Abstract

Besides climate, economic, politic, social and cultural factors, belief/religion factor has an influence on the shape and meaning of traditional house. Lamaholot tribe’s traditional house in Ile Ape, Lembata Island is rich of architectural symbolism. The relation between the shape and the physical symbolic meaning will be described in this articles. Through qualitative approach, it is found that the space structure of Lamahot’s traditional house is the manifestation of social stratifications status and community’s belief system, both horizontally and vertically.

Keywords: Shapes, meaning, architecture elements of traditional house, Lamaholot tribe.

A. INTRODUCTION

Traditional house, in its manifestation, is architectural form that represents inhabitant’s culture. The inhabitants relate the hierarchy of living spaces with their belief system so that form the certain pattern (Roxana Waterson, 1990: III, 43). On the traditional settlements, shape and function are the result from agreement between a communities. Usually, the certain elements of both building and environment have a certain message and meaning that can be understood by local community. It is found also in Lamaholot, Ile Ape, Lembata Island. By the time being, that message and meaning are interpreted differently by different generations.

District Ile Ape, Lembata has 5 traditional villages that until now still hold the tradition left by their ancestors. Those villages are: Napaulun, Lewotolok, Lewohala, Lamarian and Atawatung. The villages are still far away from publication. The people who are exist in East Nusa Tenggara, especially eastern Flores Island people, as Alor, Solor and Adonara Islands are known as a big family. Traditional buildings in those villages are left by its residents slowly because they wander about or they leave with other reasons. Because of that, traditional buildings almost are not built anymore. Not only house, but also koker bale (the place where to do outside ritual) is not re-built.
anymore because there is no one who can replace the role of tribal leader in some tribes. The phenomenon above impacts in the loss of knowledge about the local traditional architecture, violations of tradition, and the loss of cultural values especially that relates to the symbolic meaning on the traditional buildings. In an effort to gain knowledge about traditional house architecture of Lamaholot tribes, it is considered necessary to do research about how is the shape and symbolic meaning from the elements of Lamaholot’s traditional house. The purpose of this study is to understand the shape and symbolic meaning on the referred of architectural elements

B. METHODOLOGY

This research used descriptive qualitative approach. The locus of this research was Napaulun village, Ile Ape district, Lembata, NTT. Data and information were collected through field observation, interview, and visual documentation. Informants were public figures/elders interviewed from the five traditional villages such as tribal heads, village heads, religious heads, and former heads of the village. Secondary data were collected from literature review on books, documents, articles, and journals.

Figure 1. Research locus
(Source: [http://www.google.co.id/](http://www.google.co.id/), accessed on November 10th 2014)
C. THEORETICAL REVIEW

C.1. Traditional Architecture and Vernacular, Meaning and Shape

Tradition is from the word of *tradere* which means passing certain values from generation to generation or something that have done continuously by the people from the past until now and naturally selected, of minimum three generations (Gartiwa, 2010:42). Traditional term refers to the procedure and material object that have been received by certain people as a norm. Then, that norm passed from generation to generation as a knowledge, instruction, or procedure. Ley and Duncan (in Pratiwi, 2009) stated that tradition rooted in culture, and culture rooted in place. Customs and practices inherited hereditary is part of cultural evolution.

According to Amos Rapoport (1960), learning about traditional buildings means learning tradition that is more than tradition physically. Meanwhile according to Ismunandar (Gartiwa 2010:41), architecture and traditional buildings are the result of art and culture, and it is a part of that cannot be separated from life and bonding inner and outer on traditional society.

Etymologically, the word of Verna is from Latin language that means home born slave (Gartiwa, 2010:39). Word of Vernacular is also from *vernaculus* (Latin) that means native. In linguistics, vernacular refers to the use of language for time, place, or certain local communities. In culture, especially in architecture, the terminology refers to a kind of culture, or architecture that applicable in local (is not imitating from somewhere else). Vernacular word actually refers to the concept of social and economic structures of society most, so that locality, simplicity, inheritance values (regeneration) are 3 main things in vernacular culture.

Gartiwa (2010) cited some figures regarding the definition of vernacular architecture, which is: Vernacular architecture is the architecture that designed by craftsman without the role of professional architect, by using technique and local material by adapting to the climate, tradition, economic. Architecture that designed by professional architecture usually, is not considered as vernacular. Mean-while according Brunskill (2000), vernacular architecture is a building that designed by an amateur without the knowledge in designing. Mentayani (2012) stated that vernacular architecture has domains and elements, they are shape and meaning. Shape elements are in physical domain, while meaning elements are in abstract domain. Each has three (3) aspects, they are: technical, cultural, and environmental.
In technical element, both elements of the form or meaning associated with: way of building, construction techniques and material selection, while the cultural aspect related with belief. In cultural context, physical domain, usually contain of symbolic element, while on abstract domain is a message that will be conveyed. Shape is a media to deliver the meaning and that meaning deliver a message through the shape. A good shape is not only beautiful but also matches with the context.

