“TAMAN SARI” – YOGYAKARTA
A Cultural Perspective in Landscape Design

by

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“With the oversight of the chair of the supervisory panel, editorial advice has been sought under the supervision of the chair of the supervisory panel [Prof. K Taylor]. The advice was restricted to matters of [statements in accordance with 7.3.3.11 or 7.3.3.18 as appropriate] only. No changes to intellectual content were made by the adviser/s.”
ABSTRACT

This thesis is a critical review of Taman Sari, Yogyakarta in particular how the Old City Planning including the Pleasure Garden which has multi functions was established in Indonesia during the ancient time (in the past), the development during the Dutch era, and current conditions and how the future generation should take care of the place.

The discussions, analysis, synthesis and assumption were done based on the literature study, the ICOMOS Burra Charter, the China Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites, and the Indonesia Law in Cultural Heritage.

In the research it has been found that Taman Sari which is located in Yogyakarta was built for several reasons and functions, such as resting area, recreation area, practicing area, traditional activities and workshops, meditation area and also defense area.

One line of this research is that the use of plants which had been planted in Taman Sari area was related with the tradition, symbolism and the daily needs. As assumption in this research some plants possibly are classified as a Javanese traditional plant.

A series of photographs which have been taken from different time support the analysis of this research report.

At the end of the report there is a recommendation to the Indonesia Government for maintaining the cultural heritage asset value, because this could be a national valuable asset which could be handed to the future generation.

Based on the Guidelines to the Burra Charter define we Cultural Significance as:

.....a concept which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past or enrich the present, and which will be of value to the future generations.
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COPIES OF LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. August 17, 2000: Letter of Recommendations from Professor Ken Taylor, Director of Postgraduate Studies, School of Environmental Design, University of Canberra


3. December 1, 2000: Letter from Neil Piper, Acting Program Manager, University of Canberra
PROJECT RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Indonesia consists of 17,508 islands (Hydro Oceanografi TNI-AL - November 2004) other source mentions 18.108 islands (LAPAN/Aviation and Space Institute, 2003) or 17.504 islands (Coordination Bureau of National Survey and Mapping) is located between Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean (or Samudera Hindia as it is more familiar to Indonesia people). The country stretches along the equator over a distance of 5,160 km (3,200 miles). It is home to more than 300 ethnic group (http://www.indonesiaphoto.com/article224.html-July 2003 and http://www.expat.or.id/info/overview.html#top, 2004 and based on Aviation and Space Institute, 2003 ), who have Bahasa Indonesia as the national language opinions differ on the number of local languages more than 365 vernaculars (http://www.indonesiaphoto.com/article224.html, 2004) or 731 vernaculars (http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=Indonesia, 2004) or 583 vernaculars (www.kbri-canberra.org.au/country, 2004 and http://www.oxfamgb.org/eastasia/indonesia/indoprofileb.html, 2004).

The ancient philosophy is Bhineka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) was a manifesto of ‘one country, one nation and one language: Indonesia’. This motto was a result of a political consensus in 1928, which has become the bases for Indonesia modern nationalism.

Bhineka Tunggal Ika signifies the unity of Indonesian people despite their diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The state basic principles called Pancasila relates to the State’s cultural strategy.

INDONESIA

Source : www.oxfamgb.org-dec’04

![Indonesia Map](https://example.com/indonesia_map.png)

Figure 1. The Republic of Indonesia and its surroundings
One of the Islands is Java Island or Jawa Island with an area of 132,000 sq km and its population about 128 million, is the most densely populated area in Indonesia. The island of Java is officially divided into six Provinces, two of which have special status. West Java, Central Java, East Java, are respectively founded in 1945 and Banten (1998). The other two special territories are the Province of the Capital City Special Territory of Jakarta (1963) and the Province of Special Territory of Yogyakarta (1950) which was the capital of the Republic during the Revolution (1946-1949).

The research project of Taman Sari is actually located within the original boundary walls of the Sultan of Yogyakarta palace. However, the location of Taman Sari at present time is administratively outside the current palace property and administratively become part of a sub-district within the Municipality of Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta, is one of the centers of the Javanese Culture. Yogyakarta city is rich in arts and cultural heritage, legend and historical places. The city enchants its visitors with its culture, gamelan orchestra, classical and modern Javanese dances, batiks processing, etc.
The fascinating villages which surround Yogyakarta such as Kota Gede (centre of silverware), Kasongan (the traditional earthenware), Kasian (center of leather puppet) and Pucung (mask craft).

From 16 -18 centuries, Yogyakarta and Surakarta City were united under the realm of the Mataram II Kingdom. Yogyakarta was established in 1755 and Kraton was the center of the traditional life of the people. Figure 3 is the Map of Central Java, which shows the Special Territory of Yogyakarta (DIY), and City of Surakarta in the past when these two cities were united as Mataram II before.

