

**Attracting Tourists to the Alley:
Subaltern Urbanism in the Maspati Kampung, Surabaya**

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to disclose the agency of kampung residents and their role in the urban process. Based on a case study in Maspati, a kampung, in Surabaya Indonesia, this study demonstrates how the kampung residents transformed their community from a stigmatised neighbourhood to become an attractive tourism destination.

This study applies the subaltern urbanism framework to examine what kind of urban process is produced by kampung residents who were socially excluded and without political power. Data for this qualitative research were collected through observation, interviews, and participating in kampung activities. The interviewees included kampung leaders, kampung dwellers, and officials in district government.

The results show that Maspati Kampung residents are goal-oriented and creative and they manage their community in flexible and innovative ways. In order to improve their livelihood and social status, they decided to attract tourists to Maspati. Maspati, largely a narrow alley and with a limited amount of historical attractions, did not look interesting enough to attract visitors. The residents, however, came up with a plan that turned out to be a success. This was a kampung tour project, cultural tourism, not a slums tourism. They are offering visitors cultural performances, traditional food, handicrafts, traditional games, and above all hospitality. The program was carried out by the community leader and women who have no job. This program has generated income for the residents; strengthened cohesiveness among the kampung residents; and gives the residents a sense of pride in their kampung. This research provides empirical evidence of the ways subaltern urbanism works and contributes to the urban processes in Indonesian cities.

Keywords: Subaltern Urbanism, Kampung, Land Commodification

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper applies the framework of subaltern urbanism to examine how a kampung in Surabaya, Indonesia, improved their livelihood and answered the challenges of land commodification. Introduced by Ananya Roy (2011) this framework undertook a theorisation of subaltern spaces and classes and argued that place such the slum is a dynamic terrain of habitation, livelihood, and politics. She believed this framework could transform ‘the ways the cities of the global South are studied and represented in urban research.’ This is also a politics of recognition that possible to put the place such slum and its people as account for urban theory (ibid).

Unlike several studies see kampungs and their residents a problem rather than resources, this paper is interesting in investigating the agency of kampung residents that make their kampungs viable and sustainable, while the grand narrative of kampung is slums with uncultured people. This paper is not to romanticise kampungs, but to explore the possibilities and capabilities of kampungs and their residents in urban process. The case of this study is Maspati, old kampung in the city centre of Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia. The kampung faces the challenges of land commodification. To answer the challenges and to improve their livelihood, the kampung developed cultural tourism, not a slums tourism, to attract tourists. Applying the subaltern urbanism framework, this paper will contribute by providing empirical evidence of the ways subaltern urbanism works in Surabaya.

Data for this qualitative research were collected during five months of fieldwork in Surabaya, between Mei – September 2017 through observation, interviews, and participating in kampung activities. The interviewees included kampung leaders, kampung dwellers, and officials in district government.

2. KAMPUNG AND SLUMS

Kampung is the Malay word for “village,” referring to a small rural settlement, but the word also indicates to a separate urban community and neighbourhood (Yeoh, 2010:419, Nas et al., 2008:645) which exist in some Southeast Asian countries. This review of the literature shows that there is a variety of definitions of kampung. Two definitions can be distinguished: kampung either as a spatial or as a social formation. As a spatial formation, kampung refers to the settlement either in rural or urban areas. As a social formation, kampung refers to a community with kinship ties, solidarity with others, and which is egalitarian and residents helping each other. In the same time, the term is also used to signify the people who are deemed uncivilised, rough, and incompatible with urban culture.

As a spatial formation, referring to its location, Funo (2002) classifies kampungs into three categories: urban kampung, fringe kampung, and rural kampung. While Ford (1993) classifies kampungs into four types; inner-city kampung, mid-city kampung, rural kampung, and temporary squatter kampung. However, all of those strikingly differs from planned residential areas. Kampungs are categorised as informal settlements (Jones, 2017, Hutama, 2016; Tunas, 2008). Characteristic of them is an unplanned spatial layout, a lack of basic services, informal and insecure property rights, and vulnerability to discrimination (UN-Habitat, 2003). In urban areas, since of fast urbanisation and migration, kampungs has transformed become a high densely settlement, remaining narrow alleyways between the buildings with lack any design, and often lack infrastructure and services. However, some kampung may be built on registered land, while some other built on the unregistered land with the ambiguous and contentious field of land rights (Leaf, 1993).

