

# The Cultural Value Identification of Bandung Traditional Market in the Process of City Development through the Government Revitalization Project Case Study: Astana Anyar and Sumber Hurip Markets, Bandung<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The traditional market as a public space has an economic function that is strongly intertwined with social relations in society and integrated with social activities. With the passage of time, however, traditional markets have been weakened as centers of cultural exchange. A shabby public image has discouraged people from visiting markets. Starting in 2013, the government of Bandung city in Indonesia began a project to renew public impressions of traditional markets in Bandung, called 'Revitalizing Bandung Traditional Markets through Thematic Markets Concept'. Through the observation process, the dual perceptions between the government and the shopkeeper's association, as the caretakers in the markets, have been uncovered. This paper aims to analyze the cultural values of the existing markets, which should not be omitted in the process of constructing new marketplaces. In the process of developing the traditional markets in Bandung, the stakeholders need to be mindful of the actors involved in the marketplace. Historically, people visited the traditional markets to gather and share information, not only through transaction activities but also through verbal and non-verbal interactions. I discovered that the current conditions of the markets are remarkably different from when they were invented (at the beginning of the 19th century), due to the development of society in Bandung. I took Astana Anyar and Sumber Hurip markets as a case study. The results of this study contend that the idea of 'human contact' in a public space is crucial in constructing the relationship between the actors in the existing traditional markets. As there are still activities performed in existing public spaces, developing traditional markets into spaces for exchanging culture in society should become the main focus of the revitalization, instead of only considering new physical constructions.

**Keywords:** traditional market, cultural values, interaction, revitalization

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<sup>1</sup> This article is improved from the author's Master's thesis in Indonesia from the perspective of Cultural Design, at the Faculty of Art and Design, Bandung Institute of Technology.

## 1. Introduction

Humans, as social and community actors, have developed ways of life which shape culture and construct the mindset of the people in a particular society. People have also placed different meanings and values on public space throughout history. In this study, I intend to show the process of a development project by the Bandung city government, related to the revitalization of traditional markets, and to show how the market's associations take the perspective of the project. The revitalization aims to generate interest in visiting traditional markets among Bandung citizens and get rid of the negative impressions of markets as dirty, unsafe and disorganized places. The project has been in place since 2013<sup>2</sup> and the construction of the thematic Sarijadi market was finished in February 2017, despite opposing visions from the government and the management of the markets (including sellers). The Bandung government planned to revitalize thirty-six other markets in Bandung, but the sellers at other markets have tended to refuse these projects, which seem unfavorable to them.

Traditional markets have the historical background from the era they were invented until now, and one of their advantages has been consistently low-prices when compared to the 'modern supermarket' (Sommer, Wing, and Atkins, 1980). A revitalized market, such as Sarijadi, is seen as unsuccessful in terms of the number of customers and shopkeepers when compared to existing traditional markets. As a consequence of the higher rental prices for kiosks at revitalized markets, the sellers need to sell their products at a higher price than at ordinary local markets, which have not been revitalized. Consumers also prefer to visit the un-revitalized markets, which have low-priced products available, rather than visit the revitalized markets with higher prices. This study argues that there should be a compromise in the process of revitalizing the markets, and the important values of local markets should not be forgotten in constructing markets with thematic concepts. In short, this study addresses the identification of traditional values which should be preserved in revitalized markets, as in the case studies, Astana Anyar and Sumber Hurip markets can contribute to the process of developing and revitalizing local markets in Bandung.

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<sup>2</sup> The Plan of Making and Revitalizing Thematic Traditional Markets in Bandung. The Development Planning Agency of Bandung City and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, 2013 (*Perencanaan Pasar Tradisional Tematik, Kerjasama Bappeda Kota Bandung dan Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia*).

