

# Understanding Sense of Place: Insights from People's Experiences at Pasar Baru Bandung, Indonesia

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## Abstract

Sense of place relates to the identity of a place or unique characteristics that create meanings for the people who experience it. This situation has the potential to initiate and enhance a person's attachment to a place and can be strengthened by the functioning of the human senses which can see, hear, smell, and feel everything that happens around them. In this context, this study explores sense of place in a vernacular place: Pasar Baru Bandung by involving the human senses, notably visual, tactile, olfactory, gustatory and auditory.

This research employ field trips, in-depth observations, interviews, photo elicitation as well as direct experiences on-site to generate information and meaning. It employs a qualitative approach involving experience as related to phenomenology. Field trips involved making sketches to record the memories of the experiences at Pasar Baru Bandung. Theory of sense of place is employed to analyse and understand identity, which is no longer determined by its appearance, but also by the values and meanings.

It focuses on discussing sense of place from the experiences of the author as well as the informants around the Pasar Baru Bandung area with the research scope, which is inside the building of Pasar Baru and the West, South, North and front of the Pasar Baru building.

The study found that sense of place is not usually linked with anything visually beautiful, tidy, nice, or clean, but rather with efforts to survive, maintain life, and continue to feed the soul with varied local typical activities of a place. Based on this, the research presents an understanding of sense of place through the experiences at Pasar Baru Bandung, a vernacular setting. It also provides knowledge about sustainable local Indonesian values.

**Keywords:** Sense of Place, Vernacular Buildings, Sense of Attachment, Pasar Baru, Basic Human Senses.

## Introduction

Each city has its own identity, which is built by the conditions and habits of local people passed down from generation to generation, resulting in a culture that gives the city its breath, soul and character (Amar, 2009 & Dewi, et. al., 2023). This remark is in line with the presence of Pasar Baru (new market) in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia, which is located in the city center. The market is more than just a location for buying and selling; it is also a witness to the history, customs, and culture that have transpired around it, and it is a site that captures the remnants of that journey (Riaddy, 2015). Pasar Baru Bandung is the oldest market in Bandung, dating back to the Dutch colonial period called Pasar *Baroeweg*, and remains today. Pasar Baru Bandung was built in 1884 in the center of Bandung City, which is currently known as Jalan Otto Iskandar Dinata, Bandung, and can be accessed by walking for 5 minutes from the Great Mosque and *Alun-Alun* (square) Bandung.

The market layout features rows of shops in the front, and side, and stalls for traders in the rear area. In 1926, this building was expanded with the construction of a permanent market complex that was larger and more organized. In fact, it is the pride of the city residents because it won the title of the cleanest, neatest, and most orderly market in the Dutch East Indies in 1935. The first renovation was carried out in the 1970s, making the market building into a modern building and this modern impression persists today because the residents focus on the form of increasingly high-rise buildings that are equipped with other modern facilities, such as escalators and lifts. However, the traditional market concept is still maintained, inside and outside the building. The Dutch and Chinese-style vernacular architecture around the market building further supports the features of Pasar Baru Bandung. This market is not only well-known in Bandung but also in the surrounding countries such as Malaysia. Therefore, it has become a symbol of the economy of Bandung. These factors justify why Pasar Baru Bandung is the research case study.



**Fig. 1:** The Façade of the Pasar Baru Building from the year of 1950 (left) & the year of 2022 (right).

Source: Archive of KITLV-Leiden, 2018 & Author, 2022

This research focuses on the human experience of a place that involves the human senses: seeing, hearing, feeling, experiencing, and engaging in various local daily activities. This is closely related to sense of place which presents a form of physical meaning and the relationship between local activities that occur in a place that creates attachment and satisfaction with the environment. Therefore, it is argued that sense of place is a factor that can change space into a place.

This description leads to research that aims to explore sense of place in Pasar Baru Bandung by delving into experiences involving the human senses through observation, interviews and place identification. Thus, it might offer an alternative viewpoint on the existence of the place. The research objective is to reveal the meaning of sense of place, by providing a narrative of the experiences of authors and informants about what place attributes are related to daily activities, values, and meanings in Pasar Baru Bandung. Indeed, this paper

is based on the viewpoint that place identification can be attained by engaging the senses in addition to apparent values.

### **Theoretical Framework: Space, Place and Sense of Place**

When discussing sense of place, it is necessary to refer to the definitions of space and place. Indeed, there are different definitions of space and place. The term space indicates an existence or location and is more physical in nature, while the term place has a more personal meaning and is related to local culture or identity. Place also allows events and experiences to occur within it. This statement explains that the difference between space and place lies in the presence of meaning. Space is a physical and objective concept, while place is a more subjective and socially-constructed concept that reflects the human experience and interaction with space.

This statement is in accordance with Canter (1977) that the concept is indeed one element of the existence of a place, apart from the physical attributes and activities that occur therein. These three factors contribute to the features of locations, with the most fundamental being the physical aspects, which are frequently where the visual appeal exists. Consider the Pasar Baru area, which is a visual row of old, historic buildings. Following that are the social aspects, which include a variety of activities, and even more valuable are the psychological aspects, which are directly tied to meaning.

