

REPOSITION OF CULTURAL-TRADITION WITHIN PERANAKAN HOUSE IN PECINAN, LASEM, CENTRAL JAVA

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Abstrak

Secara tidak langsung dan tidak disadari, suatu perubahan keadaan dapat mempengaruhi pengalaman penghuni karena adanya perubahan aktifitas di dalam hunian yang berdasarkan reposisi tradisi-budaya. Peristiwa tersebut dapat bertindak sebagai “mesin” konektivitas yang mendorong terciptanya ruang-ruang tambahan atau baru yang bersifat *tangible* maupun *intangible*. Pengalaman ruang yang dihasilkan berbeda-beda sesuai dengan keadaan ruang, aktifitas yang terjadi dan memori yang dimiliki penghuni. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk berkontribusi pada pemahaman reposisi tradisi-budaya yang terjadi di rumah Peranakan, Lasem dan mendorong pembaca untuk melihat ruang dari perspektif yang berbeda. Untuk menjawab tujuan tersebut, maka metode dimulai dengan survey, wawancara dan observasi dengan mendokumentasikan aktivitas dan ruang di dalam kompleks rumah Peranakan Kidang Mas di Lasem, Jawa Tengah sebagai studi kasus. Pembahasan penelitian didukung dengan salah satu konsep trialektik ruang yaitu *Lived Space* dan pendekatan fenomenologi. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa reposisi tradisi-budaya dan ruang saling berhubungan dan terlihat bahwa ruang bukan sekadar tempat atau wadah untuk bernaung tetapi tempat untuk mengalami dan tempat berkumpulnya memori.

Kata kunci : reposisi, tradisi-budaya, rumah Peranakan, Pecinan, pengalaman ruang

Abstract

Indirectly and unconsciously, a change in circumstances can affect the experience of residents because of changes in activities in the dwelling based on the repositioning of cultural-traditions. This event can act as a connectivity “machine” that encourages the creation of additional or new spaces that are tangible or intangible. The resulting spatial experience varies according to the state of the space, the activities that occur, and the memory of the occupants. This paper aims to contribute to an understanding of the repositioning of cultural-traditions occurring in the Peranakan house, Lasem, and to encourage readers to see the space from a different perspective. To answer these objectives, the method begins with surveys, interviews, and observations by documenting activities and spaces in the Kidang Mas Peranakan house complex in Lasem, Central Java as a case study. The research discussion is supported by the space trialectic concept, namely Lived Space and a phenomenological approach. This research finds that the repositioning of culture-traditions and space is interconnected and it appears that space is not just a place or a place to take shelter but a place to experience and gathering places of memories.

Keywords : reposition, tradition-cultural, Peranakan house, Pecinan, spatial experience

INTRODUCTION

All traditions and cultures are inherently prone to change and at the same time, can also resist change. There is a dynamic process that operates intending to encourage the acceptance of new ideas and things, while there are other processes that promote the stability of traditions and culture without change. It is more likely that social or internal chaos will occur if there are no conservative forces from the rules or individuals who resist change. There is a process or stimulus for change that occurs, namely ideas, ideas, thoughts and experiences from other cultures. This situation is in line with the conditions that occurred at the Peranakan Kidang Mas house in Babagan Village, Lasem.

Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) focuses on the formation of culture and its relationship to space. He had a different view of understanding about the space that not only exists as a physical construction but also has philosophical ideas. Lefebvre (1991) also believes that every culture will always be a unique form of life rooted in tradition [7]. Through his critical thinking, he produced the concept of trialectic space that consists of three components, namely the Perceived, Conceived, and Lived spaces [5]. This article only focuses on the Lived Space, or Edward Soja (1996) calls as the Third Space that is a melting pot of the existence of a tangible (physical) and intangible (value) space [9].