On one hand, various innovations such as the implementation of technology in financial transactions creates new trends in modern markets. The abolition of traditional markets in towns is encouraged by modern lifestyles, which have created public personalities that tend to be more individualistic and “minimalist” (Hardiman, 2010). Therefore, the process of using bargaining in a market is no longer seen as an attractive way to shop. On the other hand, in the historical view in Indonesia, a traditional market, as a public space in society, has always offered something unique to each region. Historically, markets in the West Java area featured traditional attractions such as Sundanese gamelan (*degung*) and traditional dancing. The display kiosks of traditional markets commonly featured woven bamboo baskets, trays and earthenware jugs to present products for sale. Some stallholders stayed in one place to sell items such as vegetables, while others were street peddlers balancing woven bamboo baskets on their shoulder. The market was usually the center for gathering, sharing information among the community, and conducting local traditions (such as bargaining) in the local language. Visiting the traditional market had become a habit for people, and there was at least one market in each society as a place for people to gather.

To revitalize the traditional market, there needs to be an analysis of the characteristics of each market that is profiled in the case study. The existence of traditional markets, each with different customs and local knowledge, is essential for Bandung society. Therefore, revitalization work should not only be about making new structures and buildings, but should also take into account existing local traditions. The study was conducted with a qualitative approach and data was collected through a process of observation, identification, and the study of existing literature. The contribution of this study is to highlight the importance of the implementation of existing cultural perspectives in the context of developing public spaces.

## **2. Research Methods**

Initially, an observational approach was needed due to the complexity of studying the traditional market. Thus, crucial terms should be identified at this stage of analysis. Focusing on the term ‘interaction’ as the starting point in the observation process, this study found that there are three significant types of traders at Astana Anyar and Sumber Hurip traditional markets: 1) Wet product tenants (fish, chicken, and meat); 2) Half-wet product tenants (vegetables); and 3) Dry product tenants (dried herbs and eggs). Moreover, this study illustrates the aspects of the *layout-settings* in their design approach and their effect on the interaction

process between sellers and buyers in the market. I intended the transaction activity to be the main focus of this study, to demonstrate how social activity in a public space is a natural habit of human beings (considered as social and community actors). *Intangible* artifacts, such as *verbal* and *non-verbal* communication in transaction activities, are crucial for analyzing the important cultural values in traditional markets which correspond to the habits in specific local markets. The use of natural materials such as bamboo and wood as market displays are significant, and therefore analyzing the concept of *craftsmanship* is also an important part of this research. Woven bamboo baskets and displays made of wood are seen as the *tangible artifact* and are interpreted as one of the characteristics of the traditional market, representing the use of local resources around the market.

### **3. The Revitalization of Markets in Bandung**

Traditional markets or local markets in Bandung are grounded in their historical background: first invented over two hundred years ago, the characteristics were influenced by the era of colonialization up until the independence era of Indonesia. Haryoto Kunto (1986), in his book 'Semerbak Bunga di Bandung Raya, ' construes the modernization of *Frisiastraat* area (now known as Sultan Tirtayasa street) in Bandung as the first structured city layout under Dutch colonialization. Later, the concept of the Garden City was used in the construction process of Bandung city. Thus, the layout of the city is divided into fixed areas, including areas for economic activities, such as a traditional market. On the one hand, the local economic systems were long-established by the community and the religious traditions in a specific area. On the other hand, economic systems from outside Indonesia had been incorporated from West Europe (i.e., a modern capitalist system). The modern system tends to pursue big profits and was therefore in contradiction with the local system in Indonesia at that time (Boeke in Kunto 1986: 193). The new system has been largely absorbed by traditional markets in Indonesia. Based on the data from PD. Pasar Bermartabat<sup>3</sup>, Bandung city has thirty-seven traditional markets throughout the Bandung area and a total capacity of 26,222 kiosks, which are maintained by 15,634 sellers (*pedagang pasar*).

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<sup>3</sup> PD. Pasar Bermartabat: Regional Owned Enterprises (BUMD), which specializes in managing traditional markets in Bandung City.

