

# Spatial Perspective in Ethnic Areas in Indonesia

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**Abstract.** This paper presents the impression of spatial segregation that appears in ethnic kampongs areas in Kuto Batu, Palembang, Indonesia. This paper examines them based on participatory mapping and visual interpretation with a spatial perspective. From this perspective, the data suggests that Chinese houses are located to the outer of the kampongs while Arabians are to the inner. The orientation of Chinese houses forms a linear pattern alongside the road network while the Arabians are clustered near the sacred objects due to the maintenance of the site. In addition, there is also a difference in the function of the house, Chinese houses have a dual function as a residence and a shop, while the Arabians are for residence only.

## 1. Introduction

Almost all social scientists agree that the city is always inhabited by heterogeneous inhabitants, both heterogeneous vertically and horizontally. The vertical heterogeneity of the population is characterized by a vertical difference between the upper and lower layers, whereas horizontally heterogeneity is characterized by various ethnic that inhabit into the city.

Horizontally heterogeneity has been studied in various aspects of social science and humanities, such as demography, politics, and linguistics. Some of these studies further study the characteristics of ethnic groups, such as population, spoken language, beliefs, economic and religious activities. Related to previous research, it is still rare to learn about ethnic groups in relation to the location of settlements. Determination of shelter for the first time for ethnic groups is an early stage that is quite heavy. Not all ethnic groups can be independent and free in determining where to live, some tend to seek an environment equivalent to their culture [1, 2].

Ethnic settlements are an interesting study of these decades. Some research results capture the uniqueness of spatial expression of some ethnic housing that try to maintain their cultural identity spatially, both in urban and rural areas. The discourse of ethnic existence and spatial characteristics gives consequences to the spatial and dynamics of urban development. The discourse can also be considered as an important indicator for the state in terms of receiving or facing the issue. The presence of ethnic housing in urban areas gives the consequence of the segregation. The expression that emerges from the ethnic residence location creates a spatial dimension [3].

Two spatial dimensions of ethnic settlement distribution, i.e. dimension of clustered and dimension of isolation [4]. The formation of variations of the pattern is a consequence of the difference in the location of residence between minor and major ethnic groups. In addition, historical factors, political



policy, economic restructuring and the concept / system of state also contribute to the expression of spatial formed [5].

Related to these symptoms, the controversy issue of urban village formation in urban areas needs to be considered by policy makers and policy actors in which it is discussed whether the issue is a constraint or otherwise facilitates the integration of urban population and migrants [6].

In order to understand the phenomenon of population heterogentias horizontally, the researchers are interested to study the phenomenon in the environment Kuto Batu, Palembang City. Palembang as a city that has experienced a period of development from the start of the emergence as a traditional city, colonial city and modern city shows specific characteristics, especially in the development of urban settlements or towns.

In the era of the Sriwijaya Kingdom, Palembang was renowned for its maritime power and dominion over the trade routes. These conditions made a power of interaction to the outside world, thus making Palembang inhabited by plural society from the past until now. One of the most recognizable forms of plurality today is the creation of ancient kampongs, which are the city's developmental embryos. The names of these ancient kampongs were adapted to ethnic groups, occupations or conditions and situations that had occurred in the village.

The purpose of this study is to explain ethnic kampongs area in a spatial perspective in Kuto Batu, Palembang. The ethnic kampongs dynamics is one of the population phenomenon of the horizontal issue of population heterogeneity [2]. The importance of revealing the symptoms that the researchers described earlier is the effort to improve the planning of residential neighborhoods based on local identity, such as those who met the field that although there is no conflict between ethnic groups in the city of Palembang, but the existence of ethnic groups to the environment create unique patterns that Interesting to learn.

## **2. Methods**

### *2.1. Data collecting*

In this study ethnic which becomes the object of research are Arabian and Chinese. The observed variables are location, orientation, and home function. Participatory mapping is used to get spatial pattern of ethnic residential. Spatial expression obtained by combining between spatial knowledge from local communities that consist of Arabic, Chinese, Indigenous ancestry and communities' personage with modern cartography tool.