A simple explanation about the idea of 'place' has been expressed by Carmona et al (2010), who say that a place is like a container that stores various events and if experienced continuously, will give rise to important and essential experiences among the people. In human experience, place is a basic notion. It is a deep and intricate part of a person's experience of the world and displays the external ties that bind their life (Rajapakse & Dayaratne, 1998: 23). Experiencing places is always related to phenomenology that provides an understanding and interpretation of place based on environmental experiences (Dayaratne, 2016).

This research involves experience and all human senses to optimize the study. Therefore, the phenomenological approach is appropriate to apply. In the 20th century, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, et al. began the philosophical tradition known as phenomenology. Since then, the phenomenological method has been considered a valuable basis for all philosophies.

Phenomenology is concerned with the meaning in our experiences, especially the meaning of objects, activities, the flow of time, self, and other people when these things appear and are experienced in the world of our lives. However, there is a new development of phenomenological perspectives from Juhani Pallasmaa (1936-), an architect and theorist who was concerned with discussing space, architecture, spaces, events, and the presence of the human senses in studying (Darmayanti et. al, 2020).

In 1962, Martin Heidegger said that to be human is to exist in a world full of significant places; to be human is to have and understand your place. To know and understand a place, the identity of a place must be known, and this can be identified from sense of place. Tuan (1977) and Norberg-Schulz (2019) expand on the preceding logic by stating that sense of place uses the term place because it is more ideal. The act of experiencing such that individuals may understand the meaning of a location so that the place has a symbolic significance is connected to sense of place.

Sense of place is also often referred to as the spirit of place related to place identity, which means that people or society need a sense of identity and belonging to a particular place or region (Norberg-Schulz, 2019). Based on this description, sense of place refers to the personal emotional bonds and attachments that people develop or experience in certain locations and environments (Violich, 1983) and is used to describe identity, distinctiveness, or unique character of certain localities and regions. Juhani Pallasmaa (2018) agrees with the preceding assertion that a feeling of location improves a sense of self as a distinct and personal experience, especially when surrounding architecture is present.

In this study, sense of place is established gradually through time in that area, and this research includes tangible values such as activities and buildings, as well as intangible values such as history, culture, traditions, experiences, and interpretation. The idea of sense of place

is complex since it refers to patterns of social activities that vary by location; hence, people and their actions alter place and redefine the people's place in it (Stephenson, 2010 & Erfani, 2022). Based on the explanations above, the components of space have differences, namely location, physical, function and practical aspects which are included in place. Meanwhile, attachment, meaning, identity and personality are included in place. Therefore, sense of place is considered a dynamic process linked to local activities, relationships, and community traits, resulting in personal experience (table 1).

**Table 1:** Components of space, place, and sense of place Summary  
Source: Author

Space	Place
Location	Attachment
Physical	Meaningful
Functional	Identity
Practical	Personal
Measurable	Feeling
Absolute	Flexible
General	Localized
<b>Sense of Place</b>	
Sense of place is viewed as a dynamic process tied to the local activities, interactions, and characteristics of a community that produces personal experience.	

A person's experiences of a location is automatically followed by a place experience, which involves the five human senses. The sensory organs linked with each sense convey information to the brain, allowing us to better understand our surroundings. As a result, whatever the senses derive from the place are unique to each individual. According to Reghukumar (2019), the senses of taste, smell, and touch offer information about nearby space, whereas hearing and vision provide perceptions of distant spaces.

## Review of Literature

Numerous research on sense of place have been identified. However, it is difficult to uncover any studies about Pasar Baru Bandung, particularly when it comes to the senses. Pasar Baru is a significant area in Bandung from a social, economic, cultural, and historical standpoint. As stated by Munazar and Weishaguna (2022), Pasar Baru Bandung is very close to history and have contributed even to the formation of public space from a typical arcade which is one of the elements of the city of Bandung. Therefore, its existence has become one of the characteristics of the city and is meaningful for the people of Bandung. Munazar also says that Pasar Baru has a unique atmosphere and physical character and needs to be maintained. Lopez (2009) contends that a facility in a city that is physically remembered and has meaning is a place that has a sense of place. Similarly, Norberg-Schulz (2006) emphasizes that the physical conditions and values contained therein shape the character of the environment as a result of the presence of people in it, presenting a unique local atmosphere.

This statement is in line with the reality at Pasar Baru Bandung which is known for its local values and traditions, which can be seen from trading activities, types of merchandise, the language used by traders or buyers, the type of buildings, the atmosphere and even the history that surrounds it. Thus, sense of place in a city can be a positive contribution to its sustainability because its constituent elements maintain important values indirectly in it such as history, culture and physical appearance (Rong & Bahauddin, 2023).

The term sense of place is used in a variety of settings and often refers to a person's capacity to recognize a location visually, that is, physically, or by the sensation of entering a well-defined space. Dameria et al. (2017) define sense of place as a sensation felt by the experienter that indirectly conveys an impression and meaning about a place. It is known that three elements always support the presence of sense of place: the physical setting, activities and meaning (Punter, 1991 & Montgomery, 1998). Sense of place is the result of a generally

accepted concept of space with human awareness through experiences related to himself, the environment including the buildings in it, and the cosmos as a whole. When sense of place exists, the structured environment is clear and sensory-coherent (Wellborn, 1966).

