

Hierarchy and Relationship of Hamlets: The Case of Baduy Tribe, Indonesia

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Abstract

Baduy Tribe in Kanekes Village, Banten Province, Indonesia, is one of the ethnic communities that still actively follow the customary law. Baduy Tribe consists of two groups, namely Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy, with Inner Baduy people often said to be the more earnest practitioner. Their customary law is called *pikukuh*, which is the set of rules and guidelines derived from the animism belief of Sunda Wiwitan. In general, the core of *pikukuh* is to control the relationship between human and nature through strictly forbidding the Baduy to change the environment. The *pikukuh* is also used as the base of hierarchy between each zone within the village. It shows that there are three zones exist in Kanekes Village, which influence the hierarchy between the Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy hamlets. However, the two groups of hamlets are not separate entities. The relationship between Inner and Outer Baduy hamlets is connected through marriage, making the community sustained for a hundred years. Therefore, to preserve the vernacular architecture of Baduy Tribe, it is also necessary to understand the system within the community.

Keywords: relationship, hierarchy, Baduy hamlets, ethnic community, Indonesia

1. Introduction

Indonesia is considered one of the countries with rich diversity. With over 17,000 islands extending from the west to the east, Indonesia is said to have over 300 ethnic communities. Each communities have different forms of heritage, often reflecting the characteristics of each region. Many of these heritages are living heritage, especially when we talk about vernacular settlements, where the community still actively follow the customary law while inheriting both their tangible and intangible heritage. These vernacular settlements are often called as *Desa Adat*, which according to the President Decree no.43 year 2014, is a unit of society within a boundary which has a right to manage an autonomous government based on the society, the rights of origins, and traditional rights acknowledged by Indonesian government. Thus, it is often found that in a vernacular settlement, unique form of social system and herarchy exists differently with the national ones.

One of the examples of an active ethnic community is The Baduy Tribe, one of the sub-ethnic groups of Sundanese ethnicity located in Kanekes Village, Banten Province, Indonesia. The community consists of two sub-groups, the Outer Baduy (*Urang Panamping; Urang Dangka*) and Inner Baduy (*Urang Tangtu*). Both groups are still preserving their beliefs and traditional social system, with the Inner Baduy being the stricter practitioners. The sense of community to practice their *adat* through their customary law, often called *pikukuh*, is still strong. Their lifestyle is based on the *pikukuh* and its taboos (*buyut*), which controls the relationship between the community and the nature in their surroundings. However, the influence of tourism, globalization, and modernity nowadays has affected the social life of the Baduy Tribe, which will possibly influence the system and customary laws exists within the community. The government initiatives to develop the community are also ineffective since it often misses the consideration of Baduy social system and customary laws (Suryani, 2021). Therefore, the understanding of Baduy system, both spatial and hierarchal, might assist in future measures to develop the community more precisely.

2. Research Method

2.1 Literature Study

Secondary data regarding Baduy Tribe's history, social system, religion, architecture, etc., and literature study from previous research are also necessary to know the development and condition of Kanekes Village from time to time.

2.2 Site Survey and Data Collecting

Field surveys in March and August 2022 were conducted to collect the data through house measurement and interviews. The survey took example of Marenggo Hamlet as the example of Outer Baduy hamlet, and Cibeo Hamlet as the example of Inner Baduy hamlet. However, this paper mostly uses the data collected in Inner Baduy hamlets, since the hierarchy, zonation, and relationship between residences are clearly seen.

2.3 Data Analysis

Descriptive and qualitative analysis will be done to identify the spatial relationship in Kanekes Village zonation as well as the relationship between Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy hamlets and its residences.

3. Literature Review

The spatial organization in vernacular settlements often plays a part as symbol of local identity and authenticity of ethnic communities. Spatial organization related to culture are often found in a more detailed scene, such as room arrangements in vernacular houses. For example, the traditional house of Sasak Tribe, Lombok, has the women bedroom in the back of the house with only one access through another room. This is related with the concept of spiritual aspect and commending the women, as well as the tradition in Sasak Tribe's marriage system (Subiyantoro, 2019). Another example is in the village of Gajah Mekar, West Java, where the natural geographic features are related to the village's spatial organization and the community traditional values as researched by Wessing (2001). Gajah Mekar Village itself is not a vernacular village, but it still follows the intangible values of traditional Sundanese ethnicity. The hills nearby are significant in their spatial organization, where the hill is called Buni Buana (hidden world) and is the place of the grave of village's ancestors. Another important feature is the water, often in forms of springs or rivers. The hamlets inside the village are often located in the oxbow of a river, between the grave of ancestors and the place where spirits reside. These places are often believed to be the place where guardian spirits reside, providing the water of life (Wessing, 2001).

