

ACCULTURATION IN CULTURE SITE KELENTENG CU AN KIONG - LASEM VIEWED FROM ARCHITECTURAL AND DECORATION ANGLE

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ABSTRAK

The entry of the influence of various foreign cultures in Indonesia can be seen in various aspects of cultural products. One of the things we can see is that there are a lot of cultural sites built in various regions that are influenced by foreign cultures. Cu An Kiong Temple in Lasem, Central Java is one of them. The research proposed in this proposal has a specific target to examine more deeply the influence of Chinese culture which is applied in the architectural style of the Cu An Kiong temple cultural site, with a long-term goal of cultural preservation in Indonesia which has experienced acculturation with local local culture. The research method was carried out by direct observation at the location, visual documentation and making notes about the architectural style used, and using literature relating to the topic to be reviewed. This research has been able to collect information regarding the temple and it's surroundings, including opinions from the people associated with the temple or Lasem area, by means of visual documentation. All of the information gathered here can hopefully be used for similar research in the near future, especially in terms of cultural preservation.

Keywords: temple; culture; architecture; lasem; humanities; Chinese.

INTRODUCTION

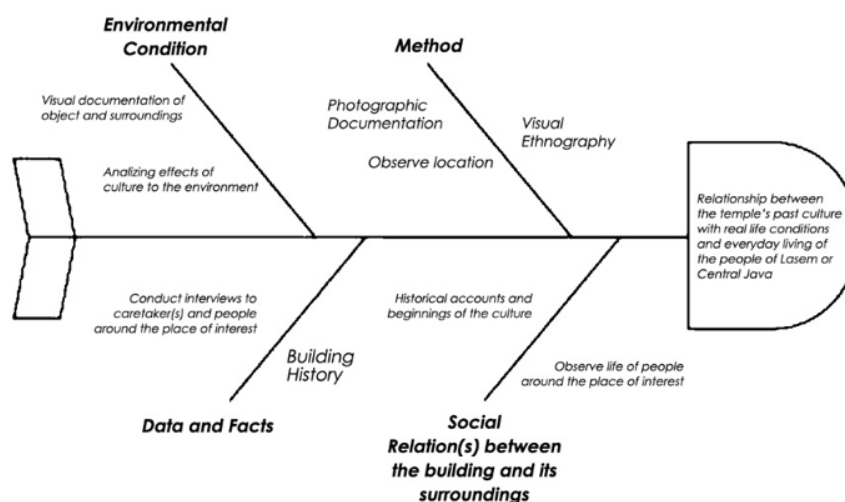
With the entry of various foreign cultures into Indonesian territory in the past, cultural acculturation between the foreign culture and the local culture has occurred. This acculturation process took place for hundreds of years and eventually merged into a distinct cultural property in Indonesia. One of the foreign cultures that has successfully merged and developed in Indonesia is Chinese culture. The diaspora of Chinese immigrants has a long story in Indonesian history. The temple itself is a public space that is used as a media of expression, and shows acculturation behavior through the use of local symbols in worship activities (Kustedja, 2014: 1).

According to ancient Chinese history it is said that the Chinese began to migrate to Indonesia at the end of the Tang dynasty. In Chinese society there are three religions, namely: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Confucianism and Taoism are native religions from China while Buddhism is a native Indian religion that entered China. After entering Confucianism and Taoism, Indonesia is considered a belief because in Indonesia it only recognizes 5 religions, one of which is Buddhism. However, these three religions in Indonesia are known as Tri Dharma. The Tri Dharma people themselves have a place of worship called the Temple. The temple that will be researched here is the Cu An Kiong Temple Lasem, Rembang, Central Java, Indonesia.

According to Wulanningrum (2017), the development of Chinese settlements in Lasem around the 1600s showed the large number of Chinese traders in the Lasem Kingdom who interacted with the local population at that time, thus forming a settlement around the Kaliem docks with a center on the Cu An Kiong temple. So that the existence of the Cu An Kiong temple should be preserved and developed as capital to enrich Indonesian culture as a result of acculturation of foreign cultural cultures to the local Indonesian culture and heritage, enriching the history.