We are often unaware of our presence in a place, or at least pay little attention to the sensory cues that, that place might convey (Foster & Spence, 2018) because in general, we scan a place only using our eyes by looking at its physical form. This statement is in line with Spence (2020) who says that traditionally, sight or the eye has been dominant in recognizing places. Wellborn (1966) agrees that a place does have meaning because of the presence of visible objects, after which it develops into other sensory organs.

Mau (2018) emphasizes a similar truth, saying that visual is the primary factor in viewing a location and occurs in the majority of daily activities. Scholars such as Pallasmaa (1996), on the other hand, feel that if people engage in multi-sensory experiences, a location, particularly one including structures, would become more alive and develop its spirit. If the human sensor is functioning, a location can be seen not just visually, but also through the ears and nose. Steven Holl agrees with Pallasmaa that place can be felt more deeply when we hear any sounds produced, by people, activities, or surrounding buildings. Then the smell or aroma of the place, in this way we will be wiser in judging a place and determining its sense. Holl believes that by experiencing a place oneself, exploring it with all the senses will form a true experience of the place (Holl, 2002). According to Seamon (2018), by experiencing a place, the creation of a place identity will be accelerated since an emotional tie between the person and the particular place or environment has been created.

## Research Methodology

This qualitative research employs direct observations at Pasar Baru Bandung to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions. Observations began in December 2022, then to better comprehend the site, investigation resumed in January and July 2023. Data collection captures 'embedded messages' from various activities, spatial components, and surrounding architecture to convey the sense of place of Pasar Baru Bandung well.

Surveys, interviews, and experiences were used to gather direct knowledge about numerous events and situations that happened in Pasar Baru and its surroundings. Although experience is typically subjective, it is nonetheless significant and legitimate since it interacts with the knowledge of the activities of a place, relationships, and conditions (Darmayanti et. al, 2021). Interviews were conducted with Pasar Baru visitors and frequent customers. The selected persons were aware of their everyday situations. Some of them are sellers both within and outside the market building who come every day to sell, connect with customers, and experience Pasar Baru.

Observation of the surrounding environment was carried out by walking around the Pasar Baru building (fig 2) paying attention to what activities were taking place. Yi'En (2014) noted that one footstep after another, continuous and rhythmic walking helps a researcher to better understand the surroundings, as he feels the body and the qualities of the environment. The walking technique to experience and capture the atmosphere of a place is also accompanied by the technique of resting or staying for a moment at one point to pay attention to get certain moments in more detail to obtain conscious movement patterns (Seamon, 1979 & 2014). This activity is carried out in the morning, afternoon and evening on different days such as weekdays and weekends to find out what differences apply so that the analysis of Pasar Baru's sense of place is more mature.

Observations were also carried out at the Pasar Baru building, combining the experiences of the other people and the researchers. This experience is critical because it validates data gathered consciously (Creswell et al., 2007). Several images of historical landmarks, activities, and human interactions were taken to illustrate people's engagement with Pasar Baru and its surroundings. Manual sketches of the surroundings of the study site were also done to boost memory and sense of place, as well as to grasp the relevance of the area. Taking pictures and drawings is useful for this research because they can reveal subtle relationships between people and their surroundings that are related to the society and culture (Stedman et al., 2004).

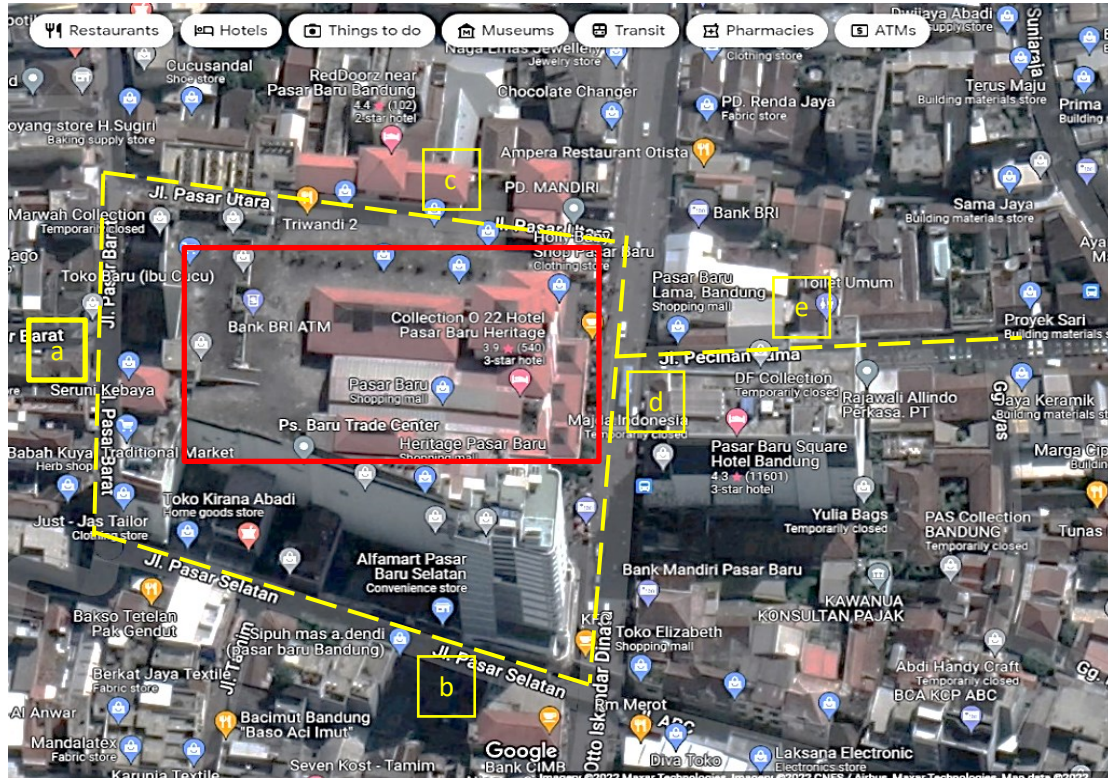
Pallasmaa's statement reinforces this. He believes that all kinds of experiences related to architecture, moment and place should not only be captured through photography but also through hand drawings such as sketches or scribbles. This is essential because hand movements are a spatial and haptic practice that allows a person to join a situation more fully, understanding emotions, feelings, and wisdom (Darmayanti et. al, 2021).

