



Aspects of Place Meaning in Heritage Tourism (Case Study: Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung, Tanjungbalai City, Indonesia)

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 02-11-2023

Revised 23-11-2023

Accepted 25-11-2023

Available online 30-11-2023

E-ISSN: 2622-1640

P-ISSN: 2622-0008

How to cite:

Auliya, M. H., Ginting, N.: Aspects of Place Meaning in Heritage Tourism (Case Study: Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung, Tanjungbalai City, Indonesia). International Journal of Architecture and Urbanism. 2023. 7(3):

ABSTRACT

Tourism is one of the industries that can improve the welfare of the people in an area, one of which is heritage tourism. Visits to heritage tourism are one of the fastest growing tourist activities, so heritage tourism is an asset that should be developed by each region. In heritage tourism, there is a place attachment. Place attachment is a bond made by humans with a place. One aspect of the formation of place attachment is the meaning of place. A historical tourist attraction that has a place attachment is the Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung Tanjungbalai. This study aims to analyze aspects of the meaning of the place owned by Rumah Balai. The research method used in this research is a concurrent mixed method. The results of the analysis carried out stated that the aspect of the meaning of the place owned by Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung is still low and this can be improved by increasing aspects of physical characteristics and aspects of social interaction. So that it can increase the number of visitors who come.

Keywords: heritage tourism, place meaning, Tanjungbalai



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1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the sectors that can improve the Indonesian economy [1][2][3], and can also improve the welfare of local communities [1][4][5][6]. So that the local government is trying to improve the tourism sector [6][7]. Of the several components of tourism that can be developed, one of them is a tourist attraction [6][8][9]. Heritage tourism objects are one of the fastest-growing tourist attractions [10][11]. In heritage tourism objects there is a sense of place attachment by tourists and local communities that must be maintained so that the original identity of the tourism object remains original [12][13].

Place attachment is a relationship formed by humans with a place [8][14][15], which is positive and develops with the length of time humans are active in that place [14]. Place attachment has several components, one of which is the meaning of place [16], the meaning of a place is very important to be preserved and developed, because the meaning of place is the key to human experience (Table 2) [17], meaning the meaning obtained

by individuals from a place. it becomes someone's goal to stay or come back to the place he visited. One of them is Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung. This building has a place attachment and historical value that deserves to be preserved [18][19]. Based on that, Based on that, the study of the meaning of places in historical tourism is very important to be carried out, so that it can be sustainable and developed optimally.

Tourism is one of the largest economic sectors that has the fastest growth rate every year and is the main source of income for Indonesia [1][2][3]. One of them is heritage tourism which has become the fastest growing tourism sector [10][20]. Heritage tourism is a tour that is carried out to see artifacts, places, and activities that authentically describe the stories or history of the past or present [21][22][23]. And heritage tourism is tourism that uses empowering methods and utilizes historical heritage, both tangible and intangible, including the community around tourist sites as an attraction for visitors[24][25]. In this study, it was discussed about heritage tangible tourism, which is divided into 2 forms, namely immovable heritage and movable heritage [26][27][28].

Meanwhile, immovable heritage is objects or places that are in open spaces such as landscapes, historical sites, and historical buildings (Table 1). Meanwhile, movable heritage is objects that are in a (closed) space such as photos, documents, works of art, archives, and audio visuals (Table 1) [26][27][28].

Table 1 Elements of Immovable Heritage and Movable Heritage

Reference	Element	Forming Elements	Conclusion
Kakiuchi, 2014; Sulistyo, 2019; Galla,2001	Immovable Heritage	1. Historical site, 2. Landscape, 3. Historical building.	1. Landscape 2. Historical building
	Movable Heritage	1. Document, 2. Photo, 3. Artworks, 4. Files, 5. Audio visual.	3. Artworks

Based on table 1, what will be discussed in this study are landscapes, historical buildings, and works of art contained in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung.

