Rethinking Kevin Lynch's Concept of “the Image of the City” through Contemporary Urban View; case study of kampungs, Surabaya- Indonesia

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Abstract
The aim of this article is to extend Kevin Lynch Theory of the 'Image of the City' in 1960 that is still applied and taught until today. Lynch's focus of reading cities is in the quality of structure and identity of the elements. The extension in this article is by considering 'meaning' in the reading process to identify urban elements. This article reads cities through the perspective of the contemporary view, which valuing the space as social production. The view is contrasting the Western centric view by focusing on the norms rather than forms, and on the process of socially constructing spaces rather than the product of the process. It challenges the Lynch's theory particularly by considering 'meaning' that is socially produced in cities. The investigation of the case study, which is kampungs (=urban villages), is undertaken by observing the historical layer, the daily rhythm, and the observers' perceptions. The theory extension focuses on the unfixed urban elements that related to social activities.

Keywords: kampung, contemporary, place-meaning

Introduction

The theory of the 'Image of the City' by Kevin Lynch in 1960 is still discussed and applied because it widened the scope of practice: considering qualities of a place through identification of the five major elements in navigational ability. The urban elements are read or analyzed into three categories: identity, structure, and meaning. Lynch's study focuses on the two most communicable dimension of the conversation between the observer and environment, which are identity and structure. Lynch put less emphasis on the factor of 'meaning' because it bears an un-fixed and relatively definitions based on the reader's categorization in society and culture.

This article reads cities through the perspective of the contemporary view, which is highlight 'meaning' behind the reading. It focuses on the concept of spaces as social production. This view is avoiding the thinking of dualism perspective of the Western and the subaltern position, especially in discussion the Asian and outside Euro-American cities. The view will challenge the Lynch's theory particularly by considering 'meaning' perceived by the observers. This article is based on a study in kampungs (urban village) in Surabaya, Indonesia, with specific respondents of young adults aged 20-25 years old, and living in the kampungs since they were born.
Kevin Lynch’s Theory

Lynch’s theory in the ‘Image of the City’ discusses the quality of cities depending on the legibility factor of urban elements. The elements are perceived by urban observers. Visibility, which he calls as ‘legibility’, is a visual quality that can be understood through studying mental images as a result of people’s memories and meanings (Lynch 1960). The urban elements are read or analyzed into three categories: identity, structure, and meaning. Lynch’s study focuses on the two most communicable dimension of the conversation between the observer and environment, which are identity and structure. Identity means a distinction from other objects; structure means a relationship to larger pattern of other elements, and meaning means a practical and emotional value for the observer.

The reading of cities first requires the identification of the elements from others, second the relationship to others, and the last is its meaning. The first and second are the most legible/visible of the physical elements in cities, while the third is very relative in cultures. Lynch highlights the five major elements in cities that enhance the legibility: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. These elements must be patterned together as nets of paths, clusters of landmarks, or mosaics of districts with sometimes overlapped and interrelated elements. Each element is only a raw material of a city form. In the urban context, all elements operate together. Images may differ from time to time, season-to-season and day-to-day.

Lynch’s theory is based on his research in three cities in the USA: Boston, Jersey and Los Angeles, a central area of approximately 1.5 by 2.5 miles was studied in each case. Lynch’s methods included cognitive mapping, in-depth oral interviews, travel maps, direct observations, field reconnaissance walks, random pedestrian interviews, aerial and ground-level photography and synthesis maps (Lynch 2007). From these diverse methods, Lynch succeeded in identifying internal consistency from a relatively small sample of interviewees (30 people for Boston, 15 for each Jersey and Los Angeles).

Instead of the robust characteristics of this theory that is still applied until today, Lynch on his later study and writings reflects his self-critique to his own theory particularly in meaning development that is culturally based. He defines ‘meaning’ on his later books. Summary of Lynch’s works after the ‘Image of the City’ explains as follow, especially in defining meaning: meaning of place is related to time (history) and the observers’ background in terms of social class and spatial behavior (Lynch 1972); meaning is developed by people’s sense of legibility, experience and place; the development of meaning of place/urban elements is affected by factors that is embedded within them such as accessibility, diversity, adaptability and comfort (Lynch 1981); and the last one is that meaning is related to people’s psychological feelings to their environment such as attachment, warmth, relaxation and interest (Lynch 1990). Therefore in Lynch’s legibility theory, it needs an additional approach to consider and analyze ‘meaning’.

