

REVEALING THE PARADOX OF A HERITAGE CITY THROUGH COMMUNITY PERCEPTION APPROACH: A CASE STUDY OF PARAKAN, TEMANGGUNG, CENTRAL JAVA

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analytically reveal the problems arising in conserving and preserving the cultural heritage of Indonesia in general, and that of Parakan in particular. Parakan is a small city in Central Java, Indonesia. As a part of a region in Temanggung District, it has been designated as a heritage city since December 2015 by the Central Government. It has a uniqueness, with both a tangible and intangible heritage. There is an extensive cultural heritage within the city, which represents its history. The research reveals the paradox of Parakan as a heritage city, which relates to delivering the process of conservation and preservation, which still faces many issues with regard to community needs. The research method was quantitative, with use of a statistical approach to show the data from the perception of the community. The paper obtains results using a descriptive narrative approach to describe the statistical data. In conclusion, we recommend that in order to reduce opposition, the local government of Parakan should deliver an initiative to encourage the local community to enhance its knowledge of cultural heritage, conservation and their impact on future generations.

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Keywords: Community perception; Heritage city; Oral tradition; Paradox; Parakan

1. Introduction

The first known use of the word “paradox” was in the renaissance era; it derives from the Latin "paradoxum" or "paradoxo". Both terms could be delivered as two words, "para" and "doxa", where "para" means "the way of" or "according to", and "doxa" means "what is accepted". To simplify the meaning of paradox, the word is usually employed to refer to a contradictory condition of an issue.

Tschumi [9] stated that a theory of space is not space itself. This is to describe and explain a paradox in architecture. It could therefore be defined that space is not just a real space which has been formed from boundaries, but also something which is covered itself. Levebre also supported this argument by representing the

definition of space which is collaborated from activities within it.

Kehoe [2] clearly discussed the paradox in conservation, particularly architectural conservation. He explained that this paradox could be compared between two historical buildings from the colonial era. The architectural conservation of such buildings could face a paradox between two issues, between conserving and preserving historical buildings which represent the old colonial era, and conserving and preserving such buildings in an effort to preserve history for future generations. Although in general the effort to preserve and conserve architectural heritage is also related to the choice of a historical moment which has a significant meaning, in practice the activities of architectural conservation and

preservation always face paradoxes related to contradictory issues.

Kehoe's [2] arguments are supported by the research of Muresanu [5], who explained that there exists a paradox between the conservation of architectural heritage and the effort to improve tourism activity within a historical site. The local community has been encouraged to support the enhancement of tourism, because it will improve their quality of life and the environment itself. But on the other hand, tourism activity could also be a challenge for the local community; negative impacts could become a threat to historical sites, and particularly the historical values and norms in the community. Both issues are very familiar to the local government and community, which have been encouraged to make possible the activity of architectural conservation. One group has very thoughtful ideas in addressing the concept of architectural conservation within a historical site, but another believes that such activity, while improving tourism, could also threaten historical values. This paradox facing conservation has been revealed in this research, which defines the level of understanding of cultural heritage of the local community and the level of willingness to conserve and preserve.

A case study was conducted for the research, with Parakan chosen as the subject. Parakan was made a heritage city in December 2015 by the Central Government of Indonesia. As mentioned by Author et al. [6], as a heritage area in Indonesia, Parakan has many aspects which have a significant character, either physical or non-physical, as well as tangible and intangible ones. Its heritage buildings are Parakan Rail Station, the Chinese Temple Klenteng Hok Tek Tong, Pasar Legi, Pecinan Area, Kauman Area, Kali Galeh Bridge, Kawedanan, the House of KH Subuki, the Cemetery of KH Subuki, Langgar Wali, Kauman Area, the Cemetery of Kyai Parak, and the Mosque Al Baroqah Bambu Runcing. The uniqueness of Parakan is also shown by the

existence of heritage ethnic Chinese houses within Pecinan Area, which have a specific architectural character. Parakan is also very well known as the city of Bambu Runcing, a sharpened traditional weapon made from bamboo. KH Subuki established this traditional weapon in the colonial era, when he was known as a Muslim leader with a strong character.

