

SPATIALIZING COMMUNITY'S CULTURE IN SHARED HERITAGE ARCHITECTURE

A Symbiotic Relationship of Socio-Spatial Practices and Heritage-Based Investigation

Student

Ananta Vania Iswardhani (4942957)

Chair of Heritage & Architecture, "Shared Heritage Lab Semarang"

Thesis, "Cultivating Heritage: Recuperating Dutch Colonial Architecture's Relation to Local Community's Practices in Kota Lama Semarang"

I INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH AND DESIGN IN ARCHITECTURE

Research in architecture context can be interpreted to multiple meanings¹. Despite the multifaceted character of architecture, design and research are oftentimes seen as two separate entities. In practice, research usually refers to a general process of collecting information or the design process itself while in an academic context, it could be referred to as an analysis of certain issues within a carefully considered framework. In this globalization time, architect's role has become critical to prevent a clash between the needs and the design because our world is rapidly transforming. To define architecture position within the changing context, research is significant in providing architects with an understanding towards different layers in our society, ranging from the environment to social dynamics.

As a student from a developing country, I have been accustomed to being practical, technical, and to focus on feasibility in the design process so that various fundamental problems could be quickly solved by architecture. The "Research Methods" course has broadened my knowledge in the different ways to approach architecture. It has come to my realization that focusing on one of these approaches could filter, limit, and open up possibilities at the same time. The lectures also have given me an understanding that some approaches can be visible to the eyes, such as the material culture², but it can be abstract and poetic, such as narratives³. Consequently, the same intentions may result in contrasting results and implications.

I am involved in the Shared Heritage Lab within the chair of Heritage and Architecture. Even though the chair of heritage emphasizes its design based on the building analysis and cultural valuation, the idea of the studio is to evoke discussions between students from four different disciplines, which are heritage, engineering, urbanism, and landscape. This studio is also in collaboration with Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), an Indonesian university. The multi-disciplinary approach is crucial for the site of the project, which is located in Semarang. Semarang is a trading city in my country, Indonesia that once stood as Dutch administration during the colonisation period. Semarang is currently facing various challenges, such as the decayed heritage built, poverty, waste management problem, land subsidence, and flooding risk. The focus area of this studio is the embryo of Semarang that is divided into four main quarters due to the social segregation in the past, which are Kota Lama (Dutch), Pecinan (Chinese), Kauman (Arabs), and Melayu.

For my graduation studio, I am intrigued by how several methods could complement each other and how to find the balance of these methods for a long-term solution. This project fascination derived from the colonial architecture that has distant to the local community's practice. In the Semarang context, the building embodies European character, which may not suit the current and future communities and environment. Therefore, apart from the heritage-based investigation, the project tries to see the relevance of the heritage built through the socio-cultural perspective. I am personally interested in the way space is socially produced and how the spatial practice changes over time based on its social culture, physical settings, and history⁴. This includes the organic spaces in *kampung* that are made and occupied by vulnerable communities in Semarang and how this can be translated to the adaptive re-use of a heritage built. My research questions are: *How can shared heritage architecture that embodies a conflictual past be appropriated as a part of local community's practices in Kota Lama Semarang? How to bridge the distance between the community and the heritage? How can shared heritage be used as a tool to improve the agricultural trading practices and its relation to the natural environment?*

¹ Lucas, Ray. "Research Methods in Architecture." London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016, 7.

² Schreurs, E. "Investigating Material Culture and Culture of Materials". Lecture Series on Research Methods 2019.

³ Havik, K. "Investigating Spatial Narratives. Lecture Series on Research Methods 2019.

⁴ Lefebvre on Giesecking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 290.

II UNDERSTANDING SOCIO-SPATIAL PRACTICES AND HERITAGE BASED APPROACH

As I am doing my graduation studio in my country, the etic and emic⁵ topic needs to be addressed in the early phase of the research. Even though I am familiar with the general situation of the country, I have to first position myself through the etic's lens because Indonesia consists of many islands and cities that embody different culture, history, geography, and social dynamic. However, I anticipate that my knowledge and experiences as a local (emic) could help me navigate, lead to findings, and filter irrelevant information⁶. I divided my research into three phases; prior, during, and post site visit with the context-led method, which could help me to comprehend the physical, historical, and social settings of the site. Prior site visit to Semarang, I focus on historical research by analysing the urban morphology of the area in relation to the socio-economic activities. The research provides me not only with physical information, but also the tradition and the dynamics of the people that have influenced the development of the community's practices and the built environment. The information is then combined with other people's researches in the studio, such as the water and transportation network, landscape, politics, as well as architecture to get the general overview of the city and its transformation.

