Places of Faith: A Reflection on Landscape of Manila Cathedral Plaza de Roma and Istiqlal Mosque Sacred Grounds of Jakarta

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Abstract: Crossing boundaries of faith from Manila to Jakarta, this study is to classify the open spaces in their sacred grounds according to its characteristics, elements, use of space and hierarchy of importance in landscape design approach. The reflection of their religious landscape in preserving the traditional, and exploring the non-traditional aspect of their landscape design in global setting is carried out thru a spatial analysis for Plaza de Roma of Manila Cathedral and the sacred grounds of Istiqlal Mosque. The design framework would tackle: concepts, planning approach, functional symbolic values, and aesthetics used. The data and information are all examined based on observation, historical background, analyses, and literature content in determining spatial functions. Finally, when results are completed, this will give a better understanding on the importance of open areas in Manila and Jakarta’s sacred spaces; paving way for a better sense of comfort in spiritual contemplation. This will also help reveal the commonalities in spiritual practices between Islam and Christianity, and the role of landscape in their religion and faith.

I. Introduction
The concept of religious landscape should not be interchanged nor mistakenly assumed as cultic and polytheistic. It seems to be a matter of common knowledge that the concept of space are socially and culturally constructed and that this concepts are historically sensitive depending on the modern perspective and experience.\textsuperscript{1} Religious landscape” has been a topic for the past twenty years. However, since the concept is not clearly stated and indistinct in nature, there is no established intellectual space to which it is derived. As defined by Matthew Dillon\textsuperscript{2}, religious landscape includes as well the itinerary a pilgrim is obliged to take or usually takes when approaching the sanctuary of his choice, the route which one has to take a specific place where sacrifices and other religious rites takes place. It includes the public or privately owned area surrounding a walled sanctuary not only with camping pilgrims, but also with fairs and markets, craftsmen and merchants who offer all kinds of services the pilgrims might need\textsuperscript{3}. The space defines the temporary religious use of an often not sacred space; wherein the potential users are coming from different religious groups apart from Catholicism and Moslems and the practicing believers of these faiths that unite to experience the sacred ground.

II. Background of the Study
Places of worship, faith and religion hold a special position in the cultural and social aspects of a community. They create the design distinctiveness and hierarchy of importance in a certain structure on how these spaces are to be planned and oriented. However, the lack of spaces to work around that is sufficient to users; along with the design approach on the landscape reduce the efficiency of a sacred
ground. With this, the author would establish the relationship of the landscape in Mosque and Cathedral’s open space on religious common grounds.

Historical Background Jakarta, Indonesia: Prayer (salat) is an indispensable religious ritual for Moslems which can be conducted anywhere except for the places they consider dirty such as tombs and slaughter houses. Masjid or Mosque is an Islamic religious building where many people with the same intention can pray together. Masjids throughout the world are built based on the axis facing Mecca. Indonesia boasts one of the most unique and monumental sacred grounds in Southeast Asia. Manila, Philippines: Philippines is the only Catholic Christian nation in the South East Asia. The Manila Metropolitan Cathedral Basilica or Manila Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Concepcion, is one of the oldest and most famous churches in Asia. With a storied history and legacy that spans over four centuries, the structure has seen the best and worst of time and humanity.

Research Problem With the geographic distribution of religious groups varying considerably, the global population of Manila and Jakarta in religious landscape therefore, influences the spatial configuration and functional efficiency of their places of worship. This study highlights the comparative scale of open spaces for Plaza de Roma and Mosque Courtyards (Sahn) in understanding their importance attached to their religious structure respectively. To clearly define space hierarchy, the different rituals for Catholicism and Moslems shall be magnified and analyzed.

Goals and Objectives In order to come up with the functionality and relevance of open spaces to sacred grounds this study aims to:

1. Identify the spatial sequence and uses of space for the religious structure of Istiqlal Mosque and Manila Cathedral;
2. To define and analyzed the historical influences on planning configuration and design elements of open spaces that makes it a sacred ground.
3. To provide spatial relationship of the natural and built environment for religious spaces of mosque and cathedral through site analysis and inventory.

