

# The Existence of Murals in Supporting the Aesthetics of Tourism Villages

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**Abstract.** This article discusses the existence of a mural in supporting the aesthetics of a tourist village in Babakan Village, Tangerang, Banten. The village was originally a slum village after participating in the thematic village program organized by the Tangerang City government which then transformed into a clean, tidy village and has a tourist attraction. The purpose of this research is to find out how big the role of murals is in supporting the aesthetics of Kampung Babakan. This study uses descriptive qualitative methods, using data collection techniques through observation, interviews and literature study. The data is then reduced, displayed and then conclusions are drawn. The method used is a case study, in this approach the researcher explores or explores a phenomenon in society that arises because of an event, namely the creation of a tourist village. The results of this study show that the mural in Kampung Babakan is one of the attractions for tourists who come to visit it.

**Key words:** mural, aesthetics, tourist village

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## INTRODUCTION

The community's response to a program initiated by the government is a challenge as well as homework that is not easy to complete. One of the Tangerang City government programs related to empowering a village is the existence of a thematic village. One of the goals of this program is to make these villages progress with their uniqueness and creativity based on the potential and advantages of each region. Based on this program, it becomes a problem for Babakan Village, considering that their village is categorized as a slum village and is not fit for habitation far from being aesthetically pleasing, this assessment is based on data from the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia that in 2016, Kampung Babakan was declared a village seedy.

Determination of criteria for slum settlements is carried out by considering various aspects or dimensions such as the suitability of the location allocation with the spatial plan, land ownership status, location/position of the location, level of population density, level of building density, physical, social, economic and cultural conditions of the local community (Perkim.id). Meanwhile, according to the law, slum settlements are settlements that are unfit for habitation, which are characterized by disordered buildings, high levels of building density, and the quality of buildings and

facilities and infrastructure that do not meet the requirements. (Law No. 1 of 2011). It is also called a slum village because it is not in accordance with its designation or spatial planning, the building density is very high in a very limited area, it is prone to social and environmental diseases, the general quality of buildings is low, it is not served by adequate environmental infrastructure, it endangers the life of its inhabitants. Such is the situation in Babakan Village, which is in the middle of the city, where people who are mostly immigrants move to the city to seek a better life and improve their standard of living. Most of their professions are traders and laborers in factories around Tangerang and Jakarta. Only a small number work as government employees, TNI and Polri.

The image that is carried as a slum village causes turmoil and anxiety for the people who live in Kampung Babakan, so that with all their efforts they try to design ideas to get a better image than before. The first step taken was to clean up the ditches and waterways that looked seedy and stagnant. The next activity is planting trees in pots that are placed on the terraces of residents' houses, so that they look clean and tidy. This community activity received a response from the local urban village so that assistance from the Tangerang City Government appeared through the village in the form of trash cans and other facilities to support the cleanliness and beauty of the village. After seeing the community's enthusiasm in building

their village together, the idea was developed to beautify the village by giving color or painting the roofs and walls of the residents' houses. The next activity is making murals on the walls and fences in the village.

Apart from making murals and giving color to the roofs and walls of houses, other activities include installing umbrellas to hang along the small road at the entrance to Babakan village, as well as installing mountain hats as aesthetically supporting elements. To improve food health and nutrition, vegetables are planted in pots arranged vertically so that the village is green and fresh. The activity of planting and installing these objects is an aesthetic element that makes Kampung Babakan get a lot of attention from the people who pass through it.

While the term village that we often hear is an antonym of the term city. In subsequent developments, the term *kampung* was used to describe the housing phenomenon in urban areas which were built independently by urbanites who came from rural areas. This housing is called urban village or housing that is like a village in the countryside, but is in urban areas (Setiawan, 2010). From another point of view, the village is defined as an informal settlement, low-cost housing built through traditional and informal processes by residents. They grow gradually through expansion and densification which are seen as basic building blocks. *Kampongs* are not considered as illegal settlements and slums, even with limited urban service facilities (Silas, 1992). Then Nugroho elaborated on the term village as an enclosed compound in a city which has its own characteristics, where the life of a village still exists and appears in the social and cultural system that is binding in a village (Nugroho, 2009).

