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Conservation of Tangible Cultural Heritage in Indonesia: A Review Current National Criteria for Assessing Heritage Value

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Abstract

National criteria for assessing Indonesian cultural heritage properties are mentioned in Article five under the Law 11/2010 on Cultural Property. In general, the four criteria are not much different from the previous legislation, the Law 5/1992. National criteria serve as a guide in determining the criteria for provincial and municipal level. This paper aims to review the national criteria based on opinions of 33 respondents (local people from various professions), who have an interest in heritage conservation, through semi-structured interviews and nominal group technique (NGT). The results of the study highlighted the crucial need of involving community in reviewing current national criteria, to improve assessment criteria for cultural heritage values. Besides, it would support national, provincial and municipal governments in drafting new regulations as a guideline for practice of heritage conservation regarding the Law 11/2010, which until today most have not been published.

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1. Introduction

Legal jurisdiction aspects of the heritage protection movement first appeared in Europe in the late 18th century. This movement continues to spread to all parts of the world until World War II. Meanwhile, heritage legislation in Indonesia was started by publishing Monumenten Ordinantie (MO) Stbl 238 in 1931. Four months after the issuance

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of this MO, Athen Charter, first international charter on heritage that is a milestone of international collaboration in the protection and preservation of heritage, established. Since World War II, the conservation movement has spread to almost all regions of the world. The establishment of several international organizations such as Council of Europe (1949), UNESCO (1950), ICOM (1952), ICCROM (1956) and the last ICOMOS (1965) have played a significant role in promoting international collaboration and policies guideline to the development of heritage conservation movement. The organizations mentioned above have published dozens of charters, conventions, resolutions and recommendations to provide guidance in developing policies for different cultural and realities to date. One of the significant charters is the Venice Charter initiated by ICOMOS. The charter raised the issue on the authenticity and recommended the attitude to make a clear distinction between the original, the addition and the replica in restoration work of monuments and sites. Since then, the spirit of authenticity in the heritage conservation became extended rapidly to all parts of the world and got more clearly in Nara Document (1994). Then, in 1972 UNESCO have issued the most significant convention in heritage protection namely Convention for a Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage. According to J. Jokilehto (1998), this convention is successful because almost all countries in the world have adopted it. At the same time, there has been a significant evolution in the policies and practices of heritage conservation, increased awareness of the community, environmental stewardship, awareness of growth limits, and the need for sustainable resource management. The convention later becomes a platform for debating the concepts and policies related to heritage conservation.

This paper aims to review the national criteria in article five, the Law of Cultural Properties No.11/2010 based on the views of local people in Medan. This paper is part of the studies aiming to develop local assessment criteria for values of Medan built cultural heritage. The issue arises in line with the application of decentralization concept in heritage management in Indonesia that is divided into three hierarchies: the national, provincial and municipal. Thus, each level of administration should prepare and establish heritage registers, including the municipal government of Medan.

2. International contemporary trend in heritage conservation

Many authors state that since mid-1990s, there has been a dramatic change in the field of heritage conservation in terms of both theory and ways of protection. Among them are the issue of scope and categories of heritage, ranging from single monument to groups and region, tangible to the intangible, and movable to immovable objects. Besides, the issue of cultural significance or cultural heritage value, that have been discussed first by Alois Riegl in the early 20th century, became flourish and quickly extended almost to other countries since Burra Charter (1999) described it in detail. Until now, many authors discuss the cultural heritage value, included the definition and theory, as well as, methods to evaluate cultural heritage value in practice. Next, in mid-1970's the Council of Europe have raised an issue of integrated conservation, as stated in Amsterdam Declaration (1975). A year later, UNESCO restated this issue further in Nairobi Recommendation (UNESCO, 1976). Now, it has become a trend everywhere that heritage conservation work is not relying on a single individual or a profession anymore. The responsibilities start linking with the preservation of other specialties, so it becomes multidisciplinary. However, it is increasingly recognized that the preservation is neither the responsibility nor the domain of experts alone, but also linked to the local public as owners of the heritage itself. Public is to be responsible and to participate in decision-making (Cheung, 2011; Macdonald, 2011; Christina Aas et al., 2005; S.Chirikure. et al., 2008). The need for sharing in decision-making among community stakeholders has become a popular topic in the field of protection and management of cultural heritage until today.

3. Community involvement in heritage conservation

The concept of public involvement in conservation efforts were initiated in Europe in the mid-1970s, as stated in the Declaration of Amsterdam (1975) "the architectural heritage will survive only if it would be valued by the public, especially the younger generation." Nairobi UNESCO Recommendation (1976) a year later concluded the contribution of individual or collective, residents and users, separately or together, which should be encouraged to provide suggestions, play an active role. Next, most of conventions, charters, declarations, resolutions and recommendations on the protection and preservation of the heritage published after the mid-1970s stated that

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