

The Meanings of Architectural Spaces in Vernacular Settlements: The Batak Toba Tribe in the Meat Village, Toba, Indonesia

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Abstract

Batak Toba is one of the tribes in Indonesia that traditionally resides in hilly areas around the Toba Lake, North Sumatra. However, the architectural spaces and vernacular settlements of this tribe have been significantly affected by modernization and changing lifestyles. One of the rapidly transformed areas with unavoidable demolitions is the Meat Village.

This research explores the meaning of architectural spaces and vernacular settlements in the consciousness of Meat Village residents as a concept for building new houses and settlements. It used transcendental phenomenology to unearth meanings spaces.

*The results show that the architectural space of a residential house is *bona*, which means the 'origin' or 'principal' that represents a clan. Meanwhile, the vernacular settlement (*huta*) represents the lineage (*pomparan*), whose existence is determined by the *horja*, a customary council. It concludes that the architectural spaces and vernacular settlements of the Batak Toba in the Meat Village are a manifestation of the existing lineage that needs to be continuously maintained. This meaning can also be applied to the transformation of architecture and settlements in the future.*

Keywords: meaning of space, vernacular architecture, vernacular settlements, Batak Toba, *jabu*, *huta*, *horja*.

Introduction

According to Bagun (1982, cited by Sugiyarto, 2017), Batak Toba is one of the tribes in Indonesia inhabiting most of the area around the Toba Lake. It is the largest volcanic lake globally (Chesner, 2012; Kaars et al., 2012), formed by a significant eruption approximately 74,000 years ago (Blinkhorn et al., 2012; Costa et al., 2014; Williams, 2012, cited by Smith et al., 2018). In contrast to the other tribes that prefer shifting cultivation, Batak Toba is engaged in permanent agricultural systems and settlements (Tjahyono, cited by Wuisman, 2009).

Although the Toba culture produces interesting and meaningful vernacular architecture and settlements, modernization and changing life styles have led to its developmental transformations (Hanan, 2010, 2012; Hanan & Meisyara, 2017).

Publication of research on vernacular architecture has increased, especially in Asian countries. Indonesia is included in the 20 countries that produce publications on vernacular architecture (Benkari et al., 2021). This shows that vernacular architecture is an interesting topic to explore and research so that it can be applied to new buildings. The loss of vernacular architecture is a global problem caused by modernization and technological developments (Michiani & Asano, 2016). This has led to the fading of identity and a decline in the region's image of the Batak Toba tribe (Antono, 2005; Maulana & Suswati, 2014; Napitupulu et al., 1997). According to Philokyprou & Michael (2020), vernacular architecture is a valuable cultural heritage that deserves to be preserved. Dayaratne (2018) states that locality-oriented vernacular settlements are able to create sustainable environments in a more macro context.

Various efforts are being made to restore the loss of local wisdom as well as culture and social values due to the transformations of vernacular architecture. Generally, this process is carried out on aspects of material use, construction techniques, socio-cultural, socio-economic influences, and climate change impacts (Jagatramka et al., 2021).

This research aims to explore the meaning of the Batak Toba architectural space and vernacular settlements of people in the Meat Village, Toba Regency, North Sumatra Province. The Meat Village was selected as the research location because it represents the settlements of the Batak Toba tribe, located on the shores of the Toba Lake surrounded by mountains. Furthermore, it consists of several *huta* (vernacular settlements) with varying vernacular architecture, which also undergo transformations due to modernization.

Research Location

This research was conducted in the Meat Village, Toba Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia as shown in Fig. 1 and 2. It consists of Hamlets I, II, and III, and approximately 20 vernacular settlements traditionally, called *huta*. According to the village head, this village was founded in the 1800s by 4 descendants (*pomparan*) of *Sibagot ni Pohan*, namely *Tuan Sihubil*, *Tuan Somanimbil*, *Tuan Dibangarna*, and *Raja Sonak Malela*. Each descendant had children whose names later became the clans of the Batak Toba tribe, such as *Tampubolon* (children of Tuan Sihubil); *Siahaan*, *Simanjuntak*, and *Hutagaol* (children of Tuan Somanimbil); *Panjaitan*, *Silitonga*, *Siagian*, and *Sianipar* (children of Tuan Dibangarna), and *Simangunsong*, *Marpaung*, *Napitupulu*, and *Pardede* (children of Raja Sonak Malela).