However, studies regarding Baduy Tribe are mostly concentrated on the fact that the socio-cultural condition within the community is changing. Suryani (2021) stated that the developing political condition in Indonesia leads to the shift in perspectives regarding Baduy community, which were once respected as hermits of Banten Province, shifting into the target of relocation and resettlement program by the government with the goal to develop the community. Permana (2010) also discussed the change in Baduy Tribe's socio-culture, resulting in the negotiation of *pikukuh* practice. Different with Suryani, Permana saw the phenomenon from various perspective. While he argued that the *pikukuh* values are still strongly believed as a method to keep their existence, it does not stop the changes occurs within the community. For example, the problem of population leads to the decreasing of farming land inside Kanekes Village area, which also connects to the economical condition of Baduy people since they need to find extra income. One of the efforts of getting the extra income is through tourism, making the community exposed to a wider set of information. These connections eventually lead to the changes of Baduy Tribe's lifestyle.

While Baduy Tribe undergo many cultural changes, their spatial condition remains the same. Research from Daisuke Niwa and team (1995) discussed the settlement composition in Kadujangkung Hamlet, one of the Outer Baduy hamlets. The result shows that even though Kadujangkung Hamlet relatively has more changes due to its location nearby Kanekes Village entrance, there are elements of hamlet that are unchanged and the same with other Baduy hamlets, such as the position of house and granary construction.

This paper tries to identify the relation between spatial organization and the hierarchy of Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy. The boundary of the spaces in Kanekes Village is derived from the animism belief of Sunda Wiwitan, which also influence the system between villagers, especially the marriage system. The general zonation of the village will be analyzed, as well as the zonation inside Inner and Outer Baduy hamlet taken as example. Furthermore, the role of hamlets in relation with the identity as an Inner Baduy or Outer Baduy person will be discussed. Therefore, it can be understood how spatial zonation in Baduy Tribe could lead into the hierarchy between hamlets, and how this hierarchy influence the marriage system between the villagers.

4. A Brief about Baduy Tribe and Kanekes Village

Banten Province is the westernmost province in Java Island, Indonesia, the homeland of Sundanese Banten people and the indigenous ethnic of Kanekes people, often called as Baduy Tribe, which of both are subgroups of Sundanese ethnicity. Based on the Regional Law no. 32/2001 regarding Baduy Tribe Ulayat Rights (autonomous rights for ethnic community to manage their land), the area of Kanekes Village is decided to be 5,101.85 hectares. Geographically, this area is part of the Kendeng Highlands, with a height of 300-1200 meters above sea level and a hilly topography with a 45% slant (Jamaludin & Permadi, 2013).



Figure 1. Location of Banten Province and Kanekes Village

The zones of Kanekes Village are based on both legal regulation and Baduy customary law. Based on utilization area, the zones are divided into three: 2,492.1 hectares of protected forest, 2,569.2 hectares of cultivation land, and 40,5 hectares of settlement land (Senoaji, 2010). On the other hand, according to the locals, the village is divided into three primary parts based on the inhabitants:

- (1) *Tangtu* or the ‘inner’ hamlets, places where the traditions are stricter and fully maintained. This area consisted of three hamlets which cannot be added or reduced: Cibeo, Cikeusik, and Cikartawana. Deep within the sacred forest of tangtu areas, lies sacred places believed to be the place where creation began and spirits are gathering, respectively called Arca Domas and Sasaka Domas (Wessing & Barendregt, 2008).
- (2) *Panamping* or the ‘outer’ hamlets, where the customary law and tradition are more loosen and relaxed. The number of hamlets in panamping as of 2022 are 65 hamlets scattered all around Kanekes Village area.
- (3) *Dangka*, which consists of the hamlets that disengaged further from the tradition, usually located in the neighboring area.