Based on the above explanation, we chose Parakan for the case study. Using oral tradition and local community approaches, the aim of the research will be revealed. Oral tradition was a significant approach, because we believed that to uncover the history of Parakan and to identify the needs of the local community, it was necessary to conduct interviews with the generation of KH Subuki. Respondents from the third, fourth and fifth generations of KH Subuki were chosen, and a result also has been defined. As stated by Vansina [10], oral tradition can be defined as verbal testimony transmitted from one generation to the next or later one, which is more precise. He claimed that oral tradition is an approach taken by historians to shed light on historical events through the local community. According to this, we believe that the oral tradition approach is appropriate to reveal the cultural heritage of Parakan and to define the paradox which relates to this issue.

To support the oral tradition approach, we also employed a local community perception approach, distributing and circulating questionnaires within the Pecinan and Kauman areas. This approach was intended to ascertain the understanding of the local community about cultural heritage, and its willingness to conserve and preserve it. All the questionnaires were distributed to the local community apart from the generations of KH Subuki; this aimed to avoid double respondents and overlapped results. The perception approach was employed in the research because it intended to reveal the paradox of cultural heritage issues. Luthans, cited in Mulyadi [4],

stated that in perception an individual will bring the intentions of selection activity, organizing activity and interpretation activity. Individuals' perception could be completed by their collecting information, feeling it and understanding it through their senses. This notion is supported by Rapoport [7], who explained that the activities of individual perception can be completed through an individual's experiences.

2. Material and Methods

The research is a quantitative, based on the collecting and analyzing of data statistically, together with descriptive qualitative research with a narrative, descriptive approach to describe and analyze the case study from both physical and non-physical aspects. Since the research is quantitative, we analyzed the data collected using a statistical graphic form to show the results. We have conducted the data collection by distributing 70 questionnaires in order to identify the paradox of heritage cities, particularly Parakan, through oral tradition supported by community perception.

2.1. Location and Research Time

The research was undertaken in Parakan, one of the Kecamatan in Kabupaten Temanggung, Central Java, which has been regarded as a Heritage City since December 2015 by the Central Government of Indonesia. We chose the areas of Kauman and Pecinan in Parakan as particular locations for the research (see Figure 1). Although there are 12 identified cultural heritage sites (see Figure 2) within Parakan, we studied six of these. Three are colonial heritage sites (Parakan Rail Station, Galeh Bridge and Pasar Legi), one is a Chinese heritage site (Klenteng Hok Tek Tong), and two are colonial heritage sites very closely related to the activity of Bambu Runcing making (the House of KH Subuki and the Mosque of Al Baroqah Bambu Runcing). We chose those six sites because they

all represent the most significant cultural heritage within Parakan.

The research was conducted for about two years between 2017 and 2018, while the statistical data collection took around three months, from July to September 2018.

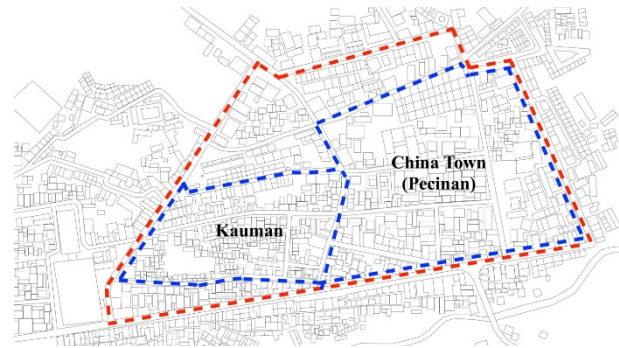


Figure 1: Research location within the historical site of Parakan (Kauman and Pecinan)



Figure 2: Mapping of the cultural heritage in the Parakan historical site.

There are 12 cultural heritage sites, six of which are the most significant

1. Masjid Al Barokah Bambu Runcing
2. Masjid Wali
3. Makam KH Subuki
4. Rumah Candi KH Subuki
5. Gedeng Ex BMT
6. Makam Kyai Parak
7. Jembatan Kali Galeh
8. Rumah Gambiran
9. Kantor Kawedanan
10. Klenteng Hok Tek Tong
11. Stasiun KA Parakan

12. Pasar Legi Parakan

2.2. Research Tools and Materials

Since this research is a part of wider architectural heritage research conducted using statistical methods, we used the following tools: (1) AutoCAD as software for drawing maps; (2) Corel Draw as a software for mapping analysis; (3) Questionnaires, which were distributed and circulated among the local community in Parakan; and (4) Ms Excel as software to make the quantitative analysis to identify and examine the results. Supporting and additional materials and tools used included a camera, sketchbook and recorder.