Fig. 1: (a) Indonesia & North Sumatra Province; (b) Research Location on the shores of Toba Lake
Source: Processed based on Peta Wilkerstat 2019, Badan Pusat Statistik

(<https://geoportal.bps.go.id/maps/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b47355787be7484f9ba023a407a5a15a>. Accessed on 14 October, 2021)



Fig. 2: Map of the Meat Village.

Source: <https://goo.gl/maps/6DPeBCgX4BAeDvTk6> (Accessed on 4 November, 2021)

Literature Review

Culture, space, and meaning

Lefebvre (1991) states that space is a social product produced by a group of people. Meanwhile, Rapoport (1980) reports that cultural "templates" shape environments and lifestyles. This statement is in line with Koentjaraningrat (2004) research that culture manifests in the 'ideal' form controlling values and manners, then the 'behavior' and 'physical' forms presenting as the embodiment of human values and activities. These theories show that spatial planning as a physical form of culture has values and plays a role in accommodating human activities. Rapoport (1980) states that the built environment is more than just a physical object because it has meaning and plays a role in building a community's identity.

According to Rapoport (1969), buildings are distinguished in line with tradition through "folk architecture" and "grand design". Folk architecture is divided into primitive and vernacular, symbolizing physical forms of culture and containing values. Rapoport further divides vernacular architecture into two categories, namely "pre-industrial and modern". The house as a product of a building is inseparable from settlements as a spatial arrangement on a broader scale because it forms a social and spatial system, including a view of life. Therefore, communities' daily activities occur not only in the house but also on a larger spatial scale, namely settlements.

Houses and settlements are products of a spatial organization; therefore, it is essential to understand, analyze and compare the built environment, which is more fundamental than the form, material, and other characters viewed as an organization of meaning (Rapoport, 1980, 1990). Rapoport reports that spatial organization expresses meaning and is communicative when conceptualized as something permanent. This implies that it is often expressed through semi-

permanent features, such as symbols, materials, colors, shapes, and sizes. Meaning is associated with the communication between the environment and people (Rapoport, 1980, 1990; Lefebvre, 1991). The organization of space and meaning reflects and influences communication, an important way of relating the built environment and social organizations.

Batak Toba vernacular settlement

Batak Toba people inhabit the shores of Lake Toba due to the availability of water, which is vital for agriculture, biological life, and transportation (Simatupang, 2018). On the other hand, the vernacular architecture of the Batak Toba tribe is an ancient Austronesian architecture as indicated from the building's shape. The Batak Toba house was built as a permanent house because the community implemented a rice field system (Wuisman, 2009).

There are two types of Batak Toba vernacular houses, *Sitolumbea* or *Bolon* with the door-steps on the inside and *Sisampuran* or *Sibaba ni Amporik* with these features in front (Antono, 2005; Manurung, 2018). Another building that functions as a granary and a residential house is called *Sopo* (Domenig, 2003).

The vernacular settlement of the Toba Batak tribe is referred to as *Huta*, surrounded by a wall that functions as a stone fortress on which bamboo trees are planted. The walls are built with two to three meters and a wall thickness of approximately one and a half meters (Hanan, 2012; Setiawan, 2018; Siahaan, 2005). In building a village (*Huta*) or settlement, the Toba Batak communities processed the hilly nature around the Lake Toba into a flat land, while rocks are used as material to build forts surrounding the village (Setiawan, 2018). Vergouwen (2004) describes the vernacular settlement as a square field surrounded by walls planted with bamboo trees as a fortress of protection. Inside the village, several rows of houses face each other with a granary (*Sopo*) separated by a courtyard that functions as open space.

Ancestor-oriented space

Generally, a place is marked by a physical building. However, this is different to the Aboriginal people in Australia, which does not categorize a building as an essential commodity. Housing for Aborigines is not as important as people of other tribes because it functions as a place to live and a symbol (Rapoport, 1975). Therefore, the relationship between buildings and symbols needs to be analyzed. Rapoport (1975) further states that kinship or group factors are essential for Aboriginal tribes because it affects the placement of their dwellings with housing placed based on the proximity of a tribal group. Aboriginal people do not view space based on its size, physical issue or ownership but differently. They believe land provide fortune and life; therefore, it is not owned individually, and people do not have the right because it belongs to the state (Rapoport, 1975).

