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# Understanding Vernacularity through Spatial Experience in the Peranakan House Kidang Mas, Chinatown, Lasem, Indonesia.

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## Abstract

*Vernacularity is a quality or a state of being vernacular. This condition relates closely to authentic or traditional buildings at particular places. In real situations, vernacular architecture comes into being through different socio-cultural dynamics and from any existing building that provides sustainable solutions and sustainable characteristics containing material and immaterial values. The Peranakan houses in Lasem can be included in this category. They can last for generations and facilitate a variety of daily activities across generations with their own values. The varied activities can help identify the unique spatial characters, and create particular experiences. This qualitative study is based on the writer's experience and supported by spatial experience concept by Juhani Pallasmaa.*

*This study sought to provide insights leading to an in-depth understanding of vernacularity through spatial experiences in Peranakan house-Kidang Mas in Lasem. The findings of the study unveiled that the dynamic changes of activities that involve family and non-family members inside the complex of Peranakan house-Kidang Mas is the justification of being vernacular.*

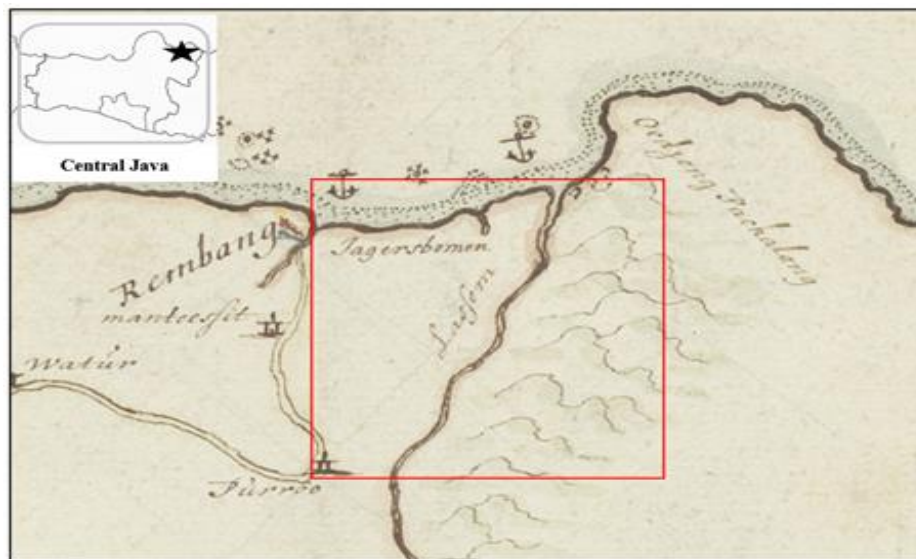
**Keywords:** Peranakan House, Lasem, Vernacularity, Spatial Experience.

## 1. Introduction

Architecture is a unique cultural component of a country; similar to language, art, music, or culinary. It is also the most visible element of various cultural components. Vernacular architecture is best represented by houses of different regions giving cues of the existing culture, tradition, and social values making them valuable sources for learning (Gulati et al., 2019: 30). Gulati's perspective is similar to the case study of this article that is the Peranakan house-Kidang Mas in Babagan Village, Lasem, Central Java, Indonesia which certainly can provide knowledge from a different perspective on vernacular. Vernacular architecture comes into being based on the reaction of culture and traditions held by the inhabitants of a house without neglecting the surrounding society and culture. The reasons

behind the selection of this house in Indonesia is not because it is the most beautiful architecture, the oldest age of the building or being best known in Lasem, but it looks is maintained and is alive since most of the generations were living, staying and continuing the traditions. The house holds private activities such as family activities and public ones which involve people from outside such as batik workers or people who come with an interest in batik, either buyers or researchers. Another factor that supports the selection of this house is the friendliness and desire of homeowners to share stories and information about what is happening in the house and the surrounding culture. This is significant because it is difficult to find such people in Lasem (Darmayanti & Bahauddin, 2019: 653).

The purpose of this study is to provide information that can lead to understanding of vernacular value, especially through spatial experiences within the complex of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas. It is possible to examine various activities inside the housing complex that are related to social, cultural and traditional aspects. Based on that, research question has been formulated to discuss how various activities within the complex of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas can contribute to vernacular value. Therefore, this study was expected to enhance the affection of local people, especially the house inhabitants towards the *Peranakan* house so they would be more appreciative and create spatial engagements. The realization is that this building serves as a platform to showcase the beauty, diversity, and particularly the importance of vernacular architecture in Lasem.



