

**THE MEANING OF NAME A PLACE IN PERSPECTIVE JAVA MIGRANT  
CUSTOM IN LAMPUNG, INDONESIA**

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**by:**

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# The Meaning of the Place Name on the Perspective of Javanese Transmigrants in Lampung, Indonesia

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*Abstract:* - Every place on earth has a name. The origin of place names generally has different backgrounds, stories, and histories. Generally, it depends on who gave the name of the place. There is a meaning and purpose behind the naming. This study aims to determine the socio-cultural ecological life of the community in an area and analyze the meaning contained in the socio-cultural context. This qualitative research is sourced from 26 informants. In addition to interviews, this research relies on observation and documentation studies to obtain a comprehensive toponym. This research was conducted at Gedong Tataan. Gedong Tataan is an area where is located that shows the history of transmigration in Lampung during the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia. The results of this study indicate that the naming of Gedong Tataan by the Javanese is influenced by the physical aspects of the area based on the socio-cultural aspect of Java. This study concludes that all areas inhabited by Javanese transmigrants in Lampung have a toponym according to the origin of the population from Java, including the use of the Javanese language for daily communication. This behavior belongs to the realm of cultural preservation and it still thrives in migration and transmigration areas.

*Key-Words:* Custom java, the meaning of the name, migrant, toponym.

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## 1. Introduction

Every place on earth has a name with a different historical background depending on who gave the name, the purpose behind the naming, or the meaning contained in each name. However, various studies have focused more on the elements of the appearance of the earth, even though socio-cultural elements such as the behavior, thoughts, or traditions of a society, including cultural symbols, contribute to the naming of a place. Toponym reflects human activities and natural landscapes in a certain area and period of time. Of course, human

activities reflect their culture, so that language factors, or cultural symbols, are closely related to toponym. As a culture, toponym is a reflection of the human mind. From this perspective, the phrases in toponym, apart from language factors, also refer to events, objects, goods, and cases and caresses the real world [1]. Toponym is also used to reconstruct the historical shape of the river network in China's Hubei Province, from the legend of river names [2].

Names are believed to have consequences and influence on their owners, and therefore in the community tradition, naming should not be arbitrary; even naming has certain rituals. Names

are given to humans and the place, region, or location where the community lives. The memory of a place can explain many things related to the context of modern identity and its dynamics [3]. This shows that in Toponym, the relationship between humans and the environment, human history in that place, or the results of the interpretation of society through cultural adaptation is described [4]. Therefore toponym study is a critical effort in uncovering the trajectory of human history from past to present. Even information about folklore, institutional conditions, and social conditions of a place, including linguistic information such as words and personal names, which are not mentioned in the literature, can also be found through Toponym [5].

The existence of a relationship between humans and their environment was manifested by the Javanese, who were transmigrated through the transmigration program to Lampung in the Gedong Tataan area. Many places in Lampung, such as Bagelen, Bangun Rejo, Tri Murjo, and others with similarities with the places in Java. It is indicated that socio-cultural factors play a role in toponym. In this case, the naming of a place and the origin of a place (toponym) can be seen from the synchronic and diachronic side of the myth and culture of society, where the two are united [6].

Ironically, not many people know the history of naming places in the Javanese transmigrant area, Lampung. This shows that cultural appreciation such as oral traditions, myths, and the history of an area is low, even though this toponym describes the cultural history trajectory of a society that inhabits an area. Referring to the problems above, it is necessary to conduct a study to determine the mindset, behavior, and factors that influence it. Ideally, the place name given has an implied cultural meaning and message in the form of hopes, ideals given. It all means that there is a process of conveying messages in cultural communication, describing various background events, myths, stories, or the history of Javanese society, struggling of lives that are influenced by the culture and traditions of the area of origin.

This study examines the process of naming places to get a comprehensive perspective and description of the socio-cultural lives of the Javanese transmigration community living in Lampung.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Migration

Formally, migration is defined as the movement of a population to settle from one place to another that

exceeds the State's political / state boundaries or administrative boundaries/borders. Migration that exceeds national borders is called international migration, while domestic migration is population movement that occurs within the borders of a country, either between regions or between provinces. The movement of population to a destination area is referred to as inbound migration, while the movement of people out of an area is called outgoing migration [7].

Migration can also be interpreted as a change in a person's residence, either permanently or semi-permanently, and there is no distance limit for this change of residence [8]. Internal and international migration processes occur due to differences between origin and destination areas. Economic, social and environmental factors cause this difference. Several migration studies have concluded that migration occurs due to economic reasons, namely to get a job and higher income, to improve the quality of life. This condition is by [9] migration model, which states that migration flows take place in response to differences in income between origin and destination areas. Revenue is the expected income, not actual income.