The Contemporary View

In order to observe ‘meaning’, this research applies an approach of contemporary view in urbanism. It is a way to analyse city or urban spaces and architecture by considering the space and its elements as results of social production, especially as transformation of local and global
understanding of culture (Perera 2013). The term ‘contemporary’ itself means present or current. This view is free from categorization of comparison such as the Western paradigm as the reference point; or in contrasting ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ countries, and ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ paradigms. The characteristics of the view are similar to ‘post-colonial’ paradigm; hence some scholars mention this view as ‘post-colonial urbanism’. In the post-colonial urbanism understanding (or in this case is in the contemporary view), it does not mean that the colonizers are totally gone, but the colonial hierarchy is simply repeated in different ways, which are in cultural and economical discrimination (Bishop, Philips, and Yeo 2003).

This view challenges the Western-centric perspective in analysing cities. The western-centric perspective focuses on the Western/developed/First countries as a reference point in analysing cities, and views the others (particularly Asian cities) in subaltern position. The contemporary view analyses cities in regard through their power of changing especially in terms of society without referring them to any ideal cities. It observes the best perspective in analysing urban spaces particularly the Asian or outside Euro-American cities in order to have better understanding of the subaltern (that the mainstream called). The mainstream literature highlighted the categorization of high-end, low-end and traditional: privileging the high-end for its growth and image buildings, and leaving behind the low-end and tradition for their poverty, uncontrolled, and overcrowding (Perera and Tang 2013). Many urban scholars have trapped their thinking into this dualism of Western and subaltern based on the mainstream literature (Simone 2012). The dualism is such as ignoring the society’s characteristics and background of subject matter, and put the western model as an ideal model to understand other cities (Edensor and Jayne 2012).

The focus of contemporary view’s analysis is in the process of remaking particular concept and in relation to shift from ‘forms to norms’, and also a shift from analytic of structure to analytic of assemblage (Ong 2011; Robinson 2006). Therefore, it requires a strong interpretation of grounded norms rather than collecting data/information and analysed them under available structures or forms (Perera and Tang 2013). Perera and Tang (2013) mentioned this process as the emergence of spatial understanding of Asian cities. This view focuses on the fact that spaces in Asian cities are combination of local, Western, and global understanding and experiences.

According to Perera and Tang (2013), there are three important tools for the contemporary urbanism approach: the scope, the theoretical concept, and the point of view. The ‘scope’ is on urbanities and urbanism issues in Asian cities; such as phenomenological characters of urban life in poverty, public-private, and formal-informal (Bharne 2013). The ‘theoretical concept’ should be constructed for the purpose of clarifying and explaining the phenomena within existing concept (because Asia still lack of theoretical presence in literature). The last tool is the ‘point of view’; it means to hear a story from the ground, develop empathy, share the same time and space, and acknowledge the concept through which the story is built. These three tools are used in this article to explore the case study of kampungs.

**The Case Study of Kampungs**
The case study of this research is kampungs (urban village) in Keputran, Surabaya. The kampungs are: Keputran Pasar Kecil gang 1 to gang 4 (gang=aisle/alley), and kampung of Kedondong Kidul gang-1. The main access entering these kampungs is from Urip Sumohardjo Street, except for Kedondong Kidul gang 1 kampung. It is the main street of the city and creating a major spine of the city street structure.