**Fig. 1:** The Map of Lasem from the year of 1695.

Source: Archive of KITLV Leiden, 2018

*“Lasem adalah sebuah kota ketjil jang terletak disebelah timur laut Djateng. Kota ini adalah sebuah kota lama, ternjata dengan telah disebut-sebutnya kota ini dalam babad lama. Penduduk kota ini sebagian besar adalah orang-orang Tionghoa jang sekaligus djuga menguasai perekonomiannja. Dengan rumah-rumah mereka jang dikelilingi oleh tembok-tembok jang tinggi dan kukuh...”* (Abdul Nur, 1955).

The above statement is an excerpt of an old Indonesian spelling from an old magazine named *Teruna: Madjalah Remadja*, that mentions Lasem. Translation of the excerpt is - “Lasem is a small city located in the northeast of Central Java (Djateng). This city is an old city and it has been mentioned in the *babad lama* (Javanese old chronicle). The inhabitants of this city are mostly Chinese people, who at the same time also control their economy, with their houses surrounded by high and sturdy walls...” (Abdul Nur, 1955). That statement contains the historical background where Lasem was known as home to Chinese immigrants

when Admiral Cheng Ho from the Chinese Ming dynasty anchored on Java. They married local women and their children were called *Peranakan*. They have absorbed and integrated with the locals, causing a strong influence of the Chinese culture into the Javanese local culture, and *vice versa* (Darmayanti, 2017). Agni Malagina (2017), a Chinese cultural philologist and contributor of National Geographic Indonesia magazine said that at the end of 1700 and early 1800, Lasem was the third place with the biggest Chinese community after Batavia (now Jakarta) and Cirebon in West Java. She also mentioned that nowadays, *Pecinan* (Chinatown) in Lasem is the biggest and the most complete town with iconic gates along the street. *Pecinan* in Lasem is also the most beautiful than other *Pecinan* in other places in Indonesia. This statement was supported by Pigeaud (1983), who stated that Lasem was undoubtedly a trading city, with the Indo-Chinese bourgeoisie and Lasem is still one of the most ‘Chinese’ cities in Java. During this period, Lasem still retained its status as an important port city. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Lasem became the centre of the opium trade which was legally traded at that time, and Chinese community was given the trust to distribute it. Those who stayed in Lasem in the 19<sup>th</sup> century grew very rich as opium traders and they owned a large complex house (Suroyo et al., 1994). Besides opium, *Batik Tulis* is one of the businesses in Lasem that survive until this day. According to *Serat Badra Santi* (SBS), an ancient manuscript from Majapahit Empire (1432–1527), the entering of Chinese influenced the existence of batik industry in Lasem (Darmayanti & Bahauddin, 2019). Based on documented history, Lasem and Chinese has been widely known for more than 300 years, especially with the presence of *Peranakan* houses in Chinatown. This can be a solid foundation for the emergence and existence of *Peranakan* houses in Lasem that have survived until today, and the long journey of this vernacular architecture has certainly contained various activities. The role of the activities is different for different spaces and the situation is determined by social and cultural aspects.

## 2. Vernacularity: A theoretical background

The term vernacularity can be defined as a conceptualization of traditional cultural medium upon which local consciousness, value, and reflex keep growing and undergoing dynamic process through time from one achieved cultural equilibrium to the next (Widiastuti & Kurniati, 2019). Similarly, the tradition and culture that were passed from generation to generation are important factors that build the vernacularity of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas. Although the embodiment of this building may appear far from the ideal representation of the authentic *Peranakan* house in Lasem due to some changes, modifications, or expansions in modern way, it still is vernacular. The changes were influenced by internal conditions, social, even politics that prevailed outside. This statement is in line with Gulati et al. (2019), who explained that vernacular architecture in diverse contexts are responses to the environmental settings including the physical, socio-cultural and politico-economic domains. In addition, vernacularity has also been scrutinized for its expression on cultural identity, and socio-cultural interactions with environment too.

