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Local Wisdom: Universal Heritage

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Local Wisdom: Universal Heritage

27th – 28th July 2016
St Giles Wembley, Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia

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The Influence of *Tritangtu* on Traditional House in Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia

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Abstract

Traditional buildings have several in-depth meanings in both their architecture and interior design elements. The Sundanese traditional house is not merely a building, it is a sacred precinct, dwelling spaces of gods and spirits. In Sundanese culture, especially in Kampung Naga, house becomes the center and axis *mundi* of their life. This qualitative research starts with pilot study, continues to observation, then collects oral and written data, and completes it with in-depth interview. Cultural studies and exploratory data approaches are also applied. The result of this study portrayed that Sundanese traditional villages are depicted as sacred spaces when the founder, the belief, and the nature spirits are interrelated. Thus, the creation of traditional houses in Kampung Naga does not only serve as shelters, but also has "breath" and "soul". Additionally it may embody cosmological value and give unique analysis with trinity pattern approach called *tritangtu*. This paper is prominent in the documentation of Sundanese traditional buildings as one of cultural identities in Indonesia, which will deliver the cultural knowledge to the world wide.

Keywords: *Tritangtu*, Cosmology, Sundanese, Traditional Houses, Kampung Naga

Introduction

Sundanese are the indigenous people of West Java, also known as Sunda. Sundanese culture closely relates to Animist, Hindu, and Islam philosophies. It led to the unique creation of the Sundanese traditional houses called *Rumah Adat* in Kampung Naga. The embodiment of traditional houses becomes a very important issue in traditional community, since it allows the community to show their existence. Kampung Naga is one of the ancient villages from nine, which is preserved by West Java Department of Tourism and Culture, Indonesia. Interestingly, Kampung Naga has the ability to accelerate itself with modern era these days. In the fourth century, when Padjajaran (Hindu) Kingdom was ruled in the west part of Java Island, known as Sundanese region, they believe the kingdom as the cosmological center. However, prior to the time when animism became the only belief in primordial era, Sundanese people believe that the houses is the center of their cosmos. A cosmos is an orderly-harmonious system, whereas the Sundanese cosmos itself is called as cosmological mythic-spiritual culture, since it always contains the theological thought. After the fall of Padjajaran Kingdom in the 16th-century, the Sundanese or *Urang Sunda* (*Urang* means people, *Sunda* means Sundanese) had lost their powerful cultural and spiritual center. The absence of a powerful culture center does not mean Sundanese culture disappear. This can be reflected in the presence of Kampung Naga as Sundanese traditional village. All people in Kampung Naga are Moslem and practice islamic beliefs, yet their previous belief cannot be separated from their culture.

Research Methodology

The process of identifying the research focus was based on a survey regarding the research site to investigate the facts in Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya, West Java. The researcher has started to collect the data as a pilot study in 9-10 January 2016 and has made repeating field visit in 17-18 January 2016. In the second visit, the researcher met local people, as the first informant, named Mr. Cahyan. He is the fourth generation of his family who lives within Kampung Naga. Other than interview, in order to get specific data, this research will require the collection of visual documentation in detail during the field research.

The Introduction of Tritangtu

The term of *tritangtu* is derived from Sanskrit, *tan* means spider web. In the holistic perspective, *tritangtu* can be seen as one of networking that expands outside but strongly fuses inside. As the basic concept of Sundanese life, it was born based on primordial farmers' thought. They believe everything in this world is always connected to something opposite or dualistic. To avoid the conflict, thus the third principle was born to balance it and became one harmony. Dualistic becomes trinity through (Sumardjo, 2015).

Discussion

Many research discuss Sundanese traditional house in Kampung Naga. However, this paper is expected to give contribution by proposing in-depth analysis on the interior design elements of traditional house and the architectural components with cosmological approach called *tritangtu*, as the basis of ancient Sundanese principle cosmology. The embodiment of the house elements and the components will lead to the discovery of in-depth and intangible cultural values. Interestingly, the number of house in Kampung Naga cannot be extended. Based on the interview with Mr. Cahyan in January 2016, he said that Kampung Naga consists of 113 buildings, including the traditional houses, sacred house called *Bumi Ageung*, the mosque, and the gathering building.

Vertically, traditional house in Kampung Naga is divided into three spaces. The attic known as *para*, the ceiling called *lalangit*, and the space under the house called *kolong* or *kokolong*. The space between *lalangit* and *kokolong* is the actual house called *bumi* or *imah*. Horizontally, the house is divided into five areas - *tepas* (man territory) also known as guest reception room, *pawon* or kitchen, and rice storage called *goah* as female territory, *tengah imah* has similar function to family room and bedroom known as *pangkeng*. The Sundanese Traditional house in Kampung Naga has an unseen "energy" that moves both vertically and horizontally, inside and also outside. Using the analysis of *tritangtu* approach saying that house is divided into three parts and they have a purpose to connect three different cosmological worlds, upper world (*Dunia Atas*) is the dwelling of gods, middle world (*Dunia Tengah*) where humans and earth spirits exist and under world (*Dunia Bawah*) where demons and ambiguous forces exist (Fig.1) (Wessing, 1978).

