

Modernity vs Traditionality: The Approach the Vernacular Architecture in Maintaining Traditional Architecture through Structuralism

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Abstract

The development of current functions in traditional homes is similar to the development of homes in general. The function of the house is not only as a place of residence for residents, but as another function. Residents develop additional functions, such as business functions or cultural functions. The addition of this function has an impact on the reduction or loss of the meaning of traditional architecture due to changes in activities and ways of view of the inhabitants of their traditional spaces. The purpose of the discussion was to find out the dynamics of the meaning of modernity and traditionality in space and the traditional forms of traditional houses. The approach is carried out through Semiotics and Structuralism which is reading the dynamics of the relationship between the meaning of traditionality and modernity through architectural signs in traditional houses. The method of discussion is descriptive-interpretive method that is to look at cultural phenomena that are behind the dynamics of traditional functions, spaces and forms by showing the developmental relations of functions to the dynamics of the meaning of space and form. The results of this paper are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of traditional house and space and contribute to the right method in the process of changing space and form without leaving its traditional values, so that traditional houses can keep abreast of the times.

Keywords: dynamics of meaning, Kudus, modernity, space and form, traditionality

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Introduction

The current phenomenon of traditional houses is the number of traditional houses that are destroyed and not continuing due to being abandoned by the community. This happens because traditional houses are considered unable to keep up with the needs of current community activities. This phenomenon is influenced by both internal and external factors. The influence of internal factors, among others, the development of the inhabitant culture (knowledge, economy, technology and information), the distribution of inheritance, the removal building to the different environment, the abandonment of building by its inhabitants and the residents' inability to take care of buildings due to poverty. The influence of external factors happens due to buildings damage caused by nature, change of ownership/occupants, the existence of new functions and behavior changes and the current global view of society that is different from the past society. Traditional houses need to accommodate the needs of occupant activities from the economic aspect (Sardjono, AB; S. Nugroho EP, 2015; Tarigan, 2013; 2015). The influence on these architectural elements occurs due to changes in the function, it is a change from functional-symbolic to pragmatic functions. This change causes the symbolic meaning of traditional houses slowly lost and it is no longer a part of human life in living.

The houses phenomenon that is currently developed by the community thought is in accordance with the needs and perspective on the cultural community. This thought is carried out based on conscious and everyday life-long actions done in centuries toward challenges of the needs and natural factors in the process of home formation. This awareness affects architectural development that is able to adapt to local impacts that later will affect the architectural space and form. This thought forms a kind of architecture called vernacular architecture. Community thinking which is in nature giving solution towards its place of residence can be called modernity.

By considering the two phenomena above, it can be seen that traditional architecture cannot develop because there is an element of "freezing" toward traditional space and form in order to maintain and inherit traditional buildings physically, as part of the history of architectural development through cultural heritage programs. Traditional houses are static. While vernacular buildings can always change according to dynamic changes in natural, cultural and time factors. This dynamic change can be categorized in the aspect of modernity. In this case, the value of traditionalism represents traditional space that is still taken care and maintained by residents, while the value of modernity is represented by the new space utilization in traditional houses.

The scope of the discussion in this paper is the development of new traditional architectural functions and spaces based on modernity aspects developed by a vernacular approach so that it can adapt to the socio-cultural-economic development through hybrid relation between the meaning of modernity and the traditional meaning of traditional houses.

The purpose of this discussion is to get the hybrid relation between modernity and traditionality found in traditional houses through function and space aspects. The benefit of the discussion is to promote the existence of traditional space and form into the environment of modernity based on traditional values as cultural localities. The next benefit is the development of traditional houses that can accommodate the development of current activities requirements. These two things become the basis for maintaining the sustainability of traditional houses in the present and in the future.

Theoretical Study

Traditionality and modernity

Changes or developments in activities in traditional homes will lead to "dialectical meetings" between cultures that are traditional in nature and the modernity culture. The meeting of "dialectics" occurs in architectural space and form. The dialectic meeting is the most critical part in understanding the influence of the modernity role on the value toward traditionality in the development of traditional houses. The dialectic meeting occurs in the meanings that emerge through the signs that occur in architectural elements between modernity and traditional cultures.