Praxeology, the study of human action and behavior⁷, would be one approach that I use for my research. Kota Lama Semarang, or the Dutch quarter that holds valuable heritage built has been left decayed. To bring inclusivity to Kota Lama, the project intends to incorporate the socio-economic practices of the community that lives in organic settlements called *kampung*. During the site visit, I wanted to discover how the spaces in *kampung* are socially produced⁸, how they use it, and how the culture, such as social, economic, and technology, is transcribed to the physical settings⁹. Observing the community's everyday practices would not only show a typology or a repeating pattern¹⁰, but also the peculiar elements to this ensemble that might be invisible to the eyes¹¹. By identifying both the pattern and the unique, a set of characters would surface and a thorough understanding of the people's relationship to the built environment would be obtained. This process may also reveal social structure, the way people interact, and specific physical setting requirements. The ethnographic research method is fruitful to reduce speculations towards the actual use of space, the significance, as well as how the people would like to live¹². This technique requires constant engagement with people's everyday lives in a specific length of time. This observation results in insights to spatial representation, the embedded meaning¹³ of space, and the different ways of how people operate at different times¹⁴. Behavior settings¹⁵ map that depicts the constant relationship between physical and activity settings would be used as the main observation tool. Meanwhile, interviews from various stakeholders, such as academics, government, professionals, and ordinary people are conducted to see the people's needs, the challenges, the efforts that have been done, and to prevent the one-sided or biased perspective in the process.

⁵ Lucas, Ray. "Research Methods in Architecture." London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016, 10

⁶ Lucas, Ray. "Research Methods in Architecture." London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016, 10

⁷ Berkers, M. "Investigating Social/Spatial Practices." Lecture Series on Research Methods 2019.

⁸ Lefebvre on Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 289.

⁹ Setha Low on Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014., 35

¹⁰ Lucas, Ray. "Research Methods in Architecture." London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016, 12

¹¹ Certeau on Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 233

¹² Lucas, Ray. "Research Methods in Architecture." London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016, 15, 37

¹³ Lefebvre on Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 35

¹⁴ Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 38

¹⁵ Barker, R.G. "Ecological Psychology: Concept and Methods for Studying the Environment of Human Behavior." Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968.

As I am working on the existing built, a rigorous process needs to be done to provide me with knowledge of the history, the design principles, the development of the city and its implication to the heritage built, as well as the technology that has been involved in the past¹⁶. I place *"Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversion"* book as my guideline. During the site visit, the observation follows "A Primer of Observation" chapter that points out the elements that need to be examined on the chosen site. Along with this process, the collection of archives, original drawings, and documentation are needed for a complete analysis. These steps are followed by cultural value mapping and assessment, which are based on the "Analytical Mapping" chapter of the book that utilizes the chrono-mapping and value matrix¹⁷ as the main tools. The cultural value assessment results in the obligations, the opportunities, and the dilemmas that need to be considered in the design process. The information is needed to be able to transform the building responsibly, in which the values are considered and the building itself is used as the source of the design.

Meanwhile, post site visit research focuses on identifying and analysing the findings from socio-spatial practices and heritage-based methods. Apart from the qualities of the heritage built, the building may not be suitable for the local community as it was built and intended for the Dutch. It emphasizes the significance of understanding both socio-spatial practices and heritage methods. The two pieces of research can complement and balance each other, which can inform the design process and be translated into spatial form. The reflection of what does shared heritage means for the future is also crucial in positioning the architecture within the context.

III RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIO-SPATIAL PRACTICES AND HERITAGE BASED APPROACH

3.1 Socio-Spatial Practices: Examining the Complex Layers of Behavior and Environment

There have been various theories and research development in the socio-spatial practices field that could enrich the research within the ethnographic methods. Roger Barker and Herber Wright introduced the behavior setting concept to describe the combination of extra-individual behavior pattern (non-individual) and their physical milieu¹⁸. They accentuate this concept as its own entity. It is not only a sociology concept because there are physical elements involved. According to Barker and Wright, behavior setting consists of physical properties, environmental settings, and social components¹⁹ and cannot be separated. As a response to this concept, Indonesian architect and writer, Joyce Laurens explained in her book (2004)²⁰ that behavior setting consists of the reciprocal relationships (*synomorphy*) between a standing pattern of behavior (activities that keep repeating) and circumjacent milieu (specific spatial arrangements) in a time-specific period. This synomorphy theory implies that physical and activity settings could dominate one another depending on its context. For my research, observation through behavior mapping can be done by focusing on the synomorphy aspect of the physical and action dimensions, while the culture and tradition would reveal themselves when the pattern and the unique appear.