The ancestors' journey is essential for Aboriginal tribes and symbolic space, and this also makes the clan an important factor in determining spatial planning because it has links and relationships with ancestors. Moreover, they define 'place' by being oriented to their ancestors and not through the construction of physical buildings (Rapoport, 1975).

Research Method

The transcendental phenomenology research method consisting of qualitative paradigms and procedures (Abakpa et al., 2017; Kafle, 2011) was used to explore the meanings of the architectural spaces and vernacular settlements of the Batak Toba (*huta*). According to Manurung et al. (2022), transcendental phenomenology is a qualitative research method that can be used to explore "the meaning of architectural space in vernacular architecture." Phenomenological research is a qualitative and open process comprising several phases of

preparations such as data collection, organization, and analysis (Moustakas, 1994). The main data collection process associated with this method is interviews by applying *epoche*, which views the object of research clearly, and free from intervention (Priest, 2002; Moustakas, 1994).

The various stages of analysis in transcendental phenomenology include “horizontalizing,” “thematizing,” “textural description,” “structural description,” and integrating the descriptions to obtain the meanings and essence (Moustakas, 1994). In this research, the horizontalizing stage was carried out by determining the unit of information. All interview transcripts were reduced and categorized by removing irrelevant information, while the relevant and meaningful ones were grouped into units and then induced to build themes (thematizing). The process was followed by integrating and inducing texture and structures in the themes to obtain the meaning of Batak Toba vernacular architectural spaces and settlements.

Findings and the Discussion

Vernacular architecture and the settlement

Field observations show that the Meat Village had several *huta* (Batak Toba vernacular settlements) and vernacular architecture. Furthermore, there are 3 types of vernacular architecture, namely *Bolon* (a house for the king with the stairs entering from the bottom side), *Sibaba ni Amporik* (a house for the king's servants, or knights, with a ladder position entering from the front side), and *Sopo* (granary). During the grand tour (initial observations), it was realized that some *huta* still have many vernacular settlements. However, this number decreased during the mini-tour (field research) because several houses were demolished and replaced by new buildings.

Hamlet I

This hamlet consists of a *Huta Simanjuntak* because the founder and owner were from clan Simanjuntak. Fig. 3 and 4 show the location of the Batak Toba vernacular architecture in Huta Simanjuntak situated along with new houses. Some of the vernacular houses found in this area are still in good condition, although lacking in maintenance, while others have acquired additional new buildings on the side and the rear.

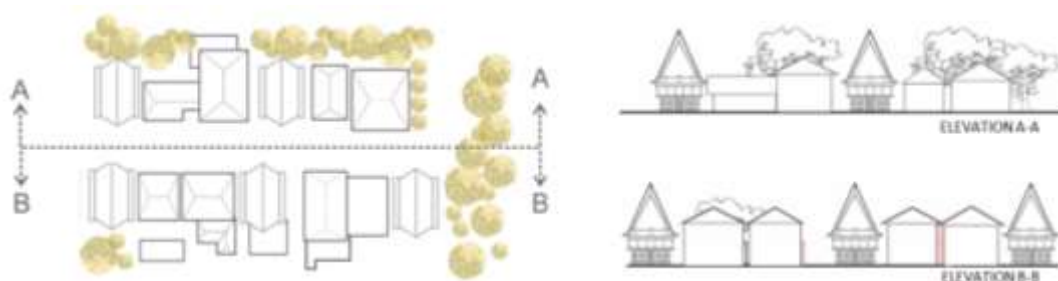


Fig. 3: Existing Condition of *Huta Simanjuntak* in Hamlet I
Source: Documentation of Manurung (October, 2020)



Fig. 4: Vernacular architecture in *Huta Simanjuntak*
Source: Documentation of Manurung (July, 2019)

Hamlet II

This hamlet consists of a *Lumban Tonga-Tonga*, a *Huta* of clan Sianipar with 2 types of vernacular architecture, namely *Bolon* and *Sopo* houses. These buildings have undergone revitalization and are currently functioning as a homestay for tourists. The location and the condition of *Huta* indicate modernization with Vernacular, and *Sopo* houses situated side by side, as shown in Figures 5 and 6.

