THE REASONS BEHIND THE USE OF TEXTURE ON THE LOWER PART OF THE EXTERIOR WALLS OF SEVERAL HOUSES IN KOTAGEDE

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ABSTRACT: *One of the uniqueness of the buildings in Kotagede is that some houses have textured walls at the lower part of exterior walls about 1 meter high, while some other houses do not. Therefore, this research aims to find out the reasons behind the use of this textured wall and whether there is a relationship with community behaviour or the local environment. The method used in this study is a qualitative method in which the primary data comes from direct observation and interviews, while the secondary data comes from previous studies. The results of the research stated that the reason for using the texture on the wall is not known for certain, because the houses that have these walls are old houses passed down from their ancestors to their grandchildren. Although the original reason is not yet known, according to interviewee, it is possible that the walls were made to add aesthetic value and to protect against mold and mildew. Thus, it can be concluded that the reasons are to add aesthetics and also for protection. The recommendation from this study is that the community can maintain the textured wall to maintain the historical value of the building and the wall can function properly.*

Keyword: Kotagede, reason, Textured wall,

INTRODUCTION

Kotagede is an area in Yogyakarta which is very thick with historical value, because this area previously was a capital city of Mataram Kingdom. These historical values are embedded in many aspects especially to its architecture. This can be seen from the uniqueness of the buildings in Kotagede which stand between narrow alleys. When people walk down the narrow alleys, they can see up close the uniqueness of the buildings in Kotagede. This uniqueness can be seen from the shape of the building, building ornaments, building elements, to the layout and function of the room. One of the unique things that can be seen in Kotagede is that some houses have texture on the lower part of the exterior walls, while others do not.



Image 1: The houses that have textured on its exterior walls (left); The houses that does not have texture on its exterior walls (right)

This textured wall is used at the lower part of the exterior walls with a height of approximately 1 meter, then at the top it is a plain wall without texture. The texture on this wall is a natural stone or plaster finish that is textured like gravel, brick, or natural stone. Some houses apply this textured wall around the walls of the house, but there are also those who only apply it to certain parts. The use of walls with textures at the lower part in some houses makes an interesting sight between the narrow alleys of Kotagede. Since some

houses have textured walls, and others do not, the question arises as to whether there is a special reason behind using textured walls and why some houses have it while others do not. Is there also a relationship with the behaviour of the local community or the local environment. The researcher's temporary hypothesis about the reasons for using textured walls is to add aesthetic value, as protection against walls (moss, fungus, and collision from vehicles or goods passing through narrow alleys), as a sign of someone's house or criterion, and as a grip to help people walk in narrow and slippery alleys.

This research question is important to answer because to find out the reasons for using this textured wall, so that people can know the function behind this kind of wall and the value contained therein. Therefore, the wall is not only considered a "complementary" element of the building, but also a part of the building itself which has a function and value itself. As said by Amos Rapoport (1969) that house is a straight expression of values, conceptions, perceptions and changing lifestyles.

Previous research related to this research is research conducted by Mahmuda. J.A. (2008). The research discusses that the brick wall with white paint and natural stone finishing is less than 1 m high, is one of the visual characteristics of the buildings on Kemasan Street, Kotagede. Meanwhile this study aims to find out the reasons behind the use of this type of wall and whether it is related to community behaviour and narrow alleys. This study is focuses on RW 7 from Purbayan Village.

Theoretical Review

The research hypotheses above are based on several theories. In the research hypothesis above it is stated that textured walls may have four functions, the first of which is to add aesthetic value. The definition of texture itself according to Supriyono (2010) is the tactile value or roughness of an object's surface. According to Darsono Sony Kartika (2007) in aesthetics there are five main qualities that make up aesthetics, which are unity, harmony, balance, symmetry, and contrast. Based on this theory, textured walls can cause a contrast with other plain walls to form a beauty.

The second function is as protection from moss, fungus, and collision. Because the walls of these houses are in narrow alleys, the environment in the alleys is quite humid because rainwater puddles easily form in the alleys and they do not get enough sunlight, which makes it easier for moss and fungus to grow. Mosses and fungi are the cause of biological damage to buildings and these organisms can grow well in places with high humidity (Stambolov & Boer, 1976). Humidity and rainwater stagnation can make brick walls easily damaged because organisms grow easily and are also exposed to water capillary action. Therefore, brick walls must be protected from water and moisture so that they remain in good condition even though they have been standing on the ground for a long time (Munandar, 2010). The use of textured walls to cover exterior walls can protect brick walls from moisture and biological damage, so that brick walls can last longer. In addition, this textured wall can protect brick walls from collisions or friction from vehicles or goods that pass through this narrow alley which is damage caused by humans (Rilatupa, 2020). Even so, this collision or friction includes minor architectural damage that does not interfere with the function of the architecture and does not pose a danger to the occupants (Direktorat Jenderal Cipta Karya, 2006).