Table 1 List of Traditional Markets, managed by PD. Pasar Bermartabat Kota Bandung

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
1. Pasar Baru Market	1. Sederhana Market	13. Sadangserang Market
2. Astana Anyar Market	2. M.Toha/Dewi Gartika Market	14. Cijerah Market
3. Ujungberung Market	3. Cicadas Market	15. Gegerkalong Market
4. Andir Market	4. Cikapundung Market	16. Simpang Market
5. Kosambi Market	5. Cihaurgeulis Market	17. Balubur Market
6. Kiaracandong Market	6. Palasari Market	18. Cihapit Market
	7. Jatayu Market	19. Watukencana Market
	8. Cicaheum Market	20. Sukahaji Market
	9. Karapitan Market	21. Banceuy Market
	10. Ciwastra Market	22. Pasar Bermartabat, Pagarsih Market
	11. Pamoyanan Market	
	12. Leuwipanjang Market	
		1. Gang Saleh Market
		2. Sarijadi Market
		3. Cikaso Market
		4. Kebon Sirih Market
		5. Puyuh Market
		6. Gempol Market
		7. Kota Kembang Market

(Source: BAPPEDA Bandung City, 2016).

The Bandung government has always tried to regenerate and shift the recent image of the traditional market from being dirty and unsafe, to being a center of cultural exchange and a multi-functional meeting place, as it was in the past.<sup>4</sup> Through the *thematic-making* project for traditional markets in Bandung, the stakeholders intend to generate the image of markets as an attraction for local inhabitants and travelers who come to the area. Based on Table 1, Astana Anyar market is grouped into the market as the Class 1 categorization, which comprises the biggest markets in Bandung. For the case study in this research, I also look at Sumber Hurip market, which is privately-managed, as a comparison.

Bandung city has always been famous for its sights, and as a destination for tourists that gives a sense of relaxation due to its beautiful views and pleasant social spaces. In this sense, economic activities, which

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Widya Gandara, interview with the author, February 2016, at Sarijadi Market construction project, Bandung.

are rooted strongly in social relations, are inseparable from social activities. The economic actions in the markets are mainly concerning profit and loss, and comprise part of the social construction in a society (Nugroho 2001: 39). People's tendency towards being private has an impact on public spaces, such as markets, as it disbands interactions among humans. The loss of desire to participate as an active social actor in society, such as the lack of sensitivity to the surrounding environment and the future, which Hardiman (2010) has called the *minimal self*, has caused people nowadays to turn to an *inward-looking* personality. Unsurprisingly, in the case of doing a transaction, the tendency of being private in public space and the invention of new technology, such as the automatic cashier machine which omits the importance of relationships between people in making transaction activities, has encouraged humans to lose their sense as social actors.

Human contact during transaction activities between the shopkeeper and the buyer is bridged by the display of products in a kiosk. In Indonesian traditional markets, tools to support transaction activities are often found, such as the old-fashioned food scales made of brass (*timbangan bebek/kodok*), woven bamboo trays and baskets. The shopkeepers commonly get these tools from local makers around the market. Therefore, there is an ongoing relationship between the shopkeepers and the local craftsmen, and they strengthen each other in terms of economic and social advantages through activities in the markets. Modern supermarkets often play on this sense of being 'traditional' by using artificial woven baskets to display products.

#### **4. Must transaction Activities and Human Contact in Public Places be Preserved?**

Along with the physical construction and the process of preserving traditional markets in Bandung city, government efforts, to make the markets an attractive and convenient public place to visit, need to consider the habits of actors in existing markets. As discussed in the previous section, traditional markets are grounded in a historical context in which the display of artifacts functions as a media for connecting local craftsmen to marketplaces. The traditional market is, in summary, a place for both human interaction and economic activities.

This study is centered around the interactions of the actors performing a transaction at a market stall. An old-fashioned market has a strong focus on human contact, which has been identified through the observation of transaction activities at two traditional markets (Astana Anyar and Sumber Hurip). The

economic activities are integral to the social activities and seen as the crucial point in the transaction processes taking place at marketplaces.

People in a social group will always need a marketplace to survive and balance their economic situation. Local markets struggle to compete with the variety of foods available at a supermarket, but this variety of products is centrally purchased and warehoused. There is no human contact left, only rows of shelves full of products which are to be collected and paid for at the checkout (Alexander et al. 1977: 247). Traditional markets, with their small kiosks, have the noteworthy characteristic of providing human contact during transactions. The love, care and knowledge about individual foods that is provided by shopkeepers at traditional markets can generate trust and a connection with the buyers. Moreover, Alexander (1977: 247) states that supermarkets are likely to get bigger and bigger along with other industries, which will further dehumanize the experience usually evoked in the marketplace.

