The Notion on Urban Cultural Landscape from the Perspective of Landscape Architecture
Case Study: Cirebon City, West Java

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is a country with cultural richness and diversity, in which its urban landscape becomes significantly a representation of the cultural civilization. The landscape of the city in Indonesia has been formed by the cultural transformation within the community. Moreover, socio-economic and political factors also constitute the urban development for years.

The understanding of landscape has changes, it is not merely considered as an expanse of natural scenery that people come to see and enjoy. It comprises the visible features of an area including its physical elements and human elements such as human activity and the built up environment. This relates to a new emerging concept of urban cultural landscape (UCL) which has multi-disciplinary background (geography, archeology, urban planning, and landscape architects), and relevancy in analysing and identifying the development process of urban landscape.

Cirebon, situated in West Java Province, is a unique coastal city. Respectively, the historical urban development of Cirebon has significantly been influenced by various cultures and religions. The city was established since the Cirebon Kingdom era in 15th Century, and continues until this day. With the notion of UCL, this paper will use the city of Cirebon in order to analysis and identify the patterns and factors that formed the character of its urban landscape. Furthermore, it will also discuss the formation of urban cultural landscape of Cirebon City from the perspective of landscape architecture.

Keywords: cultural richness, urban cultural landscape, Cirebon.
INTRODUCTION

Recently, many scholars and researchers in landscape, anthropology and cultural background use the notion of cultural landscape for study about the morphology of landscape, or potential of the area, district and regions. Term of cultural landscape has been introduced by Carl Ortwin Sauer since 1925. The term is an elaboration result from culture and natural landscape as a media. In this concept, he argued that cultural landscape as form of cultural diversity manifestation in a landscape. It is a form of human activities result which they do in a landscape, where geographic landscape condition is unique and different will be different from other landscape(Sauer, 1963)

An area can be called a cultural landscape where there is human intervention in it, notwithstanding the percentage is too small. John Brinckerhoff Jackson said in Landscape magazine, 1951 “Wherever we go, whatever the nature of our work, we adorn the face of the earth with a living design which changes and is eventually replaces by that of the future generation (Calcatinge, 2010).Cultural landscape is a past representation and become our part of present life. Its richness and variety are physical evidence of cultural, religion and social community(ICOMOS, 2009).

Eventhough the concept has been known fora long time but it’s still become a debate among academics and researches. With numbers of science backgrounds infashioning the concept, many disagreementsin defining this concept. One of this form is urbanculturallandscape.

Urbanculturallandscapeis the most geographicareathatgetsshumanintervention. Calcatinge, (2010) said that the cultural landscape is a product of the inter-relation of human and space. The relation between the social structures and the urban, symbolic and utilitarian spaces is the one that can determine the interpretations of the cultural urban landscapes. The spaces and symbols of life in the urban environment are in relation to the economic, political and social ideologies and systems. The concept becomes a meta-word of post-modern speeches about space and culture, being a social product of the scenery of urban life, which contains among buildings also spaces and different ways to express the cultural values and human behavior. The landscape as a system implies the connection of different aspects of human existence, thus creating a multidimensional and dynamic space for the contemporary urban life in which dualities of the type time/space, human/natural, present/past transform the cultural landscape into a speech of the complicity of relations.

The high complexity presented by the urban cultural landscape makes it unique. A unique description of the urban character from big urban to rural is important so it is quite intensive to be discussed at the World Heritage Committee since 2005 to present (O'Donnell,2008 and UNESCO,2002).

Through the cultural urban landscape, the connectivity between human and the urban landscape produce a unique and characteristic landscape, create a different character from other region. One of the unique and characteristic urban landscape is Cirebon in West Java-Indonesia, a well known historical city as the Islamic Empire and trading port since the 15th century.

As the urban cultural landscape, the form of Cirebon established through a long process, influenced by a variety of aspects of political, economic, social, religion, etc., so formed a variety of elements then create a character of Cirebon. Therefore this paper tries to explore the cultural urban landscape connectivity concepts from different sciences then establish the appropriate urban cultural landscape concept based on the perception ofarchitectural landscape. Furthermore, through this concept, we can explore some kinds of aspects and elements to create the character of Cirebon so it looks unique, typical and different from other cities in Indonesia
THE TRACING TERM OF URBAN CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Many scholars take urban cultural landscape term from cultural landscape and urban landscape terminology. As described by Calcatinge (2010), that this terminology is new and important which the cultural landscape as a politic manifestation. The concept of cultural landscape today has a series of development and transformation, more complex than the one launched by Sauer in 1925, besides containing material component also mental component.

As mentioned above, the first term of Cultural landscape had been launched by Sauer in 1925, which stated that the cultural is the agent, the natural area is the medium. The cultural landscape is the result (Sauer, 1963). So, if the location of the cultural landscape is an urban area, we can call it urban cultural landscape.