The next function is as a sign for someone's house because the textured walls are different in each house, making it easier for people to remember the house and even the owner of the house and the textured wall can be a criterion. Textured walls can be used as a criterion or navigational guide in the midst of the many and complicated alleys in the area. Textured walls that have a striking appearance and color among other plain walls and not all houses

have them can be used as a criterion or navigational guide by someone, especially someone who is passing through the alley for the first time to more easily remember the path they are going through. This is because one of the factors that helps people find their way is color, because color can increase awareness and help direct people to a destination, such as the color on a wall that can be used as a medium of navigation (Farr, Kleinschmidt, Yarlagadda, & Mengersen, 2012). This is closely related to perception. Perception according to Webster's dictionary, one of the meanings of perception is deep knowledge, intuition, or the ability of the five senses to understand something (Webster, 1977). The perceptual process begins with the introduction of stimulation patterns such as signs, symbols and so on, which then occurs cognitive processes and finally perception (Gibson, 2001). Cognitive processes are the acquisition, arrangement, and use of knowledge (Asrori, 2020). It is this cognitive process that makes a person able to recall the path he has travelled with the knowledge previously obtained in the form of remembering the benchmarks as a navigational guide.

The final function of the researcher's hypothesis is that the textured wall can serves as a grip so that people do not slip when walking in narrow alleys. The narrow alleys that are between the high walls of the houses do not get enough sunlight, making the alleys quite slippery because they are overgrown with moss and a little dim even during the day. This can make people not pay attention to the path they are going through when walking in these alleys, so they will easily slip. The presence of textured walls can make people walk while feeling the textured walls because textured walls can make people who have difficulty seeing able to move confidently (Lestari & Widyarthara, 2012). In addition, people who pass through these alleys can hold the wainscoting at the top of the textured wall to hold on when they fall.

METHOD

This study uses the qualitative methods through primary data and secondary data. Primary data comes from direct observation and interviews, while secondary data comes from literature studies to strengthen the findings. Direct observations were made at the RW 7 of Purbayan Village, Kotagede to see first-hand the condition of the neighbourhood. While the interview was conducted by interviewing one of the RT heads and the local resident. The interview contains the reasons behind the use of texture at the lower part of the wall and its relationship with the people behaviour and the alleys.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This research was conducted in Purbayan Village, Kotagede, precisely in RW 7.



Image 2. The Map of RW 7

From the observations made in RW 7, there is some information obtained as follows:

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1. There are 18 houses had textures on their lower walls. There are some houses that use textured walls around their house and there are some who only use it in certain parts such as the front of their houses.



Image 3. The houses with texture on lower part of exterior wall

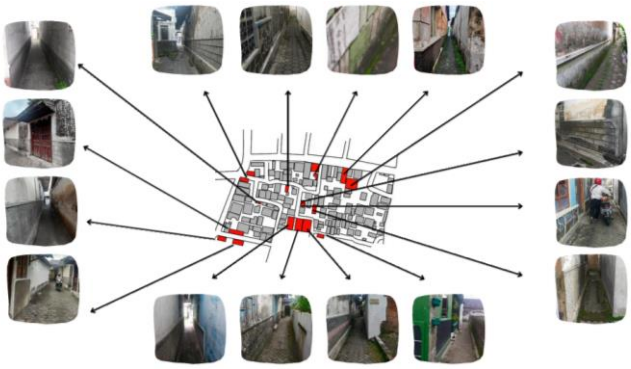


Image 4. The houses that use textured wall on the lower part of their exterior wall



Image 5. One of the houses that use textured wall in certain part [in front of the house] (left); One of the houses that use textured wall around the house (middle and right)

2. The height of this textured wall ranges from 70 cm - 1.4 m.

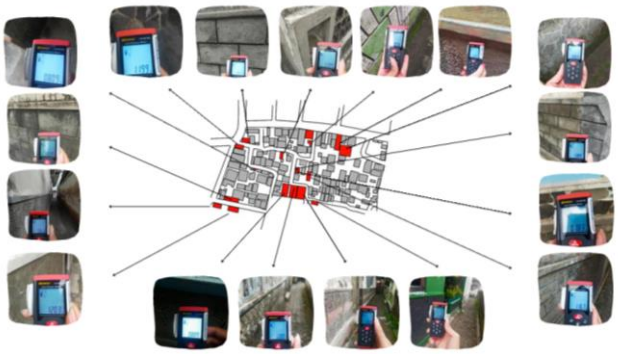


Image 6. The height of textured wall

3. These houses stand among alleys with a width between from 80 cm to 1.3 m and the widest alley is 3 meters which is one of the main alleys in RW 7.