As a social formation, the term kampung refers to such idyllic community in rural areas with kinship ties, egalitarian solidarity, and mutual aid among neighbours (Newberry, 2008; Yeoh, 2010). While in urban areas, kampung and its residents have a negative connotation which is regarded as a relic from an agrarian way of life living in an urban context and believed to become demolished by the modernisation. The residents have a stigma of being kampungan meaning uncivilised, rough, boorish, uncultured, poor, potentially dangerous and subversive people, ill-mannered and incompatible with urban culture (Guinnes, 2009; Bunnell, 2002). It has similar meaning with the English word for 'slum' that immediately conjures up strong images of poverty and misery, danger and decay (Nuissl and Heinrichs, 2013). Both in terms of social and spatial formations, kampungs have placed outside of urban modernity. Kampungs and its residents are objects of urban redevelopment and modernisation.

In general, kampungs in urban area are described as part of planet of slums (Davis, 2004:14; Cities Alliance, The World Bank, and Habitat, 1999:1), as a group of individuals who are living under the same roof in an urban area and lack one or more of the following: 1) durable housing that protects against extreme climate; 2) sufficient living space; 3) easy access to safe water; 4) adequate sanitation; 5) security of tenure (UN-HABITAT: 2006). Kampungs are also classified as shanty towns (Gottdiener and Budd, 2005:137) with poverty, crime, health crises, and children without future, and deemed by the government as the site of social pollution (Seng, 2007). Nevertheless, as revealed by Ford (1993) there are some types of kampungs which differently with squats. Then similar with Nijman (2009) to Dharavis, Funo (2002) also questioned the accuracy of the concept of slums to kampungs.

3. KAMPUNG SEEN FROM THE SUBALTERN URBANISM: A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Many studies have treated kampungs and their residents more like an object in urban development rather than the subject of the change. However, treating kampungs and their residents as an object of development without understanding how they are mobilised as subjects is a limited view of kampungs and does not help the city to deal with kampungs which are a home for more than a half of city residents. We need a more contextual perspective to see kampungs. Perspectives that offers exploration and liberating potential of kampungs. Perspectives that describe not only the problems faced by the space and subaltern people, but also their agency. Perspectives that gives them a place as a subject in urban process

Ananya Roy (2011) has offered an idea of subaltern urbanism. With this, she means as a framework to ‘understand and transform the ways the cities in the global South are studied and represented in urban research’. She argues that subaltern urbanism can help us move beyond the limits of our understanding and revitalise the agency of subaltern people. This framework also develops theorisation of subaltern spaces and actors and argued that place such the slum is a dynamic space of livelihood and politics (ibid). Subaltern urbanism is a general process that may be taking place anywhere, including in the global North (Schindler, 2014). This is also a politics of recognition that giving chance the place such slum and its people as account for urban theory (Roy, 2011; Rao, 2006).

Originally, the term ‘subaltern’ was introduced by Antonio Gramsci but has been developed in postcolonial studies by Subaltern Studies group which generally considers subalterns as persons or agents whose voices are not heard (Yeboah, 2006). It refers to 'any low-rank person or group of people in a particular society suffering under hegemonic domination of elite ruling class that denies them the basic rights of participation in the making of local history and culture as active individuals of the same nation' (Louai, 2012). Subaltern urbanism then “tends to remain bound to the study of spaces of poverty, of essential forms of popular agency, of the habitus of the dispossessed, of the entrepreneurialism of self-organizing economies” (Roy, 2011: 231).

Applying this subaltern urbanism framework, this paper is to disclose the agency of kampung residents in Maspati, Surabaya which has transformed their community from a stigmatised neighbourhood to become an attractive tourism destination. This paper, therefore, deals with the agency of subaltern people and place in urban process, as advocated by Herzfeld (2016), Nijman (2010), and Bayat (2007).

IV. URBAN KAMPUNGS IN INDONESIA

In Indonesia, urban kampungs are not rural kampung or temporary squatter kampungs. Urban kampungs are characterized by high density, built around narrow lanes, with little open space in the kampung area, but close to the employment or business centre. Administratively, an urban kampung is under the Kelurahan, a sub-subdistrict government. An urban kampung may consist of at least one community association that called RW (rukun warga/ community harmony) and several household association that called RT (rukun tetangga/ household harmony). RW/RT are neighborhood units. These divisions originated from the Japanese wartime administration (Tonarigumi or Chounaikai) and were adopted by the post-independent governments as an effective way of governing urban population. Ideally, RT comprise no more 30 households and RW three to seven RT. This administrative structure was implemented for all settlements in the city.