One way to preserve cultural wealth that was resulted from the acculturation process is to maintain the cultural form itself and record all matters related to it, so that there is always an accurate source of documentation about that culture. However, the temple and its surrounding areas are not widely known yet in the tourism industry, so collecting information about it can be quite challenging. The research team will need to go directly to the mentioned temple and observe the situation in order to get proper documentation that is needed for the research. As Lasem is not as popular as a tourist attraction such as Bali or other tourist destinations in Indonesia, there are no direct train or airline service from Jakarta, where the research team is based, to go to Lasem. Therefore, the team will first have to get to Semarang, before continuing the journey to Lasem using a local car rental service from Semarang.

Despite the setbacks, the research team were able to get to Lasem safely and managed to collect the documentation materials needed for the research.



Picture 1. Fishbone diagram of Visual Ethnography workflow for this research

METHODS

This research was conducted using several qualitative methods, which were carried out in several ways, namely:

1. Literature Study
Data collection from a spiritual or spiritual point of view, from the point of view of the cultural values that exist in the temple, as well as historical data that is closely related to the time-traveling process of this temple becomes one of the cultural sites. Besides that, it was also examined from a literature study on how to use decorative styles and architectural forms of the Cu An Kiong temple.
2. Field Survey
Direct visit to the location of the Cu An Kiong Temple to document and physically read from the temple.
3. Visual Documentation Method (Visual Ethnography)
Documentation is carried out using photographic techniques to supplement visual data from the physical site of the culture as information and comparison material. Below is the fishbone diagram of visual documentation workflow, applied using the visual ethnography method :

Literature Review

• History of the Cu An Kiong Temple

The Cu An Kiong Temple was founded around the 15th century, in the Lasem area, Central Java, with the official address of Jalan Dasun No. 19. Nobody knows exactly when this temple stood because at that time, most of the Chinese people around the location had not been able to read and write, and caused no data on the

establishment of temples. However, the Cu An Kiong temple was estimated to stand around the 1470s, because when the Dutch made the Lasem map in 1477, the temple was already included in it.

Cu An Kiong is believed to be one of the first temples on Java built by Chinese who landed in Indonesia. This temple was established as a place to worship the Makco (goddess) Tian Siang Sing Bo or the Goddess of the Ocean which has provided safety on a voyage from China to Java. It is said that the Lasem area was also first opened by people from China to live and trade, and gradually became the area with the most Chinese population on Java, making it earned the nickname “Little China” until now (National Geographic, 2015). Local residents also began to bustle in Lasem until finally the Dutch came to colonize.

- **History of the City of Lasem**

The Lasem region has a long history in the journey of the Indonesian State. Once a trading location for illegal opium, Lasem also became a trading center because there is a river used by Chinese merchants to trade and also as a means of transportation. The Cu An Kiong temple is located right next to the river even though at present it is not visible. According to several people who have visited the Museum in The Hague, the Netherlands, there are a lot of data about Lasem and its temple there and therefore it is possible that the Dutch took several documents from the temple during the colonial period. At least it is still recorded that the temple was once restored in 1838 to raise the temple and avoid flooding. Furthermore, it will be examined whether there is a difference between the architecture and decoration of temples located in the interior with temples located in river areas.

- **Collective Memory**

According to John Tosh, history is a collective memory, a source of experience through developing a sense of people's social identity and prospects for these people in the future. Collective memory can also mean collective memory, people have memories together about their past. The past can introduce who their social identity is. For example, in an area of inter-group riots, the community will remember it as a tragic event, very terrible, people will really hate the event. From these events the community will be a source of valuable experience, will be a mirror in the future. The community hopes that in the future this tragic event will not occur. With his social identity, he will know what he must do in the future (Kartodirdjo, 1993: 285).