“Every act of sketching or drawing results in neurological connections between the hand and eyes”

Pallasmaa et. al., 2015

Pallasmaa's statement above provides an understanding that through drawing activities an attachment can be created between the observer, the research object, and the environment. By involving this, it is hoped that readers will be able to experience and understand the essence of this research. Pallasmaa's concept of phenomenology will be utilized primarily as discussion material, which will be supplemented with a sense of place theory.

The research area covers the space inside the Pasar Baru building and its surroundings, starting from the back of the building, namely, Jalan Pasar Barat (a); left side – Jalan Pasar Selatan (b); right side – Jalan Pasar Utara (c); The front side is the main road - Jalan Otto Iskandar Dinata (d), and opposite the building is known as Jalan Pecinan Lama (e) – note: the words *Barat*, *Utara*, *Selatan* are Indonesian for West, North, South. Apart from reflecting the cardinal directions, they are also used as street names (fig. 2). The study location was chosen based on its proximity to the Pasar Baru building, which has a distinct vibe, particularly given the presence of old structures at each research point, as well as the sort of products and activities that take place. Each study site is assessed using the basic human senses, specifically the eyes, nose, hearing, touch and taste. The method used brings the tangible and intangible value of the area.



**Fig. 2:** Research Scope (yellow line) & Research Object – Pasar Baru Building (red rectangle)

Source: Photo elicitation from Google map, 2023

The research area is explored through research indicators, namely the sense of place element which is the focus, namely the physical form which includes buildings around the new market and inside the new market building; then the state of activities such as interactions between traders and visitors, including shopping and trading behavior; and meaning related to the narrative of place, uniqueness of place and experience of space.

Analysis of research data uses the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994) which consists of collecting data, presenting data, selecting appropriate data and validating data for discussion.

### Case Analysis: Pasar Baru Bandung and Environs

The economy of Bandung City has experienced rapid development since the mid-19th century. Sutardi (2015) in his research stated that "... this especially happened after the issuance of the Agrarian Law (*Agrarischwet*) in 1870 and the Priangan Reorganization (*Priangan Reorganisatie*) in 1871." The issuance of the Agrarian Law encouraged many European entrepreneurs to take the initiative to open cinchona, rubber, and tea plantations. The main activity that marked the rapid economic development of Bandung City was the establishment of Pasar Baru as the main market. The wholesale market is a forum for economic and social interaction.

Pasar Baru Bandung was originally located in the area called Kapatihan, but was relocated to Chinatown (*Pecinan*) when it burned down during the Munada Riots in 1842. Since then, traders have moved around without permanent structures. Pasar Baru Bandung is now located in the *Pecinan* district, which was developed under Dutch colonial rule (Raap, 2015) and the market building was constructed in 1906 and still stands today with renovation on Jalan Otto Iskandar Dinata, also known as Otista Street (Fig 3). Pasar Baru Bandung, as a research case study, is an iconic district of the city since it still has old yet beautiful structures with historical stories. The structure is designed in a Chinese and Dutch colonial style. Numerous old buildings around the market are not properly preserved and some have suffered more contemporary alterations owing to renovation, resulting in the loss of their cultural and historical identities. Similarly, the market structure has experienced several adjustments.



Fig. 3: The Pasar Baru Bandung within Chinatown (*Pecinan*) District

Source: Photo elicitation from Google map, 2024

The traditional main market has been transformed into a modern shopping area with an 8-story tall building complete with a vehicle parking area. These changes occur due to the dynamics of society, the economy, and government regulations. According to Sutardi (2015), the dynamics of market growth present hope for improving the economy and expanding the social interactions that occur within it. Simultaneously, the trade sector witnessed rather major advances during the period. This is seen by an increase in the quantity and variety of stores that have expanded into *alun-alun* (square area) and Braga streets.

