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## Historic urban landscape (HUL) approach in Kota Lama Semarang: mapping the layer of physical development through the chronological history

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# Historic urban landscape (HUL) approach in Kota Lama Semarang: mapping the layer of physical development through the chronological history

**Bintang Noor Prabowo , Previari Umi Pramesti, Mirza Ramandhika, S. Sukawi**

Department of Civil Infrastructure Engineering and Architectural Design,  
Diponegoro University

Corresponding e-mail: bintangprabowo@lecturer.undip.ac.id

**Abstract.** This paper focuses on the identification of layer mapping of Kota Lama Semarang through chronological development within decades of its construction since the early 17th century. The site was first settled as a relatively small fortress, changed into a massive huge fortress city, and underwent the demolition of the outer wall in order to face modernization and the Nederlandsch Indische hegemony in Indonesia. The newest layer of the map would be posted in the Indonesian independence era, where some major changes were applied in this area.

After reviewing the history of ideologies in conservation, as qualitative research with the descriptive-analytic approach, this article employed heuristic method as its main approach.

This article only discusses one aspect of the Historic Urban Landscape, which is the identification of layer mapping of the Oud Stad area through its chronological development from the 17th to 21st century. The other approaches would be recommended to further research as stated in the conclusion.

The primary apprehension of this article is to examine the efficient and complete approach to preserving the urban heritage that complements the values and the ongoing traditions of the local dwellers.

**Keywords:** Historic Urban Landscape, HUL, Kota Lama, Oud Stad, Layer, Mapping

## 1. Introduction

Conservation, Preservation, Restoration, and Reconstruction are multi-disciplinary practices comprising environment, art and architecture, and archaeology. The early part of the article argues the Conservations' concepts by studying the historic source of conservation ideologies. Through a chronological review of ideologies, four approaches are inspected in this article. The best result identifies the optimum approach to be applied for Kota Lama Semarang, although only one part is going to be focused in this writing: the layer mapping of Kota Lama Semarang.

According to the "International Council on Monuments and Sites" (ICOMOS) [1], conservation means developing a place to preserve its "cultural significance". The following discussion of the "conservation movement" analyses the different ideologies, the history of conservation and its development.

In history, we can identify several changes in the movement of the conservation efforts. Since the pre-classical era, until before the "French revolution" in 1789, conservation movement started due to religious significance. During the classical period of Ancient Greek (480-323 BC), the

idea of preserving historical monuments was meant to glorify the power of the city, while in Christian Rome era, the memory of old building was remembered by tearing down the old building to build a new one using the existing materials. In between 14th to 17th century, marked as Renaissance Era, restoration and collection of old artifact were becoming a new lifestyle for the rich, leading to an ideology called as scientific restoration; an attempt to reconstruct heritage buildings with minimum changes.[2]

After French Revolution broke up, there were two major groups in term of conservation across Europe: restorationists, which allow the conservator to interfere and complete the design while restoring/reconstructing an old building, and anti-restorationists, which tend to preserve heritage building as it is, without further interventions. A moderate approach also being introduced as Surgical Approach with only minors changes applied to the historical buildings.

Between the first and second World Wars, the modern conservation policy was born as a metamorphosis of scientific restoration. The Athens Charter was then accepted as a reference for other heritage conservation movements worldwide. One of its concepts was acknowledged as “thinning out the urban fabric”, which accommodating modernization and conservation altogether.

Soon after the establishment of UNESCO, the notion of “cultural significance” became an important issue in conservation that directly related to the modern theory of restoration (memorial values and present-day values) and urban conservation approach (the conservation object and it's surrounding). Later, the World Heritage Convention announced the thought that some heritage objects all over the world were important for all people from all nations, and should be taken care as world heritage, instead of a single nation.

In Globalization Era, the impact of urban planning and designing was highly acknowledged among conservationist. Urban development approach has finally met an equilibrium between private sectors, public participation, and dwellers creativity, including the government obligation to regulate the conservation of historic buildings and urban areas.

The methods that were developed and accepted globally in the last twenty years are: (1) sustainable approach, (2) culture tourism approach, (3) living heritage approach, (4) and historic urban landscape approach. Each or combination of these methods was implemented internationally as conservations policy on historic buildings and areas.

A sustainable approach is accomplished by creating accessible, beneficial and fundamental conservation area to the everyday life of the dwellers. The primary goals of heritage protection were the concern of nowadays and tomorrow's economic, social, and environmental prerequisites. They are influenced directly by society involvement and community participation. According to ICOMOS, cultural tourism was developed to safeguard the historic place and to honor the local inhabitants, while answering to the requirements of the tourists with thoroughly taken-care historic places.

Soon after the launched of the Living heritage approach by ICCROM, the methods acknowledged that the significance of conservation object does not merely lay in its construction and appearance, but also in how the people admired and exploited its historic-value possibilities. It is said that the purpose of the living heritage approach involved [3]: (1) establishment of ways needed to improve a community-based methods to handle heritage objects, (2) promotion of local-wisdom approaches in preservation, restoration, reconstruction and, adaptation, and (3) promotion of living heritage topics in teaching syllabus [3]. Within the same year, which was 2005, the WHC approved Historic Urban Landscapes as the most advanced methods in the conservation field, since it linked tangible and intangible heritage elements. They believe that the urban conservation will be the tool to increase socio-economic improvements through the property, visitor/ tourism, and commercial aspects, which will generate incomes to finance the conservation efforts.[4].

According to ICOMOS, genuineness of heritage objects lays on several criteria, which are: (1) guarantee the authenticity of the preserved objects, (2) reliability of documentation proof [5], (3) maintenance of functionality, (4) evading duplication/ replication [6], and (5) social value and local habit [7].