Place attachment is a relationship formed by an individual to a place [8][14][15]. Place attachment can be formed if there is a meaning from the place [15][29]. Likewise, if there is a place attachment, then there is also a meaning from that place [16]. The meaning of place is the belief of each individual towards a certain place that describes the physical characteristics and social interactions that exist in that place (Table 2) [30], the meaning of place also greatly influences the value of self- formation (Table 2) [31].

Table 2 Aspects Forming the Meaning of Place

Reference	Aspect	Conclusion
Park, (2005)	- Experience	
Wynveen, et al, (2012)	- Physical characteristics	1. Physical characteristics
	- Social interactions	2. Social interactions
Weber, (2016)	- Self formation	

Based on table 2, what will be discussed in this study are aspects of physical characteristics and aspects of social interaction contained in the Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung.

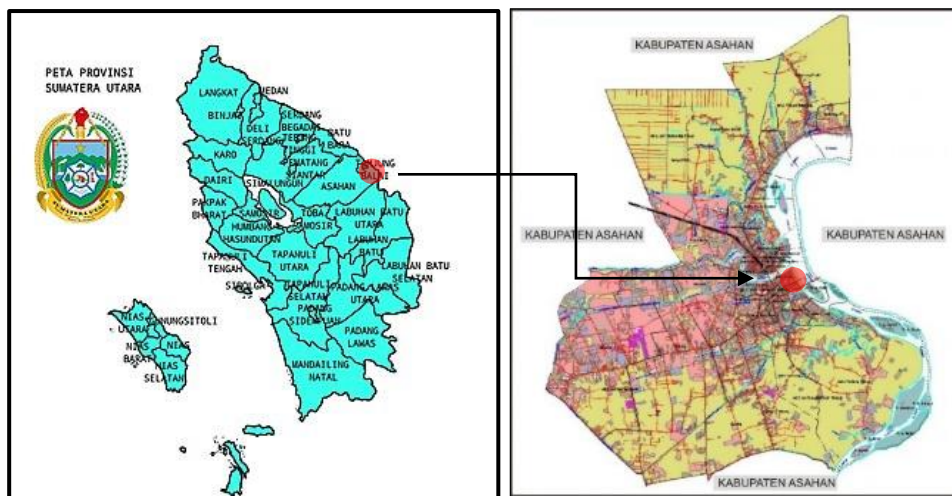
2. Method

The method used in this study is the concurrent mixed method [2][8]. This method was also used in several previous studies, Place attachment of the public space in Krueng Cunda [2] and Place attachment of the ecotourism in Sicanang Mangrove [8].

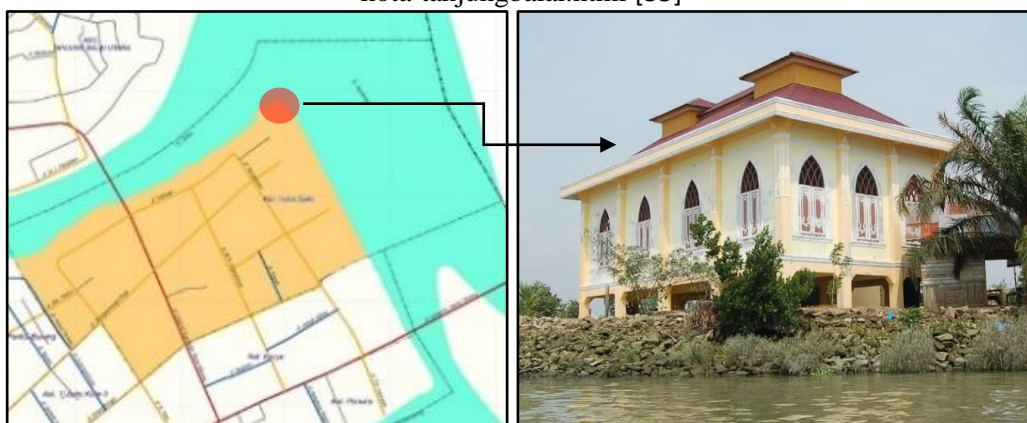
Quantitative data was obtained by distributing questionnaires to visitors and local communities with as many as 100 respondents, using a five-point scale that is between strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to assess the variable meaning of place. These measurements include physical characteristics and social interactions [31]. The results of this questionnaire survey will be processed using an excel application to get the average value of several statements that have been distributed.