The urban cultural landscape create the character of city, town or village, a combined work of people, place and time, defining it as unique. The resulting human and landscape interaction evolves to communicate aspects of the unique urban landscape spirit, also describes urban dynamic stratification today and before. Furthermore, O'Donnell (2008) said that urban cultural landscape occurs combine between the heritage value of tangible and intangible elements. Both of those elements can create an expression that gives spirit and forms character of that area. Therefore, the condition of an urban cultural landscape needs to be appreciated by documenting and preserving (Table 1. Element of Urban Cultural Landscape).

Table 1. Element of Urban Cultural Landscape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tangible Elements</th>
<th>Intangible Elements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural system</td>
<td>Festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land uses, land patterns, land clusters</td>
<td>Traditional music, dance, performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial organization</td>
<td>Pilgrimage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual relationships</td>
<td>Worship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topography, surface drainage</td>
<td>Rituals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>Commemoration of past events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation system</td>
<td>Traditional practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water feature, water natural and water constructed</td>
<td>Gathering place for native plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non habitable landscape structures and buildings</td>
<td>Gathering place for craft materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial character, spatial form &amp; spatial scale of habitable structures (space character and form, and spatial scale formed habitation area)</td>
<td>Iconic shared community place of memory and present use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary of site furnishing &amp; objects (site furniture and object)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Urban cultural landscape is also a potential area where traditionally the landscape is considered as an expanse of natural scenery, so everyone who come and see the view, they can enjoy it, and they will have an experience (Greffe, 2009). Furthermore, Calcatinge, (2010) said that urban cultural landscape is a real form of Cultural Landscape, where the cultural works with nature to create a living context and landscapes as a manifestation of the diversity of products and as a proof of the existence of the community culture area. We can say that Urban Cultural Landscape as an people interpretation of urban daily living. It reflects the political, social, economic, territorial state of the environment in which

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evolves and history. This concept developed by 3 (three) basic components; ideologies, individuals and urban morphology(Figure 1).

Urban cultural landscape is assimilated from cultural landscape as a part of entrophy result of human creative in the area, the shape is typology physical and social, and this description is mentioned as palimstes and kaleidoscope framework (Stan 2010 in Paftală, 2011). Furthermore, Paftală(2011) said, urban cultural landscape is including geography, ecology, aesthetic area aspects and social, politic, economic and also connection between vernacular and politic, functional and symbolic, dynamic and timeless element, hereinafter all aspects integrated and evolved so it has historic value.

Urban cultural landscape as a visualized shape of experiences. As Greffe(2009)said in urban cultural landscape, visitor position who come to urban landscape will change not only as a viewer but he becomes a “Flaneur” –a person who walks the city in order to experience it. Therefore Urban Cultural Landscape potentially to establish local community economy through the culture.

From the search result, the definitions of O'Donnell (2008), Greffe (2009), Calculinge (2010) and Paftală (2011), can be concluded that human intervention through their culture to a natural landscape, which is geographical area, change the landscape to be an urban cultural landscape. Thus, less human intervention in the landscape, the landscape is more natural, while moreintervention so it can make the landscape as a build environment (Figure 2).

Therefore we can conclude that theUrbanCulturalLandscape is formed because of human intervention with their scenery, which is aspecific and unique urban landscape. This shape create urban image that can be used as its identity. UrbanCulturalLandscape is arefection ofthe physical and cultural conditions in the region, whichoccurs due to political, economic and social influence starting from the past, present and future. So it can be said that urban morphology occurs because of UrbanCulturalLandscape.
The concept of urban cultural landscape can be understood from various sciences, such as geography, architecture, anthropology and the last is landscape architecture, as mentioned in this paper. According to landscape architect, urban cultural landscape concept is a human intervention form which is culture in an urban natural environment producing the beauty and unique, typical and rare urban landscapes character (Figure 3).

An Urban Cultural landscape cannot be separated from cultural manifestation that created in an urban community from time to time. So all aspects that form the Urban Cultural landscape occurs due to a combination of cultural manifestation by Koentjaraningrat (2000), they are: (1) cultural as a complexity of ideas, cultural values, norms, customs traditions, etc; (2) cultural as a complexity of activities and action of man in the community; (3) cultural as things of men’s work and urban cultural landscape components by Calcatinge, (2010) and landscape component by Simonds & Starke, (2006). From all provokes above there are 6 (six) aspects; historical period, urban environment conditions, demography conditions, knowledges, actions in activities and events forms (intangible elements), and physical form (tangible elements). As the three aspects; historical period, urban environment conditions and demography conditions forming community knowledge use as a reference and the behavior in doing daily activities, or at certain activities, these components formed intangible element. Next, as a place for activities then it is a physical shape or tangible element. Generally, this tangible element has a unique characteristic and different from other areas (Figure 3 and Figure 4).
Figure 4. Aspects of Urban Cultural Landscape from the landscape architect perspective

Figure 5. The Position Elements Urban Cultural Landscape of Components

**DISCUSSION**

Cirebon is well known as history city with its Islamic and trading kingdom. As a trade city, the port has been famous since XVI century told by Tome Pires, a Portuguese writer and treasurer, in 1513. He described that at that time Cirebon had been part of world trade network (Tjandrasasmita, 1997). The establishment of Islamic Kingdom started from the port, which was in XV century, by Pangeran Cakrabuwana.