Image 7. The width of the alleys

Discussion

From the interview conducted by interviewing one of the RT heads in RW 7, namely Mr. Marsodik who is the head of RT 30, there are several things that can answer the questions from this research paper. According to him, the reason for using texture on the lower walls of the residents' houses is unclear, because these houses are old houses passed down by their ancestors and they still maintain the shape and facade of these buildings (Marsodik, 2022). Apart from the old houses, there are several houses that look modern but have texture at the lower part of the walls, one of which is the house belonging to Mr. Joni from RT 32. Mr. Joni stated that his house was actually an old house inherited from his ancestors, but he has renovated his house to look more modern but still maintains the facade of his house which has a texture on the lower part of the walls (Joni, 2022).

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Image 8. Mr. Joni's house

Mr. Marsodik assumed that the textured walls might serve to add beauty to the house and were a building style in ancient times. In addition, the textured wall also serves to protect the wall from moss and fungus, because it turns out that most of the textured walls are made of real stone or gravel which can protect brick walls from moss and fungus (Marsodik, 2022).

If researcher look at the condition of the arrangement of the houses in Kotagede, especially RW 7, these reasons are most likely true. This is because in Kotagede there are many narrow alleys. The alleys are about 1 meter wide, with the widest being about 3 meters and the narrowest being about 80 cm. In the middle of the narrow alleys that ordinary people passing by, having a textured wall with a pattern and color that is different from the other walls that look pale in color, will make the alley more colorful and not look too gloomy. In addition, the narrow alleys feel a little damp, especially during the rainy season, because rainwater puddles on the ground plus the alleys are a little dark because they don't get much exposure to sunlight, making it easy for mold and mildew to grow. With a texture at the lower part of the wall made of stone or gravel, it can protect the main wall from moss or fungus which can make the wall weathered and look unattractive. Because of this, some houses may apply this textured wall to parts that are prone to growing moss or fungus.



Image 9. The comparison between house that does not have textured wall and the house that have it

From the picture above, it can be seen that the house on the left which does not have textured walls grows a lot of mold and mildew, especially on the bottom and even the top wall, while the house on the right tends to be cleaner from moss and mold. The house on the right also looks prettier, apart from being cleaner, the textured wall which is a different color and texture from the wall above makes a nice contrast which is one of the five main qualities that make up beauty (Sony Kartika, 2007).

These reasons can be corroborated by the existence of one area in RW 7 where the houses that are lined up in one long alley do not have any texture on the lower walls. This is because these houses face each other and there are no gaps between the houses. Because they face each other, the facades of the houses directly face the alleys and other houses which make

these houses not need to add texture to the lower walls to add beauty to the alleys. In addition, there are no narrow alleys between houses, there is only a main alley which quite large, so that the alley is not damp, and makes the houses not easily mossy or moldy.



Image 10. The map of the area where no houses have texture on the lower part of their exterior walls



Image 11. The photos of the area where no houses have texture on the lower part of their exterior walls

Even though these reasons, especially reasons for protection, seem reasonable at this time, according to Mr. Marsodik, their ancestors probably used the texture on the lower part of the wall only for aesthetics, not for protection. Because he stated that the narrow and complicated alleys like a labyrinth in Kotagede were the result of an accident. Their ancestors used to just build houses on their land and the rest of the land was made for *tritisan* (area where rainwater falls from the eaves). Those *tritisan* are now become the alleys between houses and used as public routes (Marsodik, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Most of the results of this study are the results of the assumptions of interviewees and researchers due to the lack of information about this textured wall. The results of this study prove part of the researcher's hypothesis that textured walls in Kotagede function as an addition to the aesthetic value of buildings and also as protection. For the researcher's hypothesis that a textured wall serves as a criterion or sign of someone's house to be easily recognized and as a grip for someone who is passing through a narrow and slippery alley, this cannot be proven because the interviewees said that so far, they have not used textured walls for these two things.

From the results of the findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that the reason for using textured walls is for beauty and also protection from moss. Not all houses have these textured walls, because the houses that have textured walls are old houses passed down from the ancestors to their children and grandchildren and they are still maintain the shape and facade of these houses, while houses that do not have textured walls are modern houses.

Because these houses were built tens or even hundreds of years ago, it is not known whether there are specific influences from people's behaviour that influence the use of these textured walls. Maybe the influence that led to the use of this textured wall was the influence of the "trend" on the building style at that time. Because of that many people want to have a house that fits the same style as that of most people.

Because not all houses have these textured walls, this kind of walls that have textures, patterns, and colors that are different from the other walls make this wall look striking and attractive in the middle of a narrow and pale alley. In addition, the reason for the existence of this wall is to protect the wall from moss or fungus that easily grows due to humidity from narrow alleys and for beauty in the middle of a narrow alley that people often pass through, so that, if there are no alleys or especially narrow alleys, then there is little possibility there is a texture on the lower part of the exterior wall of the houses.

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