### Spatial Experience in Architecture

The term space is often used in daily life and in this study, space is defined as ‘activities container’. Creating a space in the vernacular architecture of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas occurred when a series of private and public activities is recognized, which can lead 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. Architecture seems to always address each one of us individually (Pallasmaa, 2018: 14). He agrees that the experience is individual, just like moments or activities that are carried out by the occupants of the house of the *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas. They have their own story and a memory for each of the space related to culture and tradition. A space can greet in their way according to an individual who sees it. Beyond its constitution in experience,

architecture mediates between the outer world and the inner realm of the self, creating distinct frames of perception and understanding. This interchange is necessarily an exchange: as I enter a space, the space enters me and changes me, my experience, and my self-understanding. Mediation is essential in all art (Pallasmaa, 2018: 12). Activities that occur in *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas are mediations for us to experience and understand spaces, which then make us understand and experience ourselves. That way, the value of an activity in space becomes meaningful with its locality value. Meaningful spaces are an indirect way to achieve balance and sustainability of local, social and cultural aspects contained therein.

### 3. Research Methodology

This study is based on the result of direct observations in one case of the *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas in Babagan Village, Lasem, Central Java, Indonesia. Darmayanti et al (2019) described the reasons why *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas is good to be chosen. There are several reasons, including the house seemed to be taken care of and looks alive. This is because most of the generations are still living, staying in the house and keep continuing the batik business. Therefore, this house is able to show their daily active activities that represent both private and public activities which involve outsiders like batik workers or people who come because of their interest in batik; either buyers or researchers. Another reason for the selection of this house is because of their friendliness and desire of the homeowners to share stories and information about what is happening in the house and about the surrounding culture. This is significant because it is difficult to find such personalities in Lasem. Most importantly, the inhabitants do not change the buildings excessively. Various activities that occur inside the houses led us to a broader definition on vernacular.

The research began with a survey, and in-depth interviews with the inhabitants. The respondents were Mr. Rudi Siswanto as the six-generation residents, Mrs. Vina (Rudi's wife), and Mrs. Tjan Djoen Nio as the fifth-generation (Rudi's mother). The data collection was continued with observations by documenting tangible activities and spaces within the housing complex that is divided into three areas, namely front area: the gate, front garden, and main building; middle area: courtyard, side building and kitchen; and rear area: batik's workshop and backyard. All steps were conducted gradually in *Pecinan*, Babagan, Lasem since February 2017, September and November 2017, then continued in June 2018 and December 2019. The duration of each visit varies from five days, two weeks, and up to four weeks. Therefore, this study was supported by the phenomenology approach to deeper the understanding of spatial experience. The significance of experience can be described through consciousness and acts. Thereupon, most of the visual documentations on various activities conducted within the *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas complex was recorded using hand drawings. The drawings were drawn based on the actual activity during the field work. Pallasmaa's words can shed us some light regarding this matter that hand drawing or sketching any experience related to buildings enhances the feeling of attachment to the study objects (Pallasmaa, 2009).

### 4. Background: The Pecinan of Lasem

The embodiment of *Pecinan* in Lasem was influenced by the existence of *Peranakan* Chinese Community in Lasem since the migration of the Chinese people from inside and outside Indonesia with various backgrounds. History tells us that they came to Lasem and established their settlements in Lasem and their arrival was initially due to the cross-border trades. It is commonly acknowledged that humans have desires to adjust or relate to the surrounding circumstances or culture. This actually became the reason that underlies the Chinese community's coming to Lasem to adapt their native culture into the local culture—Javanese and the circumstances that were happening at that time. These adjustments can be seen in the architectural genre, materials, colour scheme, spatial language and even its activities.