2.3. Measurement Methods

Two approaches are used: oral tradition and community perception. In the oral tradition approach, we collected the data through direct interviews with the generation of a significant person with Parakan named KH Subuki. Around 40 respondents were interviewed from the third to the fifth generations. On the other hand, to support the results from the oral tradition approach, we distributed and circulated 70 questionnaires throughout the local community within Parakan. The community perception approach can be examined using the purposive sampling method. The 70 respondents varied in age, educational background and status; they either originated from Parakan, or were immigrants from another city. Two types of respondent represented ethnicity, one from the Kauman Area (Muslim and Javanese) and the other from the Pecinan Area (Khonghucu/Confucian and Chinese). These two types of ethnicity were classified because we believed they would affect the results. The percentage of the type has been modified depending on the population. In the Kauman area, the population has been regarded relatively average with the population of Pecinan Area.

2.4. Respondents

For the oral tradition approach, we interviewed 40 people, and for the community perception approach we prepared 70 questionnaires, with 14 related questions. The questionnaires were distributed randomly, but covered two groups in the local community. Since the population in Kauman Area is relatively average with the population in Pecinan Area, we divided the questionnaire into 50% for Pecinan Area and 50% for Kauman Area. Both areas were represented by 50% male and 50% female. The age of the respondents was randomly distributed using five age groups: <17 years old; 17-21 years old; 21-40 years old; 40-55 years old and >50 years old.

2.5. Analytical Methods

Since the research aimed to reveal the paradox of a heritage city, which is part of the problem that arises in conservation and preservation activities, we identified the results of the data collection and classified them into various categories. We measured all the answers from the respondents to examine their perceptual opinions. The analytical results will be presented at the end of the research using the standard in an understanding of cultural heritage, as well as the willingness for conservation and preservation. They will then be interpreted to reveal whether there is a paradox or not in Parakan as a heritage city.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Understanding of Cultural Heritage

Referring to Undang-Undang RI Number 11 Year 2010, the word “heritage” could be defined as either an individual object, a group of objects, or a part of an object which is about 50 years old, or has represented a particular unique style for at least 50 years and is regarded as an object with significant historical, scientific or cultural value.

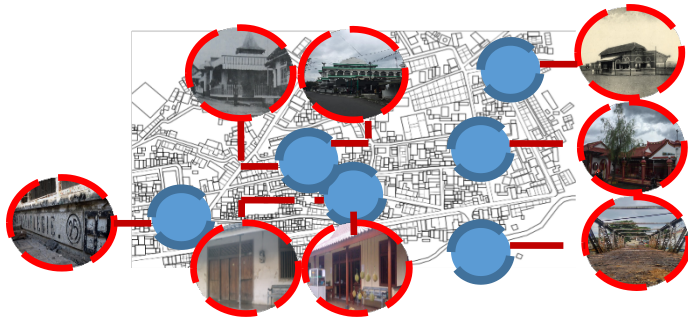


Figure 3: Location of the six cultural heritage sites used as a measurement tool of community perception of cultural heritage.

According to the above definition, cultural heritage sites in Parakan which have significant value and are more than 50 years old include:

- a. Rumah Candi-House of KH Subuki
- b. Mosque Al Baroqah Bambu Runcing
- c. Chinese Temple-Klenteng Hok Tek Tong
- d. Railway Station from the colonial era - Stasiun KA Parakan
- e. Bridge from colonial era - Kali Galeh Bridge
- f. Market from colonial era - Pasar Legi Parakan

The location of the six sites can be seen in Figure 3.

The direct interviews using the oral tradition approach showed that almost all the 40 respondents stated that out of the six cultural heritage sites, only two were very significant, namely Rumah Candi-House of KH Subuki and Mosque Al Baroqah Bambu Runcing. They mostly said that both these sites represented the movement of KH Subuki with the Muslim community to fight against the colonial powers. Both sites are also a reminder of the history of Bambu Runcing, as well as the history of Parakan itself. The interviewees also stated that the remaining sites, particularly those representing the history of the colonial era, constituted a bad memory of the colonial era. Furthermore, to support the oral tradition approach, we distributed 70 questionnaires in Kauman and Pecinan Area. The distributed

surveys resulted in the following respondent profiles:

Table 1. Profile of respondents

Characteristic	Pecinan Area	Kauman Area
Gender:	35 respondents	35 respondents
Male	50%	50%
Female	50%	50%
Age:		
<17 years		2.85 %
17-21 years		2.85 %
21-40 years		42.90%
40-55 years		35.70 %
>55 years		15.70 %

Two questions indicated whether the respondents had knowledge and understanding of cultural heritage. The first question asked for a definition of cultural heritage. There were four possible answers to this question: ancient object, historical object, old object and useless object. Out of the 70 respondents, 85.70 % stated that cultural heritage related to historical objects, with the remaining 14.30 % saying that it related to ancient objects (see Figure 4). Both answers have a similar meaning, but are different with reference to the definition of cultural heritage. An ancient object not always has historical value, so is not always an object cultural heritage. However, a historical object might be an ancient object as it has historical value which represents a previous era. Both answers could show that the respondents had good knowledge and understanding about cultural heritage.