- **Definition of Myths and Semiotic Views of Architecture**

According to Roland Barthes, myth serves the function of ideology of naturalization. The function of myth is to naturalize culture - or in other words to make cultural and historical values dominant, attitudes and beliefs appear so ‘natural’, ‘normal’, proven validity, eternal, clarity of common sense - and thus ultimately become something the objective and the way it is. (Chandler, 1999: 94)

The aesthetic response to buildings and architectural space is very complex. This is influenced by the observer's emotional response to the material used, the arrangement of architectural elements, and how the lighting conditions contained therein. Thus, the building is read as a form of ‘text’ in the form of annotative meaning. (Danesi & Perron, 1999: 199)

- **Cultural Acculturation**

The term acculturation, or culture contact is a process in which a group of people with a culture is confronted with elements of a foreign culture in such a way that (in a long time) is gradually accepted and processed into their own culture without causing loss of cultural personality itself (Koentjaraningrat, 1980, pp. 247-248). The main purpose of acculturation, as stated jointly by Herkovits, Linton, and Redfield, which the author quotes from Muhammad Fauzy, is “Acculturation is understood as a phenomenon that will occur when groups of individuals who have different cultures engage in ongoing contact first-hand (direct), accompanied by continuous change, in line with the cultural patterns of origin of the group or of the two groups under the definition. Thus, acculturation is distinguished from cultural change which is only one aspect, and assimilation and which at a certain moment constitutes an initial phase of acculturation. Acculturation is also distinguished from diffusion which at the same time takes place in all instances of acculturation, not only as a phenomenon that sometimes takes place without the

type of contact between people specified in the above definition, but also builds only one aspect of the acculturation process “(Fauzy, 1999, p.528). Indonesian people are easy to adapt and accept different cultures from their native culture. The new culture they received was then cultured and adapted to the local culture. Then from the results of this acculturation will produce a new form of culture.

The acculturation process in Javanese society in particular has been going on for centuries, starting from the entry of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. All mingled and adjusted to fit into the daily culture of Javanese society. The people are very accustomed to doing this cultural acculturation. That is why in the past there was no rejection or resistance in cultural matters. The acculturation process proceeded peacefully including acculturation in the Lasem area, East Java, an area that still has many ancient Chinese buildings and is widely referred to in local and international media as “The Little China in East Java”, or “Little China”. This is reinforced by Lasem’s statement and historical story from Mr. Ramelan as our guest speaker while in the Lasem area. Lasem to date can be categorized as a peaceful area since the arrival of various nations around the 13th century, for example by the arrival of traders from China, Arabia, etc. These traders then pass on knowledge and knowledge to the local population and are applied in their daily lives.

With the development of public knowledge, ideas slowly emerged to build places to meet and worship. One of the ideas is to build a temple to worship “Makco” or “Kongco”. Both of these terms can mean ancestors or someone who is worshiped as a god or goddess who can be asked for help in everyday life. One of the temples in Lasem is the Gie Yong Bio temple. One thing that distinguishes the Gie Yong Bio Temple from other temples is the background of the construction of this temple, which is said to be built in honor of Raden Panji Margono, a native and Muslim religious figure in Lasem who opposed the Dutch colonialists. While another temple is the Cu An Kiong temple, which was said to have been built in the 16th century, making it one of the oldest temples on the island of Java, and is the subject of this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before entering into the discussion of temples, we must first see the ancient Chinese buildings in Lasem. Houses of Chinese descendants in Lasem can be categorized as a *peranakan* version. It is called *peranakan* because in China the form of the house itself has a number of differences from the form of Chinese housing in Lasem. The ancient Chinese buildings and housing in Lasem have large, large-sized land and high walls, are equipped with various Chinese ornaments and have an offering place for ancestors/ gods.



Picture 2. Streets around Cu An Kiong temple



Picture 2. Chinese heritage around Lasem

The Cu An Kiong Temple was founded around the 15th century, in the Lasem area, Central Java, with the official address of Jalan Dasun No. 19. Nobody knows exactly when this temple stood because at that time, most of the Chinese people around the location had not been able to read and write, and caused no data on the establishment of temples. However, the Cu An Kiong temple was estimated to stand around the 1470s, because when the Dutch made the Lasem map in 1477, the temple was already included in it.