Keputran Pasar Kecil gang 1 is located directly in juxtaposition with the BRI Tower, and gang 4 is side by side with the Urip Flat. Between Pasar Kecil gang 3 and gang 4 is the location of the gutter/silted channel. The 4 meter-pedestrian of the main street is physically separated the kampungs’ entrances with the main street. It also connects the kampungs with the shops and kampungs areas opposite them through the pedestrian-bridge over the main street. Shops, banks and other commercial facilities are grown along this pedestrian. Especially in the afternoon (after working hour), many food/beverages hawkers occupy the pavement. It is also functioned as parking areas for motorbikes and becaks (becak=pedicab) to ride and park.
The kampungs are placed side by side with a high-rise building of BRI Tower with modern style and beautiful garden in the Basuki Rahmat area. The two are separated by a long permanent wall belongs to the modern building, and the spaces inside the wall are used as parking or service areas. Contrary, another side of the wall is a living space for kampungs' dwellers, which is characterized by one-storey buildings, semi-permanent, and organic pattern of housing layout and street with organic infrastructure provision.

Figure 3. The solid void analysis of the case study

The Reading of the Kampungs

In reading the case study through the view of contemporary urbanism, the discussion is divided into several sections. The first section is the history of the city and the kampungs. It is to explore the kampungs spaces in terms of time in social production process. The history is one of the elements that assemblages the current meanings of the case study, because it has contributed to the current meaning of the urban spaces. The second section is exploring the daily rhythm of the kampungs through direct observation and interviews. The exploration is a way to know the cultural norms of the kampungs dwellers, specifically in daily practical ways. It is also to observe the case study through inside-out observation, by investigating and interpreting the ground (physical and social life). The last section is the young adults perception to their kampungs, which is investigated through interviews. It is to understand meaning perceived by the young adults in order to identify the urban elements that are represented their identity.

The Historical Layer

Figure 4. The dynamic evolution of the city from 1678 to 2005
Before 1930s Surabaya was well known for its sugar mills before the economic depression. Sugar fields, mixed with kampungs as the farmers' settlement areas, occupied the current urban area of Surabaya. In the map of 1787 (before the Dutch came), it is shown that kampung of Keputran was one of the settlements in the sugar fields that surrounded the Surabaya kingdom. In the map of 1900 to 1975 (after the Independence), the city grew rapidly within almost 70 years. It grew firstly to the southern direction (along the Kali Mas River), and then expanded to the eastern and western part of the river. The location of the central city was also shifted, from the north to the south, in terms of governance and business location. In 1900 to 1975 maps, the location of the city center gradually gets close to Keputran kampung. Once, it was only a sugar fields, then become a valuable areas since attached to the central business areas of the city.

Until the Indonesian independence in 1945, the land in Surabaya city, including kampungs and sugar fields, was mostly owned by private parties and controlled by landlords (Basundoro 2004). Initially, the Dutch government sold their land to the private parties in order to get money for physical development of the city and the province. The landlords had full authority over the land and also for the people who lived in those areas: the kampungs’ dwellers had to pay tax to the landlords. The dwellers had an uncertain situation about their land, even though the dwellers (and their former families) had been lived in the land before the Dutch came. Conflicts came when the kampungs’ dwellers had to pay tax with money or their field crops and landlords started to speculate their lands (Basundoro 2013).

During the British invasion (1945-1949), the kampungs areas were places for nationalists or pro-Indonesian Republic to hide from the British troops because it was difficult for foreigners to move inside the kampungs. ‘Arek’ spirit’ is known to represent the braveness of the Surabayan to fight the battle, with bare hands and traditional weapons. In November 1945, which was known as the ‘Battle of Surabaya’, the British used modern weapons to destroy Tunjungan and Keputran areas, all areas badly suffered including the kampungs that were razed to the ground (Dick 2002). The British firstly said that they will take over Surabaya in three days, but in fact it needed a month because of their fierce resistance. This resistance helped Indonesia to receive international support for its Independence because of this heroic effort by Surabayan. The battle until today is the most patriotic battle in protecting the nation at that time, especially for Surabayan.