In relation to the non-physical aspect of the field, concepts are explored by experts like Edward Hall, who introduced proxemics in 1966²¹, which is the invisible bubble created by culture and tradition that defines people's relation to other people and to the environment. The concepts are also investigated by Jan Gehl, Hans and Patterson, who explain the division of activities²². Concerning the

¹⁶ Kuipers, Marieke, W. de Jonge. "Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversation." Delft: TU Delft, 2017, 23

¹⁷ Clarke, N. J. and Kuipers, M. C. 2017 (in press). 'Introducing the Heritage Value Matrix: Connecting Matter and Meaning in Built Heritage'.

¹⁸ Barker, R.G. "Ecological Psychology: Concept and Methods for Studying the Environment of Human Behavior." Standford: Standford University Press, 1968.

¹⁹ Bell, P.A., Fisher, J.D. & Loomis, R.J. "Environmental Psychology." Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, 1976.

²⁰ Laurens, Joyce Marcella. "Arsitektur dan Perilaku Manusia." Jakarta: Grasindo, 2004.

²¹ Hall on Gieseeking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 35

²² Gehl, Jan. "Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space." New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1999.

physical aspect of the field, Rapoport²³ (1982) describes elements that could form physical settings, which are fixed, semi-fixed, and non-fixed elements. He underlines that in some cases, human can act as a physical setting as well. Meanwhile, experts like Norman Crowe and Ashihara characterizes the several ways physical settings can affect behavior, such as the level of enclosure, lighting, and scale²⁴.

To integrate these kinds of concepts, Setha Low summarizes several theories on her own research, *spatializing culture*²⁵. Several works included in the discussion are Lefebvre's work on the social production of space and how space always carries a meaning, Munn and Rocketteller who weighs on the tangible aspect of the social space, or Rodman and Richardson that focuses on the personal spatial experience and phenomenology. Low's overview of the idea of spatializing culture already consists of two different methods that the lecture series research methods has touched upon, which are the praxeology that focuses on human action and spatial narratives that focuses on experience. Reflecting on this evidence, a context-led approach is important to filter certain methods that would only add complexity to the research.

3.2 The Position of Heritage in the Built Environment

In practice, the attitude of architects in different countries towards built heritage shows the everlasting debate on the role of heritage in the built environment, where it would stand in the future, and what it can bring to the future generation. The on-going discussion focuses on whether to restore or to preserve. This debate was triggered by the divided views that weigh on aesthetics or ethics. As a cultural resource, the aesthetic-oriented minds like Viollet-le-Duc would restore heritage built to its former condition. The purpose is to allow the heritage to represent a specific moment in time. The implementation of this idea lies within the beautification approach to the heritage built, which can be seen in projects like Sainte-Chapelle (1840-1867) and the Cathedral of Notre-Dame (1845-1864)²⁶. The opposing view, which is represented by figures like Ruskin and Morris, considers ethics as the main foundation of their thinking. For them, preservation that shows an honest relationship between the original built and the new intervention is more important, which can be seen in the projects like Athens (1931) and Venice (1964)²⁷. As a response to this issue, Alois Riegl introduces a matrix tool that considers both tangible and intangible values in his essay "*Modern Cult of Monuments*" (1903). This matrix, alongside the matrix written by Brand that holds mostly the physical factors of the valuation²⁸ is being used by Clarke and Kuipers to produce a culture value assessment matrix²⁹ that stands as a tool for this project. The cultural value assessment may result in various approaches, such as adaptive re-use, restoration, or even demolition. However, this matrix offers a clear line of thinking, which results in reasonable arguments of intervention despite the subjective character of the assessment. This is the reason why the assessment does not have a right or wrong answer. To get the best result, verifications to experts or a group assessment needs to be done to avoid biased decisions.

²³ Rapoport, A. "The Meaning of The Built Environment." SAGE Publications, 1982.