Scope and Limitations The study is site specific to Istiqlal Mosque and Manila Cathedral’s open space used for religious practices. For this study, the selected open spaces are those bounded within and adjacent to the interior and exterior constraint of these religious structures (courtyards and plaza).

Assumptions and Hypothesis Religious buildings that are monumental in scale symbolically represent spiritual dominance for a certain faith. The larger and grandeur it is designed and crafted, the more it embodies spiritual power over the other. For religious structures, it is assumed that even the smallest of space are considered sacred or blessed as long as it is attached to its main building. The orientation and size allotment of their spaces foretells the important use of the space. The sequential order and zoning of the spaces are relevant to the activities to be performed inside or outside the religious structure. Despite the changing environment, the physical characteristics of a religious structure is influenced and dictated by the traditional concept of design patterned to its historical and commemorative significance.

Significance of the Study The importance of this study is to understand the concept of religious landscape on the realms of Islamic and Catholicism’s sacred grounds that reflects their culture and spiritual identity. The commonalities between two different faith and their religious practices can be a binding factor in resolving conflicts in the future. This will help define the attributes and integration of open spaces to their religious practices that is globally acceptable despite the changing conditions of climate, building materials and technological advancement used where sacred grounds are located (table 1).
Table 1. Open Spaces a Place of Worship and Sacred Grounds

| CATHOLIC FAITH | ISLAMIC FAITH |
|----------------|--------------|
| LOCATION: Plaza del Roma, Manila Philippines | LOCATION: Istiqlal Mosque, Jakarta, Indonesia |
| SACRED GROUNDS: Open space | SACRED GROUNDS: Courtyards |
| ACTIVITIES: Liturgical Calendar | ACTIVITIES: Political/ Civic/ Social/ Religious Celebrations |

OBSERVATION, USER ANALYSIS, SPACE SYNTAX

TANGIBLES: Spatial sequence, Religious Activities, Spaces Required, Aesthetics
INTANGIBLES: Historical and traditional Background, Psychologica, Spiritual and social perceptions, Modern Changes

III. Concept and Framework

Open Spaces As Place Of Worship And Sacred Grounds

Catholic Faith Philippines: Manila cathedral Plaza de Roma

Islamic Faith Indonesia: Istiqlal mosque

Liturgical calendar

Religious practices And ritual

Functional spaces

Observation, User analysis, and Space syntax

Tangibles:
- Spatial sequence
- Religious activities
- Spaces required
- Aesthetics

Intangibles:
- Historical and traditional background
- Psychological and spiritual perceptions
- Modern changes

Figure 1. Concepts and Framework

Figure 2. Space Syntax: Istiqlal Mosque
IV. Methods of Inventory
To come up with detailed understanding of the space hierarchy and its functional uses, this study provided a series of documentation in gathering and translating information in the form of photos, literature research, space syntax and comparative analysis.

V. Tables and Figures: Comparative Analysis

| PARAMETERS       | ISTIQLAL COURT YARD                                      | PLAZA DE ROMA                                      | IN COMMON                                      |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Planning layout  | • Seven entrances in the building grandeur in scale;    | • Considering its rectangular layout, it has      | • Multiple accessibility to accommodate more    |
|                  |   nine hectares lot                                       |   four entrances accessible from North, East,     |
|                  |   • Square in plan; with surrounding columns and        |   West, South side of the lot.                    |   can accommodate larger numbers of users      |
|                  |   enclosed vast prayer halls with roofed areas          |   • Major plaza in Manila                         |   • Geometric in shape; formal symmetry.       |
|                  |   • Paved flooring for indoor and outdoor spaces        |   • Square in plan, enclosed by surrounding     |                                                 |
|                  |                                                          |   fences and hedges as perimeter planters;       |                                                 |
|                  |                                                          |   open green space                                |                                                 |
| Flexibility of   | • The courtyard is attached to the main structure as    | • Open space is adjacent to main structure        | • The space is flexible in use, depending on   |
| the open space   |   worship area; prayer halls and vestibules were        |   where it is used for general functions          |   the time and season; both can be used as    |
|                  |   generally laid out in plan; space can also be used    |                                                 |   social, civic, cultural activities          |
|                  |   apart from praying activities                          |                                                 |                                                 |
| Physical         | • Despite irregularity of the site; the main area is    | • Accessible to anyone at any given time of the   | • The configuration of area is the same and   |
| efficiency of    |   configured in square plan to accommodate              |   day. The existing                              |   the activities done                         |
| space            |                                                          |                                                 |                                                 |
more worshippers; courtyards are exposed to sunlight during the worshipping hours making it inconvenient for those using the space for prayers.

