

Becoming Heritage: A Place-Making Study of Old Neighbourhood Marketplace in Bandung

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Abstract. The urban architectural heritages of Bandung represents the city's historical layers. A unique urban architectural element found in Bandung is the heritage neighborhood marketplace. In the style of European post-renaissance urban design, a heritage neighborhood marketplace is initially designed as housing clusters with open spaces as neighborhood centre to create community privacy. But along the time, the neighborhood centre open their enclosed spaces and landmark buildings, transforming itself into small marketplaces with intensively daily activities. Through everyday place-making methods, this article investigates the history and meaning of neighborhood marketplace as everyday urban artefacts through observation, historical study, and interview. The study reveals are three main forces assembling the current form of neighborhood marketplaces in Bandung: Dutch-Indies colonialization, Chinese society trading network, and local traders' tradition. Dutch-Indies colonialization in Bandung brought European architectural knowledge into neighborhood morphological design that contributed well-defined urban spaces. The Chinese trading network has been at place since the diaspora era and is still continued until now, bridging past and present life through economic activities. Local traders, who came after Dutch-Indies colonialization, fill the empty spaces of neighborhood centres with intensive formal and informal economic activities. Bandung heritage neighborhood marketplaces represent the city's urban constellation, where global and local political-economic and socio-cultural forces meet in an urban process. Here, the urban heritage is redefined as living artefacts experienced in everyday urban life. Keywords: urban heritage, place making, neighborhood marketplace, Bandung, urban assemblage, living artefacts.

1. Introduction

In architecture, studies about space and place aims to define and describe the relationship between human beings and its surrounding physical elements. Architectural forms define space and create images to conceive of a place. The study of place has expanded from merely looking at how forms, activities, and images intersect into, by looking at psychological aspects of human beings, understanding deeper the phenomenology, psychometric, or social-constructivism approach. In urban culture, the architectural perspective of space and place contributes to uncover how power works in everyday urban life [1].

This paper analyzes the everyday life of heritage neighborhood marketplaces in Bandung. These marketplaces are unique to Bandung. While there are many another colonial cities with neighborhood clusters, but only in Bandung the clusters are constructed with enclave configuration where the



marketplaces become the clusters' center. A study found that these clusters shown three cultural layers: Dutch colonial, Chinese, and local traders [2].

By analyzing space, place, and cultural assemblage of Bandung, this paper will read urban spaces are formed and creating meaning to represent the urban cultural assemblage. As working paper, this article tries to open discussion about mutual relation among human and physical elements that construct urban places. It is one step to build thought about urban learning, which is concerning to the learning process on urban life by relation among human and non-human agents [3]. The concept of urban learning would hopefully unravel the deeper connection between human beings and its physical environment and conceive improved ideas of sustainability and better future of the city.

2. Method

This paper is based on short research about urban architecture phenomena. This short research uses descriptive method, collecting its data through morphological map, field observation, interviews, and urban historical study. Analysis of space formation is conducted by space/form framework from [4], and place-making by intersecting the forms, activities, and image [5]. At the end of discussion, findings will discuss urban cultural assemblage by associating it with *city shaped* [6] and *urban assemblage* [3].

3. Literature review: space, place, and urban cultural assemblage

In architecture, the concept about space is introduced as a mono-dualism with form, a unity between two opposing things, like the concept of Yin and Yang. Space will be defined by form, and vice versa, form can be seen and enjoyed from the space created [4]. Architects have the duty to compose form, here space is defined when architectural forms can be seen and enjoyed.

The relation between space/form is be broken down systematically into three parts: space forming, space organization, and form/space hierarchy. Schematically, space includes horizontal elements (base plane, elevated base plane, depressed base plane, and overhead plane) and vertical elements (vertical linear elements, single vertical plane, L-shaped plane, parallel planes, U-shaped plane, and closure). Space composition defines patterns in a certain organization, such as centralized form, linear form, radial form, clustered form, and grid form. The relation of these form/space can also create hierarchy, where a form can be more dominating than other forms, through size, shape, or space of the form [4].

In architectural design, the concept of place is used to differ space and place, where place is space with meaning. Place is created because the composition of form in that space, user activities, and the images of the usage of space [5]. Place-making themed architectural design is simple way is composing form/space by imagining how that place will be livelier with the presence of activities and gives off good vibes by the users.