Meaning is a tool to see, to understand, and to interpret verbally and non-verbally, through the objects and signs. Meaning is a message that will be delivered and symbol as its physical media. Meaning and symbol on architecture work can be revealed through the shape, rhythm, color, and texture.

C.2. Traditional Building and Settlement

Traditional house can be interpreted as a house that built with the same way by some generations. Traditional housing built without design theory, but more oriented to the culture and the influence of beliefs that they profess (Rapoport, 1960). Learn the tradition, more than just learn the tradition of building physically. The authenticity of traditional houses is learned through the habits or the implicit rules when the houses were built or started to use, such as ritual fixing the first pole, salvation and determine the right time, determine home direction, shape, color, decorative motifs, building materials were used, an offering, a prayer or a mantra that should be read (Marcus Gartiwa, 2010).

The concept of space in the building structure is generally the same as the concept in space of rural village (Gartiwa, 2010). The space division categorized vertically and horizontally, as a response to the social system of alliance, cosmology, and natural conditions around. For example, the horizontal part of the house are considered the most sacred on the most inside or back part, as a place of worship, or storage of sacred objects. (Marcus Gartiwa, 2010).

Traditional building has several features that can be seen visually. According Utomo (the Dewi et al. 2008: 33-35) traditional architecture features: 1) cannot be separated from religious factors, both in concept, execution of construction and form of the building. The residence is an integral part of the universe (macroscopic) and natural small (microscopic). Space orientations have a certain symbolic, for example: the world above (good and holy), middle (moderate) and bottom (ugly and dirty); 2) are linked to the alliance system,
which determines the size and typology of the house; 3) respond to local climate, because climate affects the composition and direction of building mass, also to the selection of roof cover and building materials.

The arrangement of space in the traditional settlement refers to the traditional values and culture, for example, refers to the value of religious beliefs that are specific / unique with the particular historical background. The structure of the traditional settlement area has hierarchy components, network or track, and orientation. According to Habraken, the form of neighborhoods is the result of a social agreement, not a product of individual person. This means that different communities have different settlement characteristics. It is thus consistent with the concept of Koentjaraningrat (1979) in Gartiwa Marcus (2010: 3) states that the objects of human’s work is a form of physical culture, including the settlements and traditional buildings.

Figure 2, The Layout of Napaulun settlement in Ile Ape District, Lembata (Source: Author, 2015)
D. FINDINGS

D.1. General Description of Napaulun Traditional Village in Ile Ape

Administratively Napaulung traditional village located between Bunga Muda village and Napasabok village, Ile Apedistrict, Lembata, East Nusa Tenggara province. The old Napaulun village known as “Ulun Lela Koli Weran Nara Wayong” village. It is a traditional village that located on the Ile Ape Mountain, approximately 2000 m above sea level. This village is not inhabited but only occupied or used during the annual ritual or often referred to Hamang Utan.

Napaulun traditional village is made up of 14 tribes / clans and had 34 homes and one house Taran Wanan which served as a place to perform the ritual / worship. Traditional house in the village Napaulun commonly known as Lango Beruin (Motherhouse), each tribe has more than one home except Laper Making tribe and Lemanuk tribe. From 34 houses, there are three houses that were not rebuilt because that becomes Beruin in the tribe / clan who wanders away or unknown. Those three house are belong to Mr. Kopa from Nimauhu tribe, Mr. Yunus Peten and Mr Kope from Balawala tribe.

In the table above shows that the tribes that occupy one Koker Bale have the same ancestral origin. Tee replacement of Koker Bale also shows that the status from those tribes come from Belen Raya or not. The table also shows that the tribe which has the status of Belen Raya came from Sream Goran Island. The tribes have
several houses, they occupy different houses that follow one lineage. As seen in Hurek Making tribe, they have the most houses in this village, there are 5 houses. Those five houses show that there are five lineages in this tribe, but they have the same origin. They came from Awololon Island (already drowned), located in front of the Lembata island.