The City of Yogyakarta lies on the foot of Mount Merapi which is an important element that relates to the Javanese Cosmology for the Planning of Kraton Yogyakarta in the old time.

Figure 3. Central Java Province & Special Territory of Yogyakarta (DIY)
Yogyakarta Special Territory, surrounded by Central Java Province area.

Figure 4. Central Java Province and the Yogyakarta Special Territory

2. REASON FOR CHOOSING THE PROJECT

The discipline of landscape architecture is rather new in Indonesia. The first state School of Landscape Architecture in Indonesia was established on October 1, 1963 which was encouraged by the first President of Indonesia, Soekarno. Soekarno urged the Governor of Capital City Special Territory of Jakarta to prepare some landscape architect experts to plan and design the landscape surrounding the immense Sport-hall Complex of Senayan for the Asian Games. The landscape architecture profession in Indonesia has not developed well until present. The landscape architecture profession has not been fully accepted by other professions (civil engineering, architecture, city planning and others).

Only a small number landscape architects have been invited to participate in projects, as for example the Taman Sari - Yogyakarta project (funded by the Portuguese and local government). The National Landscape Architect Association is still fighting to get a better input to projects, by establishing BSKAL (Landscape Architect Certification Unit).

The landscape architecture has also several specializations, and it is considered that the role of maintaining the remaining historical buildings is not the responsibility of the architect and the archaeologist only but also the responsibility of the landscape architect.
The mission of this research is **building and encourages the young people awareness** for the historical sites or buildings, since it still lack awareness for heritage places.

The main objective of this research itself is to explore the best solution in order to give more value to Taman Sari - Yogyakarta as a Historical Place without destroying the sense of the place.

Numerous heritage places spread all over Indonesia and one of them is Taman sari, a fascinating beauty of the ancient time.

### 3. REASON FOR CHOOSING THE SITE

Taman Sari or Perfumed Garden or Water Castle is located in the Province of Special Territory of Yogyakarta. It was built in 1758. The establishment of the buildings was in connection with the establishment of Kraton Yogyakarta.

“Taman Sari “ is also known as “ Water Kasteel” as the Dutch called it. It is written in several articles that Taman means park , while Sari/Saras/Segara means lake, while Perfumed Garden refers to the aromatic flora planted in the Garden. But in my opinion, Sari is more related to scented garden, while Saras is more related to physical and mental condition and Segara means both lake and ocean

**Scientific reasoning**

As the Republic of Indonesia Law no 5/1992 stated that ....items of cultural heritage are important resources of the national culture essential to the understanding and promotion history, science and culture, and therefore require protection and conservation for the sake of fulfilling an awareness of national characteristics and the national priorities.

The establishment of this complex in detail will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

This site interested me since I was a collage student in 1975. Since that time I have been collecting all information about Taman Sari, I could never get sufficient information to answer my curiosity. With this research I try to find the proper answer and information about Taman Sari.

Yogyakarta, rich in art, culture and tradition has become a tourist second destination after Bali. Therefore the management of the historical places in Central Java is very important. The development of the awareness of the historical city needs to be linked to the cultural heritage awareness.

### 4. SITE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

**The political will of the local government regarding the conservation policy.**

During the preparation of the research I have identified six major issues related to Taman Sari, such as :

- Socio-cultural issues related to the Kraton/Palace and Government
• Prioritizing the Conservation Policy
• Socio Economic Issues, including: housing
• Conservation issues versus tourism
• Historical cultural landscape issues, including the analysis of Taman Sari within the old city planning
• Landscape Aspect and Traditional plant aspect.

Besides the above issues there are other minor issues such as:

SLOW ACTION
The actions to conserve and preserve the remaining site are very slow. The local government did not show any interest in the beginning of my research project. But, later (in late 2001) some efforts were made to converse the remaining buildings. It was carried out with the aid of foreign funds although it was done in appropriately.

MATERIAL
In protecting and re-constructing the remaining building they did not use similar or closely material to the original. The use of different materials did not achieve a perfect complexion so that, it would create a favorable impression to the historical sites and buildings.

The supporting steel that had been used to sustain the ceiling of Sumur Gumuling passage-ways (was done in January 2002) was not appropriate material used in that period, so that it shows the contrast.

PEOPLE
The people who live around the Taman Sari area considered that they belong to the area and the site, due to their long occupancy.

How Taman Sari has become a crowded settlement and which plants used to grow within Taman Sari area will be explained more detail.

The daily activities of the people flourishing the environment of the site. The site without these people and the “Bird Market” (located just in the North side of the Taman Sari) would give an emptiness of the historical site.

The local government will face a major problem if they try to move some of the people from the site because, most people who live in Taman Sari area are low income people. Their life depends on guiding the tourists, selling batiks as souvenirs, and selling food.