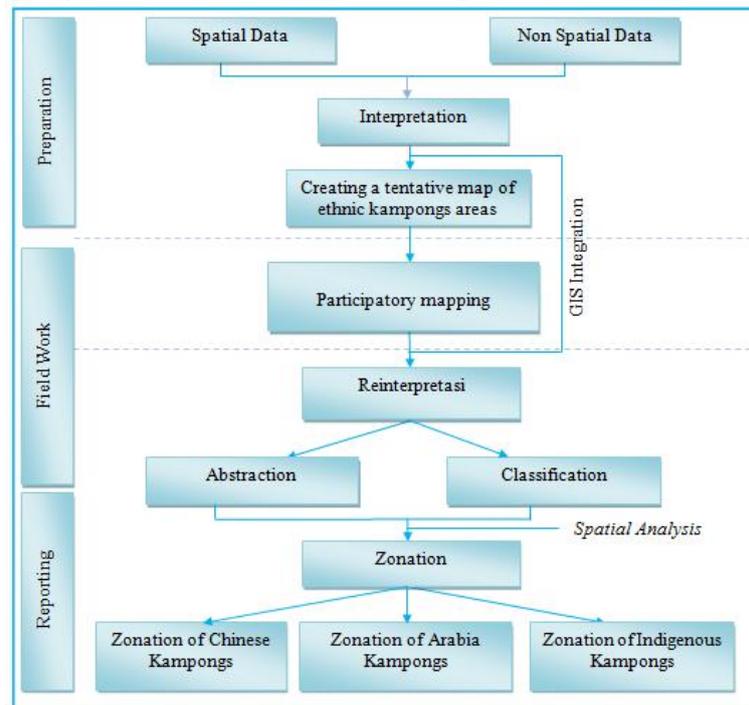
Focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interview selected in this research as a tool to get information and data systematically, effectively, efficiently and accurately about specific problem through selected group. Snowball is chosen as sampling method in this research. This method is appropriate for getting representative respondent of spatial pattern of ethnic residential in urban area. Data obtained starts from community's personage and he will determine future respondent and so on.

### *2.2. Data processing*

Stages performed on this study are 1) Interpreting spatial and non-spatial data do to get the expression of spatial pattern. The result is tentative map of ethnic kampongs areas. The spatial data consist of Inventory Cartography Manuscript of Centuries 17th – 19th; Palembang Administrative map (1:10.000, 2010); Kuto Batu Administrative map (1:5.000, 2010) and Quicbird image (2010). The non-spatial data such as ethnic demographic, livelihood, functions and home ownership status are collected from community's personage. 2) Use tentative map as a tool in participatory mapping with local communities. In-depth interview and FGD are used in this activity. 3) Reinterpretation is based on the result of participatory. 4) Classification and abstraction for getting the zonation of Chinese, Arabian and indigenous kampongs. The output are zonation map and descriptive information about ethnic kampongs areas.

### 2.3. Data analysis

Data analysis was performed with a spatial approach that is focused on the analysis of spatial patterns. Spatial pattern analysis puts space as the main variable. This analysis takes into account the close relationship between the shape and nature of the housing distribution according to the ethnic group in Kuto Batu. The things identified from the relationship are the location, orientation and function of the house of the ethnic group. The research flow can see in figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Research flow

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Chinese kampongs areas

Palembang is one of the oldest Chinese colonies in Southeast Asia. The arrival of China in Palembang was about the 16th century [7]. The arrival of the Chinese is as the trading partner of the Sultan. Chinese offers services as "brokers" or merchants to meet the demand for imported goods [8]. They include ceramics, rough and fine linen fabrics, rough silk, gold thread, iron pans, medicine, tea, and sweets [9].

The Chinese economy until the early nineteenth century was relatively unremarkable. Between the 17th and 18th centuries these ethnic trades were street vendors, day-to-day traders, to brokers in pepper and tin trade networks, while in the early nineteenth century their trading space was increasingly limited. They are only in certain places where their services are needed.