Traditionality comes from the word "tradition" which is derived from the Latin word *traditio* which means "to be continued". The most basic thing of tradition is the information that is passed on from generation to generation both in written and in oral, because without doing this, a tradition can become extinct. According to Peursen (1988), tradition is the inheritance or continuation of norms, customs, rules, properties. Tradition can change, can be combined with various kinds of human behavior and raised in a whole. Traditionality shows the level or quality of a person or community in holding the values, norms and customs that are carried out from generation to generation and understood as well as realized as an internal tool conducted in groups, based on mutual agreement by certain traditional leaders (collective leaders). According to Heynen (1999), modernity, etymologically can be identified in three basic levels of understanding; they are: (1) modernity is 'now', or 'currently', which means the opposite from the early time, something from the past. (2) modernity means 'new', as the opposite of the word old.

By examining the above definition, the phenomenon that occurs in current traditional houses is houses that accommodate contemporary developments in the sense of "temporality." The accommodation process toward the development of activities has been the part of the consequences from the development of human thought that is influenced by contemporary culture. In this case, the contradiction that occurs is the contradiction between the value of "immortality" in traditionality and the value of "temporality" in modernity. Reading the contradicting value of traditionality (immortality) and modernity (temporality) cannot be done only by looking at the building physics/technic/material consisting merely of roofs, walls and floors. The building must be read in a different way by exploring the meaning of the material produced in the form of culture.

The contradiction of traditionality and modernity meaning in architecture

Understanding the traditionality and modernity in traditional homes cannot be separated from the meaning contained in the signs that occur in that home. The architectural signs are shown in architectural space and form consisting the meaning of traditionality in the Javanese house and is represented in the aspects of a lasting space arrangement, that tends to be unchanging and hereditary which is held by the occupants. The static and dynamic aspects cause contradictions which can lead to destruction, because modernity cannot be developed in traditional architecture that has traditional values. However, if traditional houses are not developed, then the tendency that occurs is that the house can be left by the community.

The contradicting nature between modernity and traditional can be done in 3 methods: dominating, hybrid and fusion. The dominative method is to eliminate other meanings with new meanings. Hybrid method is to give space for the two meanings to develop themselves together and for them to not eliminate each other. The fusion method is those two meanings are merged into one unit.

The vernacular architecture and locality

Vernacular architecture is an architectural manifestation that has the nature of locality. Vernacular architecture is an architectural design that adapts the local climate, uses local techniques and materials, and it is influenced by the social, cultural and economic aspects of the local community (Heryati and Abdul, 2014). Vernacular architecture is an architecture that grows and develops from folk architecture that was born from an ethnic community. It is rooted in ethnic traditions, and is built on experience (trial and error), using local techniques and materials. It is also the answer to the environmental setting where the building is located and always opens for transformation to occur. Vernacular architecture consists of buildings built by its users to meet the daily needs of domestic activities and work related to ordinary people (Barke, M. & J. Parks, 2015).

Based on the description above, vernacular architecture is an architecture that accommodates development based on various factors that influence both internal and external without neglecting aspects of locality which consist of aspects of tradition (social, economic and cultural), geography (place / place). The progressive vernacular architecture has values that are limited by time. Thus, vernacular architecture is dynamic and open. This vernacular nature is the basis in describing the phenomena that occur in the dynamics of traditional architecture.

Material and Methods

The description of the study case

The study case was in Kudus Regency. Kudus Regency is located in the northern part of the province of Central Java, Indonesia. The location of the study case was in Langgardalem Village and in Karangmalang Village.