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Picture 3. Front façade of Cu An Kiong Temple

As is the case with some temples on the island of Java, the Cu An Kiong temple also has its own characteristics. Ornaments and architectural forms in the temple have a meaning or philosophy that is usually taken from the old Chinese proverb, as well as from parables in everyday life. In front of the temple building there are two statues of the gods and two golden lion statues guarding the entrance to the temple. There is little belief that if you do not treat the temple with respect or change the shape or color of the temple, it can bring curses or bad luck. The word “Kiong” in the name Cu An Kiong means that the host (god / goddess) of the temple is “Makco” (female goddess).

If the last name of a temple is “Bio” as in the Gie Yong Bio temple, then the host is “Kongco” (male deity).

In the opinion of Marcel Danesi and Paul Perron in chapter two, that the observer’s emotional response to the architecture of a building is influenced by the material used, the arrangement of architectural elements, and the lighting condition inside the architecture. So from the shape of the building which resembles the architectural building in the State of China, the Chinese people in Lasem give the meaning that this building is very close to their ancestors who came directly from China. They deliberately built this building to have emotional connection with their ancestors.



Picture 5. Clockwise from top : Image 1. Center of temple, 2. Altar, 3. Stove for burning paper, 4. Gate

The Cu An Kiong temple can be said as a collective memory for the people of Lasem, a positive memory of past good experiences of cultural acculturation and long-standing beliefs. This building reminds them of the history of how their ancestors who came to land from China mingled with the natives while mingling in people’s lives peacefully. The Lasem community may have the Gie Yong Bio Temple as a symbol of peace between diversity, but they can also boast the Cu An Kiong temple which is a silent witness to the lives of Chinese descendants of migrants in Indonesia during the lighting period and as historical evidence that Indonesia had had Lasem as a place living and gathering of multi-ethnic communities in carrying out daily life, without any significant problems.

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Everyone can enter the entire area of the Cu An Kiong temple except the prayer area that looks “Makco”, and indeed it is devoted to the visitors of the temple who want to pray and perform rituals according to their religion. Visitors not only come from the surrounding area, but there are also many local and foreign tourists

who come to pay homage to their ancestors or just watch and admire them. Uliti-ethnics in carrying out daily life, without any significant problems.

CONCLUSION

Through a research and documentation trip conducted directly to Lasem yesterday, the research team was quite easy to obtain information from the interviews of resource persons including local residents who had been met and interviewed by the research team. Because currently the tourism sector in Lasem itself is being promoted and is being processed and developed, by the local government, even they are focusing on developing this tourism by bringing tourism-aware figures to provide input and ideas for the development of Lasem tourism area.

The role of the Cu An Kiong Temple in the process of developing the tourism sector is also very large considering its historical value which can be one of the things that sell in the Lasem tourism series. So that the process of preserving this temple is something that must be considered by local residents, including the extraction of historical value information contained in the Cu An Kiong temple itself to be understood by local residents as their capital as a resource.

The acculturation process that occurs in the lighting period can gradually open up more local people's insights and form a collective memory of the pagoda. The collective memory of the people with positive memory for this temple can open the way for non-Lasem and local Lasem residents in Indonesia. The form of the pagoda in Lasem which is still well maintained and clean enough is proof that the community can help take care of this old historic temple so that it can be made a legacy for Indonesian children and grandchildren later.

After studying all the information obtained through our visit to Lasem, we concluded that Lasem, especially with its Cu An Kiong temple, is a very unique location in Indonesia where the diversity between the people (Ethnic Chinese-Indonesian) is very well maintained. The visual documentation materials provided in this research are expected to be a valuable resource for future researchers conducting ways on how to maintain the diversity, and hopefully to make it as a well-known tourist destination, which in turn will provide greater preservation of the Cu An Kiong temple and also for the life of all people around Lasem. As this research is limited to conducting visual documentation materials and raw information from the people, we would suggest future researchers to collect proper and written historical accounts of the temple.

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