The Chinese limitation to trade is one result of the Sultan's subjective view of suspicion of the foreign eastern faction. This suspicion is implemented in the form of a racially organized settlement policy. At that time the location of their settlements was placed in the water space opposite Ulu in the form of a *rumah rakit*.

Chinese begin to better experience conditions is when the Dutch government. They were made a trade brokerage between the Dutch and the Natives. Their success helped the Dutch make them get a chance to move their original homes *rumah rakit* into *rumah darat*. The colonial government not only freed them to build houses on Talang, but also gave them the opportunity to expand trade up to the interior. Talang is one of soil characteristic Palembang which are relatively high and dry soil. Chinese

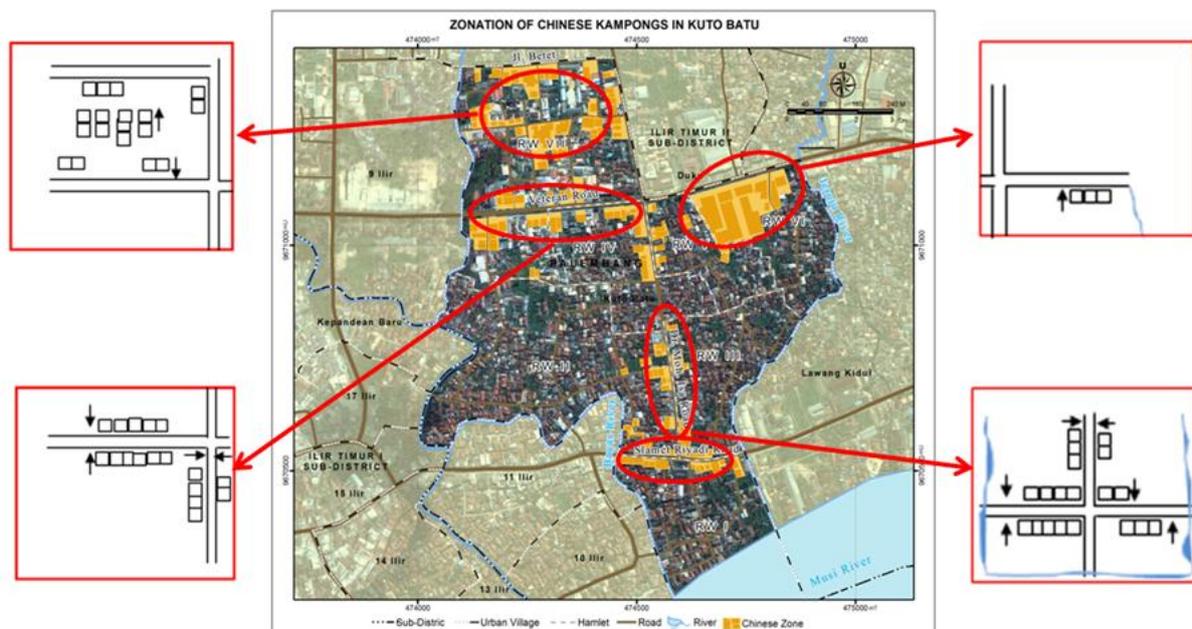
settlements on the Talang are generally adjacent to emerging markets as trade activity grows in Palembang [10].

The success of this ethnic in the field of economy continues on the choice of shifting location where the original residence in Seberang Ulu into the Seberang Ilir. One of their destination locations is Kuto Batu. Kuto Batu has strategic location value because it is located between Boom Baru Port, Pasar 16, and Musi River. Chinese who are identical to trades consider their location close to the market. The beginning of their arrival at Kuto Batu was around the 1950s, their presence is often referred to as China Talang because they are from the farm area.

Initially this ethnic character is closed and hesitate to organize life with people outside of ethnicity, but the demands of living as migrants become their adaptive process to exist in the middle of the people of Kuto Batu. From selling tofu, they try their luck by buying used bottles and used goods, over time with the interaction with the community around them are able to rent plots for places to trade and even buy a house. Through confidence and getting its own place in the hearts of people make their economic growth develop rapidly.