D.2. Structure of Outer and Inner Spaces

The concept of arrangement existing space in the building basically has similarities with the existing space from outside the building. The division of space vertically and horizontally is heavily influenced by belief systems and environmental conditions. Vertically, the space is divided into: the upstairs room, living room and basement. Whereas horizontally, the space is divided into front, middle, back and sides. The part that considered the most sacred is usually on the right rear.

D.2.1 Outer Spaces Structure

In hierarchy, the existing spaces in Napaulun traditional village divided into public space and private space (sacred), differentiated by type of activities. The public space in this village is Namang. Namang is a gathering place and to conduct deliberations and receiving guests during Hamang Utan ceremony. Even though Namang is public space, there are also sacred spaces inside it, they are Nude and Wawe Sigo. Nude as Lewo Puhuren (center village), is believed as the powerhouse from that village. Wawe Sigois also as sacred place that used in Uran Apun ritual (ritual for rain) and also believed as the power source that had by Napaulun village.

Besides some of the space that has been mentioned above, in Napaulun village there are also other sacred spaces, namely: Taran Wanan and Koker Bale. Taran Wanan is a sacred house for Uran Apun ritual, while Lockers Bale is a place of worship for several tribes during Hamang Utan ritual. Koker Bale has Rie Wanan (forked wood) that equipped by Mahang (twigs of bamboo that tied for ritual completeness). Koker Bale is one of places that considered sacred in Napaulun village. This Koker Bale is used to do worship to Lera Wulan Tana Ekan ancestor (God), thanksgiving for the harvest, to seek truth and falsity that is in the Koker Bale. Koker Bale used by a few tribes that have the same origin or derived from the same offspring. All the boys who came from one Koker Bale will be counted in this ritual.

D.2.2. Inner Space Structure
The hierarchy of building space is not too different from space outside the building. Rooms are separated according to the type of activities. There is a sacred space used for ritual purposes and there is space that is used for daily activities. Physically it does not look like there are division spaces in the building. In the left corner is a cooking area and is mostly used by women. Similarly on the left side of the front, relatives or women visitors usually occupy the area. For the front right area is widely used by men, both visitors and members of the tribe. In the right corner is a sacred area with a Nathan Belen, this place is only occupied by Beruin Kolen (the eldest boy in the tribe) and the elders.

Nathan Belen is a place that is considered the most sacred in the building and is at the right corner. This place serves to perform the worship of ancestors, Lera Wulan Tana Ekan ("God"), thanksgiving for the harvest, to seek the truth and the faults that come from one tribe/clan as well as places to perform offspring calculations of every boy, in this ceremony the girls are not counted.

Nathan Belen with Rie Wanan (forked wood) is a link between fellow human beings, ancestors and Lera Wulan Tana Ekan. All communication with the ancestors are done in Rie Wanan, all disasters such as sickness and death will be revealed in this ritual. Moreover, this ritual is known to make good harmony in the tribe.
D.3. Social Structure

Lamaholot tribal communities in Ile Ape use a mixture of social orders. They are open and closed. The social order openly used in everyday life, while the closed social order used during ritual Hamang Utan ceremony.

D.3.1 Social Order in Life

Open social order in public life Lamaholot tribes allow all members of the community or every tribe has the opportunity to rise a higher social stratification. Marriage system plays an important role in social stratification. In daily life, the mother's family (brother in one tribe) called Opulake has a higher position. Opulake has a very important role in many aspects of life, starts from marriage to death. Every marriage and death ceremony, Opulake always involved. The local community believes that Opulake is God in the world. Opulake can give the curse to Anabai (son of Inabine) and Opuwae (daughter of Inabine) if there are acts that less pleasing or norms violation.

Vertically, the social stratification that existed at Lamaholot tribe Ile Ape especially in villages Napaulun starting from Opulake → Amabine → Anabai → Inabine → Opuwae. Opulake has a higher position due to appreciation of women. Women have a role that is not too dominant, but the marriage system requires that the groom must give bala/dowry to the woman so that the attendance of girls in a tribe becomes very important.

D.3.2 Social Structure in Hamang Utan

Closed social order used in ritual Hamang Utan ceremony, where there are two levels or social stratifications in the traditional village Napaulun. Those social
stratifications are from Beloloken tribe and Lereken tribe. The tribes that come from have higher social stratification than the tribes from Lereken.