Friendly inhabitants (or so-called *someah* in Sundanese) can facilitate social activities involving interactions between people who meet in public spaces, such as the markets. The sellers often engage in in-depth conversations (e.g., about current social issues or political situations), as well as transactions. In the everyday practices of markets, the local language in Bandung (in this case, Sundanese) plays a significant role in the construction of social relationships. Conversations between shopkeepers and buyers carrying out transactions in Sundanese tend to be more familiar and friendly than conversations conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. The relationship between shopkeepers and their buyers is maintained through repeated transactions, and buyers usually become regular customers at specific stalls. The connection between regular customers and shopkeepers is a social interaction which only appears in traditional marketplaces. Shopping in a supermarket, with its structured systems, is very different from carrying out the transactions based on human contact which are found at traditional markets. Alexander (1977: 248) depicts the heartfelt situation, with its verbal and non-verbal communication, at the old-fashioned market in San Francisco as follows:

*If you visit the Market regularly you come to have favorite stalls, like the one with the pippin and Hauer apples from Watsonville. The farmer looks at each apple as he chooses it and places it in the bag, reminding you to keep them in a cool place so they will remain crisp and sweet. If you display interest, he tells you with pride about the orchard they come from and how they were grown and cared for, his blue eyes meeting yours. His English is spoken with a slight Italian accent so you wonder*

*about the clear blue eyes, light brown hair and long-boned body until he tells you about the part of northern Italy where he was born. .... He cares that you will always get a good one and enjoy it.*

Here, I intend to discuss the bewildering layout and flow found in the revitalized *thematic* markets in Bandung. This study argues that the important values which can be found in existing traditional markets should be preserved, rather than debating the superiority of either the supermarket or the old-fashioned market. Traditional markets are composed of several small shops with various types of kiosks, as mentioned above. If individual shops are well-located and systemized in the market, they can operate competitively, and be integrated with other markets nearby so the sellers can compete naturally and effectively with other marketplaces. In Bandung, there are several central traditional markets such as Caringin, Gedebage, and Kiaracondong market. These markets are connected to several 'branch markets' which are smaller than the central markets. The revitalization process should therefore not only focus on one market, but also on other markets in the area. By doing this, the perspectives, social habits and economic systems of each market can be studied to make the revitalization process acceptable to all markets in the area.

The merit of having traditional markets, is the representation of local culture in a city, which at the same time can display local habits of performing activities in the public space. It is inevitable that the relationship between shopkeepers and buyers is an important value in the system of traditional marketplaces. In the physical construction process of the revitalized markets, the layout aspects that contribute to the transaction processes and the flow of the crowds, should be well-planned.

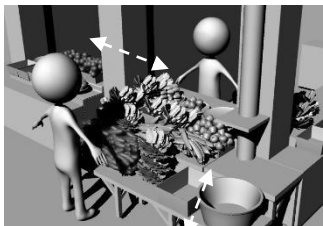
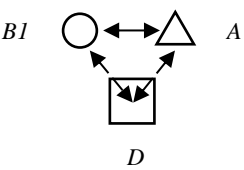
The exchange of culture and ideas, through the informal communication process, is made up of three aspects; *sets* (words), *isolates* (sounds), and *patterns* (syntax) (Hall and Trager as cited in Hall 1959: 99). Communication can be structured in sentences and words, or *through non-verbal* gestures. The main purpose of communication is to convey meanings, so the receiver is able to grasp the content transmitted by the source. In the process of getting to know each other, the shopkeeper and the buyer will experience a period of learning about and adjustment to each other's language (verbal communication) and gestures (non-verbal communication). In the case of 'regular customers' at a kiosk, there is repeated communication among the subjects, whereby the newly formed language between the actors has proven to work well. Through studying how language works in a conversation, it can be analyzed that the basic components of language consist of something akin to a word, which is made up of *sounds*, and is then put together in a particular way according to a certain set of rules, called syntax (Hall 1959: 99). The syntax of communication in Sundanese language, when mixed up with Bahasa Indonesian, will always follow the

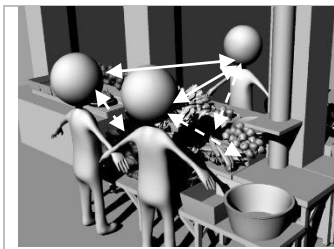


Sundanese dialect and common gestures from the person who lives in Bandung, when performing a transaction activity.