The origin of the *Pecinan* establishment is based on two factors, namely political and social. The political factor, originated during the Dutch colonial era in which the *Wijkenstelsel* rules (1836-1917) required the Chinese to live in a special area. This decision was valid after 1970 in all major cities in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) (Handinoto, 2015). The word *Pecinan* was derived from the Javanese language means an area for the Chinese people. According to Slamet Widjaja (1988), the *Pecinan* development that started from 1351 up to 1942 functioned as the center for economic and trade activities and generally with housing, markets and stores. According to Danang Swastika, a local resident and also a Lasem historian, three *Pecinan* areas in Lasem fall into ancient category, namely Soditan, the area of the first settlement located near the port of Lasem. The area was then developed westward around 1750s called Karangturi with the most migrants coming from Jakarta because of the massacres of Chinese people in Jakarta at that time. Babagan, the second settlement was developed around the 1800 with most of the Chinese who fled from the riots in Ngawi. The massacre happened in the early period of the Java War in 1825 when Raden Ayu Yudakusuma—known as the daughter of the first Sultan of Yogyakarta—with her cavalry squadron swooped down on the vital Ngawi's trading post which was 'home' to the Chinese community (Frederik Louw and De Klerck, 1894). De Java-Oorlog van (1825-30, 6 vols), stated that the entire Chinese community in Ngawi was put to the sword, they fell, in blood-smeared doorways, streets and houses. These terrible tragedies have survivors who escaped to the Chinese settlements on Java's north coast, including Lasem. Most *Peranakan* houses in *Pecinan*, Lasem are bungalow type as they were intended to be for residence. However, due to the political conditions during the Dutch era, most homeowners were encouraged to turn their houses to places of business. The common business for homeowners at that time was opium storage (Darmayanti, et al., 2019).

There are two construction approaches which are generally applied to *Peranakan* houses in *Pecinan*, Lasem. First is to build walls around the complex, and build buildings inside and gates. The second method is to build a wall around the complex, make a gate, and then build a building inside. The main building is built in the middle of the complex, surrounded by other buildings where between these buildings there will be front yard and backyards (Nas, 2002). The characteristics of *Pecinan* in Lasem can be seen from the appearance of the gateways of *Peranakan* houses that are neatly lined up on the right and left of the *Pecinan* road (Figure 2).



**Fig. 3:** The Drawing of *Peranakan* House Gates in *Pecinan* Lasem.

Source: Author, 2019

## 5. Case Analysis: The *Peranakan* House Kidang Mas

Figure 3 shows the entrance of the *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas. This house is running a batik tulis industry that has been passed down for generations. Kidang Mas has successfully passed seventh generations since its inception to the present. Engkong Tay Tjian—who came from China—and Mak Klepon, a local Javanese woman married and built a *Peranakan* house. They are the first generation of Tjan

Djoen Nio or known as Mrs. Kian and is the fifth generation who inherited *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas. She is married to Tan Gwan Ling or known as Mr. Gunawan, his Indonesian name. This house is also inhabited by the youngest son of Mrs. Kian, known as Tan Tiong Sajie or Mr. Rudi and his family.

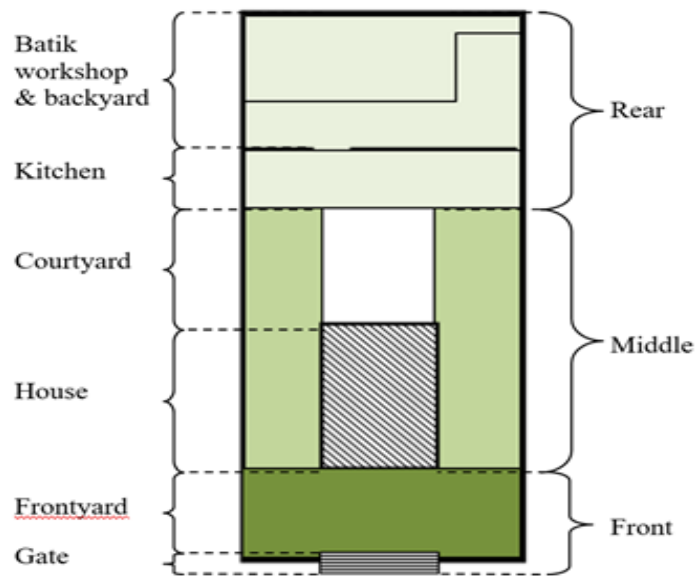
Batik tulis has been a tradition in Tjan Djoen Nio family. There is no written record about the history of batik industry in his generation (interview with Mr. Rudi in July 2019). Fortunately, he got a verbal documentation from his mother. It is known that since the first generation, batik has been made but for personal use. Then, the fourth generation called Mak Ing began to make batik for commercial purposes by using the name of Tjan Liong Khoen as a trademark which has survived until now and held by Mr. Rudi's parents, while Mr. Rudi named his trademark as Kidang Mas.



