ABSTRACT

Characteristic of the symbol is multivocal. Symbol have basic operational and agreed meaning. Symbol can be given a new meaning when associated with shapes, events or activities. Giving new meaning should be done carefully so as not to change early understanding. Meaning of symbol in traditional societies can be used to get to know their culture.

Batang garing is a symbol which is owned by Dayak Ngaju. The symbol of batang garing that represents Dayak Ngaju’s philosophy of life. Meaning of batang garing can be used to understand concept of space in a traditional house of the Dayak Ngaju. In this paper, the concept of space will be seen in one of the traditional house of Dayak Ngaju namely Huma Gantung (high house).

This paper is based on literature review. The results of this paper is expected to enrich the traditional architecture of Dayak Ngaju. This paper also expected to provide inspiration for architects/designers who will use the traditional concept of Dayak Ngaju to design the building.

Keywords: symbol, batang garing, space, huma gantung

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Traditional architecture realized in the form of a house is a result of physical culture. The traditional house was influenced by socio-cultural community. Traditional house is the embodiment of community traditions (folk tradition). House for traditional society is a form of symbolic macrocosm into the nature of microcosm. Differences place geographically and culturally caused differences in the architecture of their house.
A. Indigenous Architecture as Basic Architectural Design

Traditional architecture is influenced by cultural, traditional value, view and perception of nature and the Creator. Existing spaces in residential are formed based on the philosophy of communities life. Formation of house in a traditional society based on rules or specific guidelines. But for traditional societies that have no such guidelines would be more difficult to understand its traditional architecture. Especially for the cultural society who does not know the written language.

One of the cultures that are not familiar with written language is Dayak Ngaju. Dayak Ngaju in the past has no script, that's why a written document was not found. Culture inheritance performed by oral. Understanding of the Dayak Ngaju’s architecture can be done with the understanding three relations which are manifested in behavior and adaptation. They are, relationship to the Creator, relationship to other human and relationship to the universe. The three relationships are became Dayak Ngaju’s philosophy of life. Philosophy of life is manifested in Batang Garing symbol which means Tree of Life.

The understanding of symbol can be used to understand the architecture of the Dayak Ngaju house especially on the concept of space. This paper tries to explain how the meanings of batang garing can be interpreted to describe concept of space on the traditional house of Dayak Ngaju. This paper based on literature review. Concept of space will be seen in one of the traditional house of Dayak Ngaju namely Huma Gantung (high house).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Symbol

The symbol is part of signs system that expressed by Peirce (Van Zoest, 1996 in Anwar, 2009). The symbol is a sign that has a relationship with its object base on convention, agreement, or rule. The symbol is a sign that indicates natural relationships between signifier and signified. A sign is unity from form of signifier with an idea or signifed. Signifier is a sound meaningless or meaningful graffiti. Sign is the basic of reasoning. Sign allows humans to think, relate to others and give meaning to what is shown by the universe.

Peirce added that the meaning of the symbol is determined by an agreement or accepted by the public as true. Symbols in terminology has a sense of visual language embodied in material form an image that has been mutually acceptable. Meaning of the symbol is an integral part and interaction from various patterns of thought and communication which made agreement (Anwar, 2009).

2.2. Space

Space is a medium of communication in which people use them to show expressions and feelings, behaviors and attitudes, as well as various types of activities associated with the space. Space is the essence of architecture that is designed to accommodate function, change value from time to time in accordance with need, development of knowledge and understanding about conception of space (Van de Ven, 1995).

Creation of space on the western architecture refers to the space needs of the human body. Space that is created tends to value-free (without symbolic meaning), with no local content.
because of the universally accepted measure of standardization and homogeneous character. While the architecture on the east rather the thought that rely on the experience and feelings (Kartono, 1999). To explain the meaning of space must be associated with culture. Culture is very unique because it affects human behavior and values (Tuan, 1977)

Space according to Lefebvre (1991) is a universal phenomenon created by God. This space is called an absolute space. This space is not located everywhere, because this space occupy all places and have a clear symbolic existence. This Space implies the existence of religious institutions, the relationship of the cosmos and the nature of the universe. In micro-form, this space symbolized the ritual space forms of religion.