The layout of the traditional Kudus house consists of the main building and supporting buildings. The main building consists of *Dalem*, *Jogosatru* and *Pawon* (Sardjono, 2009). *Dalem* consists of *senhong kiwo*, *senhong tengah*, *senhong tengen* and *jogan*. *Senhong kiwo* and *tengen* are used as bedrooms, while *senhong* is being used for special places, namely places to store treasures and heirlooms. *Jogan* used the link between the three rooms. *Jogosatru* is a room that is located in front of the house and functioned to receive outsiders (guests) and other social and formal activities. *Pawon* is a manifestation of a symbol of non-formal, domestic activities and family relationships and non-formal social relations. Supporting buildings are separated from the main building. Supporting buildings are functioned as a service room, such as: bathrooms, latrines and places to wash as well as kitchens. The layout of service rooms that are separated from the main building (figures 1 (a), (b), and (c)).

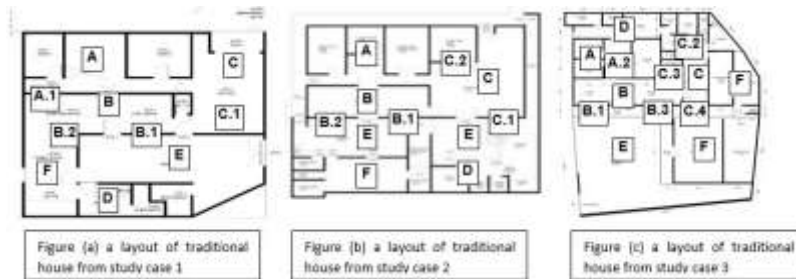


Figure 1
 (a) a layout of traditional house from study case 1;
 (b) a layout of traditional house from study case 2; (c) a layout of traditional house from study case 3

Description:

- | | |
|--|--|
| A : Dalem consists of : <i>Senhong Kiwo</i> , <i>Senhong Tengah</i> , <i>Senhong Tengen</i> dan <i>Jogan</i> . | D : Service Room : wells, bathrooms, toilets, and warehouses and/or kitchens |
| B : <i>Jogosatru</i> | E : Yard/Land |
| C : <i>Pawon</i> changes function as snack/light food stall | F : Additional building that is functioned as a room for industrial activities |

Methods

First, the research approach is conducted using interpretative studies of space and form by composing traditional meanings and traditional meanings that occur in traditional homes. The formulation of the meaning is reviewed based on the relation among function, space and form. The analysis is carried out with a structuralism approach to get the meaning of fixed/static (traditionality) with the meaning of changing/dynamic (modernity). According to Saussure, language consists of two factors: *langue* (language) and *parole* (speech/utterance). *Parole* is a word spoken by a person at a certain time while *langue* is a language. Even though in *parole*, the word is spoken differently, but has a fixed/same language basis. *Langue/language* is autonomous; therefore, it is a structure of *parole*. This condition results in semiology used in cultural studies. (Sutrisno & Putranto, 2005).

According to Lévi-Strauss in Sutrisno & Putranto (2005), structuralism has some principles. They are:

1. The existence of "regularity" (order) and "repeatability" (regularities) will form the regularity that is carried out repeatedly (structuring), so it can form patterns as elements of meaning.

2. Arrangements regarding patterns, habits, lifestyles and other things, carried out by humans, are still on the surface/outer structures (surface structure), so it is necessary to know the inside structure (deep structure) that supports the outer structure.
3. The structuralism view emphasizes the existence of binary opposition, which is to contradistinguish opposing relations.
4. Structuralism approach is more concerned to synchronic than diachronic.

From the Saussure and Levi Strauss point of views, there is a connection between the sign and meaning. Signs are external structures/surfaces, while meanings are internal structures. In architecture, signs are spoken through text that is expressed through function and space. Function and space are surface structures, while meanings behind functions and spaces are called internal structures. The internal structures are the basis for understanding any changes that occur in those meanings associated with the meaning of both modernity and traditionality. To understand the meaning revealed in space and form, it is necessary to see the role of functions/activities applied in these spaces and forms, whether space and form respond to the dynamic function in traditional houses (Salura, 2015).