Those key points of sustainability are the environmental, economic, social dimensions (Sutherland, 2007). Applying those dimensions to the objects explains many concerns to attain sustainable development in the heritage conservation effort. [8].

## **2. Methodology**

As historical research, this writing is categorized as qualitative research with the descriptive-analytic approach. A heuristic method was the main approach used in this article, by collecting primary source of old maps, photographs, and information from various sources. An observation was also conducted in order to obtain validation of data in the field. A literature study was performed to gain secondary data from journals, books, theories, and articles whenever necessarily needed.

Periodization used to analyze the chronological layer mapping of Kota Lama Semarang was divided into four periods. The first period was Pre-1700 as the first evidence of the presence of Kota Lama Semarang. The second period was 1700-1800, where the fortress was expanded into the new development that later is known as Oud Stad. The third period was 1800-1900 where finally the wall of the fortress was demolished, and the construction of the city reached its peak. The last period was Post-1900 where modernization and urban phenomenon finally become more obvious than before.

## **3. Discussion**

The Historic Urban Landscape Approach meets the three selective evaluation criteria. It indicates that positive points gifted by the ideology as the existence of a clear framework assigned to the HUL approach reinforces theoretically the positive achievement of the selectivity, authenticity/integrity, and sustainable criteria.

Located in Semarang, The Old City of Semarang (Kota Lama Semarang) is a coastal town with a historic core. The modern town of Kota Lama Semarang consists of two distinct archaeological sites, the historic Dutch Colonial city, and the old port. Kota Lama Semarang was proposed into the World Heritage List in 2017.

The choice to apply the HUL strategy in Kota Lama Semarang, a small historic city, the capital city of Central Java Province, for the reason that it has historic buildings all around the heritage area concentrated inside the old estimated fortress. These conditions are sufficient examples for the application of the Historic Urban Landscape conservation approach.

The HUL approach itself is a comprehensive method that detects, preserves, and manages heritage areas within their larger urban context both tangible and intangible. The Historic Urban Landscape preservation approach on this part of town requires the use of a variety of traditional and local wisdom. [9]

Some suggested recommendations were (1) the civic engagement tools, where participation of stakeholders is proposed as urban policy, (2) the knowledge base and planning tools where identification of HUL should be exposed, (3) system of regulation, and (4) financial aspects.

Stakeholders of the Old City of Semarang consist of Government Institutions (BP2KL), directly affected group (dwellers), and indirectly affected group (tourists and NGO). There are several successful dwellers and inhabitants' participation in Kota Lama Semarang, namely: (1) some property owners had already conserve, preserve, reconstruct, restore, and perform some adaptive uses on their buildings for personal use or business, such as: Spiegel Café, IBC Restaurant, etc, (2) BP2KL (Badan Pengelola Kawasan Kota Lama-Old City Regional Management Agency) was formed to enhance the usage and utility of Semarang Old City area.

Historic Urban Landscape approach inside a geographical urban morphology of the town could contribute to an understanding of HUL in present time for urban conservation [10]. The morphogenetic approach by Conzen, which is an urban morphological approach to townscape conservation management, could be used as an approaching tool. The maps shaped by this technique give urgency to historic periods in terms of physical forms produced [11].

In Kota Lama Semarang, the integration of the urban heritage values of the old city into a larger framework of city development delivers suggestion of areas of high heritage sensitivity that requires more consideration to planning, design, and implementation of development projects.

### 3.1. Regulatory Systems

Conservation, preservation, and management process should be empowered by the regulatory systems by respecting localities, environment, and cultural values in the urban conservation management. [9]

At first, BP2KL, the local authorities in Kota Lama Semarang, should lead stakeholders formerly mentioned as a form of cooperative management that leads to strategic decisions and changes for these preservation decisions into regulating-law and standards on the regional level [9].

### 3.2. Visual Analysis Of Kota Lama Semarang

#### 3.2.1. Pre-1700

Semarang as a port city had good access to many resourceful destinations in central Java, including a less than 3 days travel to the Mataram Kingdom, where it took more than a week to travel from Jepara Port. Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie (VOC) had a plan to acquire as many port city as possible along the north coast of Java. As a favor of defeating the rebel of Trunajaya from Madura, Mataram Kingdom gave special privilege to occupy the harbor of Semarang, according to an agreement with Amangkurat II on 20 October 1677. The permission to build a colony was granted near the Resident (Bupati) house, on the riverbank of Kali Semarang. Even further, VOC was later be given a monopoly right to trade rice and sugar, tax-free, and an authority to occupy the Semarang area [12]. Since Semarang was considered as more strategic for them, especially the way they communicated with the Mataram Kingdom in Kartasura, VOC later moved its representative office from Jepara to Semarang in 1708. [13]

The first evidence to the existence of Kota lama Semarang was shown as a Fortress on the map of PAAN van het Fort en Omleggende Cituatie van Samarangh, dated back to 1695 [14]. It was located on the east side of Kali Semarang. Kampung Melayu (Negorij) was on the west side of the Old City, across the river.

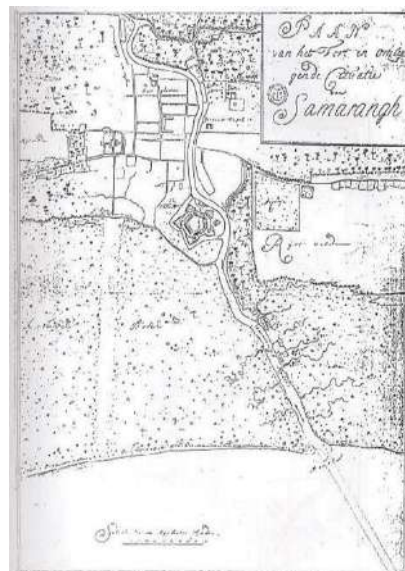


Fig. 1. Map of PAAN van het Fort en Omleggende Cituatie van Samarangh dated back to 1695

According to Fransçois Valentijn, VOC had a vast number of soldiers and workers who were in charge of doing trading with the locals. The colony settlement was in the form of five edged stars, fortified by the wood plank on each edge: Raamsdonk, Bunschoten, Zeeland, Amsterdam, and Utrecht [13]. This complex was later known as De Vijfhoek van Samarangh.