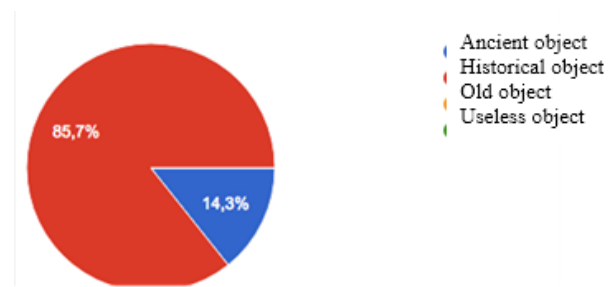


Figure 4: Knowledge of the respondents about cultural heritage

The second question was about the knowledge and understanding as to whether Parakan had much cultural heritage or not. This question was posed to prove respondents' knowledge and understanding about cultural heritage. The results show that almost 100% of the respondents (98.5%) knew that Parakan had extensive cultural heritage, which indicates that the knowledge and understanding of all the respondents about cultural heritage is clear. Only two respondents, around 1.5 % (see Figure 5), stated that they did not have any knowledge about whether Parakan had much cultural heritage.

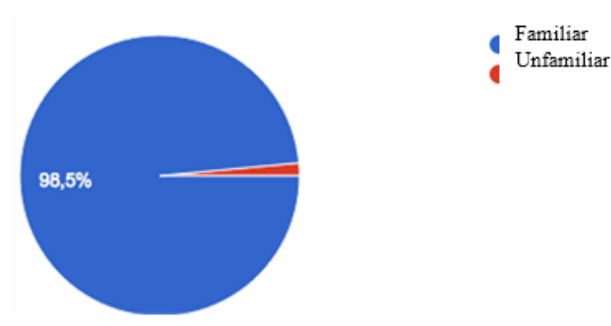


Figure 5: Knowledge of the respondents about Parakan's cultural heritage

3.2. The Willingness to Conserve and Preserve

In previous research, Author [6] mentioned that the designation of certain areas as conservation areas, as well as heritage areas in Indonesia, is encouraged by global concern about the protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage. Since then, Indonesia, which has many heritage areas, has attempted to protect its cultural and natural heritage by designating some regions of the country as conservation or heritage areas. One of the initiatives of the central government is to encourage local governments to implement conservation and preservation programs. To help such programs succeed, local governments have established community groups to assist in their delivery. They have also arranged activities to encourage the local community to show commitment to conservation and preservation. However, many

local communities still have a lack of understanding and knowledge about cultural heritage and conservation/preservation, a situation which has affected conservation and preservation activities.

At this stage, we asked some questions to identify whether the respondents had the willingness to conserve and preserve. By posing six questions referring to the six cultural heritage in Parakan, the results of the research are clearly revealed (see Table 2 and Figure 6).

Table 2 Statistical results on the willingness to conserve and preserve the cultural heritage of Parakan

Cultural heritage site	Designated as a cultural heritage site			
	Community of Pecinan Area		Community of Kauman Area	
	35 respondents	35 respondents	35 respondents	35 respondents
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
House of KH Subuki	30 orang/ 85.70%	5 orang/ 14.30%	35 orang/ 100%	0 orang
Mosque of Al Baroqah Bambu Runcing	31 orang/ 88.57%	4 orang/ 11.43%	35 orang/ 100%	0 orang
Chinese Temple-Klenteng Hok Tek Tong	35 orang/ 100%	0 orang/ 0%	31 orang/ 88.57%	4 orang/ 11.42%
Railway Station from Colonial Era- Stasiun KA Parakan	35 orang/ 100%	0 orang/ 0%	27 orang/ 77.16%	8 orang/ 22.84%
Bridge from Colonial Era- Kali Galeh Bridge	35 orang/ 100%	0 orang/ 0%	21 orang/ 60%	14 orang/ 40%
Market from Colonial Era- Pasar Legi Parakan	35 orang/ 100%	0 orang/ 0%	21 orang/ 60%	14 orang/ 40%
Mean	95.70%	4.30%	80.95%	19.05%