In general, the community is divided into two sub-groups, also based on their village division as mentioned earlier. People who live in *tangtu* area are often called as *urang tangtu* (Inner Baduy; *Baduy Jero*), and people who live in *panamping* area are called *urang panamping* (Outer Baduy; *Baduy Luar*; *Urang Dangka*). The difference between these two groups is their behavior towards the customary law, which considers the Inner Baduy group to be the stricter believers and Outer Baduy to be less strict (Wessing & Barendregt, 2008). Danasmita and Djatisunda (1986) suggested that *panamping* has a meaning of ‘people on the border (of Kanekes)’, implying that Outer Baduy’s role is to be a buffer between the outside modern world and the sacredness of Kanekes area. Meanwhile, people who live in the *dangka* area are freer and are no different from other non-Baduy people. Their relationship with the Kanekes is mostly limited to the *adat* (custom) ritual only, but the leaders in *dangka* are often involved in the decision-making within Baduy Tribe’s social system.

5. Result: Hierarchy of Hamlets and Zonation of Kanekes Village

As explained in the previous part, the zonation decided by governments and the community is overlapping with each other. Figure 2 below explains the imaginary area that divide the inner and outer Kanekes Village, since the community does not have an explicit mark or border. The community usually marks the zones with natural features or construction that they could assume as ‘landmark’. For Baduy Tribe, the boundary between each

hamlet is usually river or *leuit* (granary), while the boundaries between inner and outer areas are hilly and mountainous slopes. According to Wessing (2001), the markers in West Java, including the Baduy Tribe area, are usually uniform with graves, communal *lisung* (rice-pounding facility) or granaries as examples.

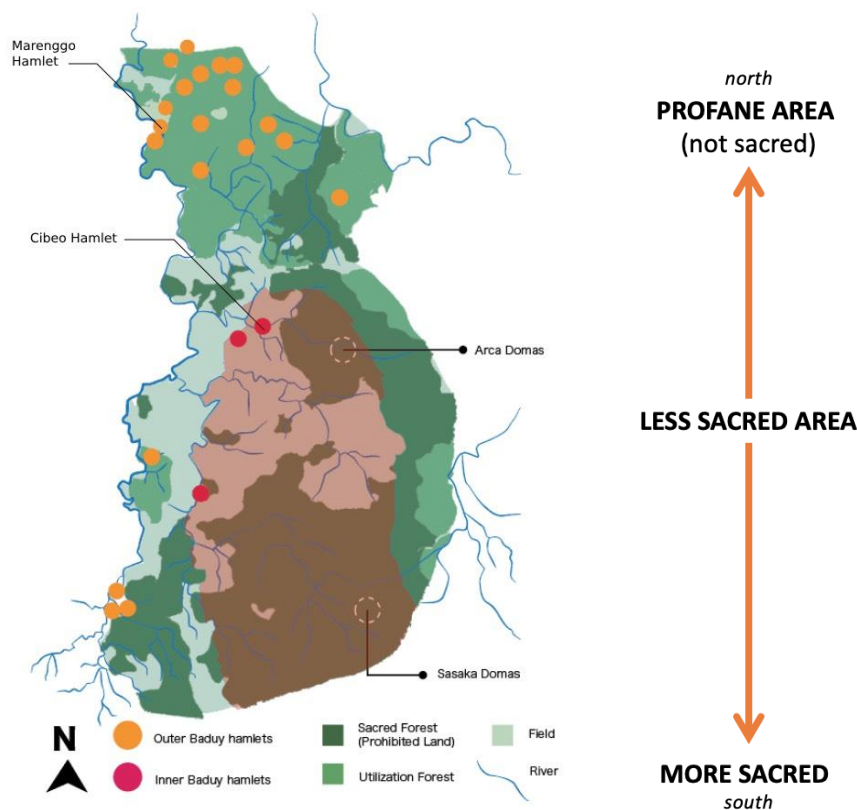


Figure 2. Zonation of Kanekes Village, with areas in red shade are part of inner (*tangtu*) area

The area in red is the boundary of inner area (*tangtu*), consisted of three Inner Baduy hamlets, some utilization fields, and Sacred Forest (protected forest) with Arca Domas in the northern part and Sasaka Domas in the southern part. The rest of the area within Kanekes Village is outer area (*panamping*), consisted of utilization forest, fields, some areas of protected forest, and Outer Baduy hamlets scattered all over the area, mostly on the northern part. Outside the Kanekes Village boundary is neighboring area (*dangka*), with more modern buildings such as motel, bus station, shops, and modern houses. From *dangka* to the inner Kanekes Village area, the only access are pathways. One pathway is managed for tourism purposes, but there are other shortcuts that lead to another smaller Outer Baduy hamlets.

