CANGKUANG TEMPLE: A TRADITIONAL HERITAGE

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Abstract

Cangkuang temple is a popular site for cultural tourism in West Java. Located in Leles, the district of Garut, the Cangkuang temple stands out due to its scenic location and the temple’s cultural relics. Within the temple, there is a place to worship the God Shiva that lies adjacent to an Islamic cemetery. Many people believe that the tomb of Arif Mohammad who is a holy figure behind the spread of Islam in the area lies in this cemetery. Until now, people in the Cangkuang area maintain the legacy, which describes a state of society living in harmony by preserving their cultural heritage. People not only preserve the physical form of the building, but also maintain the will to respect one other. Thus, the cultural heritage is maintained by the society through cultural tourism. By making cultural heritage as a cultural tourism site, the public can take advantage of for the benefit of others, namely tourism. By making the area into a site of tourism, the profits earned by people around the location is not confined to certain advantages, but also social and economic benefits.

Keywords: Cangkuang Temple, worship, the god Shiva, the legend of Arif Mohammad

Introduction

Indonesian society is a society that is very heterogeneous. This can be seen from the numerous tribes in Indonesia. Every tribe in Indonesia has different language, literature and culture. If these differences are put together, they become a source of extraordinary cultural richness. Cultural wealth is essential for Indonesia. The Indonesian nation has a wealth of culture. One of them is a wealth of ancient buildings, such as temples. The temple is an ancient religious building built during the spread of the Hindu religion and professed by the Java community.

Before the influence of Arab culture through Islam in Indonesia, the Indonesian people in general had religious Hindu ancestors. In addition to embracing the Hindu religion, the community also has its own socio-cultural system. The community embraced the royal government system because the government at that time was referred to as a Hindu kingdom. The community and social system of government embraced Hinduism. As a form of government, in fact a lot of people built temples as a place of worship, for example the Cangkuang temple in Garut. Along with the progress of time, the socio-cultural system was
changed and not only in Indonesia but throughout the world. In the early 15th century, Arab culture entered Southeast Asia along with the emergence of Islam and brought changes in the people’s lives. The Hindu society was turned into a Muslim society that was influenced by Arab culture. Although the religion of the society was changed, certain cultural behavior were maintained. The society did not destroy the Hindu heritage building but maintained the building as a legacy of their ancestors. They embraced Islam, but did not destroy the heritage of Hindu society. They even maintained these heritage buildings. On the other hand, Indonesia consists of various ethnic groups who have different cultural backgrounds. Thus, these differences must be dealt with properly. These differences provide the cultural wealth for the Indonesian nation.

Upon considering the location of Cangkuang temple, it is common knowledge that the temple is located in West Java. However, to be precise, it is located in the area of Garut in West Java. The temple is called Cangkuang, because it is located in the village Cangkuang and in the village there is a lake called Lake Cangkuang. To reach the temple Cangkuang, people must cross the lake. The distance is about 500m, and it can be crossed using bamboo boats.

Based on statements from archaeologists, the temple was found in the rocky remains of the building which has been 40% restored. This was based on instructions from the discovery by Voldermann, a Dutch archaeologist, in 1893. Vordermann wrote a report on it stating that a small temple has been discovered in the Cangkuang village in Bataviaasch Genootschap.

Technically, the position of this small temple is located at an altitude of 700 m above sea level. Lake Cangkuang is located in the middle of a basin in the northern part of the Aruman mountain, while in the western part it is lined and semi-circular to the east of Mandalawangi mountain. On the other side, there are the hills of Mount Guntur.

In an attempt to reconstruct the building of the Cangkuang temple, archaeologists estimate that it is similar to the Hindu temples found in Central Java. The site of the Cangkuang temple was first discovered on December 29, 1966 by an archaeologist named Dr. Uka Tjandra Sasmira. It is estimated that this temple dates back to 7-8 century AD with a massive length of 4.5 m and a height of 8.5 m. The temple was restored from 1970 to 1976. The statue of the God Shiva was also discovered within the temple.