Most urban poor live in kampungs (Nas et al., 2008:646, Garr 1986; Toer, 1996). However, there are not only poor people living in kampungs, in some kampungs, there are also middle-income households (Ernawati et al. 2013). The diversity of its inhabitant intertwining altogether in property ownership, occupation, education, origin, and religious practice. Based on his studies in Java, Guinness (2009:15-16) argues kampungs still maintain their community values such as 'rukun' (social harmony) and 'gotong-royong' (mutual aid). Rukun and gotong royong are characteristics connected to kampung residents. Rukun is an ideology of social relations at the neighbourhood level by which people express and justify their actions. The moral imperative of rukun is individual self-control, to avoid emotional confrontation with others. 'Gotong royong' is a form of action usually done by groups of people to achieve a shared objective.

As informal settlements, the houses in urban kampungs are built by individuals without following building guidelines (Ernawati et al. 2013:25). Kampungs' building density is high, and the narrow alleyways between the buildings lack any design. In contrast, formal settlements are built with good design buildings, organized, good infrastructure, and separated from urban kampungs by a wall to give their residents a safe and secure environment. This striking contrast has led to the situation in which urban kampungs are stigmatised by a negative image. Not only the urban kampung as a neighbourhood is stigmatized but its residents as well. The label that reflects urban middle-class prejudice against kampung residents (Nas et al., 2008:646).

However, kampung in Indonesia is not only a residential area but also a dynamic terrain of habitation and home-based entrepreneurs (Funoo, 2002). Some kampung residents produce in their homes food, household goods, handicraft and then sell these in the market. There can

also be tailors, barbers, and *warungs* (‘small shop’). Most of these are not controlled by the government.

5. MASPATI

A. *Maspati Kampung and Its residents: Idyllic Principles in Confined Space*

The case of this study is Maspati, a kampung in the downtown of Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia. Located 250 meters from the Surabaya city landmark “Tugu Pahlawan” (Heroes Monument) in Bubutan district, this kampung hidden behind the shops and trading activities along a busy road around the city centre. Maspati is an old settlement where there are still some colonial buildings inside. There is also a preserved tomb of “Mbah Buyut Suruh” which is believed to be the tomb of the royal family of Javanese kingdom.

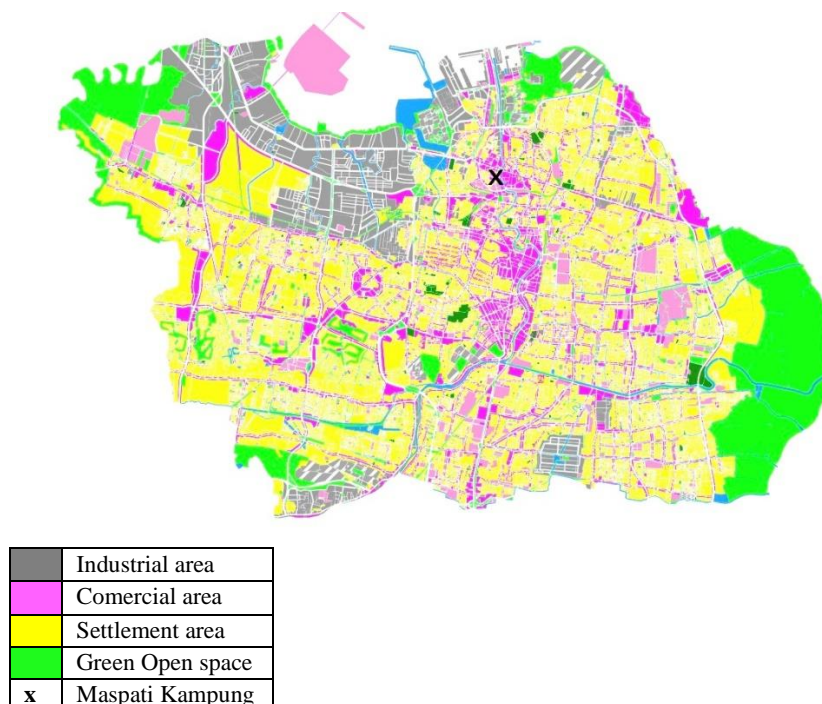


Figure 1: Maspati’s Kampung in the Land use map of Surabaya

Maspati, about 37,000 sqm has grown into a dense neighbourhood built along two alleyways. There are 245 families registered with 167 households (71 percent) lived in houses with an area less than 60 sqm. About 105 houses (42 percent) do not have building permits yet, and 74 houses (30 percent) stand on land that also has not been registered yet. There are 120 households (49 percent) have been living for more than 30 years and only 40 households (16 percent) for less than ten years. Territorially, they are divided into five household associations

(RT) in one community association (RW), where two of them (RT1 and RT2) that located at the east of kampung was more populated than others (Maspati Profile, 2017).