The tribes that from Beloloken are: Waolangun, Lemanuk, Koli Making, Niha Making, Belaon Making, Lopot Making, and Laper Making tribes. While the tribes that from Lereken are: Hurek Making, Lamarongan, Paokuma, Nimanuho, Balawala, Laga Making, and Lado Purab tribes. Social stratification in Bloloken tribe subdivided into several levels. Lemanuk and Wilangun tribes occupy higher position than Laper Making, Niha Making and Lopot Making tribes. Differences in social stratification in Utan Hamang ritual can be seen at the height of a seat back that is on Namang. Waolangun and Lemanuk tribes have higher position in Hamang Utan ritual process, but the seat back made lower than the seat back of Lopot Making tribe. The seat back of Lopot Making tribe are made higher in order to respect Lemanuk and Waolangun tribes as Belen Raya (village leader). The seat back of Niha Making tribe are made higher than the other tribes based on their role as village protector.

D.4. Realization Traditional Buildings in

Figure 5. Napaulun’s traditional building (Source: Author, 2015)
Napaulung Village

Traditional buildings of Lamaholot tribe in Ile Ape, especially in Napaulun village are built for ritual/worship. Construction is done by using local resources and pursued in accordance with the local climatic conditions, site conditions, local customs or traditions. The building is not occupied but only used during ritual purposes. There are four types of traditional buildings in the Napaulun village, namely: building belongs to the tribe with the status Belen Raya/Beloloken, the building belongs to the tribe with status Normal/Lereken, building for barns, and buildings Taran Wanan (a rain ritual). The buildings are slightly different from each other.

To be able to distinguish who is the owner or what is the function of the building, can be identified from existing ornament on the ridge of the roof. The roof with 7 bamboo skewers signify the building belonged to the tribe of Beloloken, while the ridge of the roof with 5 bamboo skewers belongs to Lereken tribe. Rooftop without the ornaments is a barn building, the shape same as the ritual buildings but on the top right corner there are Nathan Belen. Whereas for Taran Wanan that shaped house on stilts, the roof is also almost the same shape but there are no ornaments on the ridge of the roof.

E. Symbolic Meaning of Lamaholot Traditional Building Elements in Napaulun Village

Figure 6. South Gate (left), Atang Lakin & Atang Ronen (right) (Source: Author, 2015)
**Nawhe (Door)**

There are four doors that exist in traditional buildings in the village Napaulunlocated on 4 sided of the building. Though on the south side cannot be crossed because of blocked stone walls but the place still given the door because the building is not only used by people living but also by their departed ancestors. Local people believe that all four doors is an entry and exit point of the ancestor spirits. This symbolizes that the users of this building is the living and the dead.

**Atang (Ring Beam)**

In this building there are no division of space for men and women but there are some elements of the building as a symbol of male and female. This can be seen in the naming of the building elements like, Atang Ronen (ring beam-women) and Atang Lakin (ring balk-men). Atang Lakin as a symbol of men because it is placed above Atang Ronen which symbolize of women. In Lamaholot tribal tradition, men have a dominant role compared to women. From the construction system can also be seen that the role of Atang Lakin is more dominant rather than Atang Ronen role. It is only as a complement in that construction system. Atang Lakin used as a link between of those 4 building.

*Figure 7.Truss construction with 2 Nun Maen(left),truss construction with 1 Nun Maen (right) - (Source: Author,2015)*
columns, while *Atang Ronen* used as a link between 2 west and east columns.

*Nun Maen* (Truss)

*Nun Maen* (truss) is a symbol of the social strata owned by tribes that exist in the Napaulun village. Truss construction with two *Nun Maen* symbolize the building owner was from Belolokan tribe (a tribe that has a higher position). Meanwhile, the truss construction with one *Nun Maen* symbolizes that the owner is from Lerekan tribe (regular status).

*Wolar Lakin* and *Wolar Ronen*

In addition to the construction ring beam (*Atang*), the ridge beam construction (*Wolar*) there is also a symbol of men and women, *Wolar Lakin* (ridge beam-man) and *Wolar Ronen* (ridge beam-female). *Wolar Lakin* symbolizes of men is on

![Diagram of construction system](image)

Figure 8. Details of ridge beam connection in traditional house of Belolokan tribe. (Source: Author, 2015)

*Wolar Ronen* that symbolizes of women. Women always become complement and it does not mean not important. Part of the construction system on the ridge beam, *Wolar Ronen*, serves as the base / handle of noreng (battens).

This indicates that, despite the woman as a complement, but in some ways they are needed by men. The function of *Wolar Lakin* as the holder of the ridge of the roof, it seemed that the dominant role of men not in terms of sheer power, but also as protectors in the family and the tribe.