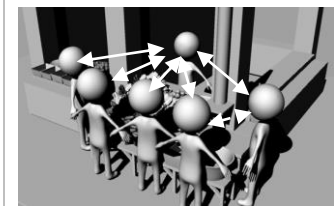
The importance of learning to understand the meanings conveyed between actors during an interaction process, stems from the idea that culture is performed through communication, which can be analyzed into sets, isolates, and patterns (Hall 1959: 99-100). The abundant values of *verbal* and *non-verbal* communication in an informal conversation at the market, have been analyzed into a triangular flow of communication (in the primary situation) between the shopkeeper(s), the buyer(s) and the display in one stall. This is simulated by using a three-dimensional model, created based on observations by the author at both markets, and is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2 The Analysis of Human Contact in One Stall

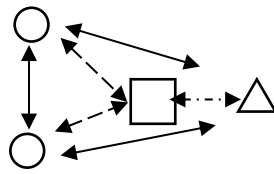
Possible Situations of Interactions		
Visual	Subject	Details
<b>One Shopkeeper Situation</b>		
 <p>1 S hopkeeper with 1 Buyer</p>	 <p>(Primary situation; single triangular flow of communication between the shopkeeper and buyer)</p>	<p>A: Shopkeeper            B1: Buyer            D: Display of products            ↔ : <i>Verbal</i>            ⇄ : <i>Non-verbal</i></p>



1 Shopkeeper with 2 Buyers

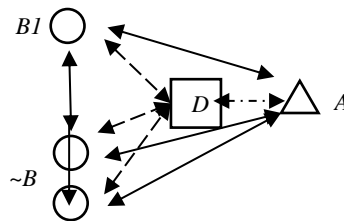


1 Shopkeeper with >2 Buyers



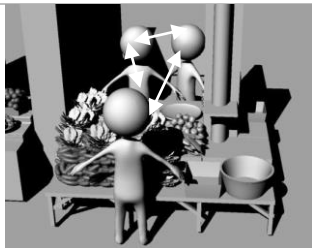
(Secondary situation; two or more triangular flows of communication between the shopkeeper and buyer)

A: Shopkeeper  
 B1, B2: Buyers  
 D: Display of products  
 ↔ : Verbal  
 ⇄ : Non-verbal

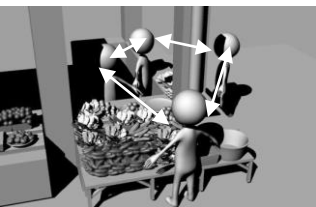


A: Shopkeeper  
 B1, B2, B3~: Buyers  
 D: Display of products  
 ↔ : Verbal  
 ⇄ : Non-verbal