Chinese people tend to rent houses close to the market. Kuto Batu itself in addition to having proximity to Pasar 16 which is the largest market in the city of Palembang also has its own market that is Pasar Kuto. The location of this market is south of Kuto Batu. The location of the Chinese housing can be explained at the beginning of arrival at Kuto Batu is located in the southern zone of Kuto Batu because their consideration was once close to the market. Their success in trade continued until they were able to buy a house around the Pasar Kuto, until today it can easily be identified by the discovery of a traditional store house building located close to the Chinese Pasar Kuto.

The economic growth of these ethnic groups has improved markedly by their ability to occupy strategic locations in trade. Based on the participative mapping that researchers have done it can be seen that the spread of Chinese houses are in the northern, central, and southern zones. In particular, the existence of Chinese arranged linier pattern alongside of the road network in Kuto Batu are on Jalan Dr. M. Isa, Jalan Slamet Riyadi, and Jalan Perintis Kemerdekaan-Veteran. Zonation of Chinese kampongs in Kuto Batu can see in figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Zonation of Chinese kampongs in Kuto Batu

Generally, the location of their housing along the road network has a double function that is as home and shop. The location of the Chinese house is not only patterned straightly following the road grid, on the north zone the Chinese house has an aesthetic value. In this zone, the Chinese house is a modern house and an exclusive.

Variations in the distribution of ethnic housing locations is closely related to economic conditions. The ethnic Chinese estate of the northern zone is inhabited by a high-economic group embodied in a modern elite housing complex. In contrast to ethnic Chinese housing in the middle zone, their houses are a form of activity in the economic field. Especially in the southern zone and the middle zone (in the area within the residential zone) Kuto Batu, Chinese houses are rarely found. The possibility of a strategic value factor is low so that Chinese are not interested in occupying a houses in that zone.

The choice of shop houses near the streets is one mode of business strategy of this ethnic group. This strategy seems to be the result of their trade transformation in the past. In the past they were more interested in being in a location near the market, but for now they prefer the concept of store house along the road with better strategic access value.

Distribution of Chinese has an impression oriented to follow the pattern of road network especially along the road in middle zone (Dr. M. Isa Street, Perintis Kemerdekaan-Veteran Street, and Slamet Riyadi Street). There is no orientation at all from this ethnic to facing the river, as has been mentioned in the previous description that the strategic value of the area near the river is low, so for this ethnic groups it is not chosen because it is not profitable.

### 3.2. *Arabian kampongs areas*

Unlike China, which has to struggle to maintain its existence through the economy so that it can move to Talang, Arabs have gained the privilege of being granted permission to settle on land. The Arab arrival in this city was originally due to the motive of Islamic propagation through trade. Palembang Sultanate which at that time was dominated by Islam assumed the arrival of the Arabs beneficial both for the economy as well as the spiritual side of the people of Palembang City. The Sultanate gave a special land space for this group among the residence of Pangeran Adipati and Sultan Lamo Palace (currently administratively an area of Kuto Batu). Secondly, in the part of Ulu Palembang City is exactly opposite to Sultan Lamo Palace. The legacy of the past related to the Arab village still leaves a trail in Kuto Batu at this time. Some of these include floating mosques, stone house, stilts house, and other traditional buildings.

In the period of the Sultan, Arabian's life was at least almost the same as the colonial period until the current era. There is no restriction of movement for this ethnics although in every period had a new rules related to urban development. The existence of Arabian is identical as the figure of scholars / teachers as well as traders. The location of their houses remains concentrated in two places namely Seberang Ilir (Kuto Batu) and opposite Ulu (Seberang Ulu II and Plaju).