Cirebon as a trading city and Islamic kingdom, also known as the city of intermix cultures, which have various cultures and nations were acculturated. The image of this intermix was then appointed to be Cirebon, which came from the word 'caruban' or mix' (Adeng, et Al, 1998). The acculturation process from different cultures (Chinese, Arabic, and Dutch) and religions (Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christian, and Catholic) came since XIV century then mixed and mingled with the culture (Javanese and Sundanese) and local religion (Hindu) create unique and characteristic community and landscape (Ambary, 1997, Sulistiyono, 1997, and Sunardjo, 1983).
Geographically, Cirebon located in Java Island, specifically in West Java, with 37.36 km
² width and a total population of 295,764 in 2010. The vision and mission of current
government is “to create Cirebon as a center of national activities and regional service
center based on trading and services, supported by the tourism Department, education,
and culture based on religious values” (BPS Cirebon, 2012 and Ciptakarya, Department of
Public Works, 2011).

As mentioned before, that the establishment of Cirebon could not be separated from the
existence of the Sultanate, who still stand until now. However, when the time went on
and influenced by political conditions in Dutch colonial era, Cirebon Sultanate was split
into 4 (four), the Sultanate Kasepuhan, Kanoman, Kaprabonan, and Kacirebonan and
each Keraton located in the city, precisely in Lemahwungkuk. From this condition, we
can see that the culture in Cirebon has a high diversity, comes from different nations, from
the four palaces and creates the typical and unique understanding, knowledge,
activities/events and space/buildings/artifacts.

The Cultural diversity is created because the physical influence condition of (as a coastal
landscape) social, economic and political is continuing from time to time (historical
aspects role), creating a community life today. In their lives, the community has a variety
of reliable understanding. This understanding in Urban Cultural Landscape concept is
what we called knowledge. Knowledge is believed as a belief that guides to conduct
various events and activities that are intangible, such as worship and praise to God, to
interact among human beings, how to live and making place, so create the character of
the residence. Basically this society knowledge is strongly influenced by Islam.

From this knowledge then the activities and events in intangible elements is created. In
those activities such as traditional dances, music, glasspainting, batik, rituals, worship,
Panjang Jimat, Rasulan, Grebeg Syawal, etc, then politics, trading and services,
industry activities such as traditional market also pesantren as a religious education. This
(Figure 6 and 7).

Figure 6. Topeng Dance
Source: Gegesik (2011)

Figure 7. Panjang Jimat Ritual
Source: Kesultanan Kanoman (2011)

Intangible elements, which are the activities, then create physical form which is
tangible element. This Physical identities as a place of activities, and the form can be land
pattern, spatial organization, urban orientation, artefacts, and vegetation zone area, and all
of this elements should related to environment aesthetic. One of the example of tangible
element is a spatial of Keraton Kasepuhan landscape. The landscape is divide into three
areas base on keraton activities and gradations of sanctity, as well as private level. The
first area that is profane part with less private. This area for public activities, place for the
royal guests are waiting to meet with the sultan, and keraton ceremonials or rituals
activities. Next area is more sacred and more private, not everyone can enter. Generally
only the servants of the palace are allowed to enter. The last area is the most private parts, for the sultan and his family living.

![Figure 8. Spatial Hierarchi of Keraton Kasepuhan](image)

**Source:** Oktikasari (2008)

The other examples is keratons orientation, influenced by the Java Sea at the northern part, and Mount Cireme in the Southern part, and the meaning is that getting closer to the
top of the mountain so it will be more sacred (Ambary, 1997). Figure 8 shows the influence of North-South orientation to the Keraton Kasepuhan site plan.

**CONCLUDING REMARK**

The concept of urban cultural landscape is divided in 6 (six) aspects, where 3 (three) first aspects are the historical period, the urban environment conditions and demography form community knowledge in related area. Next, the knowledge is embodied in intangible elements; activities and events. Finally, for this cultural activities and events, we need places and physical entities and we called it tangible elements.

In Cirebon City, urban cultural landscape concept has been understood since the beginning of the Sultanate of Cirebon. The six aspects of urban cultural landscape has become part of community daily activities. Knowledge, intangible elements and tangible elements formed by the demography factor influence (diversity and population) that interact with coastal landscape from time to time and create activities and events, then formed a different landscape patterns with other city landscape. This formation makes a unique and distinctive Cirebon landscape.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