**Fig. 3:** The *Peranakan* House Kidang Mas.

Source: Author, 2017

Initially, Tjian Djoen Nio did not allow any guest to enter and only in 1980, the obeng or batik workers were allowed to work inside the house. For her, that rule is to keep the family tradition from generation to generation and to keep family intact. Moreover, in the time of Mak Lian (second generation) until Mak Ing (fourth generation), the obeng did not work inside the house. The making of batik motifs was done at the obeng's houses and delivered back for the colouring process. The colouring process is done by themselves because it deals with secret formulas. But the next generation, Mr. Rudi approached his parents to allow guests to enter the area of the house, especially for those who are interested in batik. However, that does not mean that this generation is not respecting the previous tradition, but influence from the environment and knowledge when Mr. Rudi was living in the big city (Jakarta) has opened up his mind to see something from different angles. Another reason is because the political conditions related to the discrimination against the Chinese community (in the New Order era of Indonesia led by President Soeharto) has been better compared to his parents' era. Therefore, there is no reason for the house to be closed to outsiders to see the batik making.



**Fig. 4:** Three Areas in *Peranakan* House Kidang Mas Complex.

Source: Survey, 2018

Figure 4 shows the field data confirming that *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas is divided into three areas, namely front areas that consist of the gate, front yard, and main building: front terrace or serambi, prayer hall or ruang altar, bedrooms, family room, back terrace and bathroom; middle areas consist of courtyard, bathroom, kitchen or pawon and dining; and rear areas consist of batik workshop and backyard. Based on that, various activities and spatial experience of the inhabitants are described in the following section.

## 6. Vernacular Values within the *Peranakan* Houses in Lasem

There is a presumption that *Peranakan* houses in Lasem are not included in the category of vernacular because they are not in accordance with the definition of vernacular architecture associated with ‘authenticity’ or genuine Indonesian traditional buildings. However, there is also a potential argument that Lasem *Peranakan* houses involve several cultures in their embodiment and therefore is inherently vernacular. For example, it includes local Javanese culture, if such association of using local materials obtained from around Lasem; teak wood, is still required. It can be argued that *Peranakan* houses belong to the vernacular category. Moreover, various activities that occur in the *Peranakan* houses are closely related to the social and cultural aspects. They cover daily life including rituals of beliefs and traditions, as well as economic aspects, including the production and sales of batik Lasem.

The *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas was built based on what they believe is to build a family, and for some reason as time changes, these beliefs have shifted. 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 perspective, such as value beyond every act that occur within it. In line with Pallasmaa (2003), the architecture is not only in aesthetics form but also in the unlimited and unmeasurable physical time to the size of human experience. Learning from the complex of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas and Juhani Pallasmaa, the role of actions through activities inside the complex are divided into two types namely private that involve family members and public that involve other people from outside the house or non-family members. All activities provide unlimited human experience within particular space. Based on the field research and the



interview with the house inhabitants, the authors decided to choose the activities for each area within the complex of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas that bring special memories to them. The front area involves gate, front terrace, praying hall dan back terrace; the middle area involving courtyard and the rear areas including kitchen, batik workshop and backyard.

## 7. Spatial Experiences

### 7.1 In Front and Middle Areas of Peranakan House Kidang Mas



**Fig. 5:** The Gate Activity.

Source: Author, 2018-2019

Figure 5 shows one of the favourite activities of Mr. Rudi's family, which is buying traditional meatball food (*Bakso*) that occurred since his childhood and this simple activity has become a tradition. Not only for their consumption but also to entertain guests who come to the house. Mr. Rudi explained in the interview that was conducted in June 2019, "this gate and activity reminds me when I was in elementary school. After I reached home from school, I usually played *bola sepak* (football) or *dolan delian* (hide and seek) with my friends as we waited for our favourite *bakso* named Budiman". The statement is in line with Pallasmaa's (2007) words that said the architectural structure indeed facilitates memory from the past to re-create similar activities in the present time and probably will do in future time without neglecting the cultural and traditional values.