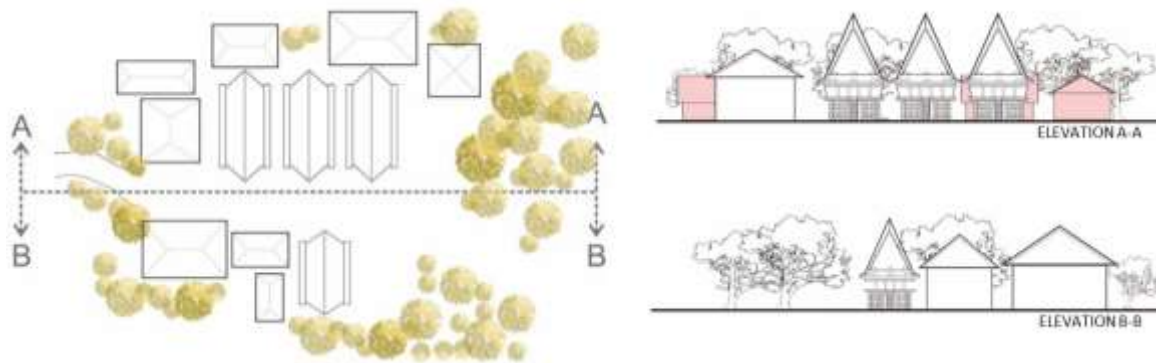


Fig. 5: Existing Condition of *Huta Sianipar* in Hamlet II
Source: Documentation of Manurung (October, 2020)

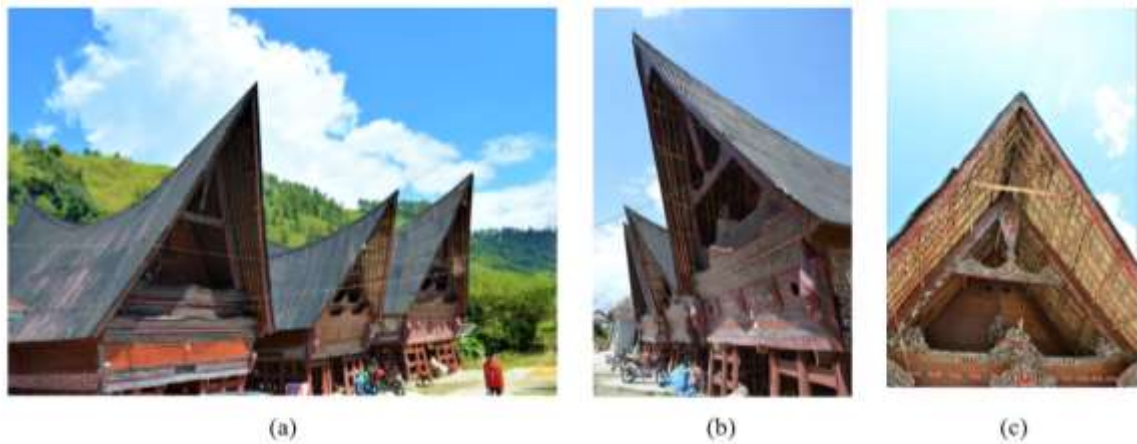


Fig. 6: Vernacular architecture in *Huta Sianipar*
Source: Documentation of Manurung (July, 2018)

Hamlet III

This hamlet has more vernacular houses than the ones mentioned earlier. *Huta Sait ni Huta* (Fig. 7), *Huta Hisap*, and *Huta Lumban Pasir* still have vernacular architecture, which belongs to the clan Siahaan. However, the number of vernacular houses in *Huta Sait ni Huta* has decreased due to demolitions and have been replaced with new buildings, as shown in Fig. 8.