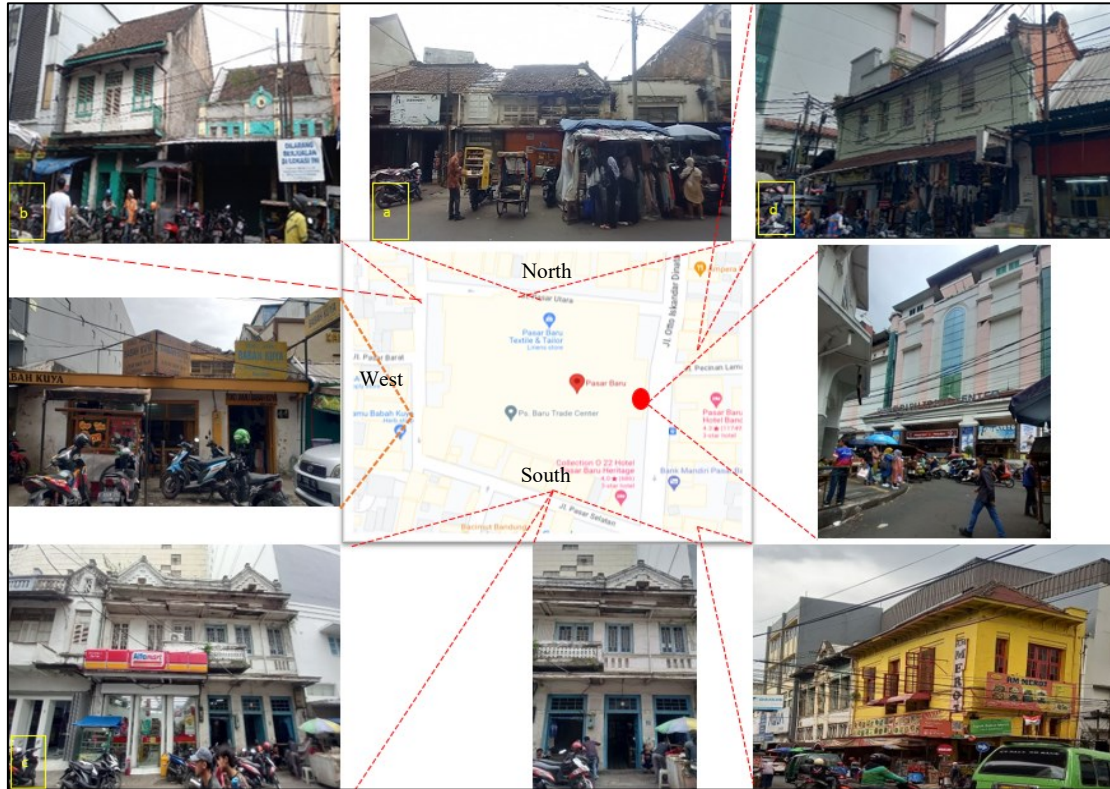
The market building has been originally built in a European-*Indische* style, as seen by various old images with Dutch titles in the KITLV-Leiden collection - *De Pasar Baroe, het centrum van de Chinese handelswijk te Bandoeng* (shelfmark KITLV 11829), *De "oude" Pasar Baroe, het centrum van de Chinese handelswijk te Bandoeng* (shelfmark KITLV 11827), *Pasar Baroe, Bandung* (shelfmark KITLV 1400263), and *De pasar baroe in Bandoeng* (shelfmark KITLV 25104) portrays the market's situation in the 1920s and 1930s as the center of Bandung's Chinese commercial district, which still tended to be calm and orderly at the front of the market building, but inside it was still lively with buying and selling activities.



**Fig. 4:** The Pasar Baru Building Condition in 1920 (left above) and the surroundings in 1930's.  
Source: KITLV-Leiden Digital Collection

Today's Pasar Baru Bandung building is a modern multi-story building with old architecture with "memories" from the past still surrounding it. These old buildings are historic and have rich cultural content, such as European and Chinese-style buildings. This situation gives Pasar Baru Bandung its unique characteristics. Based on an article about the conservation of the Pasar Baru area written by Nurmala in 2003, it is known that many of the old buildings around the market building are in disrepair and are not functioning, especially on Jalan Pasar Barat, which is behind the market building. Some have been turned into new buildings without paying attention to the original architecture, as well as adding advertising boards or shops with sizes that cover architectural elements (Nurmala, 2003). However, the diversity of buildings

enriches the face of the Pasar Baru Bandung area (fig. 5). The atmosphere surrounding the market building has also shifted from peaceful to quite bustling from morning to evening, this situation is typical of the Pasar Baru Bandung area as an economic center. Figure 6 depicts the frequent buying and selling activities that take place outside or inside the shop, as well as driving and other social activities on Pasar Utara Street (on the right side of the market building), Pasar Barat Street (on the rear side of the market building), and Pasar Selatan Street (on the left side of the market building).



**Fig. 5:** Current Condition of Pasar Baru Buildings and Surrounding Historical Buildings.

Source: Author, 2022



**Fig. 6:** Street (*jalan*) Situation that Surrounds Pasar Baru Building – Jalan Pasar Utara (left), Jalan Pasar Barat (middle), Jalan Pasar Selatan (right)

Source: Author, 2022-2023

### Sense of Place in Pasar Baru Bandung

When you experience the Pasar Baru area in Bandung, you immediately catch the atmosphere of the past, especially around the market buildings. Walking around the area, you will get the impression that this area has a long history. Various historic buildings began to tell stories through their architectural elements, conveying their pride that they still survive and stand tall today despite the fact that look old, the colors have faded, the paint is peeling and some parts are damaged here and there. The majority of the buildings are commercial buildings,

and some are vacant and inoperable. In the old abandoned buildings, the “body” is still there but the “soul” is no longer nested in it. However, is replaced by various activities outside the body, which helps give the building life. These activities are carried out by actors in the Pasar Baru, namely consumers, traders, workers, or even market visitors and they interact with each other or with the surrounding environment. Through the sense, that the market as a living place will experience movement and alteration as one of the steps for its sustainability. Then, sense establishes a relationship with the place and its environment, giving birth to the spirit of that place.

