvest ceremony is held once a year just before the harvest time. This ceremony is held entering the harvest time and not everyone is involved, it is performed only by representatives of the people. It is a form of gratitude to God for the abundance of rice harvest and prosperous life especially for the people of Kampung Salapan. This ceremony is held just before the rice stalk is cut. In Sundanese language this harvest

ceremony is called “nyipok haci” or shaft kiss. The word haci is derived from Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang Asri who is the goddess of rice in the ancient Sundanese beliefs. This system of belief is a manifestation of Arwah Karuhun (spirit of ancestors) and the force of nature. Ancient Sundanese people venerate the force of nature that gives fertility to the land and livestock. This force of nature manifests itself in the form of Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang Asri, the goddess of rice and fertility. Her consort is Kuwera or the god of prosperity. Both are manifested in the form of Pare Ayah (fatherly rice) and Pare Ambu (motherly rice), the communion of men and women symbolizing fertility and prosperity in the family.

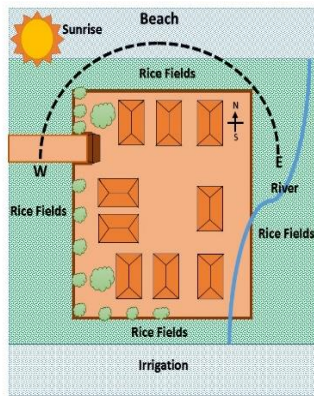
This ceremony is using offerings such as black coffee, tea, rujak and coconut for the attendance. The dress code for Upacara Nyalin is usually traditional attire of Kampung Salapan, a Sundanese outfit with dark blue color with headband. It is held once a year before the first rice is cut during the harvest time. The rice will be stored inside leuit (main barn) and auxiliary barns. The ceremony leader then gives indung pare (rice seeds) that have been blessed and believed to bring good luck to be planted in the next planting season. Afterwards, 9 rice stalks will be displayed in their house facade above the doorway as a symbol of gratitude for the abundance from the harvest that brings blessings for the people.



Fig. 4. Upacara Nyalin ceremonial rite.

C. Kampung Salapan Settlement

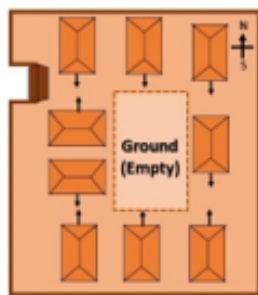
Kampung Salapan is a rural settlement surrounded by rice fields. To the north is Muara Baru beach, to the east Cilamaya river, to the south an irrigation canal and to the west another rural settlement. Kampung Salapan used to have a source of clean water in the form of rainwater pond for daily use such as laundry, bath, cooking etc. Nowadays, they use electric pump to extract clean water from aquifer.



^a. Researcher.

Fig. 5. Kampung Salapan settlement.

Cosmology is a traditional knowledge concerning the universe. These symbols have a meaning that relates to the universe as well as to God Almighty [6]. The cosmology of the spatial arrangement in Kampung Salapan is a blueprint laid out by their ancestors and had never been altered with number 9 is the total number of houses. Houses in this settlement are implementing north-south orientation, signifying the axis of the earth with an open space as the square. More houses orienting their access southward (5 houses).



^b. Researcher.

Fig. 6. Kampung Selatan settlement.

D. Value System of Kampung Salapan Settlement.

Value is obtained from phenomena in the field that appear and are told by the object of research. This step is the epistemological process of the social reflection approach that arises from the phenomenon. Inter-subjectivist approaches to positionality emphasize how social interactions within the field produce 'interpretative moments' and thereby consciously affect the process of knowledge production [7]. The exploration about value system of Kampung Salapan is closely related to something that complements or something that corresponds with the essence of the settlement. The symbolic experience which is an intangible space is interesting to explore because it is an integral part of the existence of the court room itself [8]. Intangible space makes space have the essence that surpasses reality. Thus, spatial knowledge can reveal the nature and make space as a new knowledge that often escapes planning practice [9]. Kampung Salapan which translates to "village of nine (9)" with the number 9 not only identifying the

total number of residential buildings but also as an essence that has a complementary feature. The inhabitants believe that 9 is a sacred number. Keramat or Karomat is an effort to manipulate supernatural power other than God, in this case the angels and sacred spirits [10]. The number 9 has sacred powers in Kampung Salapan.

Based on Jacob Sumardjo's understanding about *tilu sapamilu* that consists of will, *ucap lampah* or desire (sense), thought and deed [11]. The phenomenon of *tilu sapamilu* is manifested in Kampung Salapan in the form of: Ucap/Will by their belief in God almighty through esoteric traditions that are consistently performed like: *Mipit/Nyalin* and *Ngabungbang*, the things that bind them in a belief system. Their thoughts regarding their belief then materialized in the form of a symbol, 9 rice stalks consistently kept in the house in a sacred place. Their deeds in preserving the traditions through generations show their consistency in keeping the spirit of the almighty.

IV. CONCLUSION

The spatial arrangement in Kampung Salapan settlement is a phenomenon of traditional Sundanese local wisdom. Local wisdom will always lead back to the past to the time of their ancestors. It is a value, a meaning that is much needed for a society to function properly to this day. In contemporary Indonesia, value system and meanings are adopted from western countries that are deemed modern, while modernization in the west was also influenced by their roots. Indonesians, especially Sundanese have their own past and continuity of their own culture. Kampung Salapan is a living evident about a local wisdom of the Sundanese people. They hold firm to their esoteric traditions and cultural form of *tilu sapamilu*. The system value of Kampung Salapan is keeping the spirit, sacred in the form of number 9. The finding of this research is an input for the Government of Kabupaten Karawang through the Division of city planning and settlement and Division of Culture to declare Kampung Salapan as a conserved Sundanese traditional settlement in Kabupaten Karawang.

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