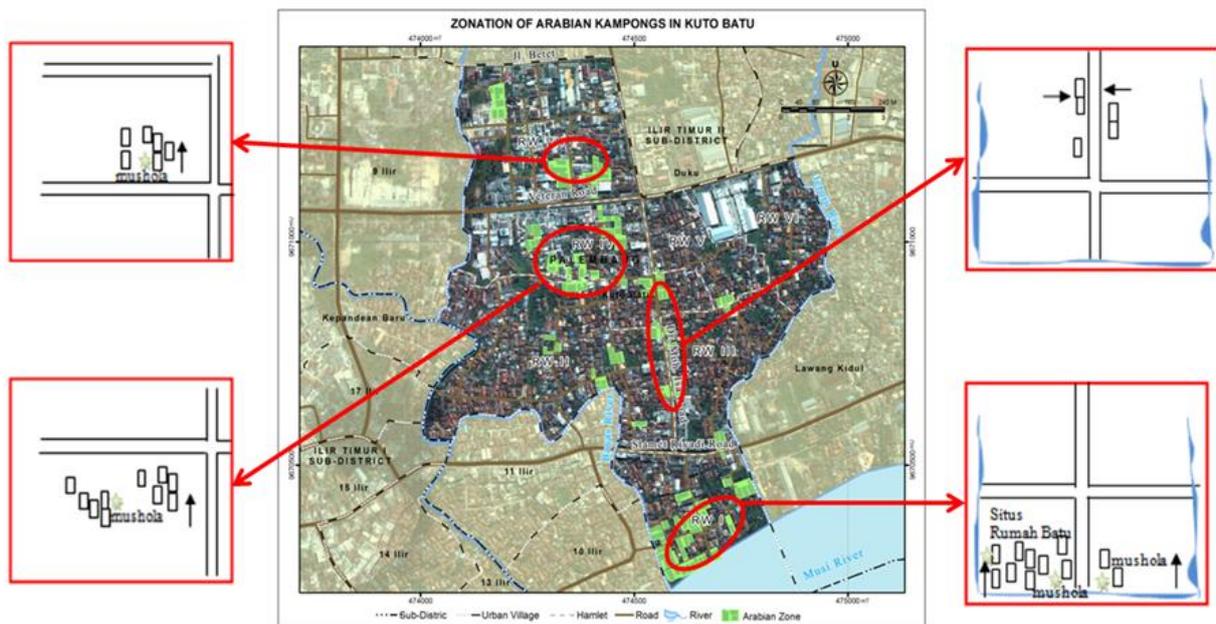
Around the 1970s, roads were expanded by the city government, which contributed to Kuto Batu. The expansion of this transport network triggered the growth of new buildings around Kuto Batu, especially in the north. In general, there are limitations of environmental deviation in the southern part of Kuto Batu because there is a large river, so the physical development of this area always leads to the north. The connection with Arabian houses, the trend of modernity symbols also contributed to the expansion of this group to approach the road.

The first location of the Arabian houses in Kuto Batu is in the southern zone close to the Musi River. In spatial terms, Arabian houses in this zone form a concentric-patterned housing complex in which their homes are built around an open field. In addition to homes, other aspects of housing that contained this area is a building of worship in the form of mushola or mosque located on the river side.

Currently, the distribution of Arabian houses not only centers on the southern zone, but also can be found in the central (western) and northern zones. In the southern zone, the function of this ethnic houses as a place to live and a gathering place for religious activities and meetings between groups. Specificity in the southern zone is the presence of mosque and stone house which is the site of

ancestral heritage of Arabs. The guarding of the site is done through inheritance downward so as not to be interrupted by the changing times.

The distribution of ethnic Arabs in addition to the southern zone, also spread in the central zone (west) and northern zone. Generally, the condition of the Arabians economy is getting to the north is getting better. The further away from the river is the better the economic status. The Arabians who inhabited the housing in the central and northern zones were not new Arab migrants, they had once resided in the vicinity of the Musi River until eventually the financial upgrades made them move to the north, their view was that living away from the river was one The form of economic success and viability, and the extension of their housing location to the north is one way to maintain their existence in Kuto Batu. Zonation of Arabian kampongs in Kuto Batu can see in figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Zonation of Arabian kampongs in Kuto Batu

In the middle zone (west) of Kuto Batu, some ethnic housing serves as a residence and the one that builds the concept of a shop house. Changing the function of a residential house into a shop house is one form of ethnic adaptation to the growing market behavior in the environment Kuto Batu. Arabians tradesman in Kuto Batu are famous for the type of merchandise that is cloth, perfume, hajj equipment, and food / culinary typical Arab. There is an explanation as to why this ethnic trades only on the type of fabric and perfume merchandise, it is a form of cleanliness in the framework of their daily spiritual activities.