At circa 1985/1987, the BRI Tower management wanted to extend their land territory further South to the kampungs areas. They were interested in buying the land and buildings in the kampungs especially in Keputran Pasar Kecil gang 1 to gang 3. The BRI management offered them a price of 300,000 Rupiahs per meter2, but the normal price for housing lot was 500,000 Rupiahs. Hence, only some of the dwellers had sold their land and houses (only 10% of the total area). Driven by an Indonesian economic crisis in late 1997, the development of the new extension of the BRI Tower was cancelled (Dick 2002). Some who had been sold their property reoccupied their land, or new immigrants came to occupy the vacant (sold) land; and they called the land as ‘tanah bongkaran’ (evicted land). But recently, the issue of kampung eviction was heard again, and the kampungs’ dwellers are ready to release their land based on a price of 3-5 mill Rupiah per-meter2, which is the normal price for utilized-land in that area.

The Daily Rhythm
In order to explore the dynamic life of kampungs, this research focuses on the dwellers’ of Keputran Pasar kecil gang 3 in their daily activity. Compared to other kampungs in Keputran, this kampung is the busiest because of the nearby Keputran Market. This market is open from late night to early morning, and mostly operates in public areas, such as streets and pedestrian ways; only some sellers operate inside a permanent market building that was built by the government.

Like other parts of the city, life in the kampung begins before sunrise. The dwellers that work at the market are going back home. People start their activity especially in preparing the morning prayer at around 4AM. Men wearing their sarung (sarung = sheath) are walking to the Mosque and the sound of the call from the Mosque is delivered through loudspeaker. Some men are walking in from outside the kampung. Mothers at homes are busy preparing breakfast and getting their children ready for school. Several young people are walking their motorbikes out of the kampung that were previously parked in front of the Mosque.

At around 6AM, it is time for children to go to school and workers to work. Children and their mothers are walking along the alleys, while many workers wearing their uniforms are walking with their motorbikes (it is not allowed to ride motorbikes in the kampung alleys). The warungs are still closed, and there are no hawkers in the kampung. Some young people are sitting on the wooden bench in front of the cyber café while having their coffee and smoking. For houses that have front yards, people are sweeping the yard with their bamboo brooms. People are greeting each other (except the workers who are usually walking in a rush). After taking their children to school, mothers in several groups are walking to the nearby local market or permanent spots for hawkers. The shopping activity is predominantly by women while the sellers are men; this activity is not for buying meat, fruit and vegetables only, but also for discussing (or gossiping about) any interesting news in their kampung.

During the shopping time, the kampung is relatively quiet because the day gets hot in the afternoon. On the platform of the Banteng ground and on the houses’ terraces, people are hanging their laundry to dry in the sun. In some areas of the alley, people dry their kerak nasi and their homemade krupuk (kerak nasi = left over rice, krupuk= crackers) on bamboo trays at the side of the alleys. Some women do their laundry outside their dwellings: on the small terrace in front of their houses or the public toilets/wells, and let the water run to the duct just below the alley.

After the shopping activity, the women go back home and some go to pick up their children from school at around 1PM. After this time, some parts of the kampung start bustling: children play...
along the alley while their mothers feed them and themselves also. Some women cook in their houses while accompanying their children doing their homework. At this time, most young adults of the kampung are just waking up, and having their meals. Some of them are having meals from the warungs in their kampung or other warung nearby. At around 3PM, mothers are busy bathing their small children and dressing them up, which occurred in front of the public toilets and their houses. In a long type of houses, mothers sit in front of the door’s house facing the alley and chat to each other, and their children are sitting on their laps or close to them. The mothers combing the children’s hair, powdering their faces, and massaging eucalyptus oil on their tummy.

After the shalat time of Ashar (at around 4PM) when the sun goes down and loses its strength, it is time for the kampung’s dwellers to relax. In kampung Keputran Pasar Kecil gang 3, the favourite spots for relaxation are in the Banteng ground, near the Belimbing tree, and in front of house number 38 (the alley’s intersection). In the Banteng ground especially, groups of people gather and relax in various spots: young adults choose a spot in the left back corner (from the entrance), small children run along the main alley with their bikes or scooters, bigger children sit on the wooden bench (some eat meals or chatting and some do homework) in front of the warung, and men sit on the cement platform chatting to each other. Most women sit in front of the warung, under the warung’s roof extension. Sometimes, young people play badminton in the middle right of the ground, and people around it are cheering. At the regular time, a bakso seller (bakso=meatball soup) stops his cart in front of the warung, under the roof extension. The seller permanently keeps his table and chairs in the spot and opens them when he is ready to sell his bakso. Around of Belimbing tree and house no.38, men, women and children relax in a smaller group than in the Banteng ground. Under the tree (the tree is in someone’s yard), there is also a bakso seller who stops there from 4PM to 7PM.