III. DISCUSSION: UNDERSTANDING SPACE BASED ON SYMBOL OF BATANG GARING

3.1. Symbol of Batang Garing

Symbol of batang garing take the form of a tree. The tree symbolizes the natural environment. Dayak has a view that nature has a linear relationship with human. Human and nature have a bond that can not be released. Humans use nature to meet their daily life and nature give affect to human behavior.

Paembonan (1993) describes batang garing-shaped spear (duhung) and pointed upward. At the top exists hornbills. Hornbills is a symbol of God who called Ranying Mahatala Langit.

The bottom of batang garing marked by jar/balanga/runjan. It is containing sacred water that symbolizing Jata or underworld. The notched tree trunk symbolize Jata while the leaves (dawen dandang tingang) symbolize hornbills tail (Ranying Mahatala Langit).

Batang garing fruit (garanuhing) represent large groups of people as the descendants of Maharaja Sangiang, Maharaja Sangen and Maharaja Bunu.

Resting place of batang garing called Pulau Batu Garing Nindan Tarung where first human life before it descended to earth. Picture of batang garing can see in Figure 1.
A. Indigenous Architecture as Basic Architectural Design

In the picture of symbols can be seen third division that is heaven, human nature and underworld. Heaven dominated by *Ranying Mahatala Langit* and underworld controlled by *Jata/Tambun*. Two Mahadeva essentially is one because *Jata* is shadow of *Ranying Mahatala Langit*. Human Nature describe everything that relates to human life in the world.

If related to the three relations in Dayak Ngaju’s philosophy of life therefore heaven and underworld connected by *duhung* describe human relationship with the Creator, human nature describe relationship of human with other human meanwhile relationship with nature described by batang garing that takes form of tree. Meaning from parts shown in the image can be seen in Table 1.

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**Figure 1: Symbol of Batang Garing**

(Sangalang, 1997; Darma, 2003; Qalyubi, 2009)
### Table 1: Part of Symbol and Meaning

(Saililah, 1978; Paembonan, 1993; Sangalang; 1997; Darma, 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Division from Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burung enggang</td>
<td>The origin of life is derived from the top (heaven)</td>
<td>Heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunu</td>
<td>Human only serve to God so that all human behavior must be in accordance with God's will</td>
<td>Human nature; relation human with God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duhung</td>
<td>The existence of spear that connect top and bottom symbolize the world over (heaven) and the world under (underworld) are one unity and interconnect</td>
<td>Human nature; relation human with God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garanuhing</td>
<td>Human should direct their view not only downward but also upward. Human must appreciate Ranying Mahatala Langit and Jata equally. In another meaning that human should be able to maintain a balance between worldly interests and interests of the afterlife</td>
<td>Human nature; relation human with God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawen dandang tingang</td>
<td>Humans must have patience in facing life. Humans must be able to control self so as not to lose direction. Humans must be able to maintain and preserve nature</td>
<td>Human nature; relation human with God; relation human with nature and other human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runjan/balanga</td>
<td>Wealth and prosperity that given by God</td>
<td>Underworld; relation human with God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulau batu nindan tarung</td>
<td>The world is a temporary residence for human because human homeland is actually the world's top called Lewu Tatau</td>
<td>Underworld</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2. Batang Garing and Architecture

*Batang garing* understood by Dayak communities as the basic meaning of their philosophy of life. The contained of meaning in *batang garing* can be developed based on what the symbol
A. Indigenous Architecture as Basic Architectural Design

is used. In the Dayak community, a symbol of *batang garing* used for ritual activities such as *tiwah* (Vredenbregt, 1981), ornament and etc.

The development of meaning can also be provided by the architecture. Meaning of *batang garing* can be associated with the concept of space in architecture. The purpose of is to know about concept of space at the traditional house of Dayak Ngaju.

3.3. The Concept of Space in *Huma Gantung*

The process of Dayak life originated from residential. It has been arranged in such a way as to create a life in harmony and balance, among fellow residents, with other people, with nature, and with the Creator. Communal spaces created by promoting the transformation of ethical values and an egalitarian culture. This can be seen from the functionality within a designated space for those needs. There are, room for deliberation and interaction (public space), occupant rooms (private room), and kitchen as a place to meet the needs of its inhabitants. One dwelling *Suku Dayak Ngaju* known as *huma gantung* (high house).