The struggle and egalitarian spirit carried out by the people of Kampung Babakan were not in vain, the results achieved as a result of their work they won an award, namely the champion at the 2018 Indonesian Enchantment Award (API) event. This prestigious event was initiated by the Ministry of Tourism (Kemenpar) of the Republic of Indonesia for the Most Popular Creative Tourism category. In 2019 Kampung Babakan won second place in the Banten Province Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) competition. The competition with the theme 'Through the Tourism Awareness Group Competition We Increase Community Empowerment in Every Banten Tourism

Destination' was organized by the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia in collaboration with the Banten Provincial Tourism Office and the Banten Pokdarwis. Then the Tangerang City government determined that Babakan Village was a new tourist destination, nicknamed Kampung Bekelir.

The mural which is the main attraction for visitors provides its own experience, when entering our village we will be greeted with smiles by the local community. The mural itself is essentially a painting that uses wall media, mural comes from the word "murus", which comes from the Latin word for wall. (Susanto 2002, p 76). And in essence a mural is a work of painting that uses walls as a medium, unlike other works of painting which usually use canvas. Murals are usually made on the walls of buildings near main roads, with the aim of making it easy for the general public to enjoy.

The joint activity carried out by the people of Babakan village is an interesting phenomenon to be researched and studied in depth, bearing in mind that there was a transformation that took place from a slum village that had not been considered before and was not known by the people of Tangerang City in general and then turned into a village with attractive destinations. and visited by people who come from within and outside the city. Very significant changes to the physical and social conditions of the local community occur due to many influencing factors. The existence of hundreds of murals plastered on the walls of residents' houses is part of the special attraction.

The problem raised in this article is the extent to which the role of murals that almost adorn the entire wall can add to the aesthetics of the village. Whatever contributions were made after the Babakan village was polished by the presence of murals. What is the response of the people who visited Babakan village to the presence of works of art in the form of murals in the middle of the village. Does the mural in Babakan village contribute to education? Considering that the themes carried in the murals include displaying local culture and local wisdom, these themes provide aesthetic and educational value.

Research on murals was conducted by Dr. Sheng Kuan Chung, who teaches at the University of Houston Arts Education, collaborated with Dan Li, who works at Michigan State University's Department of Art Education, History and Design. They invited

elementary school students to explore a mural done by a contemporary painter named Robot Skid. The painting that Robot Skid worked on is a homeless area that lives in the corners of the city of Los Angeles. Skid helped create murals on walls occupied by homeless people. The results of this study indicate that students have quite high empathy for the lives of the homeless. After making observations they hold discussions to formulate and propose their ideas. The substances described include the image of an ideal house that is livable which is the affirmation of the imagination of each student using different perceptions.

Another research on mural art has been conducted by Tessa Assyfh et al, with the title "Mural Art to Increase Reading Interest in Pilot Laboratory Elementary School Libraries". Published in Indonesian Journal of Primary Education Vol. 3, No. 1 (2019), Indonesian University of Education published June 25 2019. The article raises the mural art made in the Tasikmalaya Pilot Laboratory Elementary School library. The result is that students' interest in visiting the library increases, this is because on average elementary school students like and have a great interest in mural art made in their school.

The research object in the form of a creative village was also carried out by B.F Sanah and friends, who took the research object in Malang's colorful village with the title Impact of the existence of Malang's Colorful Village for social change and the dynamics of the local community. This article was published in the Journal of Integration and Innovative Harmony of the Social Sciences published in 2021. The results of this study indicate that there is a significant impact of social change as well as an influence on community dynamics, such as the use of technology and the development of science in society.

Based on previous studies, it can be concluded that the object of research is the same, namely murals in public spaces, some of which aim to develop imagination, strengthen interest in learning and have the impact of social change. While this article aims to get the role and contribution of murals to the aesthetics of tourist villages. The substance is to find out how far the role of the murals that have been created by the artists who decorate Kampung Bebakan have played, which have been done by several artists who are not only from Tangerang City but also come from several cities in Indonesia.

## METHODS

This research is a literature review type. Literature review is the process of placing, obtaining, reading, and evaluating research literature related to the interest of the researcher (Borden & Abbott, 2005) in Manzalati, 2017: 34. Literature review is one of the important stages in the early stages of research because this process is carried out in almost all areas. types of research, both in qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The population in this study used all research journals with the topic of emergency curriculum in arts education in PAUD.