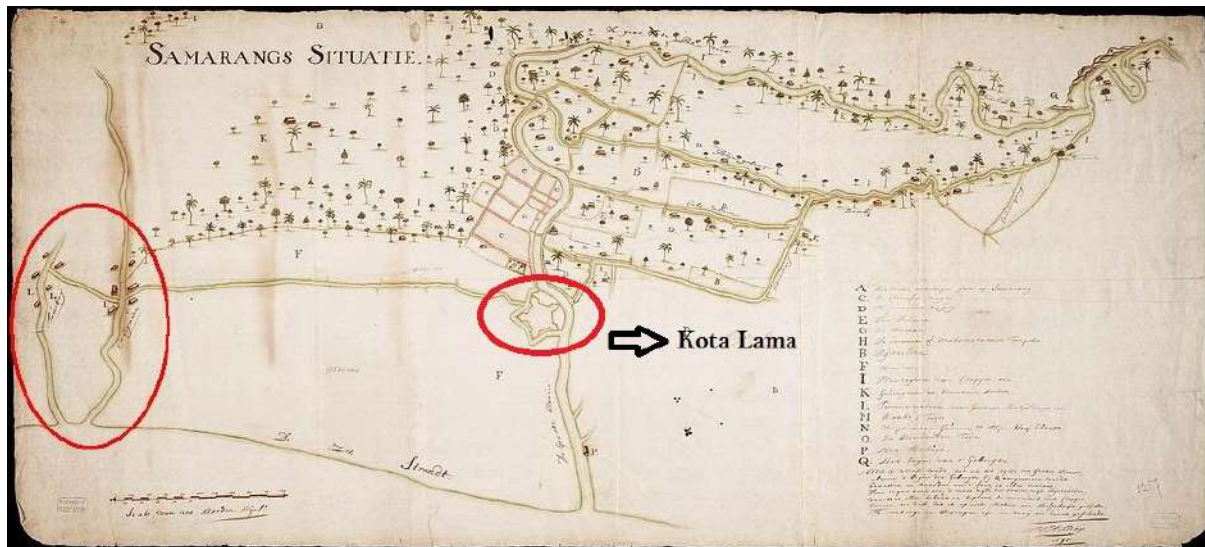


Fig. 2. Old map of de Vijfhoek van Samarangh with legend

### 3.2.2. 1700-1800 Period

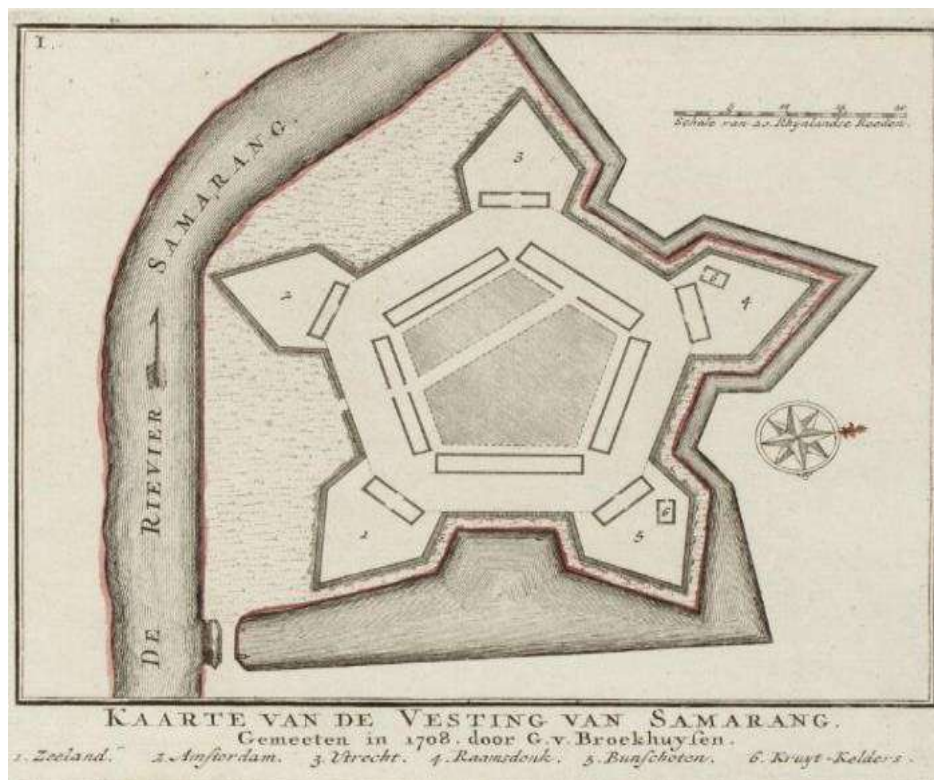


Fig. 3. An early map of De Vijfhoek van Samarangh, 1708  
The Five Corners: (1) Zeeland, (2) Amsterdam, (3) Utrecht, (4) Raamsdonk, (5) Bunschoten  
1