Once the local government offered them to move to a “BTN complex or low-middle income housing”, that they refused it. They thought the location of the housing was too far to the city, but the main important thing was that the people felt that Taman Sari as their life, their home and their luck.
DILEMMA

Taman Sari Yogyakarta as Cultural Resource, Economic resource or both.

The local government was put in a dilemma, in conserving the Taman Sari area.

The psychological human need issues seem to come first, followed by the tourism and the cultural heritage issues. This dilemma could be understood because the government funding is limited to conserve an area like Taman Sari Yogyakarta. And the people who lived in the surrounding of Taman Sari Yogyakarta expect to get more benefit from the tourist who visits this area.

Haryadi’s opinion may be able to solve the problem or the dilemma. Haryadi (1994) in Askew and Logan stated:...... by conserving the system of activities, this trend may be slowed down or stopped entirely. If this can be realized, the stability of the kampung (literally mean village) as residential areas will be possible. This will allow for the formulation of urban design in the inner cities that emphasizes the settings for people and not just ‘urban beautification’ or providing attractive environments for the investors.

In 1989, Taman Sari area was chosen as one of the cultural conservation districts under the decree of the Governor of the Special Province of Yogyakarta. Under this decree, people who live surrounding Taman Sari area has been asked to protect its architectural heritage.

Furthermore Haryadi (1994) mentioned that the development means strengthen the cultural integrity and improving the quality of people’s life, then the conservation of the village is most appropriate.
PLANTS

Plants which grew in different periods

The plants which are now planted in Taman Sari area are not exactly the same as the plants from the historic period. The plants cultivated within the Taman Sari area were more connected to Kraton daily use, and traditional ritual life (interview with Citro Mardowo, February 2004). For example taken from Suaka Peninggalan Sejarah dan Purbakala (see Drawing 03 attached):

- **Cocos nucifera** (Klopo, or Coconut)
- **Artocarpus altillis** (Sukun or Bread fruit)
- **Mangifera indica** (Mangga, or Mango)
- **Vegetable garden** (not clearly defined)
- **Eugenia aromatica** (Cengkeh/cloves)
- **Myristica fragrans** (Pala)
- **Pandanus amarylifolius** (Pandan wangi or scented leaf)

The trees or plants are totally different than the plants in Kraton area. Plants in Kraton area were chosen for their symbolic relationship and implied meanings, not because the need or daily use. For example:

- **Manilkara kauki** (Sawo kecik or Satin-leaf fruit), meaning ‘ben becik’ or wishing you luck, happiness and honor.
- **Ficus benjamina** (Beringin or banyan), ‘a life tree’ which is believed to be able to protect people from bad luck.
- **Tamarindus indicus** (Asem), meaning ‘ngasemke’ or causing parents to be honored and parents being proud of the children.
- **Inocarpus edulis** (Gayam), representing the rebirth of resi (wise man) that had a super power. Therefore Gayam tree has a power to cure.

Some plants were used for medicine.

5. DEFINITIONS

This project deals with issues of heritage places, related to the culture heritage it also includes the actions that need to be taken.

Under the Republic of Indonesia Law No 5/1992 the House of Representatives The Republic of Indonesia decided that: Law Concerning Items of Cultural Heritage stated that in Chapter I General Provisions are:

1. Item of Cultural Heritage are:
   a. Artifacts made by man, movable or immovable, individually or in groups, or parts thereof or remains thereof, which are at least 50 (fifty) years of age, or represent a specific period of at least 50 (fifty) years of age, and are considered to be of significant value to history, science and culture.
   b. Natural objects which are considered to be of significant value to history, science and culture.
2. A Site is a location which contains or is thought to contain items of cultural heritage including the surroundings requires ensuring its safety.
In Chapter 2 of the Republic of Indonesia Law No 5/1992, Purpose and Scope are:
The purpose of protection of items of cultural heritage and sites is to conserve and utilize them for the advancement of the national culture of Indonesia. The scope of this law covers items of cultural heritage items which are considered to be of cultural value, valuable items whose owners are not known and sites.

It was known that Taman Sari Yogyakarta is more than 50 (fifty) years of age, and considered to be of significant value to history, science and culture; and need to be protected and to be conserved. Moreover, Taman Sari Yogyakarta has cultural values.

The Australian ICOMOS Charter also stated that:

- **Cultural significance** means aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.
- **Fabric** means all the physical material of the place.
- **Conservation** means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance. It includes maintenance and may according to circumstances include preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaptation and will be commonly a combination of more than one of these.
- **Maintenance** means the continuous protective care of the fabric, contents and setting of a place, and is to be distinguished from repair. Repair involves restoration or reconstruction and it should be treated accordingly.
- **Preservation** means maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration.
- **Restoration** means returning the EXISTING fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.
- **Reconstruction** means returning a place as nearly as possible to a known state and is distinguished by the introduction of materials (new or old) into the fabric. This is not to be confused with either recreation or conjectural reconstruction which is outside the scope of this Charter.
- **Compatible** use means a use which involves no change to the culturally significant fabric, changes which are substantially reversible, or changes which require a minimal impact.