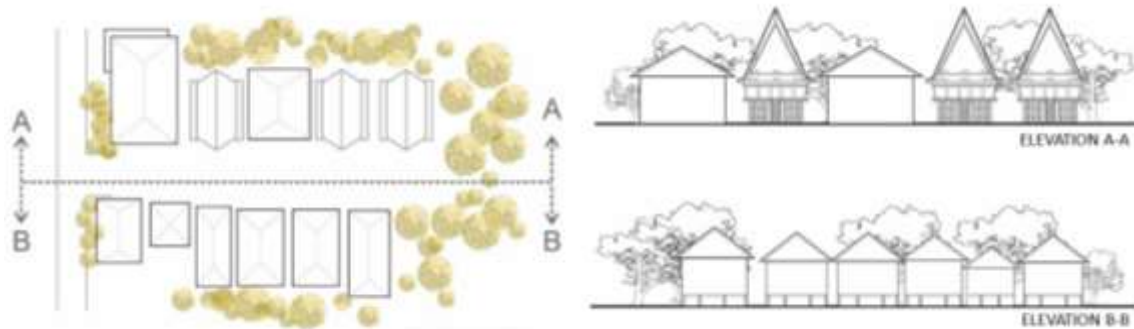


Fig. 7: Existing Condition of *Huta Sait Ni Huta* in Hamlet III
Source: Documentation of Manurung (October, 2020)



Fig. 8: Vernacular architecture in *Huta Saitnihuta* in 2018(a); and 2019 (b).
Source: Documentation of Manurung (July, 2018; and May, 2019)

New building transformations

At the beginning of the formation process in the Meat village, the ancestors built Batak Toba Vernacular houses in each *Huta*. Over time, there has been an architectural transformation, as indicated in the field observations and interviews. There are 3 types of houses, namely stage, semi-permanent, and permanent as shown in Figures 9a, b and c, respectively. Some respondents stated that Batak Toba houses, which previously dominated the buildings in the Meat Village, were recently demolished. The demolition has been carried out for various reasons, such as the damage in building materials above hundred years. Moreover, it was also due to the necessity of a larger house to support the current life needs.



Fig. 9: Architecture Transformations in the Meat Village.
Source: Documentation of Manurung (a & b: July, 2019; c: May, 2021)

Spatial order of the vernacular and new houses

Based on information and sketches from traditional leaders, the vernacular houses in the Meat Village are categorized into 4 main zones, namely *Jabu Bona*, *Jabu Suhat*, *Jabu Ipar-ipar*, and *Jabu Soding* (Fig. 10). *Jabu Bona* and *Jabu Soding* are on the right side, while *Jabu Suhat* and *Jabu Ipar-ipar* are on the left. The force of the zones is very clear due to the absence of wall barriers. *Jabu Bona* is for the house owner, while *Jabu Suhat* is for the children. Conversely, *Jabu Ipar-ipar* functions as *Paisolat*, a term for people who are not family members but stay in the house. *Jabu Soding* is a space intended for guests with family relations, while *Jabu Ipar-ipar* is for those without any form of ties.



Fig. 10: Spatial Order of Batak Toba Vernacular House.

Source: Processed based on the sketch of Guntur Sianipar (August, 2021)

Observations were made and interviews were conducted with respondents who had dismantled the Batak Toba Vernacular houses and replaced them with new buildings. The results show that the position of the new houses is similar to the Batak; especially the front. It was revealed that the position of *Jabu Bona* and the living room was formed by a vernacular house. Meanwhile, other spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms, and back porch do not follow this order. Fig. 11 shows the plan of a new house built to replace a vernacular building. The core room, including the *Jabu Bona* and barrier on the front side is in the same zone as the Batak house. The porch of the new houses is not allowed to cross the line formed by the vernacular houses and follow the same line.



Fig. 11: Spatial Order of New House (center) Flanked by Vernacular Houses

Source: Documentation of Manurung (August, 2021)

The meaning of the house

In the settlement layout in the Meat Village, the right position (*Siamun*) has an important meaning. It manifests spatially in the micro space order in the residence, and also in the mezzo space in the *Huta* space. In residence, it is the first stone-laying ritual used to ask for ancestral blessings and acts as a sign of commencement of construction activities. Presently, the request has shifted to the Lord because the villagers are now followers of Protestant Christianity.

Prayers and requests are followed by laying various offerings on the far right side of the building's foundation, as shown in Fig. 12a. This represents the expectations of house owners who believe that the right side brings fortune, and the request submitted through the symbols of offerings is realized when living in the house. The right position as the location of the laying of offerings is interpreted as *Bona* (main/origin), as shown in the Fig. 12b. *Jabu Bona* means residence to *Batak Toba* tribe because the space is always present in every house, despite a shift in the architectural style.