According to [10], the Network theory links the migration process through personal, cultural, and other social relationships. That explains that in migrant-sending countries, information about employment and living standards abroad is efficiently conveyed through personal networks such as friends and neighbors who have migrated [11-14]. Meanwhile, in receiving countries (destination countries), migrant communities often help men and women of their age (colleagues) to immigrate, get a job, and adjust to a new environment. Such networks reduce migration costs for new arrivals, causing potential migrants to leave their country (region).

### 2.2. Javanese Migration to Lampung

Lampung is a province in Sumatra that is famous for its Sai Bumi Ruwa Jurai motto [15]. The motto has the meaning of one earth Lampung. Lampung inhabited by two inhabitants, namely the indigenous people of the Lampung Saibatin and Pepadun tribes, with immigrants from various regions who are in social life. So that the culture can be in harmony. The ethnic diversity in Lampung originated from the Ethical Policy policy during the Dutch administration. One of the policies is population migration, known as colonization. To follow up on this policy plan, the Dutch government assigned H.G Heyting, a resident assistant, to study the possibility of relocating Javanese residents to other areas. Heyting's report was given in 1903 and suggested that the Dutch government move outside Java. The island of Sumatra was chosen as one of

the places for this migration [16, 17]. In 1905, Heyting sent 155 families (heads of families) from Karesidenan Kedu (Central Java) to Gedong Tataan Lampung. In that place, the immigrants built a village named Bagelen, the village of the first colonization.

The other four villages were built between 1906 and 1911. Each head of the family received 70 rice fields and 30-yard areas. The cost of transportation, building materials, equipment and life insurance (for two years) is borne by the project [18]. In 1921 colonization (transmigration) was sent from Wonosobo Village, Central Java, to be placed in Kota Agung, South Lampung. Given that the origin of this transmigration came from Wonosobo Village, it has developed into Wonosobo District, Tanggamus Regency [19]. After Indonesian independence, this colonization program was adopted into a transmigration program for national population distribution [20]. The Director-General of Transmigration carried out the pattern of implementing transmigration in Lampung until the end of Pelita II; the target was to move people from Java and Bali to the Lampung area transmigration recipients because the Lampung area was considered not yet overcrowded [21].

### 2.3. Toponym

Toponym is a science or study that discusses geographic names, the origins of place names, forms, and meanings of personal names, especially names of people and places [22]. In other words, Toponym is the science of place names, meanings, origins, and typology. Toponym is also included with the naming of a place, or it can be said that it is included in the naming theory. Naming is arbitrary, and the general agreement is said to be arbitrary because it is created or a decision is based on the community's will. In contrast, it is said to be a general agreement because it is arranged based on the habits of the people.

Toponym is a term that is not only known by linguistic circles as a tool for analyzing a name or naming, but other branches of science also recognize the term Toponym. However, the term Toponym is indeed popularly associated with the field of geography, namely for scientific discussion of the name, origin, meaning of a place or region, and other parts of the earth's surface, both natural (such as rivers) and artificial. (like a city). This develops along with the development of maps because Toponym is indispensable to map an area.

Toponym place names, according to [2], are grouped into four, namely:

1. Toponym Vegetation is the planting of a place based on the description of plants or plants around the place. So in this vegetation

Toponym, the naming of a place is based on the plants or plants that grow or live in the vicinity.

2. Historical Toponym, in the Toponym of historical events, the naming of a place is based on historical events or events closely related to the formation of the place. These historical events can be general (national) or specific (according to local communities). So this historic Toponym, naming the place name, is based on the events that occurred or events that occurred in that place.
3. Toponym Giving, this Toponym is naming a place based on a gift by someone who has power over the place. So Toponym is based on this giving the name of the place given the name based on the gift by someone who has an important role in the place.
4. Regional Toponym, this regional Toponym is the naming of a place based on the name of an area (City, district, sub-district, village, village or sub-district, hamlet, etc.) associated with the existence of the place. So this Toponym is based on an area associated with the place's existence.

Toponym can function as a distinctive marker of a place. This seems to be evident from the variety of natural phenomena combined with a socio-cultural plurality in Indonesia, triggering the diversity of naming an area based on local culture as identity. Toponym is related to physical, social and cultural aspects. These names certainly indicate that the toponym is not just a label, but there is a treasure trove of values that are still hidden [23].

As for the purposes of this study are (a) to determine the ecological life of the socio-cultural community in an area and (b) to analyze the meaning contained in the socio-cultural context.