In Sundanese cosmology, traditional house is possible to become a macrocosmos, whereas the people living in the house become the microcosmos. In Sundanese culture, house is called in various names such as *bumi*, *imah* or *rorompok*. *Bumi* can also mean world, because of that, the traditional house serves as the macrocosmos, the small world inside the universe. In the process of *tritangtu* emergence, every entity starts with "emptiness", then "content" is created. That statements also supported by Kroef (1951) and Athyal (2015), they stated that emptiness creates willingness known as *tekad* (Sumardjo, 2014). If there is a will there is a possibility to create any "content". The form of willingness are power (*kuasa*), *ucap* and *deed* (*lampah*). The relation with Sundanese traditional house which the existence of house is started with emptiness. The potential of willingness, power, and deed creates the division of interior spaces to provide facilities for the inhabitants, then the house becomes the macrocosmos for surroundings.

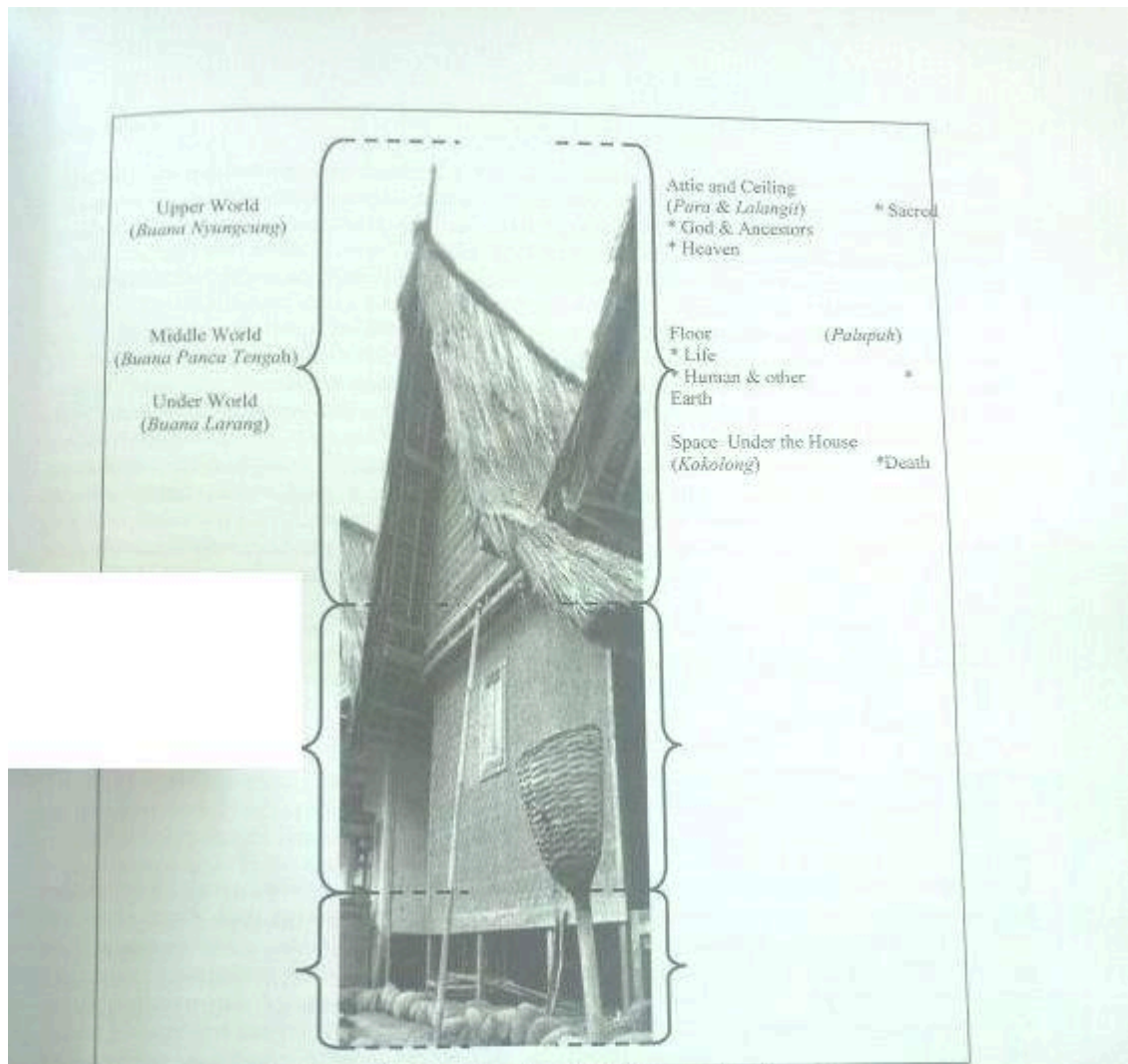


Figure 1. Kampung Naga Traditional House Based on The Universe Level
Source: Private Documentation

Conclusion

Since cosmology as a human effort to build a world-view about the aim of their life in this world, Sundanese people brought trinity pattern or *tritangtu* as a local cosmology. *Tritangtu* brought in depth meaning of traditional house in Kampung Naga. Traditional house in Kampung Naga not serves as living space or physical embodiment only, but it also has philosophical value both vertically and horizontally. Vertical meaning represents the relationship between man and God, whereas horizontal meaning is about interactions among human being and nature. The house becomes the macrocosmos for the inhabitants whose natures are microcosmos, in this case woman in the house as the centre of microcosmos. Fill the "emptiness" and unite with "the contents" that has been created into unity. The natures of the house change into microcosmos when the inhabitants leave the house. They switch position with the inhabitants as the macrocosmos, and therefore the house returns to become the center of cosmos for the surroundings.

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