Qualitative data was obtained by conducting interviews with 5 resource persons, namely the Tanjungbalai city government, the tourism office, tourism managers, community leaders, and tourists, then field observations were made on Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung [32][33].

This research was conducted at Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung, Tanjungbalai in 2022 (Figure 1). The selection of this research location was based on things that had been considered by the researcher. The consideration is whether the study location already has a tangible heritage tourism component and has an aspect of place meaning. Because of this, the researchers chose this location so that the heritage tourism of Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung is better known nationally and internationally.



Source: https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sumatra_Utara [34] / <https://peta-kota.blogspot.com/2017/01/peta-kota-tanjungbalai.html> [35]



Source: <https://kectbs.tanjungbalaikota.go.id/peta-kelurahan/> [36]

Figure 1 Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung

3. Result and Discussion

In the aspect of the meaning of place, it is divided into 2 more sub-sections, namely physical characteristics and social interaction [3]. The first that researchers will discuss is physical characteristics. Physical characteristics are all attributes that exist in the landscape area of the study area [37], while social interaction is all interactions between individuals and groups in the study area [38].

This analysis was conducted to examine the aspect of the meaning of place in heritage tourism at Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung. Data were collected through questionnaires, in-depth interviews with key informants, and field observations. To measure the aspect of place meaning through a questionnaire, can be seen in table 3 and table 4.

Results and Discussion of Physical Characteristics in Aspects of Place Meaning

Table 3 Physical Characteristics on Place Meaning

Statement	Local Community	Traveler
	Average value	
The condition of the landscape around Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung is well maintained and maintained.	3.2	3.12
The condition of Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung building is well maintained and maintained.	1.7	3.1
Mean	2.45	3.11

Based on table 3, it can be seen that the landscape condition of Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung received a moderate predicate from the category of place attachment rating scale. This is reinforced by the results of the researcher's observations (Figure 2), who saw firsthand the condition of the landscape [37]. Even though the landscape in the form of a river has the potential to be used as water tourism in addition to having a history behind it. It can also be seen in table 3, that the physical condition of Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung building received a low predicate by the local community (1.7) and a moderate predicate by tourists (3.1). This difference in predicate is because the local community considers that Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung building is uniquely Malay in its ornament and shape, while tourists also say that the typical Malay characteristics of Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung already exist, but the condition is very poorly maintained [39] (Figure 3). This is reinforced by the results of interviews with the Head of the Division. Tanjungbalai Tourism,

"... The Malay character owned by Rumah Balai is still relatively low but it does not hinder the meaning contained in the building of this Balai House..." (Kabid. Pariwisata Tanjungbalai)