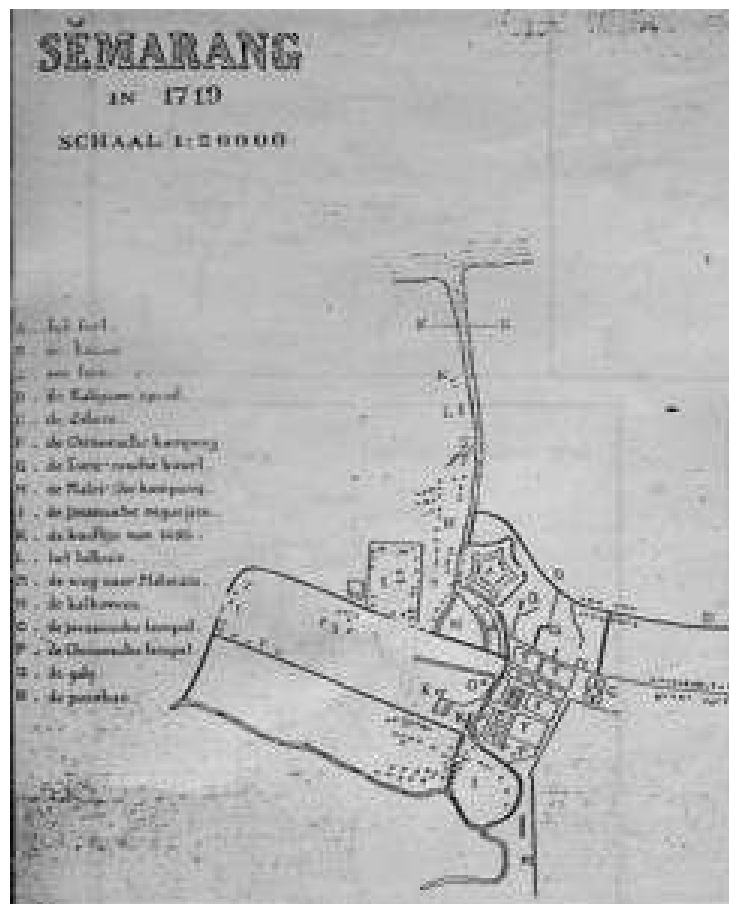


Fig. 4. Map of *De Vijfhoek van Samarangh*, 1719



Fig. 5. Map of *De Vijfhoek van Samarangh*, 1719

Inside the Vijfhoek, the seed of the city was developing as a European settlement until, at least, the year of 1741, before the enlargement of the fortress began.

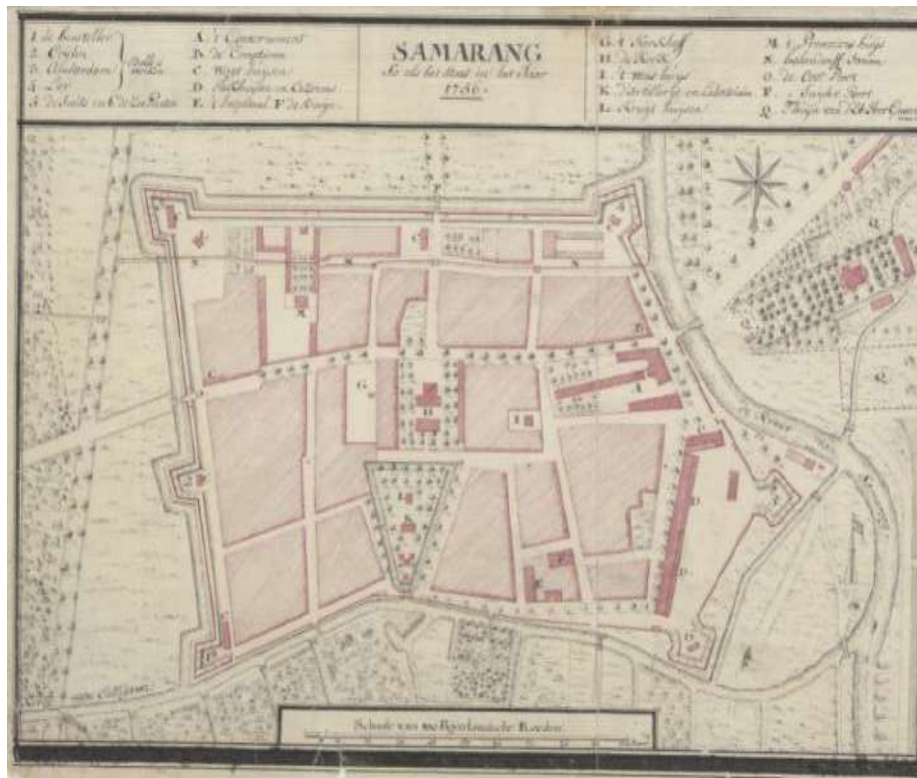


Fig. 6. Enlargement of *De Vijfhoek van Semarang*, into Oud Stad, 1741

Due to the fast urban sprawl, the old small fortress wall was finally be diminished, and a new fortress wall was built around the Old City of Semarang circa 1741-1756.