The spatial relationship between hamlets and its area also defines the hierarchy of sacred and profane area. The profane, *dangka* area in the north is used to welcome guests without important cultural values. The middle where *panamping* area, Outer Baduy hamlets, and utilization forests are located, has lesser sacrality. While the *tangtu* area in the south; consists of three Inner Baduy hamlets, Sacred Forest, and the sacred place Arca Domas and Sasaka Domas, is the most sacred area of Kanekes Village. This hierarchy is also related to the myths and stories of Baduy community, where they believe the spirits of the ancestors are gathering in Sasaka Domas, the place where Batara Tunggal (the first human on earth, sometimes they refer to him as ‘the Adam’ to make it easier for tourists to understand) came to the earth. Batara Tunggal then had descendants, which later believed are the ancestors of the leaders in Inner Baduy hamlets (*puun*).

This north-south axis in Baduy Tribe is believed by the community, but Wessing (2008) argued that rather than the north-south axis, the spatial organization within the village might responds to the high and low region, which often found in other Sundanese hamlets. Salura (2015) refers to this concept as *Luhur-Handap* (*luhur*: upper; *handap*: lower), where the community settlements have contrasting differences in contour, making the hierarchy of important facilities clear. The case in Kanekes area is that the higher region, where the sacred Sasaka Domas is located, is on the southern part of Kanekes. Therefore, directing their settlement towards Sasaka Domas will also mean directing the houses’ facade and sacred facilities to the south while profane facilities are on the north,

thus the discussion of the north-south axis in settlements.

This *luhur-handap* concept can be clearly seen in Cibeo Hamlet, one of the Outer Baduy hamlets. The organization of these facilities is oriented towards the *Puun* house, with the *Puun* house located on the highest ground in the southern part. Opposite of the *Puun* house, on the lower northern part of the hamlet, there is a multipurpose building called a *bale*. *Bale* is usually used for cultural meetings or *rapat adat*, where officials from Outer and Inner Baduy hamlets gather. While in Marenggo Hamlet, the Outer Baduy hamlet, both the concept of *luhur-handap* and the distinction of facilities on the north-south axis are not clear. The facilities and houses in Marenggo Hamlet are rather adapting to the ground condition, which is distinctively sloping towards the east. Furthermore, unlike Cibeo Hamlet, Marenggo Hamlet does not have *Puun* house and *Bale*, but the facilities inside the hamlet are mostly to accommodate tourists.