Case study research was chosen because in this study the researcher explored and explored the symptoms or phenomena that exist in a particular entity or community in their activities (Sumartono 2017, p.97). The purpose of case study research itself is to explain explanatory (explain) or evaluative (assess) phenomena which are then critically analyzed and then presented in the form of qualitative descriptions (Sumartono p.98). Phenomena or events that occur in the field are an interesting topic to study, just as the existence of mural art which is public art is the topic raised in this research. Case study research is used to gain convenience in reducing incoming data According to Gall there are three approaches to analyzing data in case study research, namely 1) interpretational analysis, 2) structural analysis, 3) reflective analysis. Interpretational analysis is used to find data or to find constructs, structural analysis involves searching data to find patterns inherent in discourse, text, events or other phenomena. Reflective analysis mainly involves the use of intuition and evaluation of phenomena (Sumartono p. 100).

Retrieval of data used adapted to the needs to answer the research objectives. The data needed in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data obtained by researchers directly without going through intermediaries. This data can be in the form of opinions or opinions from sources, both individuals and groups, which are carried out by direct interviews. While secondary data is data obtained by researchers through intermediaries in the form of archives and documents. To validate the data used in this study is to use data triangulation techniques. Triangulation is the use of several types of methods or data in research to obtain good results (Sumartono 2017, p. 28). The results of the analysis can be obtained by

validating and verifying data using different sources or multiple sources so that the data results obtained are valid.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The existence of Kampung Bekelir, which is a new name for Kampung Babakan which was originally dirty and dirty, is a phenomenon in Tangerang City, whose presence has become a new magnet for people who hear about it, both adults, teenagers and children to visit it. The presence of visitors at Bekelir Village, aside from enjoying the hundreds of mural works, also took selfies to immortalize themselves that they had visited Bekelir Village, which they then uploaded on their respective social media accounts, so it was inevitable that the village would go viral and be flooded with crowds. people who come from everywhere. The visitors who attended came from all cities, some even came from West Java and East Java.



**Figure 1.** Bekelir Village seen from above  
(Source Liputan6.com)

All of the hundreds of murals are the work of mural artists from Tangerang City and several artists who come from outside the city. Its existence adds to the aesthetics of Kampung Bekelir. According to Agus Sachari, in assessing and studying an object that is said to be aesthetic, it must be positioned within the three pillars of culture, namely the power of awareness, the power of learning and the power of charm (Sachari 2002). These three pillars are used in their capacity as instruments that are objectively used to express the object or work as aesthetic.

## Public Art

A mural is part of a branch of fine art whose visual appearance can be enjoyed by anyone who passes by it. Because a mural is a work of painting whose medium is a wall and is usually located outdoors or in a public space, its existence becomes part of the supporting elements of the aesthetics of a city or village. These works of art can be enjoyed substantively by the community together. As said by Umar Kayam who said that all cultural expressions in society are not individual expressions but a collective expression (Kayam 1981 p.25). Collective expression in this case implies a togetherness in creation and its presence is enjoyed together. So that art that is born and grows in Indonesian society is generally anonymous, this kind of attitude shows a sense of not showing oneself to each other, but prioritizing tolerance and togetherness. So that works of art that are born in society are collective, meaning that the art is owned and maintained together.

Art that is collective in nature is very close to the people who own it, because they both maintain and enjoy it, such as the mural art in Kampung Babakan or Kampung Bekelir. The mural is one of the collective works of art that was created and enjoyed together by artists from around Tangerang and from outside the city of Tangerang, all of whom have the same goal and intention, namely to present beauty to the surrounding community. Among the missions carried out by the mural artists is a sense of pride in creating works that are in public spaces that are very possible to be appreciated. Because of its beauty objectively, art in society can be enjoyed without having to think about its meaning and philosophy deeply.



**Figure 2.** One of the 3D paintings that attracts visitors

Source: [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)

Artworks can be said to be beautiful because they have objective characteristics, as said by Ki Hajar Dewantara who requires three things to state that art is beautiful. These conditions are the existence of integrity or perfection, the existence of the right or harmonious proportions and the existence of clarity or clarity (Dewantara in Jazuli 2014). These three conditions are the starting point in assessing collective works of art that belong to the public. The requirement for perfection means that the work of art has a level of complexity and perfection that is not arbitrary and can be accounted for both conceptually and technically. The harmonious requirements for works of art include fulfilling the elements of fine art which take into account the points, lines, shapes, colors, areas and textures that are integrated into the work. For the clarity of works of art, there is a level of clarity that can capture the essence and substance, so that appreciators can enjoy works of art that have a high level of artistic quality.