Studies of place-making develop broader to uncover the relation among humans and built environment in real practice. Relating with psychological school thought, studies of place can be mapped into three main approaches: phenomenology that concern with humanistic aspects of built environment, psychometric that measuring the relation between human and physical environments, and social-construction that see mutual relation among construction of spatiality and sociality [7]. Assemblage thinking of place studies can be classified in social-construction or –in more neutral term– socio-spatial approach. Assemblage thinking generally refers to two French philosophers, Deleuze and Latour, although they have different roots of thought [8]. Assemblage thinking sees different elements come together, and in place studies it concerns on how human dwell as socio-material activities assembled in everyday practice [3]. Here, place is investigate how it experienced, structured, and constructed through flows of desires and power in everyday activities [9].

By assemblage thinking, we can investigate the detail of urban process in everyday life. The term of urban process is used by Kostof to remind the urban planner and designer who tend to create ideal city that never been built [10]. Through historical studies, Kostof urges to understand urban patterns and elements that are assembled by political, economical, social, and cultural through history [10]. Here, the urban physical forms can not be avoided from the social contents as an organized “matrix” in everyday activities.

4. Case: old neighborhood marketplaces in Bandung

Bandung, with the nickname and brand “Paris van Java”, is a colonial city in Indonesia. Bandung was designed as “Indisch” concept in central area and “garden city” in neighborhood clusters. These clusters represented the ideas of “tropical Europe” concept. Several ones were designed with closed enclave formation and open spaces and landmarks to signify the clusters centers and gates [11]

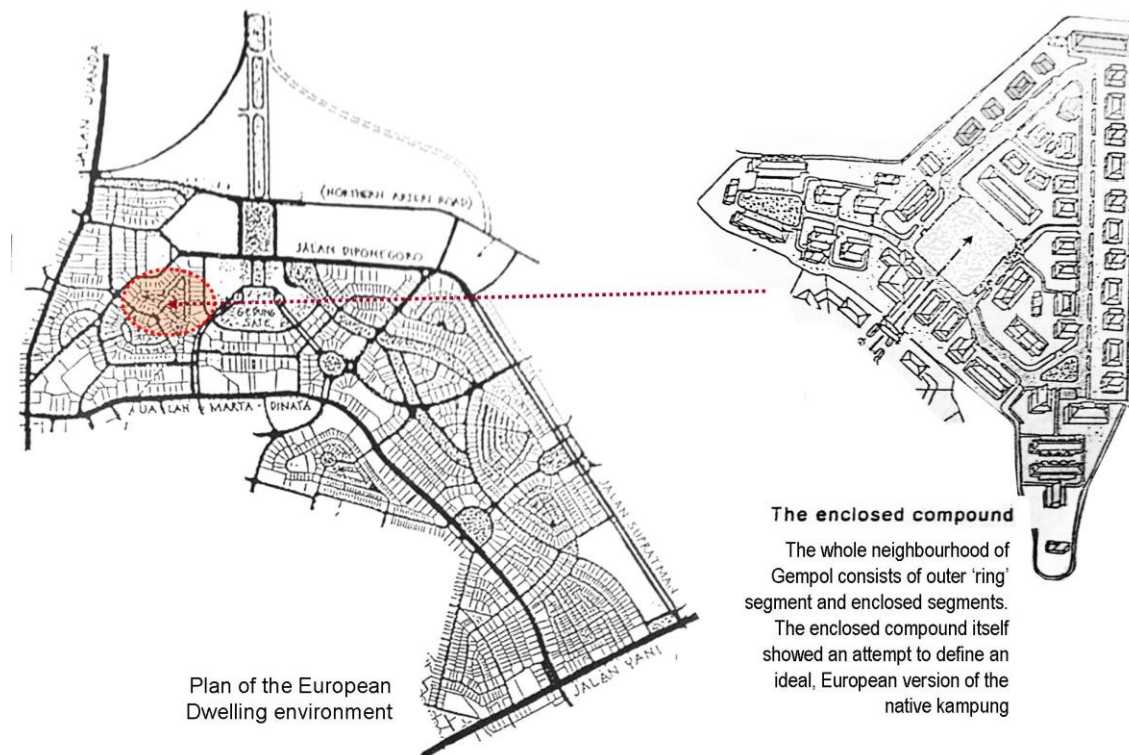


Figure 1. Map of Bandung as colonial city and a neighborhood cluster [12]

