



# Overview of Ecopedagogy and Local Wisdom of the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Cultural Site in The Sub-District of Arjasari, Bandung Regency

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**Abstract:** This study is intended to determine the history and local wisdom around the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site in Arjasari District, Bandung Regency, which is related to nature conservation efforts. Ancient society was very close to nature and manifested that closeness by uniting themselves without destroying each other. In that context, *silokas* often appear which are believed to be valid until now. Various *silokas* became a powerful way to provide education to the community so as not to damage or over-exploit nature. From an ecopedagogical point of view, this is important to study. Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted, it can be seen that local wisdom related to preserving nature around Bumi Alit Kabuyutan is still being maintained. These values need to be re-installed into the younger generation to be a form of inheritance of history and the noble values contained therein. The ecopedagogical approach is one of the effective ways that can be used in the learning process in schools to link history and environmental understanding. Ecopedagogy becomes a means to change or fight the ideology that places humans as rulers and destroyers of the planet's ecosystem. It is essential to place the study of ecopedagogy in the context of historical learning. This is done to prepare students to become historical actors in the present and future that are fairer to themselves and the natural environment, humanistic, and better quality of life.

**Keywords:** Bumi Alit Kabuyutan, ecopedagogy, history, local wisdom.



## Introduction

Bandung Regency is one of the regencies in West Java Province, Indonesia. Geographically, the location of Bandung Regency is 107° 22' - 108° 50' East Longitude and 6° 04' - 7° 01' South Latitude. The total area of Bandung Regency is 1,762.39 km<sup>2</sup> (4.99% of the total area of West Java Province, which is 35,377.76 km<sup>2</sup>).

Most Bandung Regency areas are mountainous or hilly areas with altitudes above sea level varying from  $\pm$  500 m to 2,429 m above sea level, getting steeper to the south. Some villages are on the edge of the forest, but most are outside the forest area. Most areas in Bandung Regency are mountainous with peaks with an average height of more than 2,500 meters above sea level. These mountains include Mount Wayang (2,181 masl), Mount Patuha (2,334 masl) in Cipeundeuy District, Mount Malabar (2,321 masl), and Mount Papandayan (2,262 masl) and Mount Guntur (2,249 masl). Both of which are located on the border with Garut Regency.

The Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site is located in Arjasari District, Bandung Regency. The site's location is between two villages, precisely on the border of Lebakwangi and Batukarut villages. The area of the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site is about 1,662 m<sup>2</sup> or 118 tumbak. In the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site, many trees are hundreds of years old, including banyan trees, kiara, and various medicinal plants. There are two buildings in this area. The first building, Bale Panglawungan, is a place commonly used to hold corporate gatherings. Second, the traditional house of Bumi Alit Kabuyutan is the main building on this site; this traditional house is one of the relics of their ancestors who continue to maintain its authenticity.

Based on this, Bumi Alit Kabuyutan is also part of the local wisdom of the Ds. Lebakwangi District, Arjasari Kab. Bandung. Local wisdom is usually taught from generation to generation and passed down from generation to generation. Local wisdom is divided into two—first, wisdom in the form of objects. Second, in the form of an intangible material, wisdom in objects is usually literature, architecture, crafts, traditional clothes, and heirlooms. In comparison, wisdom is in intangible forms such as dances, ceremonies, and other traditional rituals. This local wisdom is usually reflected in people's long-standing living habits; for example, they protect and preserve nature.



This paper intends to discuss an overview of ecopedagogy and local wisdom in the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan area. This cultural site can be used as an object of study that connects history and environmental education to be understood and imitated by today's young generation.

## Methods and Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a case study through an ecopedagogical approach. Qualitative research explores and understands the meaning that several individuals or groups ascribe to social or humanitarian problems (Creswell, 2009; Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2019). Furthermore, Creswell (2009) explains that this qualitative research process involves essential efforts, such as asking questions and procedures, collecting specific data from participants, analyzing data inductively, starting from specific themes to specific themes. Common themes and interpret the meaning of the data.

According to Brewer and Hunter (in Densin & Lincoln; Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2019), qualitative research is inherently the focus of attention with various methods. The use of various methods or triangulation reflects an attempt to understand the phenomenon being studied. Flick (in Densin & Lincoln, 2009) explains that the combination of various methods, from the empirical point of view and researcher/observer in a single study, should be understood as a strategy that adds power and depth to any investigation.