Maspati's residents work in different occupations, have a different level of education, and practice different religions. Majority of residents are people who rely on their earning from wage labour either in the formal or informal sector. There is also the home-based entrepreneur who use the home to run a business such as Warung (small-shop), tailor, barber shop, and home industry inside the kampung. The small-shops provide limited daily groceries to serve inhabitants. The customer of tailor and barber are mostly their neighbour. The home industries such as plastic packaging, baby mattress, and traditional recipe food with two to seventh employee serve some market in the city.

Even though living in the dense settlement, the resident Anto, an entrepreneur, 45 years old, felt at home in Maspati since he thought the people are affable and harmonious. *"I had lived in Bandung and Jakarta, and now I have been living in Maspati for 12 years. I like this kampung compare to my previous residence. People here are friendly and care to their neighbour"*. He said the feeling as a member of the community seems strong within the resident. Residents have a habit of greeting each other when they meet another resident in their alleyway. Another resident, Sur, 69 years old, a Chinese descent, asserted that she is happy living in Maspati. *"I have been living in Maspati more than 60 years, and I am happy living in here because the people are care with their neighbour. We care to our neighbours especially when one of us gets sick or mourns."* Anto and Sur think that Maspati's residents still maintained their communal values such as harmony (rukun) and mutual aid (gotong-royong).

The residents have several community activities such as the PKK and Yasinan. The PKK (Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga/ the Family Welfare Movement) is a community association the membership of which is based on residence, gender (women) and marriage. Every month, there are meetings of PKK in Maspati. The yasinan is a kind of joint pray every Thursday night for Muslim. This is a tradition that performed by the Javanese muslim community. They also have an agreement to keep their alley as a public space safe and pleasant. It was a prohibition to ride motorbikes along the alley. People must turn off their motorbikes and guide their bikes to the intended endpoint by walking. This agreement was made by residents to save the children who often played along the alley and to avoid noise and pollution inside kampung.

B. Maspati's Resident: Against Land Commodification

For Maspati's residents, living in the city centre and close to commercial activities does not necessarily mean a benefit for their livelihood. It means uncertainty. Residents are fully aware that they are living in an area where the land is valuable. Rin, 45 years old, coordinator of PKK disclosed *"Many parties interested in this kampung because we live in the city centre.... Now, there are some houses already sold to the outsider for warehouse"*. As stated by Rin, some houses in kampung have changed into storehouse. Trader favour this area as it provides easy access to place and distribute the commodities. This situation was considered a threat to the community. Sabar, 48 years old, the chief of community association (RW) asserted: *"We are worried if there will be more houses replaced by the warehouse. It will reduce our people, degrade our community, and finally, eliminate our kampung"*.

The changes some dwellings into warehouse are not a new threat for Maspati's kampung. As Rin told. *"in the 1990's, we had been offered three million rupiahs per meter for our land. But we did not get a deal because there was no agreement among residents to respond the offer"*. The residents claimed that they had received some bids to sell their land. The offer come from hotel developer and cigarette company through brokers. Some residents refuse to sell their land for various reasons such as keeping family inheritance, not wanting lost old neighbours, close to the workplace etc. While some residents want to accept the offer if the price is satisfied.

The threat of land commodification on kampungs in Surabaya is not a new phenomenon. That is not the only case in Surabaya. Some old kampungs have been demolished and replaced by hotels and commercial developments. In the city centre, Karangbulak kampung was replaced by Hyatt Hotel, Blauran-Kidul kampung replaced by Empire Hotel, and Kaliasin kampung replaced by Tunjungan Plaza shopping mall. The booming real estate business has been one those of threats jeopardising kampungs in Surabaya. As the second largest city in Indonesia, Surabaya has attracted heavy flow of property investment. In the last five years, the economy of Surabaya has been growing 7% a year and always above the national average of 5,02%. Real estate business in Surabaya grew significantly, and offices building, apartment, retail, and hotel were developed in the last decade. Land prices raised between 10% - 15% per year. In 2016, there was 27,260 sqm new office buildings developed making the total amount of the office space 296,512 sqm. In the Hotel sector, there are 1,920 new hotel rooms available during 2016 (Colliers Report, 2016).