### Local Wisdom in Murals

The themes presented in the murals in Bekelir Village are varied. There was no agreement or concept that was discussed with the artists in determining the theme to be the object of the image. With hundreds of murals that cover the walls of people's houses, there are various styles, styles and techniques. The diversity of these patterns is actually a

uniqueness that is very interesting to explore. Of the several themes presented, there is a theme that raises the local wisdom of the City of Tangerang, this theme is one of the main attractions because it is different from other themes. The local wisdom that becomes the object of the mural painting represents the diversity of local community culture.

The context of local wisdom is the existence of a tradition in society that has been going on regularly for years. Meanwhile, one definition of local wisdom is the cultural identity or personality of a nation that causes the nation to be able to absorb, even process culture originating from outside/other nations into its own character and abilities (Wibowo, 2015: 17). Culture that is maintained and continues continuously becomes the identity of the community which is a differentiator from other communities both around it and those that are further away. Local wisdom is believed to be a rule or value system that is used as a guide and reference in everyday social life.

The city of Tangerang is an urban city which has its own cultural diversity and uniqueness, many local wisdoms that grow and develop are the result of acculturation of several ethnic groups. In the beginning, the people who inhabited the city of Tangerang from the start were Sundanese, in the following period they entered the Chinese community. Ethnic Chinese who were originally emigrants who came directly from China. In the following years, some people of Chinese descent who had settled in Jakarta also migrated to Tangerang. The other indigenous ethnic group, namely the Betawi people who live on the border between Jakarta and Tangerang, then blend into residents of Tangerang City. So that the culture and local wisdom that is now developing is the result of acculturation of the culture of these ethnic groups.

The results of cultural acculturation formed in Tangerang City are actually not very significant because each ethnic group maintains its own culture more. The traditions they carry are so strong that no new cultural acculturation has appeared yet, so that the artifacts that appear still hold on to old traditions. Such as Chinese culture featuring the Dragon Boat, Betawi culture featuring Kerak Telor sellers, there is also the Lenggang Cisadane dancer, all of which are displayed in murals made by artists. At present the population of the City of Tangerang, which is almost close to 2 million, consists of



various ethnicities and tribes who come from almost all tribes in the archipelago. The diverse residents of Tangerang City bring their own culture and traditions so that a new culture has not been formed which is the acculturation of several ethnicities.



**Figure 3.** Lenggang Cisadane Dancer mural painting

Source: detikTravel-Detikcom

Various types of murals that adorn Kampung Bekelir are a special attraction. Its existence is a complement to thematic villages that display a colorful and cheerful impression. The murals presented are mostly based on the theme of local culture and wisdom in the city of Tangerang, for example the Lenggang Cisadane dance which is displayed in the monochrome form of a large dancer covering part of the walls of residents' houses. Then the Barongsai art which is also made large so that it is very attractive and clearly visible when used for selfies. There is also a Taman Laksa mural painting which is a typical culinary delight of Tangerang City which is part of the uniqueness of the chosen object.



**Figure 4.** Barongsai mural, one of the Chinese ethnic cultures growing in Tangerang City, source: Travelerien.com

### An Art Aesthetic

In global geo-cultural studies that have developed so far, it shows that there is a separation of concepts and paradigms between the West and the East. The separation that was deliberately carried out by Western thinkers seemed to want to show that the West was seen as superior to the East. An analogous conclusion is that the West thinks more rationally than the East, which is analogous to thinking with moods or is more meditative and mystical (Sachari p.9). Eastern thinking which is synonymous with living the values of life as it is is not based on reason and rationality. The continuity of the life of meditation and silence is the basis and in the union between humans and nature which is their support. The universe that is natural and full of silence makes Eastern people unite in their daily lives so as to create modesty not to measure material things as their goal in life.

