

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE AND CONSERVATION OF BALINESE CEMETERY, MEANING AND THREATENING

Ni Made Yudiantini¹

¹Department of Architecture, Udayana University, Bukit Jimbaran, Badung, Indonesia
 nmyudiantini@unud.ac.id¹

ABSTRACT

Balinese cemetery is one of villages landscape that include in Balinese landscape type. Balinese cemetery play an important role in traditional village tie the people to obligate the tradition. A villager is bound to the *adat* system including the village's temple, organization, and cemetery. Balinese cemetery as one of cultural landscape that implement the *Tri Hita Karana* concept (three sources of balance). The research found that Balinese cemetery gives important role in green open space provision in city planning although never been increased in numbers. Observation in several cemeteries in Bali show that Balinese cemetery has several type and function, and each villages have their own management system of cemetery. Interviews to stakeholders such as elder in the village provide significant information regarding understanding and meaning of Balinese cemetery. The research contributes for the future city planner to maintain and conserve the tradition of Balinese cemetery as part of village's landscape. The research is also found although Balinese cemetery never increase in number, Balinese cemetery contributes to green open space provision in the city, which it can be functioned as a city forest.

Keywords: *Cultural landscape; conservation; Balinese cemetery.*

A. INTRODUCTION

In a village pattern, there are three zones of village with different function. The zone or area is based on Tri Mandala Concept, i.e. primary area that functioned as village temple (Bale Agung and Puseh Temples); middle area with its settlement and public facilities, and impure area functioned as cemetery and the Inner Temple. Balinese cemetery is part of traditional village (*desaadat*) pattern. The cemetery has significant influence in the *adat* system which people has to be a member of traditional village and thus they will allowed to use the cemetery for the death of family. Cemetery has function for burial and cremation. Every traditional village (*desaadat*) tied to impure area, the cemetery.

The research study in depth the understanding and its meaning of Balinese cemetery as part of cultural landscape which 'landscape' relates to 'a human-made artefact' associated 'cultural process values' (Taylor & Lennon, 2012, p.23). The process values in the Balinese cemetery can be seen from the *adat* system of community in help the ceremony of death (cremation). Balinese cemetery gives important role in green open space provision in city planning although never been increased in area numbers. The study has urgency to understand the function of Balinese cemetery and why it never impact the land provision in the city planning. Balinese cemetery is also unique in every traditional village in Bali.

B. LITERATURE STUDY

The word of 'cultural landscape' was first used in Germany in the 1890s (Palang& Fry, 2003; Rapoport, 1992). In the managing cultural landscapes, Taylor (2012) also reviewed the writings of both cultural geographers and anthropologists between the late 19th to early 20th century whom established the global discussion upon cultural landscape. Taylor concluded that landscapes in the late 1970s were viewed not only as a 'history or a physical cultural product', but also as a "cultural process reflecting human action over time with associated pluralistic meanings and human values" (Taylor & Lennon, 2012, p. 22). The word 'landscape' in English course, has Germanic origins and was transferred into Britain by Anglo-Saxon people from the words *landskipe* or *landscaef* that means "a clearing in the forest with animals, huts, fields, and fences" (Taylor & Lennon, 2012, p. 22). The combining of the word 'cultural' with 'landscape' reinforce these human activities. 'Cultural landscape' is also derived from the German term *kulturlandschaft* which means "development of human intellectual achievement, care, as an area changed by human actions" as adopted by Ratzel in 1895-1896 (Palang& Fry, 2003; Taylor & Lennon, 2012). Another scholar, Otto Schluter (1903) underlined the quantification of the impacts human activity in the forming of landscape in deference to natural determinism

(Schuter, 1903); Norbert Krebs (1922) emphasized *Kulturlandschaft* as *Okumene* whereby settlements occur by human interactions, as opposed to *Anokumene* that means non-settlement or subordinate to the environment (Kerbs, 1992; Palang& Fry, 2003).