Researchers used qualitative research with a case study strategy. A case study is a research strategy in which the researcher carefully investigates a program, event, activity, process, or group of individuals. The cases were limited by time and activity, and the researcher collected complete information using various data collection procedures based on the allotted time.

Based on this explanation, descriptive qualitative research is a series of activities to obtain data without being under certain conditions, the results of which emphasize meaning. In this study, the researcher uses a qualitative descriptive research method because this research explores an activity, event, activity, process, or group of individuals carried out at the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site related to the rules or *siloka* of the relationship between humans and nature so that the natural conditions on the Earth site Alit Kabuyutan has been preserved until now. Following the characteristics of the data needed in this study, the data collection techniques carried out are:



### 1) Observation

Observations are made with clear, detailed, complete, and conscious observations about the actual behaviour of individuals in certain circumstances. The importance of observation is the ability to determine the initial factors of behaviour and accurately describe the reactions of individuals observed under certain conditions.

Through observation, researchers learn about behaviour and the meaning of that behaviour. In connection with the observations made in qualitative research, the observations in this study are used to reveal data regarding efforts to preserve the environment around the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site. This observation aims to obtain more complete data regarding procedures, *silokas*, and traditional heritage values that are still applied today.

### 2) Interview

An interview is a process of obtaining information for research purposes using question and answer while looking face to face between the questioner or interviewer and the answerer or respondent using an interview guide. In this study, the researcher recorded all the answers from the respondents as they were. The interviewer occasionally intersperses the respondent's answer to ask for an explanation and straightens out an answer that deviates from the question. The type of interview used in this study is a structured interview. That is, in conducting interviews, researchers have prepared research instruments in the form of written questions. Here, the researcher interviewed the *kuncen* or caretaker of the site.

### 3) Documentation

According to Djma'an Satori (2011), a documentation study collects documents and data needed in research problems, then studies intensely to support and add to the belief and proof of an incident. The documents used in this study are photographs taken during observation, both in photos of the surrounding environment's state and objects in the site. It is just that some photos may not be published, so they are only for research data. In addition, researchers also obtained written documents related to the history of the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site.



## Findings

*Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site.* The research location for the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site is precisely on Jalan Batukarut-Lebakwangi, RT 1 RW 7, Batukarut Village, Arjasari District, Bandung Regency. The boundaries of the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site are in the north by the district highway, in the south by the Citalugtung River, in the west by villages, and in the east by rice fields and minor roads. We can visit the location by following the public transportation route Arjasari-Banjaran for about 5 minutes; the distance from Bandung Regency is  $\pm 8$  km, and the distance from the capital city of Bandung is  $\pm 17$  km.

Bumi Alit Kabuyutan has been recognized by the government as a cultural site since 1993. Bumi Alit Kabuyutan is located on a customary land area of +1,662 meters<sup>2</sup>, or +118 *tumbak* Bath. Bumi Alit Kabuyutan measuring 5x6 meters<sup>2</sup>, in the form of a stilt house generally an ancient Sundanese house which is dominated by bamboo, wood, and the roof is *injuk (batenp)* facing north, in front of the section there are three stairs, inside which is divided into three rooms, namely the *panjuaran* (room a place for heirlooms), *pangcalikan* (middle room) and *pawon* (kitchen) which is said to have been built by an ancestor from the Galuh Kingdom named Grandmother Panggung Jayadikusumah and her four confidants. Meanwhile, Bale Panglawungan with an area of 10x10 meters<sup>2</sup> in the form of a pavilion built in 2010 with the assistance of the West Java Provincial Government. The construction of Bale Panglawungan is a place for gathering and deliberation of local traditional institutions.

*Meaning Lebakwangi and Batukarut .* The name of this site is known as Bumi Alit Kabuyutan, which means more or less a small house of ancestral heritage. While Lebakwangi-Batukarut is the name of the place where Bumi Alit Kabuyutan is located. If we examine the meaning of the origin of the word (Etymology) and the study of the origin of place names (Toponimi), Lebakwangi contains several meanings, including:

- a. Lebakwangi (Sundanese) consists of two words, namely Lebak (lower land) and Wangi (fragrant), meaning a place on low land that became famous because of the fragrance of the elders, including Grandfather Panggung Jayadikusumah who was famous for having various skills, supernatural powers and abilities. Leadership and four of his confidants, namely Embah Suta.