The aesthetic values that have been ingrained in Eastern society, including Indonesia, are an integral part of carrying out daily life. Even though Indonesian society is formed in a plurality, all of them are united in the same paradigm which prioritizes taste compared to ratio. Freire's opinion on aesthetics states that true art and aesthetics are not only creative works carried out by artists related to works produced using certain media which are mere ritual activities of artists. Freire means that what is thought and applied in the field from a concept called is a cultural action (Sachari p. 27).

In line with Freire, Albert Camus describes the artistic process of an artist by freezing the aesthetic moments that occur within him. The process of creating an artist's work of art actually presents a world that is not as it is, but presents a world that he understands and feels, even though the phenomenon seems absurd (Sachari p.25). An aesthetic experience of an artist who then goes through an induction process which then produces a work he produces. Meanwhile, according to I Gede Arya Sucitra (2015), aesthetics in a work of art is not the only value that is most important in the creation of works of art, but there are other values that also need to be considered, including human values, social values whose purpose is as a new work. for the people. These meanings and values can be felt more by the general public, they collectively become part of the works of art that are present in the midst of life.

Basically, art is not autonomous, it is always bound by institutionalized structural conditions, whether in the form of social institutions or values and norms that have been institutionalized according to certain conventions within the community concerned (Jazuli, 2014, p. 61). Related to Jazuli's opinion, it can be drawn that the work that the artists have made is a collective idea that has become the basis for the creation of an art institution, both formal and informal. Next, the institution that was founded on the basis of shared interests becomes a boat that will carry them in one common interest.

There are several notes that the author found which can then be used as study material for further researchers related to the continuity and change of Kampung Bekelir. The first is related to material objects, namely those that are getting faded and henceforth must be rejuvenated or repainted. Second, there is no simultaneous follow-up to develop activities carried out by the local community, for example holding skills training which is the mainstay of the local community. The three people who are not equipped with knowledge about management in managing a tourist spot, about the value of manners and courtesy which are part of the service from the host to the visitors. If this is allowed to continue, gradually the tourist village will become obsolete with time, and visitors will not come back to enjoy the destination because they feel bored and that's all that is presented.

On the other hand, it is related to the creation of a creative tourism village whose initial idea

came from a handful of people who had the idea to change the image of their village, which was originally a slum and then developed like a snowball (snow ball) until the local government was totally involved. This shows the lack of concern for the local government in the early stages of production, the position of the local government which has thematic programs together with the community is to be observant in discovering the potentials that will be developed by the surrounding community. So that the villages that are left behind can organize themselves into villages that are more humble and humane.

The author's suggestion is to create a souvenir center by exploiting a very strategic geographical potential, that Bekelir Village is located on the banks of the Cisadane River which has banks that can be maximized to open local area souvenir stalls. The souvenirs they make are souvenirs that show regional identity, so they can be souvenirs for the visitors who attend. Next, by taking advantage of the popularity of Kampung Bekelir through its youth, they design routine activities in the form of festivals or regional cultural performances which can be held every month or once a year, with the aim of attracting even more visitors. Art festivals or parades can be realized by cooperating with the arts community or art institutions in Tangerang City, one of which is the Tangerang City Arts Council (DKT) which will be ready to contribute both technically and non-technically.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis of observations and literacy surveys, it turns out that the mural art in Kampung Bekelir makes a positive contribution to the aesthetics of Kampung Bekelir. The murals that are attached to the walls of people's houses are part of an undeniable aesthetic. Indicators of the influence of murals in supporting the aesthetics of kampung bbekelir are:

- 1) Almost every visitor who comes to Kampung Bekelir will take a selfie against a mural as a background.
- 2) Mural art is not only part of the completeness of the object but can be used as a cultural action, so that its existence really supports tourist attraction.
- 3) The presence of mural art is integrated with other aesthetic elements, namely colorful fields on the roofs of residents' houses, thus

creating unity in the elements of fine art.

4. The contemporary mural style, which is three-dimensional in shape, spoils visitors to immortalize themselves by taking pictures.

5. The mural can also be an educational vehicle for visitors, while taking photos they indirectly learn about the heterogeneous culture of Tangerang City.

The presence of the murals in Kampung Bekelir besides functioning as a medium for artist expression, also makes a lot of positive contributions as a promotional medium and identity for tourist destinations that emerge because of creativity.

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