The conservation as considered by Dobby (1978) encompasses both natural matters, and architectural and built environment matters (Budihardjo, 1995, p.3; Dobby, 1978). The natural matters include “ecology, flora, fauna, pollution and over population”; and the built environment includes the architecture. To understand the function of conservation, one needs to review the question of ‘why conserve’, ‘conserve what’ and ‘for whose benefit’ (Hobson, 2004). Hobson defined the advantages of conservation as being both ‘self-evident’ and in ‘the public-interest’. In the era 1960s and 1970s, the conservation planning aims for ‘aesthetic’ and using the ‘locality’ as ‘a design principles’. During the 1980s and 1990s conservation focused in the ‘urban living’ to shows the ‘character’ and ‘creating places’.

C. METHODOLOGY

The research investigates the understanding and meaning of Balinese cemetery (*sema/setra*) and its implementation. The research conducted through in-depth literature review regarding Balinese cemetery and observation in several cemeteries in Balinese traditional villages. The research is also done through interview to elder of the villagers who’s related to the cemetery.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bali Government through Bali Statistic (2011) has stated that villages in Bali differ to other villager over Indonesia’s villages. In this subject, Balinese villages implement traditions and cultures imbued by the Hindu Religion that has been inherited from Bali Kuna history to next generation. Although it was influenced from Majapahit Kingdom, Balinese culture still exists with diversity in traditions in the Balinese life.

Balinese Village Pattern

The key element of a customary village or *desaadat/desapekraman* in Balinese traditional village generally, are the origin village (PuraDesa), the settlement including its public facilities such as hamlet, traditional market, PuraPuseh; and PuraDalem. These imply the *Tri Angga* (*utama*/primary, *madya*/middle and *nista*/impure) concept in the village. The *utama*/primary value

refers to the PuraDesa and PuraPuseh, the *madya*/middle value refers to settlement and its public facilities, and the *nista*/impure value appoints to the PuraDalem and its cemetery. At this important point, a customary village obligates to conserve and maintain some temples such as KahyanganTiga temples, Kahyangan temple, and PuraDesa (the village origin temple), meanwhile PuraDadia, PuraPaibon and *pamerajan* (clan family temples) are substantial in the village.



Figure 1 Village temple of Bale Agung Temple

(Source: Yudiantini, 2017).

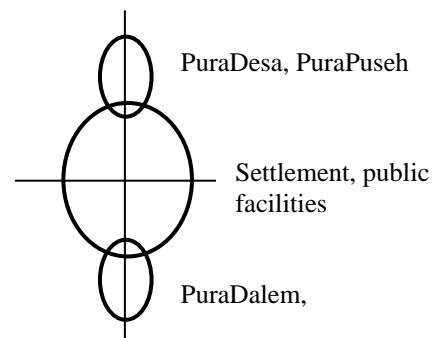


Figure 2 the Key Element of Village Pattern

(Source: Yudiantini, 2015).

Balinese Cemetery and *Ngaben* Ceremony

Balinese commemorate life from birth to death through traditional ceremonies that inform their traditional cultural landscape. One of the most important landscapes, that cannot be separated from Balinese life, and used for the death ceremony, is the graveyard. The cemetery is the third zone (impure zone) in a village’s pattern. It is used as cemetery but is also equipped with the death temple called PuraDalem. The cemetery is a key element in the Balinese traditional landscape and is an integral part of traditional village patterns across Bali. Culturally, Balinese people have their own traditional cremation ceremony that is call the *ngaben* ceremony. The cremation ceremony takes

place in the graveyard and thereupon ashes are placed in the sea waters surrounding Bali. An interesting point of land use planning in contemporary Bali is how to enable eco-friendly interment extensions to villages. This is occurring because of the increasing number of corpses that require cremation thus necessitating no accretions in land provision of graveyards (Yudiantini, 2012). The impure zone is placed in the profane area in the south direction and it is as a part of *Tri Hita Karana* comprising *pawongan* that is a place for the souls or spirits.

Cemetery Function and Ecological Aspect of Trees

The cemetery is an integral element of Balinese traditional open spaces. Cemetery function both as burial places and as green open spaces. These functions are reinforced in government policy whereby a graveyard is seen as a green open space for the village as well as the City (Sudata, 2002). Sudata (2002) asserts that a graveyard is owned by a traditional community in Bali of *desaadat* and it functions as a funeral and or traditional cremation place called *ngaben*.