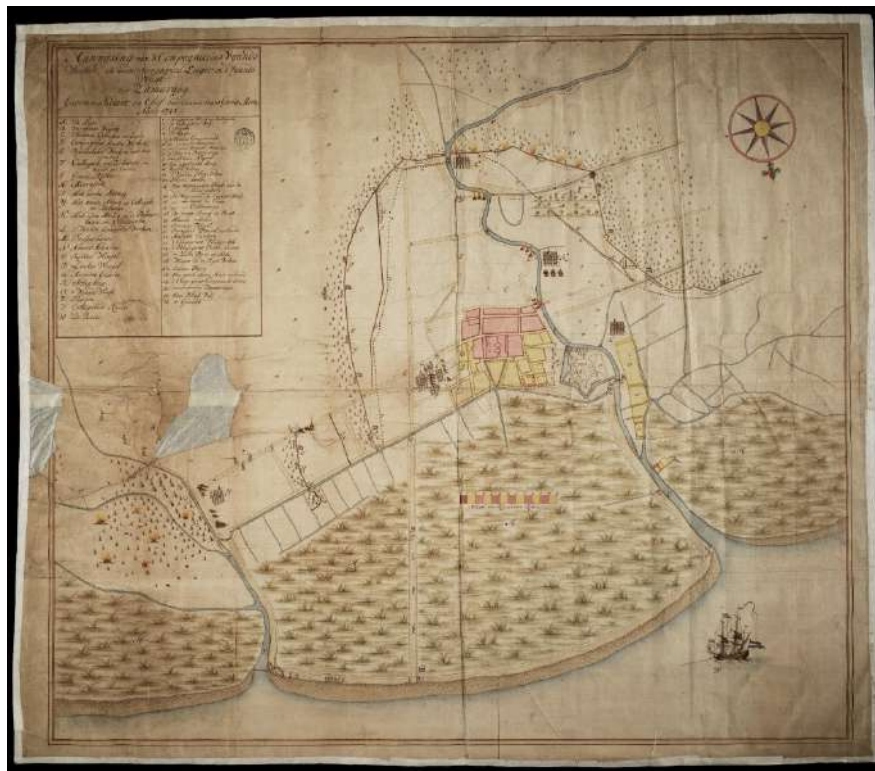


Fig. 7. Another original map of enlargement of *De Vijfhoek van Semarang*, into Oud Stad, 1741

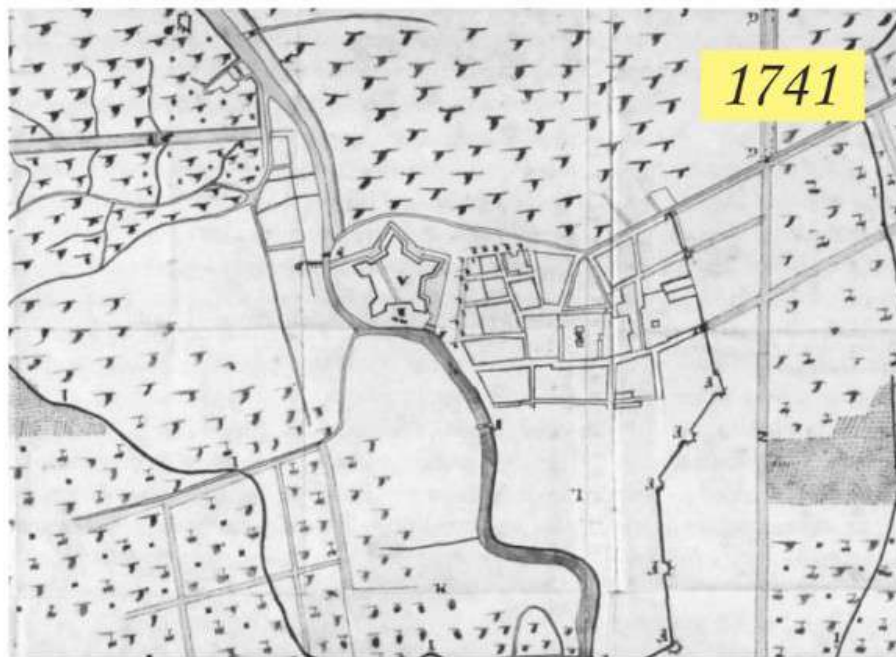


Fig.8. Another original map of enlargement of *De Vijfhoek van Semarang*, into Oud Stad, 1741

The new wall design consisted of three Main Gates, which are: (1) de Wester Port (Gouvernementsport), located in Gouvernement Burg (Berok Bridge), (2) de Zuider Port, located around the tram-track, near Pekojan Street and Agus Salim Street, and (3) de Oosters Port, located on the east side of Heerenstraat (the intersection of Raden Patah street and MT Haryono street).

These ports were also equipped with six security checkpoints: (1) de Hersteller (Ronggowarsito&Pengapon Street), (2) Ceylon (the yard of Gedangan Church), (3) Amsterdam (Agus Salim Street), (4) de Lier (old Post Office), (5) de Smits, and (6) de Zee (Old Boom/ Boom Lama).

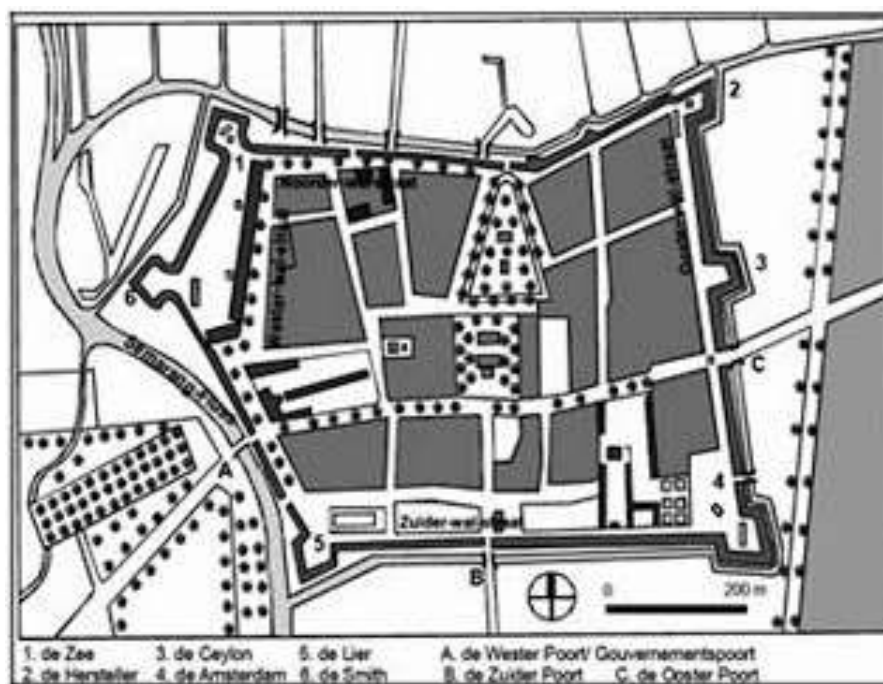


Fig. 9. Map of Oud Stad, 1756

During this period, VOC managed to build numbers of buildings, paradeplein, Stadhuis, Ziekenhuis (hospital) in Noorderwalstraat, gevangenis, kazerne, arsenal storage, and other public offices.