Approaching Maghrib time (at around 6PM), fewer people are in the alley. The location of hang out is slightly different for the afternoon activities. The kampung’s alley is predominantly occupied by young male adults and men: the area in front of the warung internet (warung internet/warnet = cyber café) or around the Mushalla ground is for young adults, and in front of the warung of the Banteng ground is for male-adults. The cyber café is open 24/7. Both the café and the shop are places for young people (and sometimes children) to spend their leisure time after school and at weekends. Most young adults like to play online games at night until morning. The customers of the cyber café come from outside the kampung either on motorbikes or by foot, in addition to the group of men in the Banteng ground. They park their motorbikes in the café’s terrace and if there is not enough space, they will park in front of the Mushalla (closer to the café). Hence at midnight, the Mushalla ground is full of motorbikes and also customers of the warung next to the Mushalla.

There is a wooden bench in front of the cyber café; it is a place for young adults to relax after playing online games, to smoke and to chat each other. It is also a place for them to have a party at midnight by drinking cukrik (cukrik = illegal brewed drinks mixed with energy drinks or sodas). Similar to the young adults’ party activities, the group of men in the Banteng ground have a cukrik party almost every night. The men from outside the kampung work at the Keputran Market, which closes after midnight, and then they go to the kampung to hang out with friends and have a cukrik party.

At night, the kampung is relatively quiet; only the main alley has street lamps, all houses and warungs are closed except the cyber café and the warung in Banteng Ground. Several young
workers walk along the alley wearing uniform and some push their motorbikes entering the kampungs, having just finished work on the night-shift. The parties in both areas (as mentioned above) are the only busy areas at that time. The night gets cold by the time around 2AM, men and young men finish their party, some walk to leave the kampung, and some lie on the floor because they are badly drunk. Sometimes, they start to fight within the group, and other adults will wake up and make them stop. In many cases, when the young adults started to fight, becak drivers who are sleeping inside their becaks and parked near the kampung’s gate, break the fight and ask them to go home.

The Perception

The discussion topic of the interview activities covered a range of questions related to: their opinion of what best describe their kampungs, their attachment to the kampungs and friends, the kampungs’ changes and their future hope for their kampungs. These topics reflect their conception and perception to their kampungs in past, current, and future times.

“It is a simple and nice place in a strategic location; with nice and friendly people...you won't be lost in here, everybody like to help you” (Uti)

“Safe and peace...people from all ages could socialize freely” (Wanto)

Uti described her kampung’s dwellers as people who are nice and friendly; if a foreigner came to her kampung for the first time, he/she wouldn’t get lost because people would tell them the way and help them look for what they want. As well as Uti, Wanto perceives his kampung in positive terms: safe and peace, where people from all ages could socialize freely. He is happy with his social life in the kampung, he knew that some adults and youth like to do gamble and get drunk in his kampungs, but he sees it as a normal habit because later they will be tired/bored of doing it. Other comments represent a paradoxical condition such as: the physical conditions are crowded and social life is complicated, but the people are nice and friendly. They also mentioned that their kampungs are less modern than their surroundings but a peaceful place in the strategic location of the city.

“It is a place for gossipers, especially the women” (Toni)

“It is a place for gamblers, drunkards, jobless people, and young people with no future, because they are wild and immoral” (San)

Toni said his kampung is the ‘kampung of gossipers’. It is because most of kampungs’ dwellers like to know other people’s business; they like to chat about people: what they do, what they have, why they do this, why they have that, and so on. Sometimes, this condition brings conflict to others because it breaks their privacy. Additionally, San said that their kampungs are places for drunkards, gamblers, and jobless people. He specifically mentioned that young people in their kampungs are wild and immoral; they have no bright future ahead.