Figure 3 Balinese cemetery in Bali Aga village

(Source: Yudiantini, 2012)

The specific trees planted in the graveyard in Bali are called the *kepuh* or *kepah* tree (a *kelumpang* or *Sterculia foetida*), and the banyan (*Ficus sp*) tree (*beringin/waringin*). These trees are believed to host spirits due to their size and spread. A graveyard in Bali can be clearly identified by the existence one of these spectral trees. While these trees serve as part of the open space producing fresh air, such as the banyan tree with its spherical form and luminous leaves, they also offer a magnificent aesthetic look for the village (Covarrubias, 1974). Traditional rules have prevented flowering trees being planted in Balinese cemeteries. Balinese treat these trees as rare and to be preserved. The wrapping of the sacred fabric

colour of *saputpoleng* (black and white colours with a tetragon pattern) around the trunk of the trees makes the tree look more eerie and no one can cut the tree.

Another tree that serves an important role in the Trunyan cemetery is named the TaruMenyan tree (*taru* meaning tree, *menyan* meaning fragrant), giving fragrant fresh air. Trunyan Village has an open burial tradition by which the corpse is buried on the ground surface and not in the ground. Reuter (2002) calls this a ‘primitive’ sky-burial. Although the corpse is laid on the ground there is no smell of death. This tree is trusted to play a key role in the production of fresh air. Trunyan Village has a small cemetery that accommodates eleven corpses in a line, and is shielded by a triangle bamboo fence or *ancaksaji*. When a new corpse has to be buried, an old skeleton and skull will be moved to the altar next to the TaruMenyan tree.



Figure 4 Banyan Tree in Trunyan Village

(Source: Yudiantini, 2012).

Balinese Cemetery Management

The *desaadat* or *desapakraman* in the traditional village is obligated to maintain the cemetery and its temple. For a death ceremony, the village undertakes burial system and continues the cremation ceremony called *ngaben*. Some villagers directly undertake *ngaben* ceremony depends upon the family conditions. The villages also hold mass cremation ceremony, such as in TanjungBungkak Village. The cremation of *ngaben* is held in the cemetery where the death’s graveyard belongs to.

Every village has more than one cemetery which the functions is differentiated by the caste, hamlets, infants, etc. Example for this, Pemogan Village has three cemeteries; there are *setraadatKepaon* of Pemogan Village, grave yard of Kampung Islam, and *Kuburan Alit* (infant, for Hindus). Meanwhile *DesaAdatKepaon* also has two cemeteries, one in BanjarDalem (it belongs to

Kesuma Sari, Jaba Tengah, and Jabajati hamlets), and another in Suwung area.

The cemetery of Setra Agung Badung is belong to Desa Pakraman Denpasar with an area of 8.90 Ha and divided by road. There are two types of cemetery in the Setra Agung Badung; Setra Gede and Setra Bugbugan. Setra Gede aims for villagers of Desa Pakraman Denpasar. Setra Bugbugan is for unidentified people or for non-Hindus, and for *kramatamyu* (Hindus) who are not as village's member (*krama*) in Desa Pakraman Denpasar (Bappeda, 2011, p.43).

In Peguyangan Village, there are six types of grave yard includes Setra Agung (for a noble with title Anak Agung), Setra Dukuh (for Dukuh clan, which including in Tek Tek Hamlet), Setra Batur (placed in south of Pura Desa), Setra Tagtag (belongs to villagers from Tagtag Tengah, Tagtag Kelod, and Tagtag Kaja hamlets), Setra Dadakan (belong to villagers from Dadakan Hamlet), and Setra Punggung. In Setra Agung, there is a plant called soar however it fell four years ago. The cemetery is divided into three areas, to bury in north side, for noble in east side, and for commoner in west side. There are three temples in the Setra Agung, Pura Taman Dukuh, Pura Prajapati, and Pura Dalem which adored by the villagers.