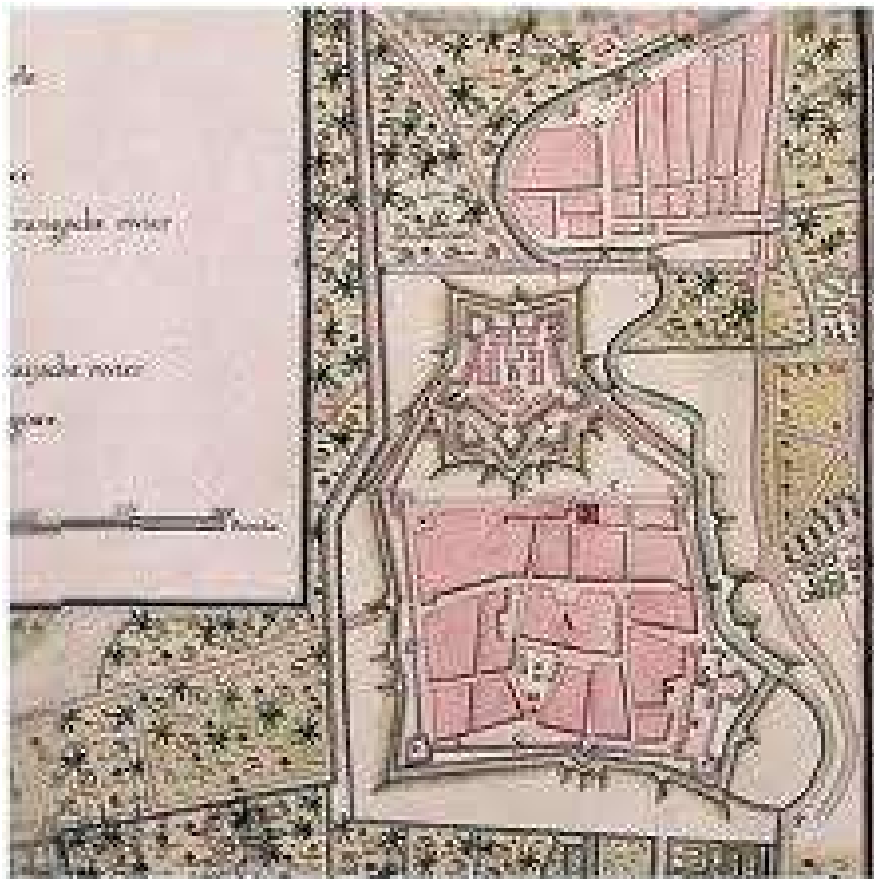


Fig. 10. Map of Oud Stad, (No Year Stated), Before the demolition of the outer wall

The Church of Nederlandsch Indische Kerk and de Outstadhuis were located in the central part of the city, near the Parade Plein where people usually gathered together whenever a ceremony was held.

The street where the Marabunta Comedy Building was called Komediestraat (Cendrawasih Street) and the street where there was a colony of swallow birds was called Swaluwstraat (Branjangan Street). The street with a flower garden in it was called Bloemenstraat (Kedasih street). There was also a street named Kortademstraat, which means short breath since this was a place to execute prisoners (Meliwis street). Konijnenstraat (Cendrawasih street) and Hoofwachtsraat (Kutilang street) were the locations where authority placed security guards. The street where arsenal was stored was called Pakhuisstraat (Empu Tantular street), and Artilleriewerkplaats was located on the east side. Other streets that contained toponyms were Van den Burgstraat (Perkutut street) and Hoogendorpstraat (Kepodang street). [15]

On 1782, the hospital (Ziekenhuis) was moved into the east part of the complex, and on the old location was then used as Marine School, that was the reason why the street on the area was called Marinestraat (Merpati street). When Nederlandsch Indische Kerk (Blenduk Church) was rebuilt in 1794, the backstreet was then called Achterkerkstraat, which means “the street behind the church”, the street we call Garuda street today. By the year of 1797, a connector street was built, connecting the Chinatown to the Old City, heading to the church; the reason why the street was named Kerkstraat (Suari street). The street going to the cemetery was called Kerkhofstraat (Perkutut street), while the way to the sandy beach was called Zeestraat (Mpu Tantular street).

Many people then called this particular Area as de Oude Stad (Kota Lama), Europeeschebuurt (European Village), or even Little Netherland, to replace the term “de Vijfhoek”.