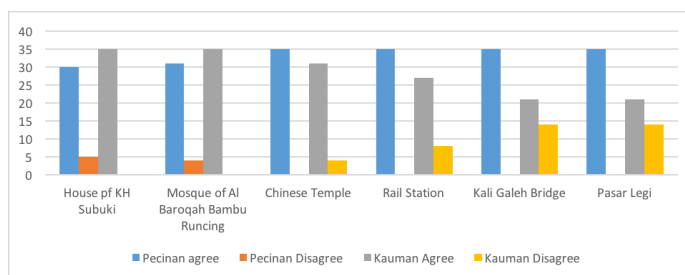


Figure 6: Chart of the Willingness to Conserve and Preserve the Cultural Heritage of Parakan

Figure 6 shows that the willingness to conserve and preserve depends on the preference of the local community. For example, Table 2 shows that the local community in Pecinan Area is willing to preserve all the cultural heritage

representing the colonial era, such as the Parakan Railway Station, Kali Galeh Bridge and Pasar Legi Parakan, believing they should be preserved and conserved as cultural heritage, as well as Klenteng Hok Tek Tong as a sacred place for Chinese people (100% agreed with maintaining these four cultural heritage sites). On the other hand, out of the local community in Kauman Area, about 100% were willing to preserve and conserve Rumah Candi KH Subuki and the Mosque Al Baroqah Bambu Runcing, because in this area these two objects are historical places with historical value. Both sites represent the history of Parakan as a city of Bambu Runcing, and also both represent the history of KH Subuki as the founder of Bambu Runcing. Around 60-77% of respondents were willing to conserve and preserve the three cultural heritage sites which represented the colonial era, with the remainder, about 23-40% stating that the sites were reminders of the colonial era (bad memories), so they did not deserve to be preserved and conserved.

3.3. The Paradox of the Heritage City

From the above results, the paradox of the heritage city of Parakan can be revealed. The first issue is about the willingness to conserve and to preserve with regard to the understanding of cultural heritage, while another issue is about the willingness to cast off the bad memories of cultural heritage. We believe that we do understand this situation, because all the respondents who are related to the history or Parakan in the colonial era mostly live in Kauman Area. They believe that the bad memories of this era could have a bad effect on future generations. From the oral tradition and local community perception approaches, we are able to give various reasons why most respondents within Kauman Area had no willingness to conserve and

preserve the cultural heritage which reminded them of the colonial era. These reasons are as follows: cultural heritage from the colonial era could become a bad memory; it could destroy

the minds of future generations; it could generate bad emotions and hatred; it only comprises useless objects with poor performance.

However, a few respondents (fewer than 20 %; see Figure 6) from Kauman Area agreed and had the willingness to conserve and preserve their cultural heritage. The reasons for their agreement are as follows: cultural heritage is regarded as a historical reminder; it is regarded as a heritage for future generations; it is regarded as an educational tool for future generations; it is regarded as a witness of old or historical events.

This paradox of the heritage city will always exist in architectural conservation. The local government, together with the local community, should initiate activities to improve the issues of architectural conservation. In this way, the paradox of the heritage city of Parakan in particular could be minimized in order to avoid rejection from the local community, who are not willing to conserve and preserve.

4. Conclusion

The uniqueness and architectural diversity within Parakan, particularly in Pecinan Area and Kauman Area, are significant reasons why the city is very suitable to be a heritage city. Understanding architectural conservation is not done only through the literature, but also by conducting research, particularly with the oral tradition, which has enabled us to understand the related issues more. By collecting information through the oral tradition and local community perception approaches, the paradox of the heritage city, particularly Parakan, can be revealed. Some reasons behind the issues have been defined as a result of this research.

Although there is a paradox in the heritage city, the issues of this paradox could be minimized if local governments are willing to take some

initiatives to encourage the local community to enhance their knowledge and understanding of cultural heritage. We believe that there are still many people who do not have the will to conserve and preserve. We only conducted the reseach on very few respondents to achieve its aims, and the results of the questionnaire do not represent all the needs of the local community of Parakan.

For further research, we suggest enhancing the study to a wider local community scope in Parakan, covering the whole area, not only the historical district. Further research could investigate and reveal the potency of Parakan as a historical site in Indonesia by making some investigations with either qualitative or quantitative methods.

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