*Huma gantung* is another form of *huma betang*. *Huma gantung* has different forms with *huma betang* in general. The difference lays on the size, the pole of building and the space order. *Huma gantung* is located in Kampung Buntoi. *Huma gantung Buntoi* is specific for the kampung leader. *Huma gantung Buntoi* built in 1870 by *Demang* (customary chief). *Huma gantung Buntoi* facing towards the east (sunrise) and parallel to the river side. River and sunrise symbolizes the source of life (Figure 2).

These spaces contained therein is *henderasi, balai parung/karimui, karung, dampuhan, and karayan* (Syahrozi, 2004; Guntur, 2007). *Henderasi* located on the front of the house. This space serves as a transition between outer space and space inside. *Balai parung* serves as a place to receive guests, family activities (*eka keluarga*) and the place of ritual activity. Then on the left there is dampuhan (kitchen) used as a cooking and dining (*eka kuman*). The left side there is space to store equipment room (*eka garantung*). At the rear the main hall there is a bed room called *karung* (*eka batiroh: bedroom*). *Karung* lies parallel *balai parung*. *Dampuhan* left side there is a room like a terrace, called *karayan*. All rooms are
located parallel to the east or river in front of the house. *Huma gantung* have 2 doors there are on *balai parun* and *dampuhan*. Occupants when performing daily activities more often used door from *dampuhan* to go out. The relationship of space on *huma gantung* can be seen in Figure 3.

Based on the spatial functions that *balai parung* is the center of the house. This space has a value higher than any other space because the main function as a place for ritual activity. *Dampuhan* is a place for daily activities residents. Residents will exit through the door from *dampuhan* if they will go to work for the farming and fishing. *Karung* is a place to rest.

According to the explanations above, *huma gantung* has two main groups of the space that is first group includes *karayan, dampuhan*, and *karung*; second group is *balai parung*. The functions of the existing space when viewed on the basis of *batang garing* that *balai parung* depict heaven while *karayan, dampuhan* and *karung* depict daily life of human beings (human nature). Human go to *karayan, dampuhan* and *karung* means entered earthly realms. Human go to *balai parung* mean go to heaven (place of Ranying Mahatala Langit).

Based on the three relationships that exist in the Dayak Ngaju associated with *huma gantung* so the relationship with *Ranying Mahatala Langit* embodied in *balai parung* at the time used for ritual ceremonies. Relationship with humans is manifested in *balai parung* (*eka uluh maja: parlor and eka keluarga: living room*) when used for communal activities such as receiving guests and family gathering place. Relationship with humans are also manifested in *dampuhan* which used for cooking dan dining. Relation with nature is embodied in the adaptation of house in its natural environment.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

Characteristic of the symbol is multivocal. Symbol have basic operational and agreed meaning. Symbol can be given a new meaning when associated with shapes, events or activities. Giving new meaning should be done carefully so as not to change early understanding.
The meaning of symbol in traditional societies can be used to get to know their culture. One of these culture is traditional house. Utilizing the symbol is one way to understand traditional house that is sometimes difficult to be understood by naked eye. The implied meaning of traditional house is sometimes only be understood on the basis of symbol that are understood occupants of the house.

Understanding of space in a traditional house of Dayak Ngaju can be seen in three relationships that are understood by Dayak Ngaju. Three relationships symbolized by batang garing. In addition, the concept of space can also be understood from the meaning contained in the parts of batang garing.

The use of batang garing to understand the concept of space in a traditional house of Dayak Ngaju may be the new thinking that will require mutual agreement. But at least review the concept of space in a traditional house aims to open new horizons. This study is the first step that opens the opportunity to conduct further research about the meaning behind the traditional house of the Dayak Ngaju. To develop this study into a better research that important to do a variety of explorative research on the history and cultural development process, especially the various aspects associated with traditional house. Although studies in this paper are simple but is expected to provide inspiration for architects/designers who will use the traditional concept of Dayak Ngaju to design the building.

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