Meaning analysis uses the rules of governance (Salura P., 2018). The dynamics of the meaning of function and space are based on aspects of the composition of space in terms of the position of space. The position of room includes the existence of one room with another, namely: front-back, right-left, north-south, west-east, top-down, center-edge and far-away. (Salura P., 2018). The position of the room determines the meaning of room in a house whether the meaning that occurs in room has changed between pragmatic functions and symbolic meanings. Furthermore, from the position of the room, it can be shown that spaces in traditional houses still have traditional meaning or modern meaning.

The method of discussion is as follows 1) observing changes in function by looking at changes in activity that occur in each case of study; 2) observing physical changes in space in each case study; 3) arranging the meaning of the function by categorizing the function into pragmatic meaning and symbolic meaning by juxtaposing the meaning of traditional house's functions and spaces in the past with the current meaning; 4) arranging the relation between the meaning of the function with the meaning of room; 5) determining the meaning of traditionality and the meaning of modernity towards room; 6) examining the nature of the meaning of traditionality with the meaning of modernity based on its relation (dominative, hybrid or fused).

Result and Discussion

Function dynamics in traditional houses

Dalem function

The three study cases showed that the overall function of the palace did not change significantly. Figures a, b and c, show that *Dalem* function still remains the same as the family's rest/sleep function.

The addition of activities in this place is not too significant. Figure a, additional functions in dalem are worship activities. Figure b, an additional function is as a place to put ready-made clothing products; while in figure c, there is a family room. From the aspect of function, there is no significant change in function, while the addition of the function is complementary.

Pawon function

The comprehensive function of *Pawon* in the three cases above, toward the changes in function is significant even though it is not dominating. One function with other functions is put together in one room without insulation. The function of the *pawon* varies. In figure a, *pawon* is functioned as a grocery store and stall. Figure b shows a variety of mixed functions, such as: receiving guests, family gatherings, cooking, selling, sleeping, worshipping and storing cloth. Picture c shows diverse activities; they are: as a place to store batik cloth material, a kitchen, a place to eat and a bed. Thus, *Pawon* is a room that has a high level of dynamics that is able to accommodate the type and nature of room together in one-time order. *Pawon* has a high level of functional flexibility. This flexibility shows the phenomenon of *pawon* capacity which is a significant part in following the development of activities that have modern value (new/present).

Jogosatru function

Like *pawon*, *jogosatru* function is experiencing development and changing, but the level of flexibility is lower than *pawon*. The case study of picture a, *jogosatru* has a function as a place to receive guests and family activities. The case of figure b shows that the function of *jogosatru* has changed to become a place for the convection industry. While the case of picture c shows *jogosatru* has 2 functions; they are: as a place to receive guests and a place for batik cloth to be sold. The developments that occur in all three cases, *jogosatru* has an attachment as a place to receive guests in accordance with its initial function. In the case of picture b, the function of receiving guests is not lost but is shifted to the *pawon*. The location of receiving guests between *pawon* and *jogosatru* has not changed. This shows that the level of flexibility in accommodating varied functions is lower than that of *pawon*. *Jogosatru* is still a part of traditional functions even though it still accepts modern functions.

The dynamics of spatial and enclosure in traditional houses

The discussion of the dynamics of spatial and enclosure in traditional houses can be described from several aspects; they are: the aspects of nature, orientation, quality of closure, hierarchy level, position of room. The discussion is shown in the table below.

No	Spaces	The changing of enclosure and spatial				
		Nature	Orientation	Closure	Hierarchy	Position
1	<i>Dalem</i>	Private, formal	Inward	closed	High	Center-middle
2	<i>Pawon</i>	Private-public, Formal-non-formal	Inward and outward	open	Low	Edge-side

Table 1
The change of spatial and enclosure in traditional houses

No.	Spaces	The changing of enclosure and spatial				
		Nature	Orientation	Closure	Hierarchy	Position
3	<i>Jogosatru</i>	Private-public Formal-non-formal	Inward and outward	open	Low	Edge-front

Physically the position of room still follows the traditional pattern. The traditional pattern with the position of *dalem* in the center is still used as a sleeping area. Although *dalem* has changed and added activities such as family room (figure c) and convection item placement (figure b).