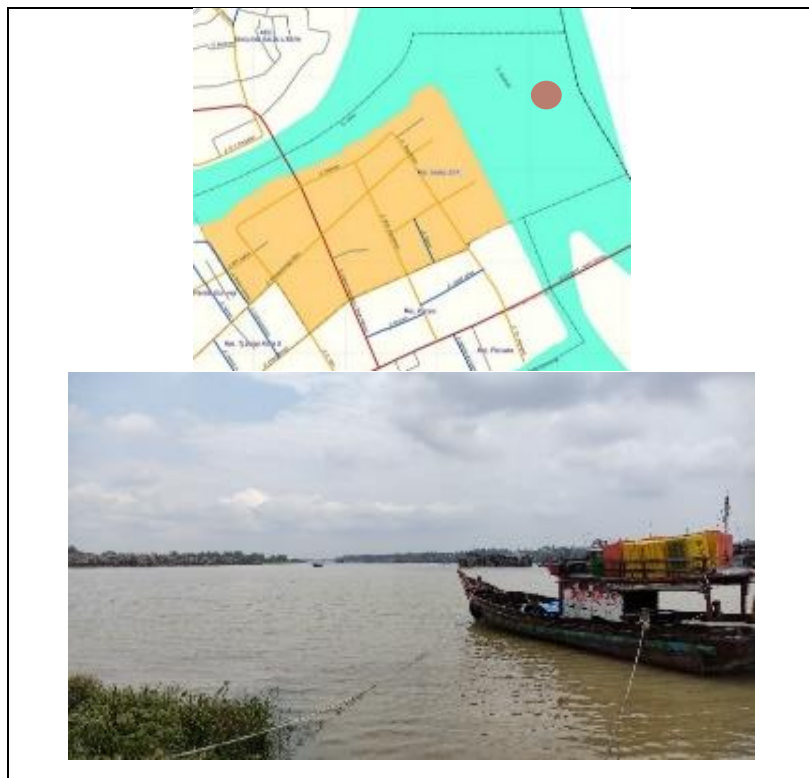


Figure 2 Landscape Conditions in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung Area
Source: Personal Documentation



Figure 3 Condition of Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung
Source: Personal Documentation

Results and Discussion of Social Interaction in Aspects of Place Meaning

Table 4 Social Interaction on Place Meaning

Statement	Local Community	Traveler
	Average value	
Social interactions that occur in the landscape of Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung (Engage / Want to participate)	2,91	3.15
Social interactions that occur in the Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung building (Involved / Wants to participate)	1.86	3.2
Social interactions that occur in the preservation of works of art in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung (Involved / Wants to participate)	1,78	3.2
Mean	2.18	3.18

Based on table 4, it can be seen that the social interactions that occur in the landscape in the Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung get moderate predicate by local people (2.91) and moderate predicate also by tourists (3.15). This is because the local community and tourists are not very involved in the social interactions that occur on the river which is near Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung [38]. This is also reinforced by the statement of the head of the Tanjungbalai city tourism sector,

“...only fishermen have activities in the river...” (Kabid. Pariwisata Tanjungbalai)

While in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung building, social activities and interactions that occur are still very rare, this is also reinforced by the low predicate by the local community (1.86). this is reinforced by statements from local communities that they are less involved in the events held at Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung [30], only officials and interested people are involved. For tourists, it is inversely proportional to the local community, which gives a moderate predicate (3.2). This is because tourists feel like participating in every activity and social interaction that occurs at the Balai Ujung House [40].

And it can also be seen that the activities for the preservation of the works of art in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung are still low (1.78) even the people say that they do not know how to make carvings or typical

Malay ornaments in the Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung [38]. However, this is inversely proportional to tourists who are eager to participate in the preservation of works of art in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung [40]. If this uniqueness continues to be maintained, more and more visitors from various regions come and can increase the economic flow in the city of Tanjungbalai in the tourism sector.

4. Conclusion

Aspects of physical characteristics and social interactions contained in the aspect of the meaning of the place owned by Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung are still low. Even the local community gave low predicate on these two aspects related to Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung. This indicates that Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung is not being cared for and not being used optimally.

While tourists give a moderate predicate, this difference is because tourists say that the aspect of the meaning of the place in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung is quite good. Plus the sense of wanting to participate that tourists have in every activity held at Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung. This can be a factor to increase the number of visitors and the economy of the people of Tanjungbalai city from the tourism sector.

So, the aspect of place meaning as an aspect of place attachment is very important to be preserved in heritage tourism. And there must be cooperation between the local community and the Tanjungbalai City government in maintaining the meaning of the place in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung and promoting tourism at Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung so that it is better known nationally and internationally. Because this tour has enormous potential to improve the welfare and economy of the surrounding community in particular and improve the economy of the city of Tanjungbalai in general. Finally, this research is expected to be a recommendation for the government and managers in improving the aspect of the meaning of a place that is still low in Rumah Balai Ujung Tanjung, to increase the number of visitors.

5. Acknowledgements

This research was conducted to fulfill the requirements for the final thesis at the Department of Architecture, University of North Sumatra. Researchers would like to thank the University of North Sumatra and the people of Tanjungbalai city who contributed to this research.

6. Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest and this research received no external funding.

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