### 3. Method

This study used the interview method with 26 informants from all villages inhabited by the Javanese migrant community. Observation and documentation are also part of the research method to obtain a comprehensive picture of the Toponym-Toponym that grows and lives in the area of the Javanese migrant community in Lampung socially and culturally, as well as digging up the information contained in the village monograph, which includes the history of the village's origins and naming. This study focuses on 13 villages out of 19 villages in the Gedong Tataan sub-district, dominated by Javanese migrants and have complete information.





Fig. 1: Map of Research Location (Gedong Tataan District)

#### 4. Result

Names in Javanese culture are an important element in the human life cycle because each name has a meaning and expectation according to what is given, including the naming of the area of residence. Naming is usually used as an identity, even a symbol that tends to be based on the situation and historical conditions.

Various conditions were found related to the origin of the name of the place of origin in the migrant area of Lampung, Java, which originated from an incident, a figure, including environmental conditions as the basis for naming the location. In subsequent developments, giving place names also serves to make it easier to identify the identity of an area. This is what is believed by the Javanese immigrants in Gedong Tataan that the name of each place or village has a meaning and meaning that contains prayer and hope. Aspects that influence the formation of Toponym at each placement of Javanese immigrants are the physical aspects and the socio-cultural aspects of Java.

**Physical Aspects:** Namely, place names related to natural elements such as hydrology, geomorphology, and biology-ecology. Founded the Place names that contain natural hydrological elements are indicated by the names Way (in Lampung language) and Ci (in Sundanese). In some places, using Way and Ci, Javanese migrants

did not make changes, even though the language owners did not live close together. The names of places with a hydrological element are Way Layap, Ci Padang, Way Lima, Way Semak; the names of places with geomorphological elements, namely Sungai Langka, while the biological ecology is Taman Sari Village and Bernung Village. There are also village toponyms related to buildings, namely Gedong Tataan, Bogorejo, Kutoarjo, Kurangan Nyawa, and Gadingrejo.

**Socio-Cultural Aspects.** This aspect includes influential mythical figures, the collective memory of Javanese migrants of their ancestral lands. Real or mythical figures influenced them when they named their place of residence in a new area. The name of the village, which is influenced by a person's character, namely Bagelen, is taken from the name of the village of origin on the island of Java, which is believed to come from the name of a grandmother who is considered to have strength so that it is considered suitable as encouragement motivation for new land clearing through the transmigration program in Lampung. The name Bagelen is a combination of figures and collective memories of Javanese immigrants. Another village which is also taken from the name of a character, namely Wiyono (the first person to lead the village of Wiyono); Padang Ratu, namely the empress or

female king; Suka Raja, who takes the word Suka which means happy and Raja means leader; Negeri Sakti which means a strong or large country.

The naming of villages in Javanese culture in Lampung is based on the conditions of the places they find and their hopes that their new lives will be better. To make it happen, a name is given according to these hopes and ideals to make it happen. According to [24], two things are used as the basis for naming a place, namely 1) processes, features, or features engineered by humans; 2) ideas, hopes, and aspirations for the place.

The Javanese immigrant community who lived in the Gedong Tataan sub-district at the beginning of their settlement must have the ability to survive, both from an economic, social, health perspective and from the disturbance of spirits in the forest area where they will live. The community hopes that this place can provide prosperity, happiness, nobility, tranquillity, and other good things through the place's name from these conditions. Therefore, names should not be arbitrary because each name contains a good prayer, a good hope for the village and the survival of the people who live in the village.

Place names based on the hopes or aspirations of the Javanese migrant community in Gedong Tataan District, Lampung: (a) Kebagusan Village, comes from the word Bagus. Kebagusan means courage, strength, which is defined as a brave and

strong village. By being given the name Kebagusan, it will be a strong and manly place and become the pride of the people who live in the area. (b) Kutoarjo village comes from the word Kuto which means City, and Arjo, which means profit or good. Kutoarjo has the meaning of a good city. The hope is that Kutoarjo Village can be a good place for, prosperous and fertile. (c) Negeri Sakti Village. Negeri means State, and Sakti means strong or powerful. Given the name of the Negeri Sakti, to become a village that is strong like a country and has the power to protect its people. (d) Desa Bogorejo, Bogo means village and Rejo mean crowd, aiming to be a fertile and peaceful place.

## 5. Discussions

The Toponym for village names in Gedong Tataan District consists of the origin of the name and the origin of the language. Although it is related to figures, plants, historical objects, buildings, it tends to be used in adjectives based on the origin of the name and language [25, 26]. Meanwhile, in terms of language origin, the most dominant place names are in Javanese, although Indonesian, Lampung, and Sundanese are used in some places. Below is an analysis of the origins of village naming and the hopes of the Gedong Tataan Jawa migrants.