The dynamics of function and space meaning in traditional houses

The dynamics of *dalem* meaning

The analysis of the dynamics of change in meaning can be recognized by looking at the position of room against other spaces by using methods of regulatory principles in architecture. In general, houses are located in the Langgardalem and Kauman villages which are houses that have grown since the growth of Kudus as a city. Of the two cases, the *dalem* function does not experience significant changes, even though there are additional new functions. In figure a, *dalem* remains as a place to rest / sleep. *Dalem* is a closed room. This is shown on the doors and windows that are always closed. The position of *dalem* against another room remains the same. In figure b, *dalem* has undergone changes on the floor but it remains the center of the other room. *Dalem* as the center is shown in its position which is surrounded by *pawon* and *jogosatru*. In the case of figure c, even though this house is a house built outside the neighborhood of Kauman village and Langgardalem village and has undergone changes in the shape of the building, the placement of room still follows the traditional house pattern with various adjustments to the current function. In the picture c, there has been a change; they are: 1) the addition of a family activity function by entering the television and sofa chair into it; 2) changes in orientation of the bedroom which does not point to the south, but rather leads to the family room being the center; 3) changes in the circulation of *dalem* to *pawon* by pointing to the back (kitchen). The *dalem* structure is still the center of other spaces, although the function of the family room has been developed.

The dynamics of *pawon* meaning

The basic function of *pawon* is non-formal and semi-public with internal activities and social activities as the main activities of the family. The development of functions that occur in *pawon* becomes the function of grocery stores and *warung* (figure a), the function of the shop, family room and living room (figure b), the function of warehouse and mix (figure c), show that *pawon* is a place that has high function dynamics affect the meaning of the room. The meaning of *pawon* is egalitarian and mixed and is able to accommodate various activities from activities that are religious/spiritual to economic activities.

This also affects the nature of room. The nature of room becomes mixed such as: formal-non-formal, private-public, spiritual-profane and main service room. Judging from the room placement in *pawon*, it shows that the living room is placed in the front, as well as the location of the shop.

The dynamics of *Jogosatru* meaning

The main function of *jogosatru* is formal public activities. *Jogosatru*'s development in three study cases is a mixed function between the living room and family room (figure a), the function of economic activities (figure b), mixed activities between the living room and the batik showroom figure c). From these developments, the *jogosatru* function can evolve and change as in the example of image b which totally becomes an industrial function.

Table 2 The dynamic spaces and function meanings in traditional houses

No.	Spaces	Function meaning		Spaces function		Traditionality	Moderenity
		Pragmatic function	Symbolic function	Pragmatic	Symbolic		
1	<i>Dalem</i>	- Rest function - Additional function	- Nothing	- Low space flexibility	- center, closed, formal - fixed and changing orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	<i>Pawon</i>	- Mixed function	- Nothing	- High space flexibility	- edge, open, formal-nonformal, private-public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	<i>Jogosatru</i>	- Mixed function	- Nothing	- Medium space flexibility	- edge, open-closed, formal-nonformal, private-public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Conclusion

The conclusion of the discussion above is: 1) Traditional houses cannot be separated from the development of the influence of modernity which can influence the meaning of traditional functions and spaces; 2) With a vernacular approach as an effort to accommodate cultural development, it is expected that traditional houses can keep up with the times and have a high level of sustainability with a low level of modification; 3) The sustainability of traditional spaces that are able to follow developments and changes must be followed by awareness of the aspects of locality; 4) The meaning of traditionality that needs to be maintained is the meaning of functions and spaces as a center of hierarchy towards traditional spatial structures; 5) Pawon has the highest level of flexibility so that Pawon has a tendency for a dynamic level of change and egalitarian nature; so it is able to develop the most varied functions.

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