Trees and vegetation benefits the users as it is used for shading during hottest time of the day except that the space where it is located is different. For courtyards, it is inside the mosque, while the plaza is outside the cathedral.

Aesthetics
- Motifs and patterns
Embellishments are intricate in design and influence by islamic art. Designs are reflective to their religious beliefs and practices.

Dependent to the rulling power who govern, manage and maintain the area; dependent on the activities and celebrations to be held.

For courtyards, it has definite look and fixed patterns; while plaza has a tendency to changes its appearance depending on the social activities.

Historical importance
Built to conform President Sukarno’grand vision of a strong, multi faith state with the government as its center.

Product of town planning system with reference to the laws of the indies where an open spaces is integral center of the government, civic, and secular structures.

Apparently, the mosque is located near christian church in Jakarta where in the attached meaning is that it reflects to the world that religions could co-exist harmoniously with other.

Spatial and Religious Experience

Table 02. Spatial and Religious Activities on Sacred Spaces

| SPACE CONFIGURATION | MOSQUE COURTYARD | PLAZA DE ROMA |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------|
| ENTRANCE            | -seven point entrances that are located adjacent to road networks structure’s axis is oriented towards Mecca | -four main entrance point are coming from the north, east, west, south, axis of the area surrounded by civic, secular buildings, government building and ancillary road on each sides |
| PRAYER HALL         | can accommodate 120,000 capacity five floors with each prayer hall accommodating 60,000 users | can accommodate 23,000 capacity one floor only |
| SIGNIFICANCE OF SPACE | Courtyard are important to mosque and cannot be seperated from the main structure as it serve as an extension praying area aside the prayers halls atop of each floors | The open space is used as town hall, convening areas for festive occassions and cultural activities |
| ACTIVITIES          | Prayer area; education and teaching purposes; government forums | Prayer area on occassion; education and teaching purposes; for cultural and community activities, used as space for political forums; commercial space for selling merchandise to foreigners, locals and the like |
FREQUENCY OF USE | PRAYER AREA: five time a day | Accessible any time of the day.
FRIDAY: Whole day of prayer: Id Al-Fitr and Id Al-Adha, Al Hijra (Islamic New year), Ramadan (Month of Fasting), “Id Al-Fitr- (Festival of Breaking the Fast), “Id Al-Adha

VI. Results and Recommendation
The importance of courtyard in a Mosque is proportional to the importance of open space for Plaza de Roma. Using descriptive analysis; it is the most efficient technique to understand and provide substantial finding. It could be understood based on the literary research that the planning configuration of spaces in terms of scale and aesthetics has its bias on location, traditional systems used in design, materials used and even attachment to the laws and notable person; political or apolitical of the specific sites. In the architecture of faith of Moslems, the use of open spaces are for the purpose of accommodating larger number of faithful to pray and perform specific social, cultural, educational and even political events during off peak days and season. For the open space in Catholic Christian communities, particularly Plaza de Roma, the anticipation its space importance can be translated mostly during the liturgical celebrations. The sanctity of Plaza de Roma is not associated with religious practices rather on the civic use of space as community Park, on how it is adaptive to its changing use from social, commercial, political uses. There are similarities in the space intent between the sacred grounds of two different faiths. It could be seen in the early stages of planning that draws back to their historical significance, but a great difference on how these open spaces are being utilized when looking at a religious landscape point of view. Being the grandest among the grandest of all mosques in Indonesia, Istiqlal’s exterior should be provided with the addition of greener landscape in order to mitigate the humidity in the surrounding. For Plaza de Roma, since it is the remaining green space at the heart of the important building of Intramuros, shall be restored without too much changes on the external features; to reflect and maintain the placeness of the area and wherein such changes can also add to the historic value of the area.

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