Sense of place is closely related to what can be seen, such as physical settings, and activities, and what cannot be seen but can be felt which is connected to meaning. According to this, physical settings are intimately tied to a place's permeability, whereas activities are related to behavior, patterns developed, circulation, and the engagement of the human senses capable of detecting noise, smell, and taste. In the meanwhile, meaning is linked to history, culture, and tradition (Lynch, 1960, Carmona, 2006 & Marzbani, et al., 2020). A Finnish architect and theorist, Pallasmaa (2011) stated similarly that “Spaces, places, and buildings are undoubtedly encountered as multisensory life experiences. Rather than registering architecture simply as a visual image, we scan our settings through the ear, skin, nose, and tongue.” In addition, he wrote again that “Architecture and its environment are the art of reconciliation between ourselves and the world, and this mediation occurs through the senses” (Pallasmaa, 1996).

### Sense of Place through Physical Setting and Activities of Pasar Baru Bandung

A place is recognized by its physical features and surrounding setting. Therefore, the physical setting of a place is part of a place's sense of place. If people remember a place by mentioning its distinctive physical characteristics without realizing it, that person has an attachment to that place which is of course influenced by the memories they have.

“We are attached to places because of their distinctive physical characteristics”  
Shumaker and Taylor, 1983



**Fig. 7:** The Crowd Around Pasar Baru Bandung as a Physical Setting of Pasar Baru Bandung  
Source: Author, 2022-2023

The Pasar Baru Bandung building is the iconic architecture in Bandung’s Chinatown since it is the tallest structure among the historical European and Chinese-style buildings. The market building is easily identified, as is the bustle of activity, which adds to the “marker” of the place.

Indonesian-Sundanese Language:

*“Kalau mau ke Pasar Baru pakai mobil atau motor, kalau kecepatan kendaraan sudah mulai melambat, berarti sebentar lagi sampai tujuan, karena mulai penuh angkot berhenti yang mengambil atau nurunin penumpang, penuh sama penjual, penuh dengan lalu lalang orang. Mulai kelihatan juga banyak bangunan jaman dulu yang udah ga kerawat, padahal bagus. Pasar Baru mah kelihatan sepi pas pandemik, sekarang sudah seperti biasa. Sepi ga enak, mati, keung, lebih baik ramai”*

Informant A, 2023

Translation:

*“If you want to go to Pasar Baru by car or motorcycle, if the vehicle's speed begins to slow down, it means you will soon arrive at your destination because it will begin to be full of public transportation stopping to pick up or drop off passengers, full of sellers, and full of people passing by.” It's starting to appear like a lot of historical buildings that aren't well-maintained despite their age. Pasar Baru, which remained quiet throughout the epidemic, is now running as usual. Quite is not nice, it seems like a dead area, it's frightening; it's better to be busy and occupied”*

Informant A, 2023

The above comment is from an informant who was shopping around the market regarding the features of Pasar Baru, which is preferable if it is crowded, with lots of things to observe and enjoy, since if it is quiet, it is like a dead region. Many activities bring the Pasar Baru area to life, not just for the people but also for the things and heritage buildings that surround it. Previously, it was explained that many old European or Chinese-style buildings are damaged, poorly maintained, and even empty, and have lost their souls, but are still “visible” because they are given a heartbeat by activities outside the building, such as street vendors, motorbike parking facilities, or a place where pedicab (*becak*) drivers wait for passengers.



**Fig. 8:** Various Activities as a Lifeline for Empty Old Buildings around Pasar Baru  
Source: Author, 2022-2023

### Sense of Place through Intangible Value of Pasar Baru Bandung

Apart from being seen from a visual perspective, the conditions around Pasar Baru Bandung also provide meaning, especially through the buildings and surrounding environment which tell the story of a long journey, witness changes, and developments in social, economic, and political conditions, the buildings contain many series of stories and representations of strength, friendliness, and loyalty to the place. Juhani Pallasmaa (2011) said that the majority of architecture is designed to be seen in the eye of the beholder and tends to ignore non-visual

senses such as hearing, smell, touch, and even taste. This review touches on and encourages us to better understand how multisensory environments and atmospheres affect us.

The activation of the human senses in experiencing a place has implications for enriching the spirit of the place and strengthening its identity. Traditionally, the physical appearance of a place, as well as its architectural presence, are controlled by the eye. In recent decades, however, theorists, architects, and designers have begun to include additional senses, such as sound, touch, smell, and even taste (Spance, 2020). In the Pasar Baru Bandung, architectural form dominates the area as a background for various social and economic activities. As a result, this statement is very suitable to be used for describing the unseen value of Pasar Baru.

The first non-visual sense value is sound, which requires the ear to hear. At Pasar Baru Bandung, the ears not only hear sounds from surrounding objects such as car horns, the sound of parking attendants blowing whistles, or human voices from dialogue between traders and buyers who ask about the price of goods, bargain over prices, and even tell stories about their day's life. The "sound" of the building surrounding it is also picked up by the ear. This sound is also known as architectural language which is produced from architectural forms or elements. Language consists of a set of true and tested solutions to express environmental qualities to a certain extent that improve life and feelings of comfort in that environment. In short, language leads human activities to take place as they should (Salingaros, 2008). A proper combination, compromise, and relationship of architectural language can represent appropriate information to convey a message to the audience, who they are, what their cultural influence is, who the people who inhabit it are, and what the activities take place in it. Understanding the "local language" also helps to comprehend Pasar Baru's sense of place. The sounds heard by the ear are not only those heard outside the building but also those heard within the Pasar Baru Bandung building.