*Uwung* (Roof)

The symbols of male and female can be found not only in building components but
also on the sides of the building. East and west sides are considered as the female's side, while the north and south as the male's side. The roof construction is located on the north and south as a symbol of man, because the position on the roof that are on the east and west that is a symbol of female. The roof construction is located on the north and south sides called Atew (male symbol) while the roof construction that located on the east and west sides called Anaw (female symbol).

Besides being a symbol of male and female, the roof of the building also symbolizes who the owner of the building. Roof of the building with 7 bamboo skewers on a ridge of the roof signifies that the building belonged to Beloloken tribe, while the roof with 5 bamboo skewers indicates the owner of the building were from Lereken tribe. **Nathan Belen and Koker Bale**

*Nathan Belen and Koker Bale* is a symbol of the boat with *Beruin Kolen*, the one who sits above it is a captain / leader in the tribe and *Koker Bale*. The passengers are members of tribes. *Rie Wanan* that planted and penetrates in *Nathan Belen* and *Koker Bale* is a symbol of a mast on the boat. One of the rituals in *Hamang Utan* is counting all the descendants of the boys, originally was done to find any descendants in one tribe and one *Koker Bale* which are from the same ancestors.
F. NAPAULUN’S TRADITIONAL CONCEPT of SPACE

F.1. Social Symbolical Values

Napaulun traditional building is a representation of the culture and beliefs of local communities. Symbols of men and women in the construction of ridge beam (Wolar Lakin and Wolar Ronen) and construction ring balk (Atang Lakin and Atang Ronen) are a submission that the role of men is more dominant than women. Yet, the construction of both systems can be seen that women do have a role slightly but quite influential, both in culture and in building construction system.

Marriage system in the local culture requires the male gives Belis/Dowry form Bala (Elephant Dental) to the woman. This makes the presence of girls in a tribal become very important. Likewise, in the construction system, the role of Atang Ronen and Wolar Ronen are not too dominant but quite important in building construction because without both buildings cannot stand firm. The fourth column will not stand if there is no Atang Ronen, as well as Ronen Wolar which supports Noreng (battens).

Wolar Ronen as a symbol of women and a footstool for Noreng illustrates that Wolar Ronen as Inabine (girls in the tribe) is so important because a footstool for Noreng. Noreng as Amabine (boy in the tribe). If it is associated with the marriage system of local communities, the presence of girls have been very important for a tribe. Therefore, although it has little role in the tribe, but women are highly valued in traditional societies of Napaulun.

F.2. Cultural Symbolical Values

The concept of vertical space
Local belief with *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*, as the lord of the sky and earth, is the basis why the ritual worship performed in a higher place. Under *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* is Ancestors and Beruin Kolen. Ancestors and *Beruin Kolen* equally occupy *Nathan Belen* which is the most sacred area inside lango beruin / main home. In accordance with the belief, the main house is also used by the ancestors. Lowermost area occupied by tribal members and guests / relatives.

*Nathan Belen* has a pole (*Rie Wanan*) that planted through to the top as media to convey all requests and acknowledgments to *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* (lord of the sky and earth). The area above *Nathan Belen* is openly facing the roof, while there is *maga/loft* that used as storage and also can be used for women.

**The concept of horizontal space**

Traditional settlement horizontally divided into several areas, namely: public areas, semi-public and private (sacred). *Namang* is a public area, but also there are sacred areas in it, namely: *Nude* that becomes the navel and the center of the village and *Wawe Sigo* strength which is also a source of home town strength. Besides these two places, *Taran Wanan* and *Koker Bale* also sacred areas that cannot be occupied by everybody. Semi-public area around *Koker Bale* where this area only occupied by a few tribes that occupy that *Koker Bale*.

**CONCLUSION**

The physical manifestation of the traditional buildings in Lamaholot tribe, Ile Ape district, particularly in the traditional village Napaulun has symbols that symbolize the male and female gender. The elements of the building that
symbolize the male and female gender (Atang Lakin and Atang Ronen, Wolar Lakin and Wolar Ronen) indicates the position and role of the man who more dominant than women. Atang Lakin and Wolar Lakin position that always rely on Atang Ronen and Wolar Ronen show that although women have small role but in some ways is needed by men.

- The elements in the inside room and outside of the building (Nathan Belen and Koker Bale) symbolize: 1) the relationship between the community and the origins of the ancestors; 2) remembrance of the origins of the ancestors, has one lineage and similarity of origin; 3) the tool to convey all requests and acknowledgments to Lera Wulan Tana Ekan

- In the imaginary, the order of dwelling of Lamaholot Tribe consists of vertical and horizontal spaces that have sacred and social values connected to their ancestors and humans relationship association.

References