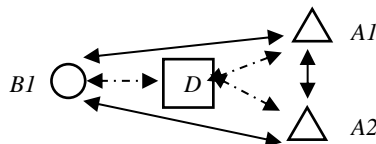
More than One Shopkeeper Situation



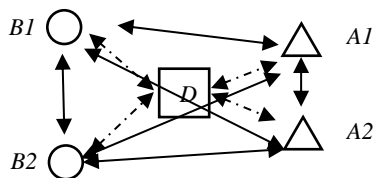
2 Shopkeepers with 1 Buyer



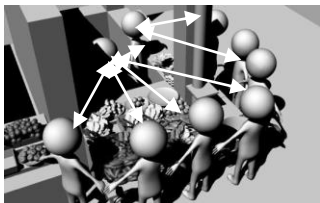
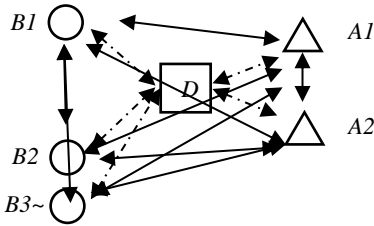
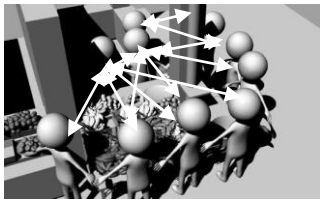
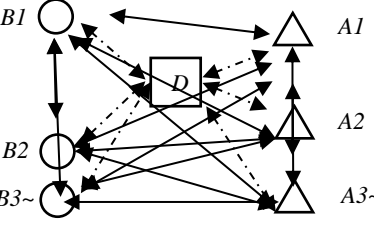
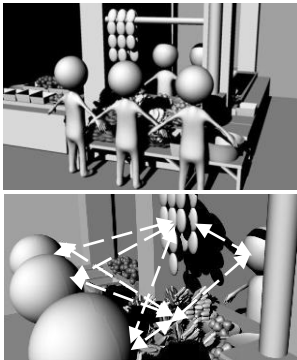
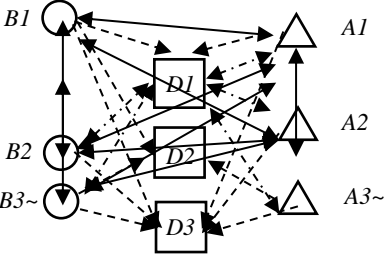
2 Shopkeepers with 2 Buyers



A1, A2: Shopkeepers  
 B1: Buyer  
 D: Display of products  
 ↔ : Verbal  
 ⇄ : Non-verbal



A1, A2: Shopkeepers  
 B1, B2: Buyers  
 D: Display of products  
 ↔ : Verbal  
 ⇄ : Non-verbal

 <p>2 Shopkeepers with &gt;2 Buyers</p>		<p>A1, A2: Shopkeepers          B1, B2, B3~: Buyers          D: Display of products          ↔ : Verbal          ⇄ : Non-verbal</p>
 <p>&gt;2 Shopkeepers with &gt;2 Buyers</p>		<p>A1, A2: Shopkeepers          B1, B2, B3~: Buyers          D: Display of products          ↔ : Verbal          ⇄ : Non-verbal</p>
 <p>2-spot display (on the table and hanging above the table)</p>		<p>A1, A2: Shopkeepers          B1, B2: Buyers          D1, D2, D3: Display of products          ↔ : Verbal          ⇄ : Non-verbal (subject-to-subject)          - - -&gt; : Non-verbal (subject-to-object)</p>

The transaction and interaction processes at a market stall is varied and situational. A single triangular flow of communication (primary situation) consists of a shopkeeper, a buyer and a single display. When

the factors involve more than one actor or display, the flow is composed of several triangles at a kiosk (secondary situation). As can be seen in the ‘details’ column in Table 2, a full arrow is used for *verbal* expression flows between the subjects, and a dotted arrow for *non-verbal* expression flows. The remarkable culture present in traditional markets, is constructed by repeating practices and transferred through the *code* of *syntax*. As stated before, both markets used for the case study show the significance of using Sundanese dialect, which is termed as syntax and is expressed through its words and sounds or accents.



Figures. 1 A Vegetable Stall, Sumber Hurip Market, source: author, Bandung, May 2017

As settings are related to other settings (Rapoport 1990: 35-53), the settings of kiosks in a market are affecting each other. The kiosks in the traditional market ordinarily have an open partition. In order to create transparency, transaction activities will usually be separated by the products which are in front of the shopkeepers and the buyers. Thus, during the transaction process, there will be no barrier between the transaction actors, except for the products on display. The sellers are responsible for their fresh products, which they offer to the buyers who come to their stall. This characteristic of openness in the market is no doubt close to the perspective of human beings as social actors in the community, and is stimulating interactions in public space. There is also the phenomenon of customers asking the shopkeeper to keep his or her heavy grocery bag safe behind the kiosk. This phenomenon is based on trust between the buyer and the shopkeeper, which only applies when the shopkeeper and the buyer have a good relationship with each other (*intangible* connection).