**Fig. 6:** The Front Terrace Activities.

Source: Author, 2019

Mr. Rudi and family often use front terrace as relaxing space, including eating *bakso* together with his family or guest - "It was not only about eating but about being together, because while eating, we could talk about anything that made the atmosphere more relaxed and meatballs provoke warm memories of my childhood" (Rudi, 2019). The activities are depicted in Figure 6. Besides reminding his childhood activities, he also remembers the previous materials used in the house — "Initially, the terrace floor was not white ceramic tiles, but terrazzo, it was authentic. Unfortunately, it was poorly maintained, the colour had

faded and was dull. Then, we decided to change it to make it look clean. The most original in this area is this wall (pointing to the main building wall) that was made from teak wood and the ceiling (pointing the terrace ceiling covered in white paint)". Through his narration, it showed that the materials had shifted from vernacular into modern materials for maintenance reasons, but it does not eliminate the cultural value of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas. The appearance is still modest and still gives the humble and homey ambience as the characteristic of a *Peranakan* house in Lasem.



**Fig. 7:** The Prayer Hall.

Source: Author, 2019

Figure 7 shows the altar area or prayer hall that is used to devote the religious life of traditional Chinese people. This practice is inherited from generation to generation. This space has important meanings for Tjian Djoen Nio (Rudi's mother). Here, she can 'communicate' and feel connected with her late parents and ancestors through various ritual traditions.

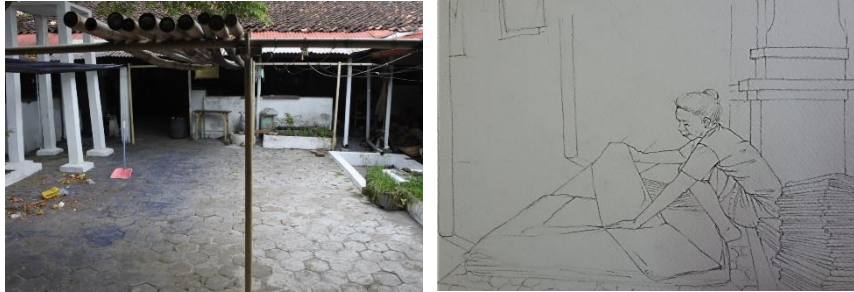


**Fig. 8:** The Activities in Back Terrace.

Source: Author, 2019-2020

From the observations shown in Figure 8, the back terrace of the house provides two types of activities namely private, meaning it only involves family activities, while public, means it involves activities that are related to family business – the final step of batik production, folding and packing the batik (on the right side in Fig. 8). Initially, the back terrace was intended for family gatherings that are 'intimate'. The activities of dining together, gathering, and chatting generally occur in that area. However, as changes occur, there are additional activities, which is a place to fold batik clothes that have been completed and ready to sell and send to a customer (Darmayanti et al., 2019: 658). The condition creates particular spatial experiences to the inhabitants because they must try to mingle and adjust to new activities and circulation. This area is facing the courtyard and the author confirmed that the air circulation in the back terrace is in great condition compared to some cases in *Peranakan* houses in Lasem with closed courtyards. *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas house has indoor thermal comfort without relying on air-conditioners (Figure 9). The statement is in line with Zwain et al. (2019) who said that the vernacular courtyard with well circulation is linked to the Chinese ancient culture that helps to bring luck and wealth, and is healthy to the

inhabitants. The embodiment of the courtyard suits for privacy considerations and also becomes a solution to the house environment sustainability. Moreover, the courtyard and the main building (house) are inseparable in the concept of vernacular Chinese architecture (Knapp et al., 2010).



**Fig. 9:** Batik Preparation in the Courtyard and Courtyard Aisle.

Source: Author, 2019-2020

### 7.2 Spatial experience in the Rear Area of Peranakan House Kidang Mas

Figure 10 presents the vernacular kitchen within the house complex. This family still uses traditional way of cooking. They use ‘tungku arang’ or charcoal stove, but a modern stove is also provided. They believe, cooking with ‘tungku arang’ can give a distinctive taste and aroma. Though this figure shows the overall activities that were cooking and preparing foods, the value and experience is different because Javanese culture involves in it (the right picture in Figure 10) when Tjian Djoen Nio cooked a traditional dish named Sangu Tumpeng (the cone-shaped yellow rice) for traditional Javanese ritual called selamatan (the communal feast from Java). The Javanese influence comes from Tjian Djoen Nio’s husband, Tan Gwan Ling. His childhood life was surrounded by Javanese friends and Javanese culture. However, Chinese culture still exists because there is an altar pawon for daily rituals to kitchen God. Furthermore, ‘keeping in tradition’ also occurs in the batik workshop that is located behind the kitchen and is directly connected to the house backyard. The activity at the workshop is making Lasem’s signature batik (Figure 11). It was the real and significant action given by Kidang Mas in keeping and preserving tradition that is not only family traditions, from generation to generation but also for Lasem cultural traditions. The situation reminds Pallasmaa’s statement about keeping in tradition that will lead to a concept of sustainability that is closely related to vernacularity.