²⁴ Ashihara, Yoshinobu. "Exterior Design in Architecture". New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1981.

²⁵ Setha Low on Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 35

²⁶ Kuipers, Marieke, W. de Jonge. "Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversation." Delft: TU Delft, 2017, 67

²⁷ Kuipers, Marieke, W. de Jonge. "Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversation." Delft: TU Delft, 2017, 67

²⁸ Kuipers, Marieke, W. de Jonge. "Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversation." Delft: TU Delft, 2017, 87

²⁹ Clarke, N. J. Kuipers, M. "Introducing the Heritage Value Matrix: Connecting Matter and Meaning in Built Heritage.", 2017

3.3 Finding a Balance

These two different approaches may establish other dilemmas when the shared heritage status of the architecture is put into consideration. Reciprocal examination of the key information from both methods is essential in defining which findings would dominate. Historical and contextual understandings as well as discussions with students and experts from other countries while acknowledging my perspective as an Indonesian, would work as filters to decide the parameters, which later be used to harmonize both the community's practices and the heritage values.

IV POSITIONING: HERITAGE AND COMMUNITY- PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

My passion for understanding the local community's practices and the livelihood of Semarang has drawn me to the Praxeology, Investigating Socio-Spatial Practices lecture by Marieke Berkers. In the early phase of my research, I was conflicted about whether I should go to the Spatial Narratives method that was introduced by Klaske Havik during the lecture. I considered it because I would like to dive deep into the meaning of the place within the shared heritage context. However, the urgency of tackling the poverty and lack of education issues in the Semarang embryo has lit my initial desire to empower the community through the improvement and transformation of socio-economic practices, which has led me to this route. Meanwhile, the spatial narratives concept would support me in the design process.

Large portions of Kota Lama area of Semarang are currently only treated as photo backgrounds for tourists. Most of the development in this area favors the beautification of heritage built without incorporating it functionally into the urban fabrics. The collaboration of these two methods is intended to trigger a symbiotic relationship of the heritage built and the community. By incorporating the heritage to the community's life, it could raise awareness of the community towards the importance of the heritage built so that they would maintain it. The idea of integrating the community's practices around Kota Lama area within the heritage built may also lead to dilemma because the architecture was intended for the Dutch and may not suit the current community's patterns. Moreover, the intangible memories that are embodied in the chosen heritage may also conflict with its values. To answer my research questions, I need to keep going back and forth while examining the spatial culture of the community and the values of the chosen heritage site.

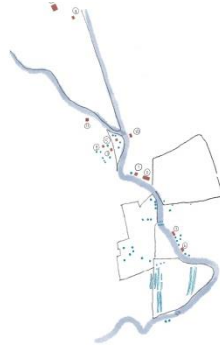
In regards to the community's practices, the ethnographic method through behavior mapping is chosen. However, as the site is located far from Delft, the time limitation arises as a challenge. I was only able to do observations in two different periods of time with the duration of three weeks for each period. Consequently, the occasional events may not be experienced and the relationship to the informants could not be constantly developed³⁰. The lack of research on the area outside Kota Lama shows the minimum attention that this area has received from researchers. Another issue that could emerge during the research is the clarity of the pattern due to its organic formation and unplanned site. I anticipate that the information could hinder the real qualities or pattern due to the limitation of the site itself. However, broadening the context³¹ of the observation to several different *kampung* (organic settlements) would help this research in extracting the qualities of the spatial culture. The gap of information can be filled by cross-checking the plural information on the different micro-context of the area. Each spot could correspond to one another and providing rich materials for the reflection process. It could also identify each spot's limitations and its consequences to the reciprocal relationship of physical and activity settings. Defining a placed-centered mapping³² method as a tool also helps in identifying the pattern rather than following the movement of people (a person-centered mapping). Walking in a wider context of places can also highlight the connections between the area

³⁰ Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 38

³¹ Lucas, Ray. "Research Methods in Architecture." London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016, 40

³² Sommer, 1980.

and their ways of operating within the urban fabrics³³. Furthermore, talking with people can also enrich the information, especially regarding the occasional events that could not be observed on site.



[Fig 1] The Observation Area: Place-Centered Mapping
Source: Iswardhani, Ananta Vania. 2019.