Inside the building, you can frequently hear the typical call of traders looking for consumers, adding to the spirit of Pasar Baru Bandung "*Lihat-lihat dulu teteh, aa.. di sini murah*" (read: look first because it's cheap here). Then, voices were heard in Sundanese as the local language from food traders walking around Pasar Baru offering their goods to the traders – "*hayu atuh, makan siangnya, cemilannya, minumannya teteh.. aa*" (read: Let's buy food, snacks, drinks, brother), or the sound of the happy screams of the merchant's children playing. This sound has become everyday life, food sellers and buyers are so familiar that laughter can be heard as they joke with each other.



**Fig. 9:** The Source of Typical Sounds within Pasar Baru Bandung Building.  
Source: Author, 2022-2023

The second non-visual sense is aroma which can be recognized by the nose. Through the nose, you can detect several distinct smells on each floor of the Pasar Baru building, particularly in the Pasar Baru basement. Aromas were typical of a wet market, such as vegetables, eggs, seafood, poultry, or culinary spices. On the ground floor, there is an aroma of

dates and sweets because the floor is filled with sellers of Middle Eastern food, such as dates. Meanwhile, on the other floors, it smells more like fabrics that have just come out of the factory because they sell lots of fabrics and ready-made clothes. The sense of touch is also included in this area because sellers, buyers, or visitors often touch something that attracts their attention, such as the texture of fabric or clothing material. It even involves the sense of taste because, for the food part, you are allowed to sample the food you intend to buy.



**Fig. 10:** The Sources of Typical Wet Market Aroma within Pasar Baru Bandung Building:  
Herbs, Vegetables, Eggs  
Source: Author, 2022-2023



**Fig. 11:** The Sources of Traditional Aroma - Dates, Sweets and Bandung Traditional Chips  
in Pasar Baru Bandung – The Activation of Sensory of Taste and Touch.  
Source: Author, 2022-2023 & tribunnews.com, 2019 middle

Uniqueness also occurs outside the building, the aroma on the outside of the building is different on each street that surrounds the market building. On Jalan Pasar Utara, on the right side of the building, there is the aroma of traditional spices from a West Javanese chips seller. The traditional aroma can also be smelled at the back of the building, on Jalan Pasar Barat, but it comes from typical Chinese spices from the renowned shop known as Babah Kuya which has been around since the 1800s. However, after 5 p.m., the smell changed to fishy originating from

the chicken slaughtering which started in the afternoon, while the Babah Kuya shop was already closed. On Jalan Pasar Selatan, the smell is not very significant, because they sell more cloth or household equipment. There are fewer food vendors on this side. Why is it necessary to talk about the human senses, especially smell? Because it enhances the sense of place in Pasar Baru Bandung.

“The strongest memory of a space is often its odor... we could see even their odor”.

Pallasmaa, 1994



**Fig. 12:** The Source of Distinctive Aroma at Pasar Barat Street, Pasar Baru.  
8 AM-5 PM the Aroma of Herbs & Spices (left-middle), 5 PM-onwards the Aroma of Poultry  
Source: Author, 2023 & <https://bandungraya.inews.id/>, 2023 (left)

### Spatial Experience and Sense of Human Senses

A place is a journey, not simply a destination. It is the complete package of a place's experience because there is a conversation between mind, body and surroundings. From the description of the tangible and intangible values in Pasar Baru, it enlightens the view that human senses which are activated when experiencing a place unconsciously present the “language” of the place, meaning that the benefit of human sense is that it brings out the identity of a place which is not shared by other places. If a place can be captured by its sense of place, then that place becomes exclusive to the people who feel it, and the people who have ties to that place, and Pasar Baru becomes a symbol with its own characteristics. This fact is made clear by the statement that – “the bond between an individual and a place is a symbol that makes a place exclusive” (Pallasmaa, 1994).

Sense of sight within Pasar Baru Bandung depends on anything related to visuals such as the condition of the market, beautiful old buildings around the market, changes in market settings due to changes in time, or various social activities or buying and selling that occur. It is known that the vision was leading sense therefore it is included in tangible value. Pallasmaa (1994) enlightens this situation by saying that sight and hearing are the basic privileged social senses. In Pasar Baru, the role of this vision captures the impression of an open and inviting atmosphere from morning to noon, but from afternoon to evening it is not very inviting, due to the lack of lighting, moreover, the presence of rows of old buildings that are not well maintained and various social activities and trading has stopped. However, phenomenological research suggests that a place must engage other senses, not just visual stimuli.

Sense of auditory plays a significant role in the sense of place even though vision dominates. The sound may indicate the condition in Pasar Baru, such as how crowded the location is, how quiet it becomes, whether it is dry or wet, whether the road is dry or muddy, which can be heard from the sound of car tires contacting the road surface, or from the footfall of visitors or traders. The intensity of the sound of vehicle horns is also an indicator of how busy Pasar Baru is, as is the sound of shouts from traders offering their goods, the sound of street buskers singing and expecting money from market visitors, and even the sound of rickshaw bells contributes to the beauty of the distinctive sound in Pasar Baru. The sounds faded as the evening progressed. The presence of sound complements the visuals captured by the eye and influences the impression of a place, as Pallasmaa said (1996) hearing may influence how a place appears to the eye.