Wanto has mentioned three best places for the kampung dwellers to have social activities, which are in the Mushalla ground, the Bull ground and the security booth at the entrance gate. Both grounds are open spaces with cement floor, so they won’t be muddy during rainy season. The open space is useful for almost all the kampung’s dweller, from children to elderly. For special event, such as Independence Day or Moslem Celebrations, this space is a meeting point for all
people from his kampung. Additionally, Aki mentioned the Banteng ground as the most dangerous place in his kampung, because sometimes at night drunken men like to bully one (particularly women) whom passing by the alley and asking for money in a worst situation. People (the worker) from Keputran Market like to hang out in this place, because of its closeness to the market and the informal leader of the worker (kepala preman) live in this kampung.

"The best thing in this kampung is enjoying our friendship; the space here is not as comfortable as in cafes or any other nice places...but we like it here, as long as we can hang out with friends" (Aki)

"I don’t want to leave my kampungs unless we move out together, and then stay at the new place together" (Wanto)

Aki understands that his kampung is less comfortable than any places in the city, but this is the best place for him to relax because he has friends here. For him, friendship with his kampung’s friends is important, he loves his friends because he grew up with them and have same experiences in many areas: school, music, drinks, and being online game lovers. In the case of leaving the kampung, Wanto said that he does not want to leave his kampungs except with his friends who will live together at a new place. Aki and Wanto attachment and dependency to their friend are strong; stronger than the attachment to their kampung. Another crucial thing for them of moving out from the kampungs is in terms of reasonable money as the compensation of taking over the kampungs’ land by the investor. Issue of being evicted haunts the kampungs’ dwellers often; the unsolved problem until today is regarding the compensation.

"Today, this kampung has less trouble with the police compared to the last five years, because we have fewer brawls after the police had caught the gang leader"

In terms of social activity, the activity of brawling that usually occurs after the cukrik party is becoming less, because a major gang leader had been caught by the policeman last year (around 2011). Therefore, the rest of the group members have become more careful about the group’s activity. The family of the leader lives in Keputran Pasar Kecil gang 3 until today, however the activity of hanging out still occurs every night but less party activity.

"I am making money through this online game, and I hope to become a commercial seller via Twitter"

Today, young adults in the kampungs are virtually connected to the outside world via the Internet especially the social media. Everyone owns a mobile phone that is connected to Facebook and/or Twitter. For most young men, they are also connected through the online games played in the cyber café. Instead of warnings from the providers not to involve real money on the games, but the young adults play and do transactions with real money (especially for games of DotA and Rising Force). In Twitter media, it becomes a trend to have as many followers as he can, with a hope that commercial providers will ask them to be their marketing. It is also happened to one of their friends, and she could make good money from it. Being involved in online games and social media could open an opportunity to have a good job while doing hobbies.

"I don’t want to think about the future, I have never had an opportunity to have a good career.....recently, I’m just doing what I can; earning money, spending money, and playing with my friends.....this is my life" (Toni)
“……no choice, except enjoying my life here” (Aki)

Most of the participants feel hopeless of their future. From time to time, the young adults face difficulties in achieving good careers. It is very rare for people from kampungs to have a good career in any formal institution or even work in the central business district attached to their kampungs. Quality improvement of houses is relatively slow mainly happening within the last ten years, but faster than improvement of public facilities. Young adults who come from poor families are usually trapped in a low economic structure from generation to generation.

Summary

The discussion of the historical layer of the city is to explore the kampungs spaces in terms of ‘time’ as in social production process. The history is one of the elements that assembles the current meanings of the case study, because it has contributed to the current meaning of the urban spaces. Understanding the current condition of the kampungs should be developed through the understanding of the past. The kampungs of Keputran is older than the city itself or the same old with the Soerabaja Kingdom. The kampungs’ dwellers are commonly known as their ‘arek’ spirit in defending the city with traditional weapons of bamboo runcing (bamboo runcing = sharp bamboo branch). The spirit or personal character of ‘arek’ is embedded with the Surabayan young people especially from kampungs until today.