Every village has their own management of cemetery. In Buahian Village, Kintamani, the social structure for the death ceremony, especially for *ngaben* ceremony is managed by two *tilem* namely Tilem Dangin Rurung (as many as 90 heads of family) and Tilem Dauh Rurung (as many as 136 families). While the cemetery or *setra* is also divided into two pieces of land and separated by one tree that is *curiga* tree or udutanah tree. The two sets are Setra Dangin or kangin saves and Setra Dauh or sibakkauh. For Setra Dangin will be managed by Tilem Dauh and Setra Dauh managed by Tilem Dangin. For burials, the upstream or the *luwan* is for elderly, usually for *kubayan* who the higher statue of uluapad system, and its characterized by the use of *ancaksaji* and also *tedung* (traditional umbrella). Meanwhile the downstream or *teben* is a burial for a baby. *Ngaben* ceremony in Buahian Village is called *biyetanam* or burial system, in Buahian Village also carry out mass cremation.

Development and Threatening

The city planning, the provision of cemetery is never provided by the planner. This due to the Balinese culture of *ngaben* ceremony. In fact, the

growing area of business or commercial are increasing in numbers and city has less green open space. Denpasar City is facing loss of agriculture area into other function. In other hand, other region such as Palm Beach County, FL, showed the need to plan for 30 years of 66 acres of cemetery (Coutts, Basmajian et al., 2011; Yudiantini, 2012). This means that they have more green open space that can be forested for ecological need.

E. CONCLUSION

Balinese city planning more focuses on land provision for public facilities and other function rather for cemetery. This due to the tradition of *ngaben* (cremation) ceremony in Bali. Balinese cemetery remain stable in area numbers but still can be as sources of health in providing of fresh air. City planer should aware to provide more green space for other function such as City Park, recreation area, zoo, city forest, or green tourism destination to fulfill city requirement of 30% of green open space (RTH/*Ruang Terbuka Hijau*).

REFERENCES

- Badan Pusat Statistik. (2011). *Bali Dalam Angka (Bali in Figures) 2011*. Denpasar: Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Bali.
- Bappeda. (2011a). *Penelusuran Sejarah Kota Denpasar*. Denpasar: Pemerintah Kota Denpasar.
- Budihardjo, E. (1995). *Architectural Conservation in Bali*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press
- Coutts, C., C. Basmajian, et al. (2011) *Projecting Landscape of Death, Landscape and Urban Planning*, 102 (4), pp 254-261.
- Hobson, E. (2004). *Conservation and Planning; Changing values in policy and practice*. London and New York: Spon Press, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Krebs, N. (1922). *Natur und Kulturlandschaft. Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft fur Erdkunde zu Berlin*, 3(4), 81-94.
- Palang, H., & Fry, G. (Eds.). (2003). *Landscape Interfaces, Cultural Heritage in Changing Landscapes* (Vol. 1). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publisher.
- Rapoport, A. (1992). *On Cultural Landscapes*. TDSR, III(II), 33-47
- Reuter, T. A. (2002a). *Custodians of the sacred mountains: culture and society in the highlands of Bali*: University of Hawaii Press.

- Schuter, O. (1903). *Die Siedelungen im nordostlichen Thuringen*. Ein Beispiel für die Behandlung Siedlungsgeographischer Fragen. Berlin.
- Sudata, I. N. (2002). *Persepsi Masyarakat Bali Terhadap Sistem Nilai Ruang Terbuka Tradisional di Kota Denpasar*. (Master Degree), Program Pendidikan Pasca sarjana Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang.
- Taylor, & Lennon (Eds.). (2012). *Managing Cultural Landscape*. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Yudiantini, N. M. (2012). *Learning from Sustainable Landscape of Death in Bali: Landscape Planning and Tri Hita Karana*. The 2nd International Conference on Sustainable Technology Development: Developing Sustainable Technology for a Better Future, Denpasar-Bali.
- Yudiantini, Ni Made. (2015). *Bali Aga Cultural Landscape Challenges: Conserving the Balinese Traditional Landscape for Future Balinese Indigenous Villages (Bali Aga) and Communities*. Doctorate Thesis. Deakin University-Australia.