- b. Lebakwangi comes from Tanjungwangi, consisting of the word 'headland' (land jutting into the ocean when the southern part of Java was still an ocean or headland in question is a land jutting into a vast lake known as the ancient Bandung lake due to the damming of the Ancient Citarum river by materials the second devastating eruption of Mount Sunda/Cuda about 135,000 years ago (source T. Bahtiar, PR, 2005) and fragrant (fragrant).
- c. Another opinion is that the cape is the name of a type of lotus flower that smells good. Considering the various opinions above, if the author considers the land formation, the headland/peninsula is the southern mountain range starting from Pangalengan, the Malabar mountain complex, and Mount Anday. Lebakwangi is in the valley of Mount Anday, wherein the valley many cape/lotus plants smell fragrant when the Ancient Bandung Lake began to recede and was still wet after it receded, the valley became dry and finally could be used as a settlement known as Lebakwangi. Furthermore, the meaning of the name Batukarut is because, in that place (the Lebakwangi-Batukarut boundary), there is a large stone covered (dibulen) by a large tree areuy as if it was sewn up. Although it has become a cultural heritage since 1993, the existence of the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site is not yet widely known, either physically or its meanings and values, even by the people of Bandung Regency itself. The site in the form of a traditional house has become one of the valuable legacies of the ancestors, which is full of local wisdom.

*Ecological Values at the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site that are Still Preserved Today.* Values are people's ideas of what is good. One of the inheritance values is through habituation in the form of the implementation of traditions by the family or the community. These values are very decisive as the laying of the personality and identity of individuals and society.

According to Kattsoff (1996), the nature of value can be answered in three ways: first, value is entirely subjective, depending on the human experience of the value giver (subjectivity). Both values are realities in terms of ontology, but they do not exist in space and time. These values are logical essence and can be known through reason (logical objectivism). Third, values are objective elements that makeup reality (metaphysical objectivism). Interpreting values



may or may not be direct or indirect (expressed or implied values), meaning that it requires an in-depth study, including examining social values or interaction values. The study results on the values of community interaction in the implementation of the traditional Sundanese culture of the surrounding community at the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site are as follows:

- a. Researchers interpret the name Lebakwangi as a message or mandate for us, that we (the community) must maintain a good name, behave well, and must give kindness (*nyeungitan*) to others so that one day they will become famous. The name Batukarut has a deep meaning, namely, so that the Sundanese people do not have a stone-like nature, must not be stubborn, stubborn. Even if it has that trait, it must be carved out so that it is maintained and does not come out stubborn and hard-hearted because it will bring disaster to him or others and can cause woe in the world and the hereafter.
- b. The ancestral message of Kabuyutan Lebakwangi Batukarut called the Five Prasatia:
  - 1) *Hirup milik Gusti, jeung salawasna tasbih ka Gusti.*
  - 2) *Hirup teu mibareup hal nu leuwih, hal nu leuwih dipulangkeun ka Gusti diantara alam jeung lingkungan.*
  - 3) *Hirup Satia kana jalanna alam.*
  - 4) *Hirup satia kana bersihna nurani.*
  - 5) *Hirup Ajen, kana lubungna rasa kamanuisaan.*

*Silih/siloka* of the ancestors of Batukarut as follows.

- 1) Not allowed to go for Hajj (if not ready).
- 2) It is not allowed to keep a gray horse.
- 3) It is not allowed to keep a horse that is copper in color.
- 4) It is not allowed to keep red buffalo (munding Caucasians).
- 5) It is not allowed to cut down trees around the springs.
- 6) It is not allowed to build a gedong house (a walled house).
- 7) It is not allowed to make house foundations from stone and cottage structures (tiles).

The message mandates that we must have faith and fear of God Almighty, live a simple life, and not overly pursue luxuries that will harm humankind. We must live side by side with nature, by preserving nature. Later, it will provide harmony in human life with nature and



away from disasters. We must always guard our conscience, not act arrogantly, be kept away from envy, envy, and evil qualities. We must live with respect and love for each other. More or less, the *siloka* is the form of missiles that can be translated and interpreted in today's life.