Basic Theories

Cangkuang temple is popularly known to be a Hindu temple, although the majority of the people who live around the temple are mostly Muslims. This presents itself as an interesting phenomenon, as it demonstrates how people may live in harmony despite religious differences. I approach this phenomenon like a puzzle of life in which I will explore this phenomenon through some theories or methods. Sonny Keraf (2014) argues that human beings always seek to enhance their life by finding harmony with nature. It is part of human nature for people to
always attempt to synchronize their life with nature. Marianne W Jorgensen and Louise J. Phillips (2010) write about a place like Cangkuang Temple as a place of life discourse. It is a place that we can use critical discourse and social discourse as a scientific approach.

Maintaining Culture Heritage

Most of the people around Cangkuang temple live as farmers. They work in the paddy fields or other forms of agriculture. Similar to the life of rural communities in Indonesia in general, the people in the village also hold on to Cangkuang customs. In everyday life, the people have rules that must be obeyed by members of the community. They believe that such rules have been passed down for generations, thus they should respect these rules. Despite the wide variety of cultural heritage in Cangkuang, there are no immediate difficulties faced by the community because the people believe that their ancestral heritage must be maintained. The people do not need to be told, because they realize that relics are precious forms of heritage. For the people of any heritage, that form must be protected and maintained.

According to the residents in the neighborhood around the temple, there is no special name for the temple. The local people call this temple simply the Cangkuang temple, because it is located in the village Cangkuang. However, to reach the temple the community must cross the lake first. The people living in the middle of the village are also known as the Pulo village community. The housing in Pulo village include of only 6 houses with similar shape.
According to oral information obtained from the community in the area, near the lake there are a lot of Cangkuang trees or in Latin *Pandanus Furtacus Roxb.* According to the residents, this type of tree has many uses for the community living around the temple. According to the locals, the tree is edible and the leaves can be used to make woven mats and for wrapping palm sugar. Another interesting point about the Pulo village is their legacy of an ancient manuscript. After the restoration of the temple by the local government, a museum was built to preserve the ancient manuscript. According to local information, there are only about 6 pieces of ancient manuscripts preserved in the museum.

One of the manuscripts that is preserved in the museum is a manuscript that contains a Friday sermon by a religious leader. Another manuscript contains information on jurisprudence, while the manuscript on the Eid sermon is the longest one in Indonesia, as well as the Qur’an nul Karim.

One interesting thing is that the manuscript is made from the traditional *saeh* paper which is made from the bark of the *saeh* tree or in Latin *Broussonetia papyrifera Vent.* Through these papers, the society continues to pass on their wealth of knowledge to the next generation.

**The Story of Mbah Dalem Arif Muhamad**

On one side of the temple, there is a tomb known as the tomb of *mbah dalem* Arif Muhammad. He was trusted by the local community as a respected figure who
spread the words of Islam in the area. As a religious leader, he was known to be wise and prudent. He did not damage the building of the temple, and he was buried next to the temple. This is the reason why he is referred to as mbah dalem Arif Muhammad. He is very wise and prudent in the face of change.

People believe that this is the tomb of mbah dalem Arif Muhammad

Mbah dalem Arif Muhammad is regarded as a figure who is wise and prudent and also introduces new values of life to the community. In the Pulo village, traditional houses can only be inhabited by the descendants of the women. The men are not permitted to live in this neighborhood. This condition is very different from other areas that are generally patrilineal.

Living between the Harmony of Nature and Culture

The architecture of the temple combined with the scenic surroundings is very beautiful and dreamy. The location of the temple which is in the middle of the lake makes people who want to visit it cross with a raft first. At the back of the temple, the Aruman mountainside stands tall covered with fog.