The Kidang Mas Peranakan House as a case study has chosen based on several reasons because it was in Lasem and the internal condition of the house itself. Lasem is indeed a small area, currently only a sub-district under Rembang Regency. However, in the 16th century, Lasem was one of the important cities as well as a famous port under the Majapahit Empire. And, when Ad-

miral Cheng Ho of the Ming Dynasty in China regularly visited ports in northern Java, he found many Chinese communities in Lao Sam or Lasem, which later became known as the most prominent place for Chinese immigrants in Java in the 14th to 15th centuries. That led to the strong influence of Chinese culture into Javanese culture and influenced the existence of the Peranakan house in Lasem [2]. This cultural influence also affects the existence of batik and distinctive motifs in Lasem. It was made clear by Aryani (2019) that the creation of motifs in batik is influenced and closely related, especially with culture, beliefs, and customs [1]. Batik has a strong connection with the existence of the Kidang Mas Peranakan house, and it's adding to the uniqueness of the Kidang Mas Peranakan house that not only has managed to survive because of daily activities (include to private category) that are still active from the beginning to this day, but also some public activities that involve non-family people in in the house as a result of the family tradition, namely *Batik Tulis*. This house is not only a shelter to protect the inhabitant, but more valuable. The statement in line with Sriwardani et. al (2019) said that the house is a part of basic human needs and also a pace of harmonization and interaction that create a social relationship between individuals in it [10].

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the shifting, changing, or repositioning of cultures that occur in the Kidang Mas Peranakan house, Lasem. Besides that, it provides a different perspective in seeing the existence of space. Based on the description above, a research question formed, namely how did the repositioning of cultural-traditions and space within the Kidang Mas Peranakan house occur, and what was the effect on the embodiment of cultural-traditions on the space in it?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research started with pilot study at the end of 2017 and continue by observations made at the end of 2018, July 2019, and December 2019 by obtaining various oral and visual data from local community leaders and residents of the Kidang Mas Peranakan house. The data analyzed through the concept of Lived Space by Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja, with a phenomenological approach by Juhani Pallasmaa. Why did the author choose them?, Lefebvre, Soja and Pallasmaa concern with the connection of space and activities that closely relate with culture. It will create a life (experience and memory) within the space. Something that has a life, simply called the Lived Space.

Through in-depth interviews with residents of the house, researchers adhere to the basic components of Lived Space. The concept of the Thirdspace can function as a medium that provides harmony between conflicts that often occur between the Firstspace as a physical entity and the Secondspace seen as a concept; which can be felt, experienced, has historical meaning and value [2]. That is to answer research questions about how the repositioning of cultural-traditions occurs. Meanwhile, the information in the form of visual documentation, space exploration, and activities in the Kidang Mas Peranakan house can answer the second research question.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Kidang Mas Peranakan house was located on Jalan Babagan, *Gang 5*, Number 1, *Kampung Babagan*, Lasem (figure 1). Kidang Mas has experienced the seventh generation in it. Currently, three generations are living in the house, namely Ibu Kian (Tjan Djoen Nio) as the fifth generation, Rudi Siswanto (Tan Tiong Sajie) as the sixth gen-



Fig. 1. **The Kidang Mas Peranakan House**
(Source: Author Documentation, 2019)

eration, and two daughters (Elisa and Brisia) as the seventh generation. Based on an interview with Rudi in July 2019, Mrs. Kian was born, raised, and lived her married life with Pak Gunawan (Tan Gwan Ling) in Kidang Mas.

The statement above is possible to become a foundation to get a firm and valid information about the story behind Kidang Mas. In this house, the daily activities space becomes a system that supports various traditional-socio-cultural activities. This activity involves family members and non-family members (figure 2). The embodiment of this space is a representation of the expression of each individual based on the principles of belief and culture. However, repositioning can occur because of ideas, thoughts, and experiences gained from other cultures.