Regarding this issue, Eko, Chief of Bubutan District argued *"The survival of kampung will depend on the livelihood of its residents. It could be the case that the municipality has provided amenities (for kampung), but when the residents were seduced (by developers) then*

the kampung will disappear". The authorities argued that the survival of kampung depends on its inhabitants. The government had no program to protect the kampung from the commodification and selling of land. Instead of such a programme, the municipality has programs to help the poor and low-income people to be able to help themselves, for example, the programmes educating them skills required in the labour market or to become entrepreneurs. The municipality defended these programmes by arguing that the survival of the kampung could not be separate with the economic situation of its residents and that these programmes improve livelihood of kampung residents. However, the municipality's persuasion that the economic empowerment programme would save the kampung from land commodification, did not convince Maspati's residents, and they began planning their own programme.

C. From a stigmatised neighbourhood to an attractive tourist destination

Around five years ago, the household association RT-2, the dense dwelling in Maspati kampung, made a simple project for their members, titled "Green with 500 rupiahs". The project implemented by collect 500 rupiahs from each family, once a week, to buy plants for each house. The purpose of this project is simple, make up their house surroundings to be tidier and greens. It was sound a funny project for the residents, since at that time, 500 rupiahs was not a significant amount for the residents. For instance, the price of a rose at that time was 3000 rupiahs. Since it was sounded funny and cheap for its members, who majority poor, all members are committed to partake and make this project successful.

However, the mission behind this project was not beautify the kampung by planting flowers, but to raise the awareness of residents for the cleanliness and greenery of the kampung. This was to fight against the stigmatization of kampungs as dirty places. Yit, 46 years old, the chief of RT2 explained: *"by this project, we want to convince our residents who are mostly poor, that to make a clean, neat and green settlement is not expensive"*. This project was successful in mobilizing residents to improve their settlement. All residents involved to spruce their dwelling and its surrounding and supplementing with potted plants. Some residents, without waiting for the money collected, bought more pot plants and shared them with their poor neighbours.

This project has inspired four other household associations (RT) in Maspati to do such this project. Thanks to the efforts of the residents, the Maspati kampung was transformed from slum to a clean settlement with flowers and plants. In 2013, Maspati won 'The green and clean contest' that was organised by the municipality. This prize, recognised in the local media, gave

the residents confident and pride of their kampung. The prize was a milestone that increased residents' care of their neighbourhood. This was also their victories to fight against the stigma.

However, the residents are mindful that winning in an environmental contest does not answer their daily problems. For Maspati's residents that majority rely on their earning from wage labour, their biggest concern is how to increase income and survive from the threat of land commodification. Sabar argued, "*Kampung's residents need more than an award. They need economic security. They need a continuous income*". For this reason, Maspati's residents come up with a plan a tourist business for their residents. It was Sabar's idea the chief of community association (RW). He stated that the idea was inspired after seeing the enthusiasm of residents making improvements of kampung amid their limitations due to poverty. He believes that most of residents have a concern to make the kampung pleasant actually. Unfortunately, they cannot do much to partake because of poverty. Sabar explained: "*A kampong in the city should not only be a decent place for living but must generate income to its residents... We want to attract visitors into kampung to generate economic activities our residents*"

In the beginning, many residents presumed the idea to make Maspati as a tourist destination is unrealistic. They argued, although Maspati located in the downtown, it lacked adequate infrastructure to be a tourist destination. Moreover, Maspati only has a limited amount of physical and historical attractions. Also, the worst, Maspati located in the narrow alley between dense dweller. Though, Sabar knew that his idea sounds difficult to be realised, but it still possible. To support his idea, firstly, Sabar persuaded the chief of household association (RT), the chief of PKK, and young kampung leader to be the pioneer of this project. Then, they began to raise the confidence of the residents to take benefit the potential of the kampung. All residents were asked to maintain the cleanliness and tidiness of kampung and be friendly to the visitor who visits the kampung. They made this project open to all residents and voluntary. The primary target of the program implementers are residents who do not have jobs and housewives who seek additional income.

They were success to realise the project. This was a kampung tour program, cultural tourism, not a slums tourism or poverty tourism. The residents refused to exhibit their poor living condition as commodity. They enthusiastic to resist the grand narrative of kampung and conjure the kampung to become "living museum" of the city that offering a nostalgic space for visitors to rediscover indigenous community and its tradition. Housewives, unemployed, and young resident were the main force in implementing the plan.