The temple is located in the area of Garut but outside the city. This temple is situated at the foot of a mountain or a hilly area, so that it gives a secluded impression. Away from the crowds, to reach this place one requires a vehicle, as it is quite far from the district town. This means that to reach this place one must go through the local township residents, rivers, forests and lakes. Perhaps in the previous ancient times this place was a very quiet place, so that monks or religious leaders can practice meditation in solitude. Today, to build a site in a remote
location is not a viable option. There is definitely something that can be conveyed through this situation. Finally, a place of meditation is selected in the foot of the hills that is silent, deserted, and only accompanied by animal noises and the wind or other natural sounds. When viewed from the position of the geographical location of the buildings around the temple, bearing in mind the time of its establishment, it can be said that the architecture is quite advanced. At the top of the hill, there is a lake surrounded by mountains and in the middle of the lake there is a small land-shaped hill and up the hill there is a building for worship. The scenic landscape has been thought since antiquity. There are two meanings that emerge from the landscape layout. First, the purpose of the layout of the temple site that is very far from the noise of people's lives is to make the religious believers pray fervently and undisturbed by the bustle of the mundane city life. Second, the significance of the location of the temple is the human relationship with God is above all the interests of life. Third, man's relationship with God should be done by way of depth and not mere passing.

A traditional house in the Pulo village

On the other hand, we also have to think that every parent would want to pass on something to their children. This legacy is not only treasures that can be seen, touched and imagined, but also inherits the legacy of thought or knowledge. This means that not only material knowledge is passed down through the
knowledge of the landscape, nature and beauty, but also spiritual knowledge or the psychology of the neighbor. This means that people living in this world requires to meet not only their physical needs but also their spiritual needs. For humans to meet the needs of everyday life is essential, but their spiritual needs are also important. The meaning of life is not only about material work, but also about work on human spirituality. It should be understood that in ancient belief there is confidence in life after the material life on this earth.

The Dynamics of a Harmonious Life

Seeing the landscape and the history of the people residing in the vicinity of the temple, one can observe the dynamics of life on earth. Community members interact with each other in this life. Community members need each other and should be able to complement the necessities of life in one another. This shows that life goes on from generation to generation.

*Mbah dalem* Arif Muhammad introduced a unique idea that a daughter or the descendant of a women should stay in the village of Pulo while boys or the men are encouraged to venture out of the Pulo village. This means that girls or women are required to keep, care for and preserve the existing culture, while the boys or men are required to share new ideas to a new generation. Parents are always thinking about peace, because the current generation does not appear out of nowhere but comes from previous generations. The main intent of this unique thought is to show that at the same time there is real affinity and no real affinity.
Real linkage is formed through family which then enters into the community. The linkage is not real in the sense that the children are distinct from the nuclear family concept. In the past, the ancestors could still be expected to be the backbone of brotherhood. One strategy that is quite unique is kinship. This situation shows the importance of heritage as something very precious. The meaning of legacy is not only the material but also the heritage of cultural heritage. Cultural heritage can show the wealth of material and mental wealth. The meaning of heritage should be a bridge for awareness of living together in society. Seeing the legacy of the past will create a life that in the past is really not as different from the present. Legacy of the past gives a concrete picture showing information about past lives. Kinship developed by the ancestors is a concept to expand the interaction of life and build a good society. The values developed provide an overview of the equality of human life on earth. In the traditional view that developed, women and men have the same position in the series to build a peaceful society. By building these values, it seeks to create a balance of social life. Traditional rich heritage such as this should be properly maintained. By maintaining the cultural heritage of today's society, there will be benefits that include not only material or worldly benefits, but also spiritual benefits.

Conclusion

Cangkuang is an ancestral temple for the Cangkuang villagers. This illustrates how relics have changed lives over time. People in the past pass on something to the next generation. This legacy can be seen from a number of sides. There is a side of knowledge. There is the human side. There is the religious side, and there is also the philosophical side.
References