The exploration of daily rhythm of the kampungs through direct observation and interview is the way to know the cultural norms of the kampungs dwellers, specifically in practical ways. It is also to observe the case study through inside-out observation, by investigating and interpreting the ground (physical and social life). In today daily rhythm, the use of the kampungs’s space is varied based on the dimension of time, social activity and group of people. In the morning, mothers, children, and workers make use of the spaces especially the alley for their way of circulation to school and work place. In the afternoon, mothers, the hawkers and the moneylenders are occupying the space in terms of transaction of things, money, news and gossip. At night until early morning, the space is for young men and men to hang out, and sometimes got drunk, play gamble, and have brawls. The locational preferences of them are relatively similar, such as near warungs, gates, public facilities, or in alleys’ junction/intersection; the availability of furniture is also important. Specifically, the daily activities of the young adults are focus on their kampungs - work places, and their social space in the alley – home in a smaller scale.

The young adults perception to their kampungs is to understand meaning perceived by the young adults in order to identify the urban elements that are represented their norms. The young adults conceptualized their kampung in paradoxical terms: crowded but comfortable and free. These terms includes both positive and negative views about social and physical conditions of their kampungs. The kampungs are the most crowded areas compared to other areas adjacent to them, in terms of houses and warungs. The young adults realized the strategic and valuable location of their kampungs because these are living areas for workers in the middle of the commercial facilities around them. The physical conditions of the kampungs are simple in terms of building and infrastructure quality. However, living in the kampung since they were born, means they are used to the crowds and small spaces, and never feel uncomfortable. The term free means that the young adults are free to do anything they want, which represents the real condition of them. They are free to decide whatever they want for their life: being a worker, a gambler, a drunkard, an
expert in online games, or anything else within their confines neighbourhood. In the future, they believe that their kampungs are still crowded, less developed, and many gamblers, drunkards and jobless young people. There is no hope for his/her social life; no optimist answers in commenting this.

Discussion of Rethinking Lynch’s ‘Image of the City’

This article is extending Lynch’s theory through highlighting ‘meaning’ in the reading. It is especially through the perspective of contemporary urbanism. This view is contrasting the Western centric view by focusing on the norms rather than forms, and on the process of socially constructing spaces rather than the product of the process. The investigation of the case study is undertaken by observing the historical layer, the daily rhythm, and the observers’ perceptions/conceptions. The history of the city and the kampungs is to explore the kampungs spaces in terms of time in social production process. The exploration of daily rhythm is to know the cultural norms of the kampungs dwellers, specifically in daily practical ways. The perception investigation is to understand meaning perceived by the young adults in order to identify the urban elements that are represented their identity.

According to Perera and Tang (2013), the three tools to read cities through the contemporary view are: the scope, the concept, and the point of view. This research has applied the three tools in reading the kampungs as the case study. The scope is in the vernacular way of life and physical condition of the kampungs, which are contrast to the city around them. The concept is by rethinking and extending the Western-centric approach of Lynch’s theory in the ‘Image of the City’. The point of view is by applying the ground observation of the kampungs and people’s perception of the kampungs. These three observations have been concluded in the previous section.

Urban elements that are identified by the observers (in this case is the young adults) are not understood only through their legibility quality but also through the meaning. In the kampungs, meaning development is more important that the visual quality of space/urban elements. It is because the kampungs are built and developed naturally according to the needs of the dwellers, or in this case could be known as vernacular architecture. The identified element as additional elements in Lynch’s five elements is social space. For the young adults, the important social space for them is one that could connect them to outside world that is more modern and wealthy. In the kampungs, they like to socialize and hang out in the space in front of the cyber café. For other dwellers, such as the men, children, and women, they have their own spaces that are used in different time. All social spaces are located along the main alley, mostly related to the openness of a space near it or public facilities that surround the space. The social space is the most important elements in the kampungs according to the dwellers. This space could not be identified through Lynch’s observation of legibility quality of urban elements.

Reference