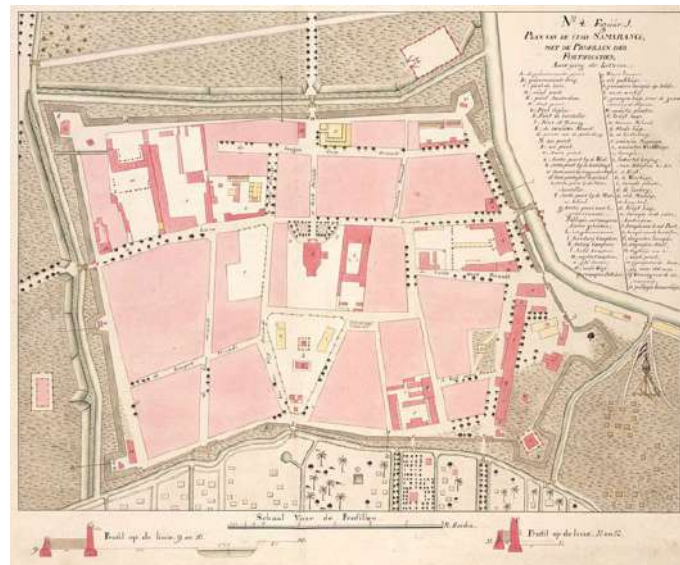


Fig. 11. Map of Oud Stad, 1787

### 3.2.3. 1800-1900 Period

After the main street, de Herenstaart, stretching in the middle of the complex, as a part of the legendary Postweg, a 1000 km highway system from Anyer to Panarukan was built by Daendels. By the year of 1824, the outer wall of Oud Stad was finally being taken down. Many Europeans started to live outside the ex-fortress city, mostly in Bodjongstraat (Pemuda street) after since.

Although the Oud Stad was no longer being fenced by a thick high wall, the structure of the area remained the same. The west wall was placed near the riverbank of Kali Semarang. An inspection street along the west wall was called Westerwalstraat, laid all the way outside the wall through Pakhuisstraat (Empu Tantular Street). On the Northside we can still witness the former flat north-wall facing the Tawang Train Station. The street outside the north wall was called Norderwalstraat (Merak street). The east wall was adjacent to Oosterwalstraat (Cendrawasih street), and the south wall to Zuiderwalstraat (Sendowo street)

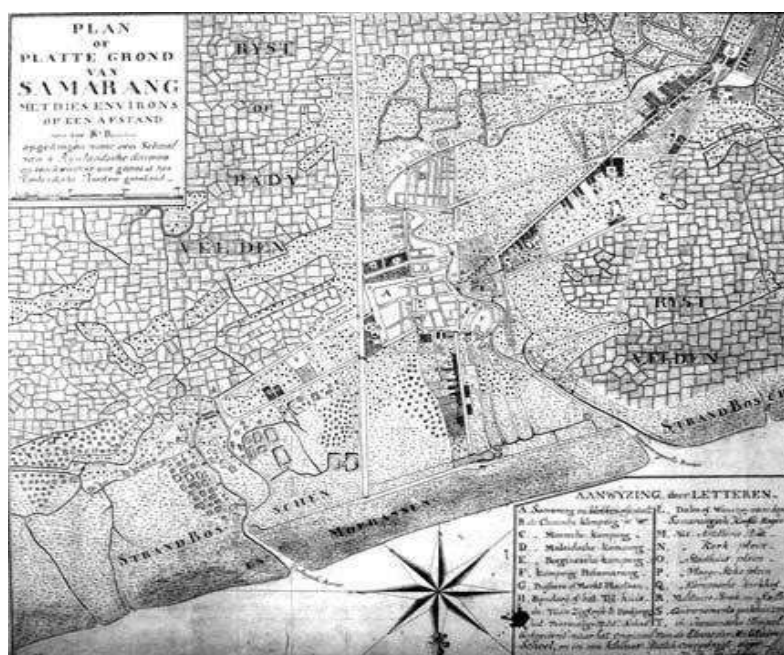


Fig. 12. Map of Oud Stad, 1800

Source: B. Brommer [16]

As an administrative and commercial city, many facilities were built during this period, such as: Landraad (City Court), N.V. Goud en Zilvermenderij voorhen F.M. Ohlenroth & Co (Jewelry Outlet), Cultuur Maatschappij der Vorstenlanden and Mirandole Voute & Co. (both were sugarcane, tobacco, and coffee plantation company), Nederlandsch Handel Maatschappij, Hotel Jansen (Semarang's first European Hotel), Selig & Son (music equipment shop), G.C.T Van Dorp & Co (a printing and publishing company located in Oudhuisstraat, known as today's Branjangan street).

Later, in Heerenstraat, a huge building of Nederlandsch-Indische Levensverzekering en Lijfrente Maatschappij (the largest insurance company at that time) were designed and built by Karsten, Lütjens en Steenstra Toussaint Architecture Bureau in 1916.

One of the milestones that would change the urban landscape of the Oud Stad area was the introduction of Railway and Train technology in the mid-19th century. The history of the railway in Indonesia began in 1867. The construction was officially started as the first train route ever in Indonesia, by L.A.J Baron Sloet van den Beele, the General Governor of Nederlandsch indische. This construction was initiated by "Naamlooze Venootschap Nederlandsch Indische Spoorweg Maatschappij" (NV. NISM), led by J.P. de Bordes, 26 kilometers railroad, from Kemijen to Tanggung. They then succeeded in broadening the railway network to Surakarta (110 km) on 10th February 1870. By the end of 19th century (circa 1900), as massive as 3338 km railways were built.



Fig. 13. Map of Oud Stad, 1866, Tawang Station has not been built yet

#### 3.2.4. Post-1900 Period

By the year of 1914, Samarang Station (Tambaksari Station), the first train station located on Kemijen was demolished to give way to a new track to Semarang Tawang Station, on the north part of the Old City. [17].



Fig. 14. Map of Oud Stad, 1917, Tawang Station has been built

The presence of the new train station changed the landscape of Oud Stad forever. Bintang Noor Prabowo (2002) on his master thesis, concluded that the decision to choose the exact location of Tawang Station was not random, but closely tied-up systemically with the existing corridors of Oud Stad, especially those that faced noordewalstraat [17]. A modern train station must be near to the center of the city, to provide efficient access for passengers and goods for trading purpose. Since then, Tawang station becomes an integral part of Old City of Semarang, including a wide-open space between Tawang Station and Noordewalstraat.