This ethnic distinctiveness compared with Chinese which is related to the housing position. Chinese houses occupies to the outer part of the kampongs while the Arabians are identified as occupying to the inner. Being in to the inner of kampongs does not mean access to this ethnic interaction is easy. Arabians have a high degree of privacy concerning the content and activities of their homes. In general, the building of Arabian was the first building that exists in the area of Kuto Batu, over time emerging other buildings occupied by people outside the Arab ethnic group. In the end it seems as though this ethnicity implies coexistence and mingle with people outside of her group, whereas non-physically the guarding of privacy is maintained for this ethnicity. However, part of their group also has an open side to the community outside the ethnic group because in addition to working as a trader, they also have a profession as a religious leader / teacher.

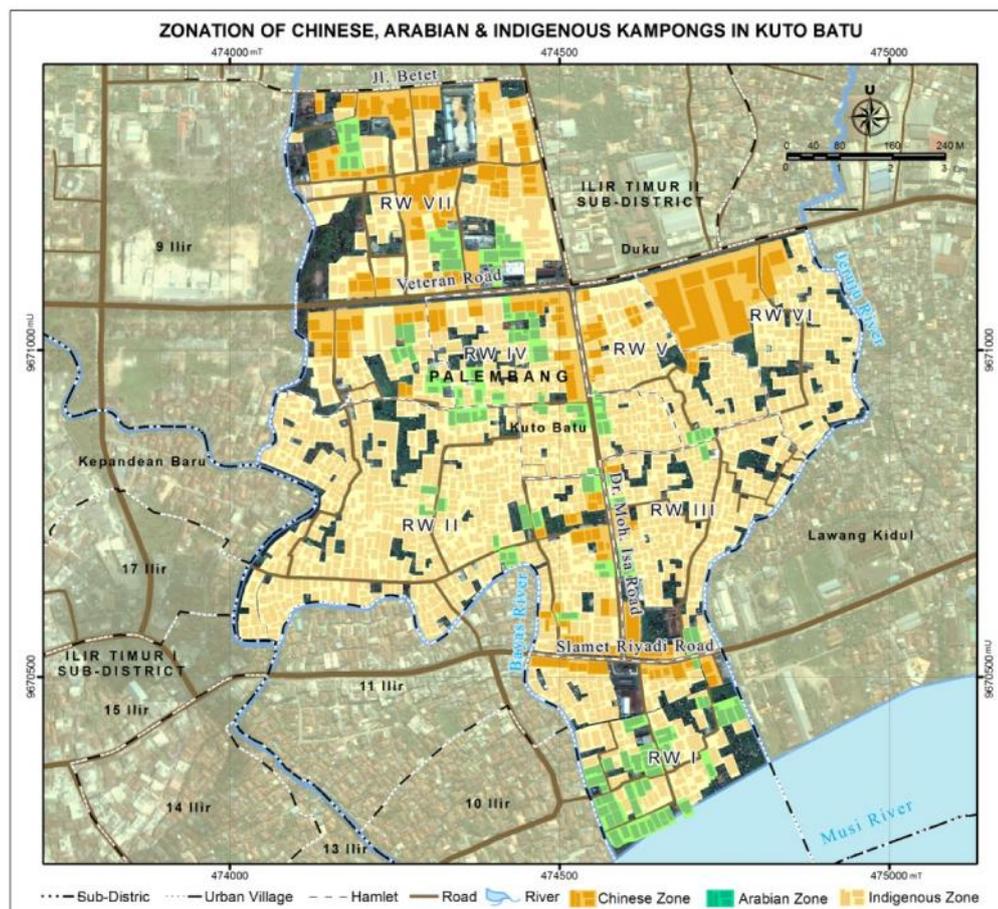
The location where this ethnicity is closely related to the inheritance of the land of its ancestors. Based on the story of the ancestors, the land in Kuto Batu is controlled by Arabian. Land tenure has

been in effect since the time of the Sultan where the grant of land to this group for meritorious in the field of economy and religious syiar. Nowadays, limitations and economic competition that occurred in Kuto Batu became one of the reasons the strategic locations in Kuto Batu are not controlled by Arabian. Some of these Arabians properties are sold, renovated, even rebuilt. In the end, only occupy the spaces within the housing kampongs still maintain because of an activity in the field of religion and economy.