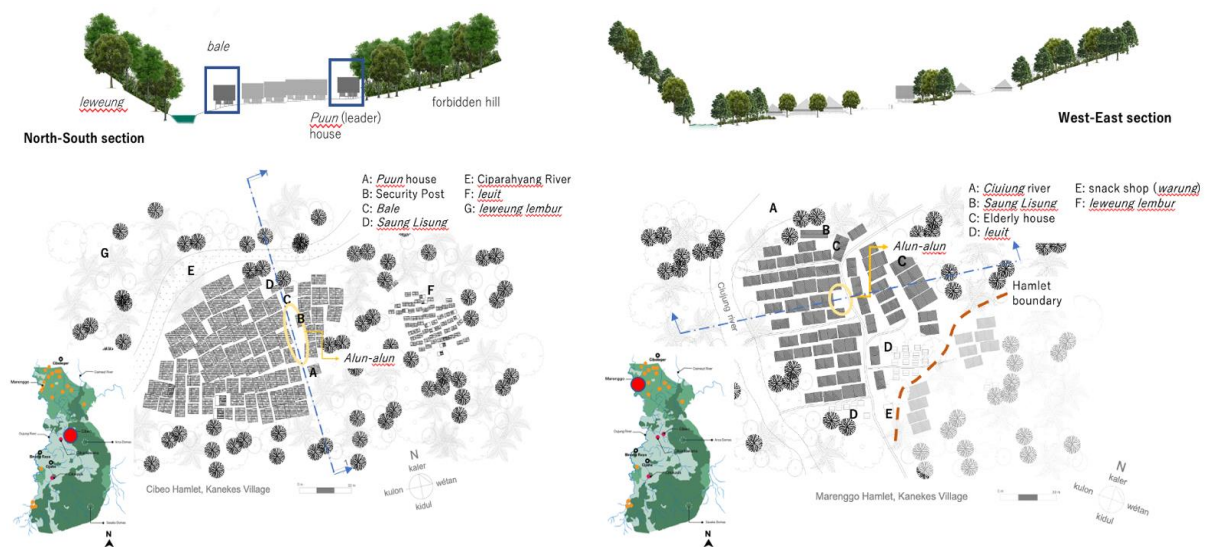
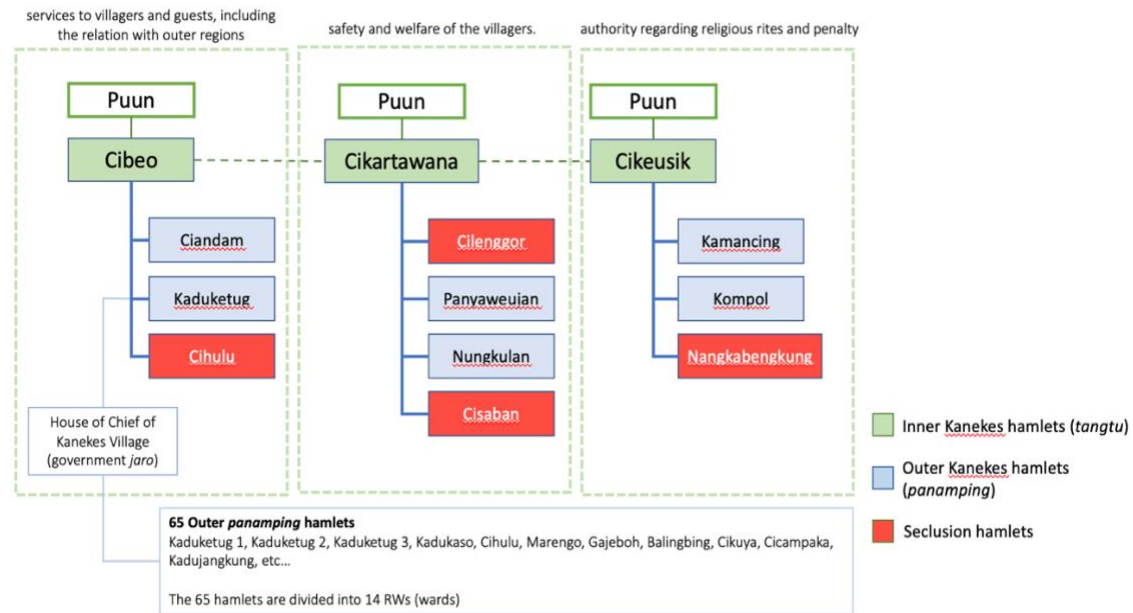


Figure 3. Plan and section of Cibeo Hamlet (left) and Marenggo Hamlet (left)

The reason is that *Puun* exists only in Inner Baduy hamlets. Each *puun* and each Inner Baduy hamlets has different responsibility in managing the community. The hamlet located in the northern part of *tangtu* area, Cibeo Hamlet, is responsible with service to villagers and guests, including the relation with outer regions. The middle Inner Baduy hamlet, Cikartawana Hamlet is responsible for safety and welfare of the villagers, and the last hamlet located in the southern part of *tangtu* area, Cikeusik Hamlet is responsible with authority regarding religious rites and penalty. This may also relate to the *Puun* descendants, where *Puun* in Cikeusik and Cikartawana are said to be descended from Batara Tunggal in the male line while *Puun* in Cibeo is descended from Batara Tunggal's granddaughter (Wessing & Barendregt, 2008), means that Cibeo Hamlet has lesser 'sacredness' than the two hamlets, where Cikeusik Hamlet being the most sacred hamlet within Kanekes Village.