Traditional markets are more likely to be accommodating to non-transactions and conversations about local issues, than big supermarkets. The most common topics are cooking-related, with buyers frequently asking the shopkeepers for advice or recommendations. For instance, at the vegetable stall<sup>5</sup> the following interaction was observed:

Buyer A: “Hey Madam, do you know how to cook *perkedel kentang* (potato cakes)? I always fail when I make them and they turn out to be shapeless!”

Shopkeeper: “You need to add some corn starch to the mashed potatoes, Madam, and then cover them with beaten egg. This way they will not be shapeless.”

Buyer B: “I need long beans, spring onions and chili. I want to make tamarind vegetable soup. It is such a dilemma; my children want me to make chicken soup, but my husband and I want something different. Is fifteen thousand rupiah okay for those?”

Shopkeeper: “Yes, right? Sometimes I also find it hard to choose the menu at my house. Do you want some more carrots?”

Buyer B: “No thanks, I still have some. Can I put my groceries here? I will come back after I have visited the herb stall over there.”

The shopkeepers also often promote their products to the customers, as well as providing the products the customer has asked for. Traditional markets, with its informal conversational and social advantages, should be preserved and revitalized according to the values of society, and not solely focus on the physical construction and decoration of the buildings. Through the communication process, there is a cultural exchange at traditional markets which circulates and perpetuates local wisdom and social bonds. The existing traditional markets in Bandung are also grounded in the historical background of how the marketplaces were established at the olden times, namely as the center of information and even more so, as the place where common local knowledge was shared.

## 5. Conclusion

In order to examine the idea of preservation and revitalization of traditional markets, which are likely to get smaller and weaker, this study highlighted the social advantages of preserving traditional markets in

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<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Eneng, the vegetable shopkeeper at Astana Anyar Market, observation and interview conducted by the author, 2017, Bandung.

modern Bandung. The idea of looking at interactions between humans in public spaces has been worthwhile in society through gathering activities. Rooted in the ideas of Hall (1959), it is arguable that people are connecting with each other in traditional markets through the communication flows taking place during transaction activities, or while exchanging ideas and building relationships between shopkeepers and buyers; all of which are recognized as 'syntax' in informal conversations. The use of Bahasa Indonesian, mixed with the Sundanese dialect, represents the local 'patterns' (syntax), which are shaped by the 'sets' (words) and 'isolates' (dialect) used in the daily life of the Bandung inhabitants. Conversations about issues such as cooking, spices, and recipes can be seen as a process of exchanging information and culture, which is irreplaceable and more enlivening than the supermarket conveyor belt (Alexander et al. 1977: 248).

It is important for the stakeholders to consider the local culture in the process of developing an area. The revitalization program prepared by the Bandung city government, as examined in this study, depicts the recent situation of how the public space, which should be the center of exchanging culture, could not ease the "minimal self"-culture that people nowadays tend to (Hardiman, 2010). The stakeholders have only been focusing on constructing new buildings without considering the habits of the actors in the market.

The social conditions of marketplaces construct the characteristics of the market as the center for economic activities. The planning and constructing of a new building in an existing public space needs to be based on an examination of the historical background. For example, if a market is intended to have a *theme* (e.g., an organic market), questions should be asked such as: "What is the basis for making this market an organic market? Is it supported by local resources nearby?" The decision to reconstruct a market that has existed for a long time should be grounded in an understanding of the history of the market. Hence, the revitalization project of a market, as a place for economic activities, should not be addressed through the misstep of physical construction, as has been illustrated by the case study on social relations in a traditional marketplace.

The study of the development of Indonesian local markets can be used as an example for other regions or countries. Moreover, this study can also act as a reference for further studies related to cultural management and interaction design, and for both academics and stakeholders in the construction industry. There are different perceptions of the *revitalization project* held by the government and the shopkeepers. The government sees the revitalization as something to be realized through a thematic concept and extensive construction. The shopkeepers, as the main actors in the market, still place importance on human contact and traditional values. The market's association usually coordinate the small shops in order to

maximize the profit margins, thereby avoiding the distraction created by the new revitalization concept. The revitalization program is seen as disrupting the connection between shopkeepers and consumers because it obstructs the phenomenon of the 'regular customer'. As a result of this study, it is argued that the intangible values of interaction and the exchange of local wisdom need to be maintained in the process of developing public space through physical renovation.

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