The distribution of Arab ethnic housing in Kuto Batu that spreads in every zone is the result of the long journey of their group civilization in Kuto Batu. The growing civilization fills off barriers that limit the interaction between Arabians and non-Arabians. Distribution of their housing location more on the function of the economy, except in the southern zone of Kuto Batu seem to cluster because of the guarding stone house site which is a marker of the existence of ethnic Arabs in the past.

### 3.3. Segregation and assimilation

Distribution of ethnic housing showed a typical spatial patterns. Each ethnic group expresses different distributions. The spatial dimension of segregation of ethnic housing can be said to indicate that phenomenon between ethnic housing one and another. Segregation of ethnic housing is a condition where there is a distance (physical) between the locations of ethnic minor housing with the major ethnic. This distance can be expressed by the formation of a cluster pattern from the residential location of each ethnic group [4].



**Figure 4.** Zonation of Chinese, Arabian and indigenous in Kuto Batu

Conditions in Kuto Batu, spatially when compared to variations of the distribution between ethnic indigenous and ethnic immigrants, the impression that emerging to the ethnic immigrants seem too

clustered among small groups of indigenous ethnic housing. The grouping of ethnic group housing areas when associated with the spatial dimension of segregation can be different in each ethnic group. The ethnic Malay Palembang as indigenous ethnic has the most dominant distribution area in Kuto Batu. Distribution of Chinese housing when compared with the distribution of Palembang Malay housing showed the dimensions of clustering-exposure. This means that the variations of Chinese ethnic distribution are grouped and appear in certain areas of Palembang ethnic housing distribution. The grouping and their emergence are located in the middle zone of housing which focuses on the road network that is Dr. M. Isa Street, Perintis Kemerdekaan-Veteran Street, and Slamet Riyadi Street. The emergence of Chinese who only centered along the main road are one of their modes in supporting the implementation of the economy in Kuto Batu.

The distinctiveness of variations in the distribution of Arabian housing is not unlike the uniqueness of the Chinese housing. When compared with the residential area of Malay Palembang housing, the distribution of Arabian seems to form an evenly-isolated housing segregation. This is demonstrated by the uniqueness of the distribution of Arabian housing that spreads in every residential zone in Kuto Batu but seems to fill only on the inside of the housing block. Spatially the impression emerges as if this ethnic housing area are isolated between the inner ethnic Malay Palembang housing area and the Chinese housing on the outside. Arabian have an image as a trader as well as a preacher so that the selection of their housing location seems to be in a residential area. One of the goals is that they can also interact (preach) to the surrounding community such as a preacher, ustadz / ustadzah, imam, and so on.

Spatially, the impression arising from among ethnic groups is a segregative phenomenon that seems to separate the housing area from other housing areas (see figure 4). This phenomenon arises due to consideration of the criteria of the housing location and the criteria of living environment in each ethnic group. Housing criteria generally related to their mode of operation in Kuto Batu. Among the two ethnic groups, Chinese have the most prominent mode impression when it is associated with the selection of their housing location. The mode is related to their economic activities and strategies in Kuto Batu, while Arabian also have the impression that quite highlight the special mode. The modes can be identified from the different types of livelihoods and property rights of their homes.

Spatially, the impression that arises from the distribution of ethnic housing in Kuto Batu seems to indicate the occurrence of segregation symptoms, but this is not absolute because in the field there are no strict limits on the separation of housing by ethnic groups. For example, physical boundaries such as certain ethnic signs are forbidden to access housing in strategic locations, or for example large fences that make certain ethnic access limits difficult to interact. At Kuto Batu, the physical symbols of the separation of housing are not found at all.