According to Djajadiningrat (1929) in *Djawa Tijdschrift Van Het Java-instituut*, the Inner Baduy hamlets and Outer Baduy hamlets also have a hierarchy relationship. Outer Baduy hamlets under Cibeo are Ciandam, Kaduketug, and Cihulu; Outer Baduy hamlets under Cikartawana are Cilenggor, Panyaweujan, and Nungkulan; and Outer Baduy hamlets under Cikeusik are Kamancing, Kopol, and Nangkabengkung (Djajadiningrat & Hoesein, 1929). The other Outer Baduy hamlets fall under the regulation of the government *jaro* who also acts as the Chief of Kanekes Village. Most Outer Baduy hamlets already use Indonesia's area system, such as RT (*Rukun Tetangga*: neighborhood) and RW (*Rukun Warga*: ward).



*As per September 2022

Figure 4. Diagram showing hierarchy between Inner Baduy hamlets and Outer Baduy hamlets

Source: Djawa Tijdschrift Van Het Java-instituut vol.9, 1928 with additions by author.

For Inner Baduy people who break the *pikukuh* customary law until it cannot be tolerated or who want to go out and be Outer Baduy people, a specific hamlet is used as a place of seclusion. After 40 days of living in seclusion, if the person repents and regrets their doings, they may be welcomed again to the inner hamlets after discussion with *Puun* and if not, they must get out of Inner Baduy and become the Outer Baduy people. As for Outer Baduy people who want to get out of the area, they could just consult with the leaders without any seclusion necessary, but in return they will lose the identity of Baduy. However, these cases are uncommon, since Baduy Tribe prefer to go with the community. For people who does not want to live with strict customary rules but still want to be a part of the community, they usually become Outer Baduy residents. This allows them to live with modernity while also connected to the family and retain their identity as the Baduy.

It is important to note that within the Baduy community, once one became an Outer Baduy or even go out of the community, they can not be back to the Inner Baduy. System in Baduy Tribe allows one to go to be an outsider, but not to return to be insider. Thus, to manage the generations, Inner Baduy people, in principle, must be married to another Inner Baduy people paired by the *Puun*. While people in Outer Baduy, they are free to choose by themselves as long as the partner is the same Outer Baduy person. However, there are special cases of marriage between Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy, which allows an Outer Baduy to become an Inner Baduy person. Through these kinds of marriage, the family ties between Inner and Outer Baduy people are established, and thus strengthen the bond within Baduy Tribe as one community.

Baduy Tribe is a patriarchal society, therefore, in a marriage, wife will move to the husband's house. The husband must prepare a new house for his family before he got married, separated from his parents' house. This common case can be seen though Example 1., where Ayah Naldi, an Inner Baduy man, needs to prepare a house beforehand to live together with his wife. Currently, they have one son and adopting two children, and live together with Ayah Naldi's mother-in-law eversince his father-in-law died.

It is different with the case in Example 2 of Ayah Jaku's family. Here, eventhough Ayah Jaku's family originated from Inner Baduy, starting from Jaku's generation they became an Outer Baduy. The *Puun* did not find the pair for Jaku in Inner Baduy, so he ordered Jaku to search in Outer Baduy. After that, in the case where usually the wife follows the husband, situation in Jaku's family is different. Jaku chose to follow his wife to Outer Baduy, since he felt that sometimes the rules in Inner Baduy are too strict. This way, Jaku went through the seclusion life for 40 days.