Apart from widening the research area, I also try to narrow down the spots of observation. Based on the standing pattern of behavior theory by Laurens³⁴, I decided to eliminate the observation spots where the activity and physical settings are not consistent. However, it is essential to also notice inconsistent patterns when it's relevant for a deeper understanding towards the socio-spatial practices. I also limit my observation to the socio-economic activities. My strategy is to walk and observe during the day and night as well as weekday and weekend of each chosen spot to see how the relationships of people and space changes during this time. I reflect on "*A Vision of the Future*"³⁵ to define which activities are compulsory or optional and what is the based culture of these activities.



[Fig 2-4] Behavior Mapping of the Some of the Chosen Spots
Source: Iswardhani, Ananta Vania. 2019.

After the observation, a set of parameters needs to be established for the analysis of the behavior setting. The thinking by the likes of Edward Hall, Rapoport, and Ashihara is important to identify the findings of this observation. However, these theories would only be used as supporting

³³ Michel de Certeau on Gieseking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, 233

³⁴ Laurens, Joyce Marcella. "Arsitektur dan Perilaku Manusia." Jakarta: Grasindo, 2004.

³⁵ "A Vision of the Future." 1984.

tools as the research is context-led. I anticipate several parameters could not be explained by the visible things but rather on the cultural knowledge and tradition that go interdependently with actions³⁶. By examining the repeated patterns and the unique, this hidden culture may be read. Furthermore, when heritage and practices methods conflict, other factors could be taken into account as supporting valuation factors. Building technology research, historical research, and precedent studies could help filtering the project's dilemmas. The combination of heritage and community's practices approach may also result in the programming of the heritage built itself. In vice versa, the program that is chosen for the heritage built could help in solving the conflicts that come up to balance these two methods.

To conclude, reflecting on the notions of shared heritage, Clarke explained that shared heritage contains qualities that are valued by two or more different groups of people³⁷ but, it needs to be realized that the future possibilities of the heritage are not meant to be limited to certain groups of people. By doing the building research, analysis, and cultural value assessment, the qualities of the past, present, and also future can be identified. I have learned that the meeting of both praxeology study and heritage-based methods could contextualise the building within its future purposes. The other layers of information in the adaptive re-use of a built heritage could improve its range of impacts, ranging from its immediate surroundings to a global context. That being said, heritage built can also be an answer to Semarang's current problems, such as lack of green spaces, water and waste management, high flooding risk, land subsidence, as well as today's challenges in a wider context, such as sustainability, circularity, and resiliency.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Altman, I. "The Environment and Social Behaviour." England: The MIT Press, 1975.
- Altman, I. S.Low. "Place Attachment: Human Behavior and Environment – Advances in Theory and Research." New York: Plenum Press, 1992.
- Ashihara, Yoshinobu. "Exterior Design in Architecture". New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1981.
- Barker, R.G. "Ecological Psychology: Concept and Methods for Studying the Environment of Human Behavior." Standford: Standford University Press, 1968.
- Barker, R.G. "The Stream of Behaviour." New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963.
- Bell, P.A., Fisher, J.D. & Loomis, R.J. "Environmental Psychology." Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, 1976.
- Berkers, M., "Praxeology" Lecture Series on Research Methods 2019. Retrieved from Brightspace on October 2019.
- Ching, Francis D.K. "Arsitektur: Bentuk, Ruang, dan Tatanan." Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007.
- Clarke, N. J. Kuipers, M. "Introducing the Heritage Value Matrix: Connecting Matter and Meaning in Built Heritage.", 2017
- Crowe, Norman. "Nature and The Idea of Man-Made World." Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995.
- Gehl, Jan. "Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space." New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1999.
- Giesecking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014.
- Kuipers, Marieke, W. de Jonge. "Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversation." Delft: TU Delft, 2017
- Kopec, Dak. "Environmental Psychology for Design." Fairchild Publications, Inc, 2006.
- Laurens, Joyce Marcella. "Arsitektur dan Perilaku Manusia." Jakarta: Grasindo, 2004.
- Lucas, Ray. "Research Methods in Architecture." London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016
- Rapoport, A. "Human Aspects of Urban Form." Pergamon Press, 1977.
- Rapoport, A. "The Meaning of The Built Environment." SAGE Publications, 1982.

³⁶ Pierre Bordieu on Giesecking, Jen Jack, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low, and Susan Saegert, eds. "The People, Place, and Space Reader." New York: Routledge, 2014, xxii

³⁷ Shared Heritage Lab Semarang Lecture by Nicholas Clarke at TU Delft on 24 September 2019