Taylor, 2004 mentioned that: **the concept of cultural heritage**, is to take the **inheritance from the past**, to embraces **tangible** aspects of heritage-physical fabric-and **intangible** aspects. Some example of these concepts are **meaning of places** and **objects and tradition or ways of life**. He also suggested that cultural heritage should involve **the notion of assets** which are to be **valued** and cherished, not squandered. It is obvious that Taylor told us to identify, assess, evaluate and conserve assets based on how we judge the **significances** of their culture. In defining the significance I used charters, decrees and conventions and other documents related. The process of establishing and assessing values, as well as the integrity of heritage places and their continuing authenticity is also very important.

Furthermore, As Kyle and Walker, 1992 said that, “many places are important to us because they tell us about who we are, and the past that has formed us. Other
people appreciate some of the places we value as well. There are places that are important to whole groups of people. Some places may have national importance, others regional or state importance and yet others might have special value to a local community or group”.

Everyone should agree that certain places must be kept as part of our common heritage. Furthermore, we should decide how to look after them and or to give them more value for the nation.

Within the Landscape Architecture Profession the Culture Landscape is quite new. This terminology was introduced around 1992 in the world.

Culture Landscape has always a Meaning and Value. About year the 1994/1995 Culture Landscape developed to the World Heritage Classification.

The Venice Charter, 1964 was the first Charter for the World Heritage. For more than 30 years the focused was to buildings only. In fact since 1960 the Concept of Culture Landscape has been for famous Monuments.

The link between People - Events - Places is constant. People build places within the times that people live with.

Taylor, 1999 in Exploring the Ordinarily Sacred stated that, “Cultural Landscapes are literally an imprint of human history; Cultural landscapes are symbols and a record of past action over time; Cultural landscapes are as a part of our national identity; Cultural landscape is not only merely chronological history, but the history or event, places and people ever time”.

Further more Taylor, 1999 said that, “we are surrounded by landscapes that people have settled, modified, or altered over time. Every landscape which surrounds us and in which we conduct our activities are called Cultural Landscape. Identity is fundamental in every life and all places have identity.

Lowenthal in Taylor 1999, strengthened the statement that “Awareness of the Past” is essential to the maintenance of the purpose of life. Without it we lack all sense of continuity.

Some definitions which are related to the research are quoted from several dictionaries there are as follows:

- Conservation according to the New Collins Australian Compact English Dictionary (1985) is protection, careful management of natural resources and environment. And according to The Collins Paperback English Dictionary (1987) is the act of conserving or keeping from change, loss, injury etc.

- Collins Cobuild (from Collins Birmingham University International Language Database) English Language Dictionary (1988) explain that conservation mean the preservation and protection of the environment and the natural things in it.
• Cobuild also explains that conservation is the preservation and protection of historical objects or works of art such as paintings, sculptures, or buildings.

• Another dictionary stated that conservation mean how to control and use systematically; and how to preserve a specified aspect or value of a system.

• While to preserve in Cobuild is to keep from harm, injury or decay or dissolution, another dictionary states that conservation means how to control and use systematically; and to preserve and maintain a specified aspect or value of a system. To protect and maintain unchanged is added to the definition to preserve is keep from harm, injury or decay or dissolution.

• Other definitions coated from a certain dictionary suitable for this project are:
  o to preserve is keep from harm, injury or decay or dissolution
  o to conserve how to control and use systematically
  o to preserve and maintain a specified aspect or value of a system.

Other definitions coated from a certain dictionary suitable for this project are:

• Renovation means to restore something to good condition.
• Revitalization means to return to its original condition.

As a comparison the Decree no. 9/1999 By-Law on Conservation for the Province of Capital City Special Territory of Jakarta can be use, the responsibility for maintaining the heritage buildings might be stated as bellow:

• Conservation is the task Special Territory.
• Conservation should be done by the owner of the property, the management and people with permission of the Governor.
• Conservation includes: revitalization, renovation, restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, preservation and adaptation

The criteria for being heritage buildings and places are:

• The value, the age, genuineness, rareness, landmark and architecture.

The complete assessment of the Conservation of Culture Heritage will be explained in Chapter Six.

Therefore, the Taman Sari case needs to be analyzed and handled with mixed action. Namely which are conservation and preservation. This matter will be discussed in the following Chapter more detail.

6. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method that will be used in this research project will be discussed broader in a separate Chapter.