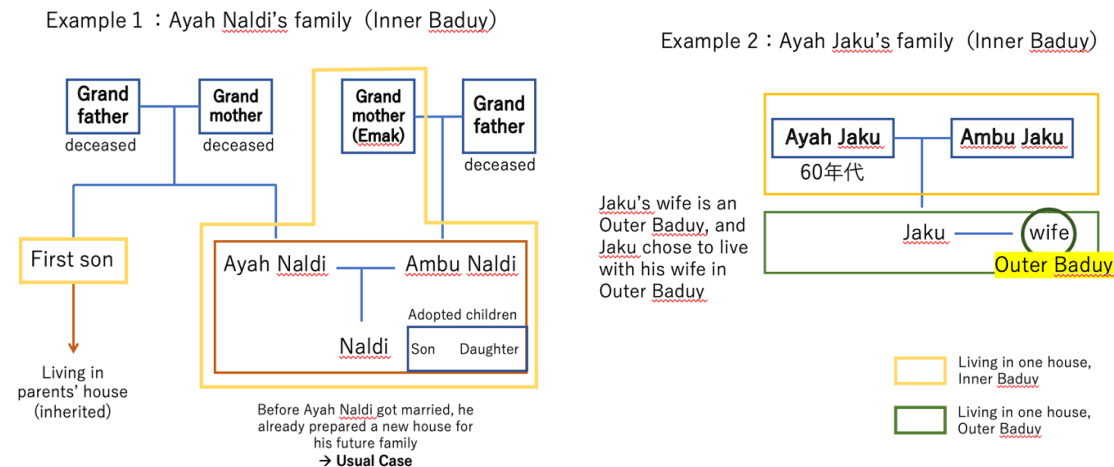


Figure 5. Examples of Baduy Tribe family tree

The special case of the conversion of Outer Baduy person to be an Inner Baduy is found in Example 3. of Ayah Mursid's family. Ayah Mursid and his parents are originated from Inner Baduy. When Ayah Mursid wanted to get married, same as Jaku, the *Puun* said that his partner is in Outer Baduy and thus, Ayah Mursid needs to find her. Different with Jaku who chose to be an Outer Baduy, Ayah Mursid did not want to leave Inner Baduy and demanded his wife to be an Inner Baduy too. Later, the *Puun* gave prayings and mantras to help 'purifying the heart' of Ayah Mursid's wife, so that she was willing to be an Inner Baduy. However, the son, Mursid, chose to be an Outer Baduy and have a family with an Outer Baduy person, since he wanted to see the outside world and use digital technologies.

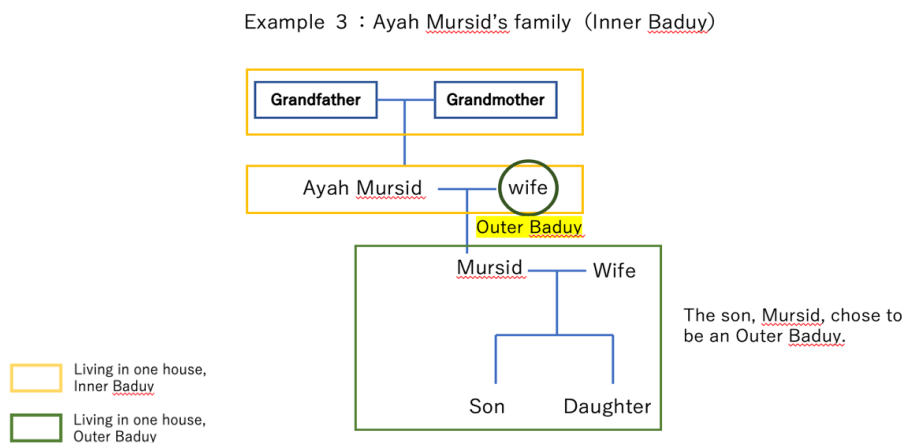


Figure 6. Example 3 of Ayah Mursid's family

6. Conclusion

This research shows that Baduy Tribe has a complex hierarchy and spatial system of hamlets derived from the intangible heritage of *adat* (customs). First, the spatial zonations of Kanekes Village are established to protect the nature as well as respecting the elderly, thus the existence of Sacred Forest, *tangtu*, *panamping*, and *dangka* areas. These zonations have similar functions with the core and buffer zones often used in modern heritage policies. Through these zonations, it is clear where the profane and sacred areas are, which will be useful for future conservation guideline.

Furthermore, the zonations influence the role of hamlets and its residents. The Inner Baduy people who live in *tangtu* area must follow the customary law strictly, while Outer Baduy people acts as the buffer between modern world and sacred world of *tangtu*. Since each group has their own role inside the community, it is not that free to 'convert' to another group, as long as one has a strong reason. The case of 'conversion' from Inner Baduy to Outer Baduy are common, but the opposite is quite hard to find, unless it is done through marriage as shown in

the case of Ayah Mursid and his wife. With marriage, the family relation between Inner and Outer Baduy could be established and managed. Children like Jaku and Mursid who chose to be an Outer Baduy can also visit their relatives in Inner Baduy, thus strengthening the bond (*silaturahmi*) between family, and eventually, between Inner and Outer Baduy hamlets.

However, further studies from the anthropological point of view regarding the reasons behind this ‘conversion’ phenomenon are needed, especially towards Inner Baduy people who become Outer Baduy, and Outer Baduy people who fully leave Baduy community. It is recommended that the factors related to social system in ethnic communities are considered thoroughly in assisting the development of Baduy Tribe in the future.

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