Sense of olfactory enhances awareness of a place since it can have the ability to preserve and capture memories of it. A distinctive smell, its intensity, and density can identify a certain place. This is the circumstance encountered while wandering around Pasar Baru Bandung. Each research point has a distinct odor or aroma quality. Pallasmaa supports the idea that the nose plays a role in helping the eyes to remember (Pallasmaa, 1996). The following remark explains how the author and visitors perceived the strength of the odour around Pasar Baru:

Indonesian-Sundanese Language:

*“baunya Pasar Baru mah khusus, waktu di rumah nyium bau keripik langsung inget jalan samping gedung (jalan Pasar Utara) yang jual keripik-keripik tea geuning, langsung kebayang keripik tempe dan keripik seblaknya. Makanya saya ke sini, mau beli keripik da kebayang-bayang aja, terus kriuknya duh. dan rasanya juga asa langsung kerasa”*

Informant B, 2023

Translation:

“The smell of Pasar Baru is special, when I smell the chips at home, I immediately remember the street next to the building (Jalan Pasar Utara) which sells the chips. I immediately think of tempeh chips and seblak (super spicy chips). That's why I came here, I wanted to buy chips because I keep imagining it in my head, it sounds crispy and the spicy savory taste immediately seems to be on my tongue”

Informant B, 2023

The experiences of merchants outside the market building also indicate that smells impact the overall perception of the location.

Indonesian-Sundanese Language:

*“udah puluhan tahun dagang di sini, kalau jejeran belakang sini (jalan Pasar Barat) baunya siga rempah, udah mah saya jualan bumbu-bumbu juga kan. Di tambah di ujung jalan sana ada Babah Kuya toko jamu tea (toko Chinese herbal) jadi khas bau jejeran sini mah. Tapi kalau ka sorekeun, bau mah beda da penjualnya udah beda lagi, tukeran tempat jualan pan”*

Merchant A, 2023

Translation:

“I've been trading here for decades, this road, behind here (Jalan Pasar Barat) smells like spices, I'm already selling spices too, right? Moreover, at the end of the road, there is Babah Kuya (a Chinese herbal shop) which creates a unique aroma in this lane. But when you're in the afternoon, the smell is different because the seller is different, we change places to trade”

Merchant A, 2023

The description of the three senses above suggests that the senses of smell, sight, and hearing also seem to have an impact on taste. Vision is diverted according to taste. Taste is not just about tasting what you eat, but what you see, such as the colors, details and building materials around the Pasar Baru building. That creates a verbal sensation that provokes visitors to comment and have a narrative about the place. Likewise, the sense of touch, how to touch the merchandise before buying, touching the dull walls of old buildings, feeling the rough texture of the walls, the foot can feel the texture of old ceramics on the broken floor provide an

experience of an old place that cannot be found anywhere else, Pasar Baru Bandung presents a sense of touch of heritage.

Based on all descriptions, the spatial experience through all basic human senses is influenced by time. Sense of place is no longer even a place, but a perception, a feeling about the way people experience, express, imagine and know the place where they live.” (Qazimi, 2014). When people participate in various activities, socialize, and interact with each other, they form a living space, and perception and memory of a place are developed indirectly.

## Conclusions

Pasar Baru Bandung has succeeded in providing a dynamic sense of place because it can change depending on human perception which is reinforced by the basic human senses. Pasar Baru Bandung's sense of place is divided into two categories, namely tangible and intangible. The dominant tangible category involves the sense of sight, such as seeing the physical layout of Pasar Baru Bandung. Apart from that, typical social and trading activities are shown busy, crowded and tend to be messy. Meanwhile, the intangible category involves the values and meanings contained in Pasar Baru Bandung. This means that this category adds to the soul of the area because it involves human sensors that cannot be seen, such as sound, touch, smell and taste. All of which is known through individual experiences related to place. Experience does not improve, enhance, or show the beauty of Pasar Baru Bandung, but makes people evaluate spatial existence through their senses consciously to understand the identity and spirit of the environment around them more deeply.

It is also known that a sense of place in Pasar Baru through experience is also identified by human preferences as actors who play a role in it. Through Pasar Baru Bandung, the definition of a sense of place is not always associated with something visually beautiful, orderly, neat, clean, or wrapped in a fragrant aroma, a pleasant temperature, a positive touch, a taste that is always “sweet” and “delicious” but rather with a place’s efforts to survive, maintain life and continue to fill the soul with various local typical activities so that it is necessary, remembered and creates bonds for the individuals who are (have been) in it.

Learning from Pasar Baru Bandung that the circulation of historical narratives and cultural content is part of the formation of a sense of place in Pasar Baru Bandung which is included in the intangible value category. This circulation is what makes a place survive. The definition of circulation here is not just human steps but also historical steps, culture, activities, and even the circulation of the human senses which will be wrapped in unique local experiences at Pasar Baru Bandung from time to time. As a result, Pasar Baru Bandung has the impression of a long-term, symbolic and unforgettable place.

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