They began improving the kampong physically, cleaned the area and painted walls. They identified the colonial-era buildings and designated them tourism areas. They painted a path along the alley and arranged a traditional game area for visitors. They reproduced some traditional toys that have been difficult to find, to be sold to visitors. They encouraged young residents to begin practicing traditional music to be performed for the tourists. They encouraged housewives to make traditional food to be sold to the visitors.

They also branded themselves as the *Kampung Lawas Maspati* (the old kampong of Maspati) and began offering a kampong tour program which consisted of cultural performances, traditional food, handicrafts, traditional games, and above all hospitality. They made known that their kampong can give a historical tour to social and cultural life of idyllic community that has disappeared in Surabaya. They sold tour packages ranging from individual to group tour packages. The ticket for individual tour packages, without a tour guide and seeing a cultural performance, is five thousand rupiahs (about 30 cent euro). Two million rupiahs (about 125 euro) for a group package. Social media such as Facebook, Whatsapp, and Instagram are the primary medium to advertise the program and Maspati.

The residents, with their joint efforts, succeeded to attract visitors, and visitors meant income for the residents. The visitors brought by tourist agencies, government official, school, and university people. The money the tourist business brought is managed by the community association and shared with all the resident who participated in this program. This program has generated income for the residents; strengthened cohesiveness among the kampong residents; and gives the residents a sense of pride of their kampong.

Contrast to the grand narrative of kampong, Maspati's residents showed they are creative, goal-oriented, and able to manage the community in flexible and innovative ways. To realise this tourist kampong project, the residents were able to capitalize a potential of kampong by relating to city history and traditions. They produced creative rhetoric of cultural identity. They campaigned that Maspati is an old settlement that bounded to the important history of the city. They promoted some kampong properties such as a colonial house that was used as a place for resistance to the Dutch colonial, old building former Javanese school building in the colonial era, and also a tomb which claimed as a royal family who founded the city. They can optimize kampong resources to achieve their goals to become a tourist destination. They are also pragmatic, and goal oriented in carrying out this community project. They made these activities to directly address their daily problems, generating income.

They are also skilful to organize themselves in the community association. They have flexibility to deal with residents with various education level, occupation, social background.

The impressive thing, they are open and easy to work with other groups both formal and informal. They are agile to make a network with the government institution, company, Non-Government Organizations, School, University and community. In this case, their capability is a contrast to the narrative of kampung's people who were described as uncivilised people and incompatible with urban culture.

Nevertheless, in line their enthusiasm, endurance, creativity, they need leadership that can direct their agency. They need leadership that can coordinate their energy and connects with networks of stakeholders outside the kampung.

VI. CONCLUSION

This research provide empirical evidence of the ways subaltern urbanism works and contributes to the urban process in Surabaya. Maspati's case show that urban poor are not passive people who conceded to be objects of urban development. They involved actively both to improve their livelihood and to guard their space from land commodification by giving a new meaning for the place they live in. A new meaning that empowers the residents and changes the way the city views the kampung.

Maspati's residents refused to sell their poor living condition as a commodity. Instead, they set the kampung cleaner, tidy and green to avoid a stigma, and conjure the kampung to what Herzfield (2016) called as a "living museum" of the city. They offer their kampung as a nostalgic space for visitors to rediscover indigenous community and its tradition which characterized by informal life, friendly and humble people, harmonious community, foods and traditions. They restored the meaning of kampung to its idyllic community of kampung. This fact becomes interesting not only for their actions to change the image of their settlement but also for their spirit of resistance to the grand narrative of kampung as slums and uncivilized people. The passionate actions of residents to change their place indicate that they are not people who are living for waiting for government intervention. They are enthusiastic people who strive to improve their space and livelihood.

Differently with Dharavi (Weinstein, 2014) and Pom-Mahakam (Herzfield, 2016) where slum residents deal with city governments that criminalize their activities, Maspati's residents use social tourism supported by the municipality as their strategies to control their land. These strategies may differ as a result of the institutional context in which they are embedded and resources, but the goals of securing urban space are similar.

Research may indicate that subaltern urbanisms engender similar responses from residents to deal with land commodification especially for residents located in the city centre,

where land is a valuable commodity. Residents in Maspati seem to exhibit similar responses: they seek to control urban space and engage in ‘plucky entrepreneurialism’ (Schindler, 2014) with social tourism which providing economic benefits for residents as the host (Minnaert et al. 2011).

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