Some neighborhood clusters have special character with Chinese old shops as landmarks in the clusters centers. Those neighborhood clusters are Cihapit, Gempol, Cilaki-Rasamala, Tikukur, and Mangga. These shops are owned by descendants of Chinese traders and named as Toko Tjihapit, Toko Cahaya, Toko Widawati, Toko Engseng, and Toko Cairo. Their architectural appearances are quite diverse: Toko Tjihapit and Widawati have Chinese architecture, Toko Cairo has colonial architecture, while Toko Cahaya dan Toko Engseng. Their position at neighborhood center attracts passers-by and crowd, making them lively places (figure 2).

The old shops owners organize their business as family inheritance. Toko Tjihapit, owned by a fourth generation of owners, has stood for almost a hundred years. The owner organizes this old shop because as an inheritance passed over from generation to generation and because of the shop's considerable number of customers. The owner and customers of Toko Tjihapit have good social relationship with the surrounding community, which is an important factor to the shop's survival despite the increasing competition from more modern competitors.

Toko Cahaya in Gempol Cluster has been open for 80 years. This shop was previously named Toko Enghwa, but the aftermath of political turmoil in 1966 required the shop to have itself renamed with an Indonesian name. The current owner runs the shop as legacy from her father as well as to provide livelihood for her family and pay her children's education. Toko Cahaya is known to offer cheaper prices than supermarkets. Customers of Toko Cahaya are dwellers of the Gempol neighborhood public market adjacent to this shop.



Figure 2. Colonial neighborhood clusters with old shops in Bandung

Although there is a row of shops at the Cilaki-Rasamala Cluster, only a small number are still in operation. One of them is owned by a lady named Widawati, a second-generation owner who inherited the shop from her parents-in-law. They owned the shop since the colonization of Indonesia ended in 1945. She continued to keep this store in order to put the building into good use and to keep her parents legacy. Although not as busy as it once was, it is still a major shopping place for neighbors and street vendors around it. Several buyers said that they have been their customer for decades and would find it inconvenient if the shop is closed. Widawati is not convinced of the continuity of this shop since none of her children are interested in continuing running the shop.

Toko Engseng, located in Tikukur Cluster, has been open since 1945. It is now owned by its second generation of owners, who run the shop since 1981. The owner said that she feels bad if she did not keep the shop. Toko Engseng is the legacy from her parents with many loyal customers. She hopes that her children will continue the shop to maintain their family's legacy.

Toko Cairo in Mangga Cluster is now organized by second generation of the shop founder. There is family relations between this shop and Toko Cahaya in Gempol cluster. She run this family business since 1984. The owner said that it is a customary to continue a family business. Despite the shop being the main income for her family, she is not expecting to his children to continue the shop as her children are set with their respective career.

The old shops owners are part of business network of Chinese-Indonesian community in Bandung. Historically, the immigration of Chinese community into Bandung was different from other port cities in Southeast Asia [13]. Chinese community was prohibited to enter Bandung area as the Dutch consider them as a thread for their trading monopoly. It was in the first half of the 19th Century, the Dutch government started to allow Chinese community to enter Bandung with a strict rules under surveillance and let them settled in appointed area known as *Chineeschewijk* or Chinese Quarter. But this racial-dividing quarter politic soon be abandoned as the Dutch government found out that this system was harmful to the settlement area and later replaced with a more proper settlement policy. At the same time, the Dutch government was building some major infrastructure to triggered economic activities and economic growth in Bandung such as the Great Post road, railway station, and new market (Pasar Baru). These infrastructures were main factors that influence the spreading of Chinese community settlement area, marked by the sharp increase of Chinese community population in the turning of the 20th Century and the growth of Chinese community settlements around the Great Post road, railway station, and marketplaces [14].