- c. The ecological values that can be understood from the existence of the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site are that humans must live in harmony with nature, not destroy nature. We must preserve nature because nature will provide life for all people. If not maintained, nature will have an impact in the form of natural disasters that will harm humans.

One of the silokas of the ancestors at the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site is the prohibition against damaging the trees in the springs. Seuweu-siwi Lebakwangi Batukarut from ancient times was prohibited from taking firewood or cutting down trees around the springs. Whoever descends from Lebakwangi Batukarut, who dares to cut down a tree in the spring, will live in misery all his life because the place is haunted.

With the haunting words, the people of Lebakwangi Batukarut are so afraid that no one dares just to take wood for cooking, let alone cut down trees around the springs. As a result, in ancient times in Lebakwangi Batukarut, the water source was abundant and cleans because there were no disturbing trees. Abstinence like this has a good meaning, namely if many trees are cut down, the springs in every place will dry up and make life difficult because water is the source of life for humans, animals, and plants.

At present, the siloka is still being applied at the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site. On the site, it still looks beautiful. The trees are still growing thickly. According to the Locksmith of the Earth Alit Kabuyutan Site, Mr. Ahim, at the site, it is forbidden to cut down trees so that the beauty of the natural environment is maintained. Uniquely, if we plant trees in the situd area, they will not be able to grow. So the trees in the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site have grown naturally for a long time.

According to Mr. Ahim, the Bumi alit kabuyutan site with its beauty, the number of trees that grow, and some trees are usually estimated to be hundreds of years old that are still growing well as a producer of oxygen. Lebakwangi Batukarut.



Inside this traditional Kabuyutan house, some stones are in a mess, which is the origin of the name Batukarut. The karut stone is a rock wrapped by tree roots. The Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site is flanked by two rivers: the Kabuyutan River and the Citalutug River. The Kabuyutan River was deliberately made by the ancestors of the villages for irrigating agricultural land. The Kabuyutan River not only serves as a boundary between Lebakwangi and Batukarut villages but is also used by the community as a place for washing and bathing.



**Figure 1.** Trees that are hundreds of years old still grow and stand firmly in the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site area. The trees have been well maintained until now  
(Source: Personal Documentary, 2021)

According to the caretaker of the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site, the natural site must be on the edge of the river. This is because water is a source of life that can be used for daily activities as a food source, irrigation system, or washing and bathing purposes. Kabuyutan river water is never dry throughout the season, especially during the dry season. This is because the environment around the river is still beautiful. There are still many trees that grow as infiltration and rainwater storage.



**Figure 2.** Water treatment and river management in Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site  
(Source: Personal Documentary, 2021)

The Bumi Alit Kabuyutan site is a site not for commercial or tourist destinations but a religious site. People who visit this site are usually people who have desires, such as advancing their business, position, or other ideals. According to Mr. Ahim, everyone needs DUIT (Prayer, Effort, Effort, and Tawakal). The step to get the DUIT, people usually perform a ritual of silence (meditation) in a traditional house on the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site for several days or bathe in the Kabuyutan river, which is located next to the site.

If we interpret the siloka, the mandate of the ancestors forbidding the destruction of the stone actually happened. Bumi Alit Kabuyutan is the site of a traditional house made of wood and bamboo, unlike the current Lebakwangi Batukarut community house, which is mainly made of bricks or roof tiles. According to the elders of Lebakwangi Batukarut, formerly the village of Cigentur Cijengkol - Batukarut sareng Lebakwangi was flat. If you go from Lebakwangi-Batukarut to Cigentur or Cijengkol, you do not have to go through the bridge, just across the stone along the Citalutug River because back then it was not as steep as it is now.

Based on the characters' stories, the Citalutug River became steep because the stones in the river were taken by the Dutch government to make roads around the land of Sunda. As a result, the Citalutug River becomes very steep. During the rainy season, landslides occur around the riverbank. Many people in Lebakwangi Batukarut are now building permanent houses, many of which are



made of stone. This is due to the development of the times. The stones are not taken from the Citalutug River but other areas. The community continues to maintain the preservation of the Citalutug River so the water will never dry.

## Discussion and Recommendation

*Local Wisdom The Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site.* During the hustle and bustle of today's community activities, the Bumi Alit Kabuyutan Site still retains local wisdom that includes titi, seloka, or other expressions as an effort to preserve nature in Bumi Alit Kabuyutan and its surroundings. Local wisdom to maintain and preserve natural conditions applies in communities around the world. One of them is *Amaterasu Oomikami's* belief that applies to Japanese society.