**Fig. 10:** The Kitchen Activities: Cooking and Food Preparation.

Source: Author, 2019-2020



**Fig. 11:** The Activities in *Batik* Workshop.

Source: Author, 2018 & 2020

The space in the rear areas with all activities always bring back the childhood memory, especially for Mr. Rudi and his mother. He always plays with his brothers while their mother cooked their snacks or meals. Another memory clearly remembered by Mr. Rudi was when he played with *layangan* (kites) at the backyard, in the middle of the *kandang ayam* (chicken coop). The fun of playing kites at that time was when he found a high area so he could control the kites more freely. However, he faced some difficulties with the number of trees in the backyard, and the only way he could play them was by climbing a pyramid-shaped pile of dried chicken manure.

*“It was hot for my bare feet, but I didn’t care. As long as my kite freely dances in the sky and I could beat another kite, don’t ask about the smelly chicken manure. Playing kites made me forget about everything”* (Rudi, 2019).

As he told this scene, the author unconsciously imitated Mr. Rudi’s expression. The hands unexpectedly closed the nose to avoid odours, and the legs were lifted to avoid heat. Based on these circumstances, Pallasmaa’s statement within the book titled *Questions of Perception* in 1994 became clearer to us: “through memory and imagination, we can see even their odour... we can see through the nose and feel through the ear”. The architectural and surrounding ambiance through the space, shape, material, and even odour which triggered their memory to recall every moment (with no matter how simple it was) that had happened. Pallasmaa (1994) once said that even simple activities can produce space, especially if it is supported by the sensitivity of the five senses, such as when he smells wood odour from an old door or sees an old wooden chair, at that time his memory and imagination shaped the spaces of his childhood. The scent that smelled through the nose can lead him to see the back to the past.

*“The strongest memory of a space is often its odor... we could see even their odor”*. (Pallasmaa, 1994)

The findings of this study are that the various activities which occurred inside the *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas can lead to certain memory to each individual and the memory will lead to experience the space. Experiencing will lead to understanding the space and that will create personal engagement to the place. In this case *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas has.

## Conclusions

A house is a product of many interrelated elements, reflecting natural conditions, history, social structures, family concepts, and particular feelings that eventually create their own ‘beauty’. So is the *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas. Not only can vernacular architecture be perceived visually through its material, colour,

and shape, but it can also be expressed through various activities with traditions and cultural values occurring in them. These will then produce a spatial experience about the house and also the place where it is located, Lasem. The *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas naturally develops with its inhabitants, and any change within it are part of its existence. Vernacularity is indeed dynamic, always closely connected to historical, social, cultural, and traditional circumstances. Widiastuti et al (2019) said that the loss and gains of values and practices at a certain time potentially transform the vernacularity, but it is still vernacular.

This vernacular house is one of the greatest examples of living heritage. Through *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas, this study argues that vernacularity is no longer limited to 'original traditional buildings', but it exceeds that definition. Kidang Mas provides a new perspective of various activities that are qualitative, such as daily activities, and ritual prayer activities, to socio-cultural activities involving people outside the house for batik production and batik sales that provide economic value to the homeowners and communities around Lasem. The existence of *Peranakan* house-Kidang Mas is indirectly determined culturally.

This study also concludes that human memory contributes in the form of vernacularity. It has a duty to preserve the past and allows it to be experienced again through activities carried out in the future about its traditions and culture. Certainly, other buildings have experienced this too, but the value of the personal and locality become vernacularity of the *Peranakan* Kidang Mas house. This paper concludes with Pallasmaa's (2015) words that said vernacularity is important to defend and protect the sanity of the human beings and culture. It agrees with Pallasmaa that continuing all activities covered by culture and tradition can indirectly sustain and preserve the authenticity of the place.

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