Nowadays, the old shops and neighborhood centers become urban places that intensively used by everyday informal trading activities. There are economic activities through selling and buying, also communal activities through social relation generated by these activities. Trading activities in Toko Tjihapit in Cihapit Cluster and Toko Cahaya in Gempol Cluster have been integrated with neighborhood public markets adjacent to the old shops. The owners organize the business mainly through the motive of respecting family inheritance instead of the ambition of taking the most amount of profit. As a result of that cultural and relational motive, their business practice maintains the communal relations with social and non-commercial activities around their shops.

5. Discussion: space, place, and cultural assemblage of the neighborhood marketplaces in Bandung

These clusters have similar form/ space configuration: the centers are open spaces, defined by vertical planes by buildings surround them. All clusters show similarities patterns of form/space formation. Each cluster center is an open space, defined by vertical planes from the sides of the building mass surrounding the area. This enclave configuration creates an open space in the middle of area. Radial form organization is marked by roads along the settlements, oriented to the open space. The existence of the shop in the center becomes more noticeable because it has a different shape (hierarchy by shape) and having a ranged space in the middle (hierarchy by space, figure 3).

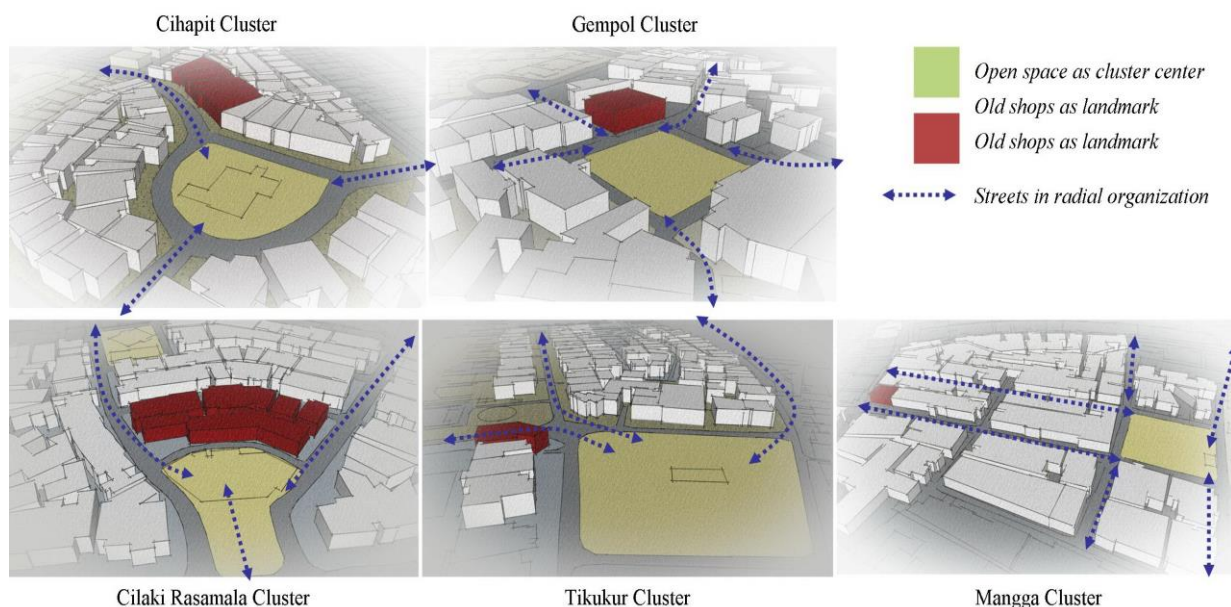


Figure 3. Form/space formation in each neighborhood clusters

This spatial configuration becomes an important formal element in creating a place at a settlement cluster's center. Psychologically, people will often gather in a space characterized by a center as its orientation and strengthened by a dominating form as its orientation. As an urban place, space configuration becomes an activity place with an important meaning to the space's user.

The spatial configuration in Mangga Cluster has a distinctive character, because the old shop (Toko Cairo) is not located at the open space as neighborhood center. This exceptions is reasonable in an urban process, considering city construction in form/space did not happen all at once. There has been an evolution and adaptation process in past, so the old shop were built on a street intersection and not in the neighborhood center. It also answers why Toko Cairo is less crowded compared to other old shops.