Japanese culture contains concepts about ways or methods to maintain and care for the environment and how to preserve it. The concept of *Amaterasu Oomikami* is a part of knowledge used selectively in everyday life to deal with relevant or suitable situations for meeting specific needs to be achieved. The concept of *Amaterasu Oomikami* is also manifested in existing institutions in society, especially those related to social order and the defense of the existence and sustainability of Japanese society.

The Japanese expression of the natural environment, water, forest, mountains, trees, rocks is in their awareness of using the environment to make the best use of it and keep it well preserved. In the view of the Japanese, stones are a source of light. This view descends on wood which is also a medium for humans to produce light. The natural form of religious belief of *Amaterasu Oomikami* as the ancestor of the Japanese emperor is the symbolization of the sacred one. The worship of *Amaterasu Oomikami* as the ancestor of the Emperor rationalized the Japanese belief in the holiness of *Amaterasu Oomikami* (Lawanda, 2008).

Thoughts on *Amaterasu Oomikami* and cosmology have become Japanese values and are operational in Japanese culture. The meaning of *Amaterasu Oomikami* as the source of human life is a symbol of the sun. The triadic structure of *Amaterasu Oomikami* creates the symbol as the supreme God of the sky, the creator god of the earth, and the god of the sun. *Amaterasu Oomikami's* relationship with heaven, earth, and humans is in the form of an interpenetration relationship in *Amaterasu Oomikami's* relationship to protect the sky environment and earth, and human environment. The relationship is



centered on *Amaterasu Oomikami*, a source of harmony preserved in Japanese culture for practical reasons and becomes normative for these reasons.

Mountains and the tree forests that fill them are a source of water for humans who live at the foot of the mountain or far from the mountain. Water, mountains, forests, and trees are sacred, especially for Japanese people who are blessed with relatively large mountains compared to the land area. The environment is a condition that surrounds human life and affects the way of life of the people who live in it. To make the real world have the sacredness of *Amaterasu Oomikami* and other gods, *jinja* and *tera* was built where the gods lived when they came down in the world and made the world within the scope of their institutions and communities, namely having the sacredness of the sky together with their people during a ritual (*matsuri*).

The process of sacralization of a situation has turned out to be a powerful way to discipline the community so that it is not too free to damage and exploit nature as explained earlier, on Bumi Alit Kabuyutan, several taboos, *pamali*, or *titi* that require special rituals to carry them out. One taboo in Lebakwangi Batukarut is that people are prohibited from taking firewood or cutting down trees around the *seke* (springs). Whoever descends from Lebakwangi Batukarut dares to cut down trees in the spring area; he will be miserable for life because the place is considered sacred.

Because the place is sacred, the people of Lebakwangi Batukarut are afraid of these taboos. Don't take you, burn or cut down trees, just to pass through that area, people don't dare because of the 'sacred' word earlier. The positive impact of sanctifying the spring area is the availability of clean water sources throughout the seasons because the trees there remain intact and sustainable because no community dares to damage them.

### **Recommendation**

The existence of Bumi Alit Kabuyutan has now become part of a cultural heritage protected by law. The Bandung Regency Government has determined Bumi Alit Kabuyutan as a site that must be protected for its sustainability. How can the younger generation in the Lebakwangi and Batukarut areas still care about the existence of this cultural heritage and preserve its noble values? The ecopedagogy approach is one of the effective ways that can be used in the learning process in schools to link history and environmental understanding.



Ecopedagogy becomes a means to change or fight the ideology that places humans as rulers and destroyers of the planet's ecosystem. It is essential to place the study of ecopedagogy in the context of historical learning. This is done to prepare students to become historical actors in the present and future that are fairer to themselves and the natural environment, humanistic, and better quality of life.

To develop ecological intelligence using an ecopedagogical approach, history learning can construct students' hard and soft skills. Hard skills relate to understanding concepts, both substantive and analytical, and critical knowledge of the history of humankind concerning the social and natural environment and the problems it causes. Meanwhile, soft skills relate to the character reflected in the tenacious, creative, innovative, professional, confident, and polite traits related to ecological intelligence.

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