Fig. 15. Map of Semarang (without date), showing the existence of railroad and Tawang Station

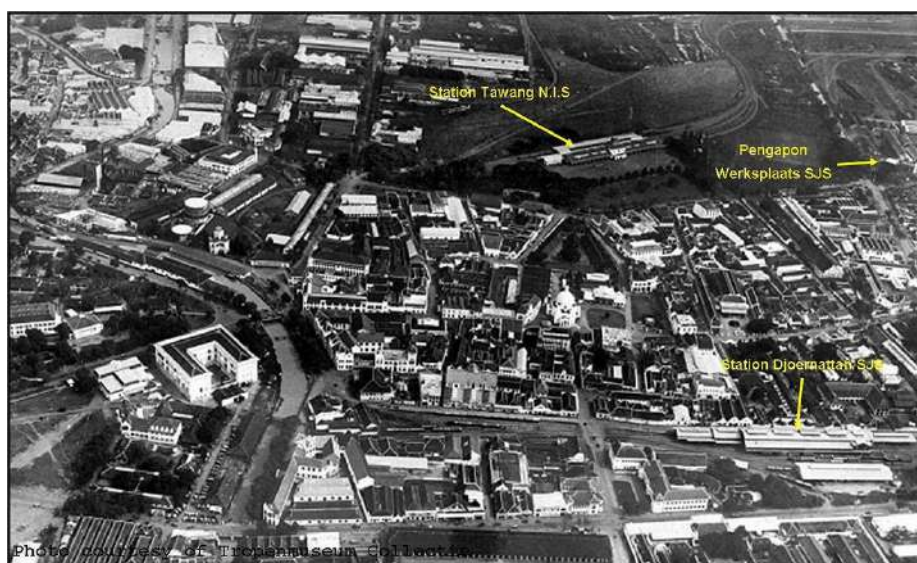


Fig. 16. Aerial View of Oud Stad, 1930, showing the location of Tawang Station  
After World War II 1942-1945, there were not much construction activities in this area. After the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Indonesia on 17th august 1945, this area began to slowly deteriorate. The old bridge called de Zuiderport burg or Gouvernementsburg was renovated in

1910, and later being added with a new identical bridge in the 1980s, following a new one-way route-policy circling around de Heerenstraat (Letjen Suprpto street) towards Tawang Station. This new bridge and circulation changed the way people experienced the serial vista of Kota Lama Semarang in the past, where it should be properly enjoyed.



Fig. 17. Serial Vista, showing the only access from Gouvernement Burg



Fig. 18. Serial Vista, showing the Spiegel building from a distance



Fig. 19. Photograph from the lighthouse, showing the original Berok Bridge



Fig. 20. Aerial View of Oud Stad, 1930, showing the renovated Berok Bridge

Deterioration of this area became worsen each year due to the local flood caused by the rising of water surface level during certain times (banjir rob), especially during rainy seasons. Before the year 2000, it used to be uncomfortable and unsafe to walk through this area at night, since this abandoned city part was known for its criminal and homeless activities, after the commercial functions were gradually leaving the Old City of Semarang to the new city center of Semarang, Simpang Lima area, due to those unfavorable conditions. [18]. Despite that, the Mayor of Semarang released policy of SK No.646/50/1992 about conservation of heritage buildings in Semarang, including those which scattered inside the Old City, as a manifestation of higher government regulation (UU No. 5, 1992, about Heritage Artefact)

To overcome the flood problem, between 1999-2000, the government of Semarang initiated the construction of Polder Tawang, a pond or water retaining system equipped with pumps to control the flood if necessary. The location of this polder Tawang used to be a 13.000-meter square public space for various activities [19]. The design of the polder was designated to mimic the atmosphere of Kota Lama Semarang since it is located between Tawang Station and Noorderwalstraat. After almost two decades, many younger generations considered this Tawang Polder as an old artifact from the Nederlandsch Indische era; a confusion with mix-response from stakeholders.



Fig. 21. Aerial View of Old City, 2002, Showing the existence of Tawang Polder

By 2017, Old City of Semarang was already listed in the Tentative List of new world heritage, by UNESCO. That was a major step toward a full status of World Heritage acknowledgment [18]. A major renovation is being conducted in the area. Many experts and researchers are worried about Oud Stad authenticity since the enhancement of Kota Lama seems to aim mostly to tourism purpose, with lesser concern on urban conservation.

#### 4. Conclusion

From the discussions above, there are several conclusions to be made:

1. The Old City of Semarang is an important asset of conservation and tourism due to its originality as an artifact of the history of Indonesia, culturally and physically.
2. It is important to understand the layering of physical development, to promote better conservation treatment with scientifically proven background knowledge.
3. The mapping layer of Kota Lama Semarang through its history is one of the implementations of HUL approach, required to design further policy-making concerning Kota Lama Semarang in the future.
4. Kota Lama Semarang has an outstanding universal value since it has a collection of building types, architecture form or technology, and landscape that provide a clear episode of human history.
5. The primary apprehension of this article is to examine the efficient and complete approach to preserve the urban heritage that complements the values and the ongoing traditions of the local dwellers. The demand to answer the finest ideology is “how intense the heritage from the past will create a piece of future’s urban area from destruction by man or nature” [2,5]. There is a necessity to preserve heritage sites to counter the effect of climate change, urban expansion, migration, and challenges from unsustainable tourism. The use of the Historic Urban Landscape approach improves the people awareness and the participation of the local inhabitants in Kota Lama where many difficulties confront the sustainable development of the town. The adding of Intangible Urban Heritage Values to the preservation strategies safeguards the cultural sustainability of the historic city.

This one step of Historic Urban Landscape approach, by tracing and mapping the layer of physical development of Kota Lama area should proceed with others parameter of HUL approach to generate a complete understanding of conservation, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and adaptation of the Oud Stad so it met the criteria of World Heritage in the future without losing its identity as an important artifact of the past.

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