Informal socio-economic activities signify the everyday life of these clusters centers. This informal activities are supported by commercial function of the old shops that also create communality by social relation of informal economic activities. Such as common marketplaces, the socio-economic activities

in clusters centers generated by goods, services, information, and values exchanges among traders and buyers.

These neighborhood marketplaces show different place intensity, related to other surrounding activities. Toko Tjihapit in Cihapit cluster and Toko Cahaya in Gempol cluster are most intensive places, because both are parts of the neighborhood public markets activities adjacent to them. Toko Widawati and Toko Engseng have medium intensity because there are buyers from school adjacent to them, other than dwellers of the neighborhood. Toko Cairo have the lowest intensity as its customers are strictly limited to surrounding dwellers.

The user has varying perception of the heritage of the old shops. The meaning ascribed by the buyers to these old shops are mostly as daily trading places to fulfill their needs. Only few of these buyers understand the special form of the old buildings. The owners understand that their old buildings are family inheritance as well as a source of livelihood that needs to be maintained. However, they do not understand the historical value of their building until informed by several architects who interview them for the purpose of research or exploring creative ideas.

Studying the heritage of colonial clusters of neighborhood marketplaces in Bandung allows us to understand three main cultures assembled here: European knowledge of form/space design, Chinese community trading network, and local-people informal socio-economic customs. Three cultures come together and interrelate between each other in an everyday practice of place-making. There are no Chinese old shops if no Colonial clusters designed in the past. These places intensity are determined by local people informal socio-economic activities. And these activities are taken on places that is well-defined by Colonial architecture.

A city is shaped and assembled by economical, political, social, and cultural forces through history. Kostof urged that urban physical elements can not be avoid be avoid with social content as a organized matrix in everyday life [6]. Through small architectural artifacts of old neighborhood marketplaces in Bandung, we can draw the lesson of cultural assemblage from the past until now.

Different cultures are determined by different groups. They create mutual relationship through human and non-human agents to stabilize the socio-technical configuration in a process of urban learning. Further research will uncover deeper how three cultures assembled through investigating actors and artifacts relation in everyday life, including how stabilized relation occurs. This actors-artifacts relations are constructed by a network connected only with others outside the places, to unveil what forces, mostly generated by political and economic motives, are at play to construct everyday urban places.

This short research also aims to spark discourse on how to interpret urban heritage. It is found that various actors have different understandings of the meaning of urban architectural artifacts, of whether or not they are considered as heritage. Concept of urban heritage is not a static definition; instead, a dynamic understanding on actors' attachment to the artifacts. The urban process does not consist only on the construction of physical elements, but also the collection of meanings ascribed them. The process of actors understanding the old buildings as heritage is important in urban learning perspective. Here, the everyday life of colonial clusters old shops in Bandung is not fixed or finished urban heritage, but instead in the process of becoming urban heritage.

6. Conclusion

This paper offers the method to read urban space and place formation combined with cultural assemblage thinking. With case of old neighborhood marketplace in Bandung, this short research can explore stories from inside well defined spaces. There are assembly of the "tropical Europe" urban design ideas from the past, the inclusive spirit of Chinese community in Bandung through their trading network, recent everyday life of old buildings through socio-economics informal activities by local inhabitants.

Cultural assemblage concept of urban place tries to recall the urban process thought in urban architecture studies. Studying old shops everyday activities in colonial clusters in Bandung give empirical evidences of the thought. Further thinking of urban assemblage is hoped to unravel how political, economical, social, and cultural forces work in everyday practice in urban places.

Assemblage thinking is also hoped to support architecture discipline to more contribute in real practice of urban place-making. Rather than technical discipline, assemblage thinking put architecture into socio-technical perspective, to see mutual relation among human and physical environments. By urban learning concept, the production of architectural artifacts can be put as learning devices for community how to dwell together in urban life.

By assemblage perspective, architectural heritage is not a fixed meaning: it is a process of becoming. This research found that there are many different meaning of heritage from architects, the old building owners, and building users. To be heritage, a building is seen as architectural: a form of architecture in relations with the others. Assemblage thinking focus on relation among architecture and its social context, including how heritage meaning is constructed. It is the key how the urban learning can be investigated and understood clearly.

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