Variations occur in residential location Kuto Batu more due to the functions of the economy and culture. Kuto Batu's strategic position which lies between harbors, markets, and rivers creates a very open interaction. It seems to make Kuto Batu society become open and accustomed to the condition of plurality in the life of society. The interaction in Kuto Batu involves not only indigenous people but also migrants. So the limits of discrimination against certain ethnic groups are faded because they are familiar with plurality. In addition, according to urban village records in Kuto Batu, there has never been a conflict that brings certain ethnic issues. This is a picture of the absence of strict limits that create discomfort in the conduct of life in Kuto Batu.

The existence of each ethnic group is more to the interaction of the economy. The economy is manifested in this type of livelihood. The type of livelihood is identical to the location of the operation. So that the variation of the housing distribution according to ethnic group in Kuto Batu when drawn red thread is more leads due to variations in economic activity and purchasing power of ethnic groups. When these types of ethnic livelihoods are identical or heavily linked to trade and service activities they will be concentrated in zones near markets and roads, whereas if they are outside of trade and services their tendencies will not be concentrated in zones near markets and roads.

Plurality-related phenomena in Kuto Batu can easily also be identified with a mixture of cultures. The process of meeting ethnic groups in a series of life organizers can take the form of assimilation.

Assimilation is the interaction of two different cultures gradually evolved into a combination of different elements. The process of assimilation will arise if there are three elements, namely: (a) the existence of human groups derived from different cultural environments, (b) individuals and groups interacting intensively directly over long periods of time, and (c) The group changed to adapt each other.

Much of the cultural mixing in Kuto Batu is the result of mixing 4 cultures namely Java, Chinese, Arabic, and Malay. The assimilation of Kuto Batu found too easy especially when the researchers together with the Kuto Batu community conducted participatory mapping activities. Arabian and Chinese are somewhat difficult to surface inhaling with the local people, but the mark for the creation of the assimilation process has been apparent. This can be seen from mixed marriages, the direct and open association in which they live and neighbors other than their ethnic groups. In addition, they also communicate fluently using the local language (Palembang language) well.

Assimilation in this village is also seen from the culinary presented both in the market and along the existing roads in the Kuto Batu. Food tastes served by both Arabian, Chinese, and Malay Palembang can be well received by other ethnic groups. This is evident from the daily life of the community in the consumption of side dishes and snack foods, especially when researchers conduct participatory mapping activities that are covered by eating together with the serving of pempek, whereas people who come also come from diverse ethnic, but they enjoy foods that are not comes from their culture. The convenience of this culinary assimilation becomes one of the satisfaction for the ethnic group in existence and living in the environment of Kuto Batu

Assimilation can also be dissociative means that cultural mixing can change the system. The form of dissociative assimilation is competition and controversy. But, so far for the contradiction is not found either on the record of criminal reports in the district administration as well as from the confirmation to the community in the neighborhood of Kuto Batu, while for the competition in positive terms can be found in this district. The emerging competition is more to the economic motive as a function of adaptation of ethnic groups to the demands of the dynamics of life.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The overriding purpose of this study was to determine ethnic kampongs areas in spatial perspective. To accomplish that goal, it became necessary to reach some prerequisite goals. Determining what ethnic kampongs areas means and how that ethnic kampong areas in spatial perspective is examined through the participatory mapping and interprets visual conducted for this research. Related to that effort, it became necessary to reach an understanding about the ethnic housing literacy. From this perspective, the data suggests that Chinese houses are located to the outer of the kampongs while Arabians are to the inner. The orientation of Chinese houses forms a linear pattern alongside the road network while the Arabians are clustered near the sacred objects due to the maintenance of the site. In addition, there is also a difference in the function of the house, Chinese houses have a dual function as a residence and a shop, while the Arabians are for residence only. The results of this study indicate that the impression of spatial segregation that appears in ethnic kampongs areas in Kuto Batu to provide for the possibility that construction could be perceived and measured as a viable component of these philosophical constructs, it was important to develop a perspective with the potential for encompassing the totality of the ethnic kampong areas.

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