How did the repositioning of cultural-traditions and space within the Kidang Mas Peranakan house occur? There is a process or stimulus for change that occurs, namely ideas, ideas, thoughts, and experiences from other cultures. Other cultures are possible to be caused by family members leaving Lasem for school or work purposes and then return to Lasem within a certain period. Another significant cultural influence was obtained by Rudi when he went to Semarang and Jakarta to go to school and then work. His experiences outside Lasem have changed his point of views

on tradition-cultural issues. When Rudi returned to Lasem in 2014, Kidang Mas tried to be more accepted by non-families, such as laborers, *obeng* or written batik artisans, batik or heritage enthusiasts, and batik consumers. The change can also trigger due to circumstances or social demands, for example, the economic crisis in Indonesia that occurred in 1997. That encourages owners to change their mindset so that they are more flexible in accepting "changes" and trying new things, such as adding to the type of family business. A state of survival achieved if the contents of the house give a soul to survive, then the existence of the house also survive. The circumstances are in

line with Darmayanti and Bahauddin (2020:268) in their article entitled *Pengaruh perubahan sirkulasi terhadap fungsi ruang di Rumah Peranakan, Kampung Babagan, Lasem*, which states that there are three aspects influence changes in the Kidang Mas, namely the economy, social, and internal culture [5].

Judging from the Thirdspace concept that produced from things that can be seen by the eye and also has a meaning that cannot be seen, Rumah Kidang Mas slowly changed from the 1980s which can be seen by the eye, namely the repositioning of activities. From the existing activities, it turns out that it is only for families that have increased, and some have switched to the community because they involve other people besides family. In the 1980s, the fourth generation began producing *batik tulis* for the community that has survived until now. These changes are based on the existence of new activities that create new circulation in the house and indirectly create new "spaces" [4]. Meanwhile, the value that cannot be seen by the eye can be explored deeper through a phenomenological approach. The repositioning of the value will happen when traditions change over time, the changes that affect the various memories that exist in each inhabitant. Therefore, Kidang Mas has kept long memories from the first generation to the present, including past and present cultural traditions. It causes a fusion of memories and souls as Pallasmaa said in 2014 – "In a combination of place and tangible soul, the soul is the container of place, the place is the container of the soul" [8].

However, repositioning does not erase memories and experiences about the house, a sense of attachment remains in every occupant of the house because the roots of tradition and culture are not uprooted, not removed, just simplified.



Fig. 2. various traditional-socio-cultural activities in Kidang Mas Peranakan House
(Source: Author Documentation, 2017-2019)

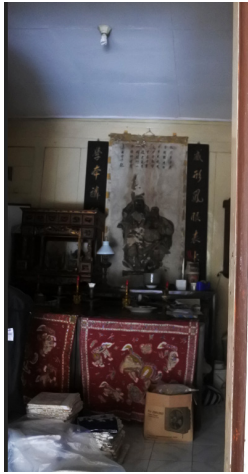


Fig. 3. **The Prayer Hall in the Kidang Mas house**
(Source: Author Documentation, 2019)

For example, the prayer activities in the altar are no longer carried out as often as before, only in a particular ceremony. Moreover, the situation strengthened when only Ibu Kian embraced *the Kong Hu Cu* belief because other family members have embraced Christianity. The altar area used to be only for storing items related to prayer. Currently, around it are many supplies related to batik production (figure 3).

Repositioning of ideas, concepts, meanings from cultural traditions that occur automatically or unconsciously affects forming additional visible and invisible spaces. The activities become a visible space, while the invisible space is the experience and value in it, which certainly enrich the memory of each individual. A series of activities that come from the action of repositioning is recognized, which to experience productions within the spaces. Space within architecture also activates and strengthens our sense of self, as its experience is always individual and unique. The Kidang Mas was built based on what the inhabitant believes. It affects various activities that occur in the house too. Therefore, there has been a change in the value of the beauty of the house. The beauty of the architecture can be seen from intangible perspec-

tive, such as value beyond every act that occur within it [6].

CONCLUSION

The repositioning of cultural-traditions in Kidang Mas Peranakan house only changes activities but does not diminish its value. This value provides personal meaning and can build a sense of attachment indirectly to whatever is in it. This repositioning also creates a dynamic of life through various activities and results in the repositioning of the spaces in it. This results in a solitary experience for the residents that cannot be separated from activities and memories. Interaction in activities & consistent experiences is an important element in maintaining the value of the spaces (tangible or intangible) in the house.

The repositioning of cultural-traditions & the existence of additional new spaces is an effort to maintain the legacy from generation to generation. The repositioning of traditions and culture and space are interconnected, and it is seen that space is not just a shelter but a place to experience and a place where concepts & memories of life's journey converge.

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