Table 1. Analysis of The Meaning of Places Based on Natural and Socio-Cultural Elements

No	Element	The etymology of place names		Meaning and Hope
1	The mythical figure	Bagelen	They are taken from the name of a strong and powerful woman. The name Bagelan was given so that the people living in the village were strong enough to live their lives and always remember their origin.	As a group identity, and also so that relatives who have been left in Java have no trouble finding those who have moved to Lampung Province
2	Plant	Bernung	There are many Bernung fruit found in the village. banyak buah Bernung yang ditemukan di desa tersebut.	Shows environmental conditions and plant types found at the new location
3	Geographical	Sungai Langka	found many small rivers around the village while large rivers are not there.	Describing the condition of the village, namely the scarcity of water from large rivers
		Way Semak (Sukadadi)	At first, it was called Way Semak (in Lampung language, way	Many fish are found around the small river in the village. However, it was changed to

			means water, and bush means fish). It is then changed to Sukadadi.	the name Sukadadi. This means that those who live in the area will always be happy and at home living there according to the name change.
		Ci Padang	It was derived from the Sundanese. Ci means river water, and Padang means light.	This means that the people of Ci Padang Village can live in peace with the geographical conditions of the village and the water sources in it as a symbol of life.
		Way Layap	Way Layap is a mixed name between Lampung and Sunda (Way means water, Layap means small stream).	Everyone who lives in that place can harmonize and unite even though they are of different ethnicities and live a life like running water.
4	Character	Sukaraja	Suka means liking, while the king is defined as a leader.	Whoever becomes a leader will always be respected by the community, and the change of leaders is always peaceful
		Padang Ratu,	The word "Padang" means light, and Ratu is the leader.	The public will always be reminded of the appearance of a Javanese woman who once built Padang Ratu Village.
		Kebagusan,	Courage, strength	They are interpreted as a strong village and pride for the people who live in the village.
		Kutoarjo	Kuto comes from Javanese, which means City and Arjo, which means profit or good.	Kutoarjo has the meaning of a good village for the people
		Negeri Sakti,	Negeri means State, and Sakti means strong or powerful.	The hope is that it can become a strong village like a country that has the power to protect its people
		Bogorejo,	Bogo means Village and Rejo means Crowded	To become a fertile village, people live in peace and have a large population
		Karang Anyar,	Karang means "yard" and anyar means "new".	The people living in the village will be happy and comfortable with the new village conditions and new atmosphere.

Source: primary data

Table 1 explains that the specific names of the villages of the Javanese migrant community in Gedong Tataan tend to be more related to adjectives than nouns, such as those in place names that contain natural, geographic, or cultural elements. The adjective's distinctive name reflects the community's expectation when opening the village [27, 28].

The residence functions as a place to live, which supports various aspects of life [29, 30]. In naming a place to live, each tribe has its own perspective, such as the actions taken by the Javanese people who were the first group to implement the transmigration program in Gedong Tataan District, Lampung. Even though they live in a new area, microcosm and macrocosm, the Javanese migrants are always connected culturally

to their area of origin, manifested through the naming and patterns of residence. The housing pattern of the Javanese migrant community in Gedong Tataan consists of: First; Scattered Pattern. The patterns are scattered with characteristics: (a) the distance from one settlement to another is quite far. This pattern is not conducive to inter-village relations. For example, in the village of Bogorejo, where the patterns of community life are spread out, there is quite a distance from one house to another; (b) there is still a lot of empty lands; (c) houses are far from other settlements so that the inter-village relationship is rather difficult. Second; Centralized housing patterns. Namely, housing patterns in which the residents are generally one relative. A sense of cooperation drives the concentration of this residence. If the population increases, settlement expansion will lead in all directions, without any plans. Meanwhile, population activity centers can shift according to expansion [31, 32]

## 6. Conclusion

The history of the name of the village Transmigration in Gedong Tataan is largely influenced by Javanese culture. The historical factor of migration contributes to the naming of places significantly in this area. However, not all place-names indicate the names of areas of origin on the island of Java. The diversity of place names is also influenced by conditions and situations that occur when opening a place as a residential area. A significant finding in this study states that all areas where Javanese migrants and transmigrates in Lampung have Toponym according to their area of origin from the island of Java and include the use of everyday Javanese. This includes preserving customs and cultures that still thrive in the migration and transmigration areas.

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### Conflicts of Interest:

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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