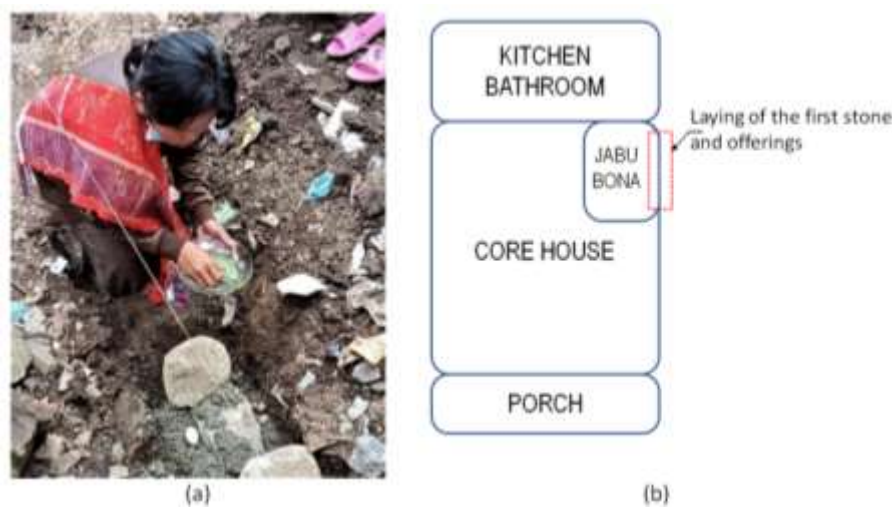


Fig. 12: Laying of the first stone and offerings as part of the ceremony.

Source: (a) Documentation of Samson Sihombing (June, 2021); (b) Documentation of Manurung (August, 2021).

Field observations show that there are 3 architectural styles of residences in the Meat Village with varying periods. They show a variety of differences, both in architectural styles, structural and material systems, as well as house facades. The new and old houses are known as landed and stage buildings. The difference is also seen in the inner layout, with a similarity, namely the existence and position of *Jabu Bona*. Other spaces such as *Jabu Soding*, *Jabu Ipar-ipar*, and *Jabu Suhat* have experienced a shift in the positions and meanings. Meanwhile, *Jabu Bona* remain in the same position with similar vernacular architecture.

Although most respondents do not understand the names and functions of other spaces in the house, they know that *Jabu Bona* needs to always be present and positioned to the right of the back side, or behind *Jabu Soding*. In the new house, the difference in meaning is seen in *Jabu Soding* and *Jabu Ipar-ipar*. The right side of the front of vernacular houses built by the ancestors of the Meat Village, such as the *Jabu Soding* is intended for guests with family relations with house owners. *Jabu Soding* is located side by side with *Jabu Bona* with similar functions as *Jabu Ipar-ipar*. The difference between the two lies in the guest kinship with the owners. For instance, assuming *Jabu Soding* is intended for guests that are families, and then *Jabu-Ipar-ipar* is for those not related to the owners.

The function of a room for guests has diverse interpretation. For instance, in some houses, *Jabu Soding* and *Jabu Ipar-ipar* act as living rooms, while others use them for guests. The guest room in *Jabu Soding* and *Jabu ipar-ipar* is for visitors who are not related to the house owners. However, in the absence of guests, the owner's children can occupy this room.

Meanwhile, *Jabu Suhat*, which is on the left side of the back at the Batak Toba Vernacular house, has a diverse position in its development. There is no standard position of *Jabu Suhat* in the new houses. However, it functions as the bedroom for the owner's children. During its construction, the house owner occupies a room in the back and the front, both on the left and right side, in contrast to the position of *Jabu Bona* which is always standard.

Fig. 13a shows the layout of the Batak Toba Vernacular houses. The right side is a space intended for respected people, both house owners and guests. Meanwhile the left is for guests with no family relations. On the backside, there is a space occupied by the owners and the family, while the room in the front is intended for the guests, as shown in Fig. 13b. The function of the room in the new houses is shown in the Fig. 14, in which *Jabu Soding* and *Jabu Ipar-ipar* are used as guests, living, and the children's room.

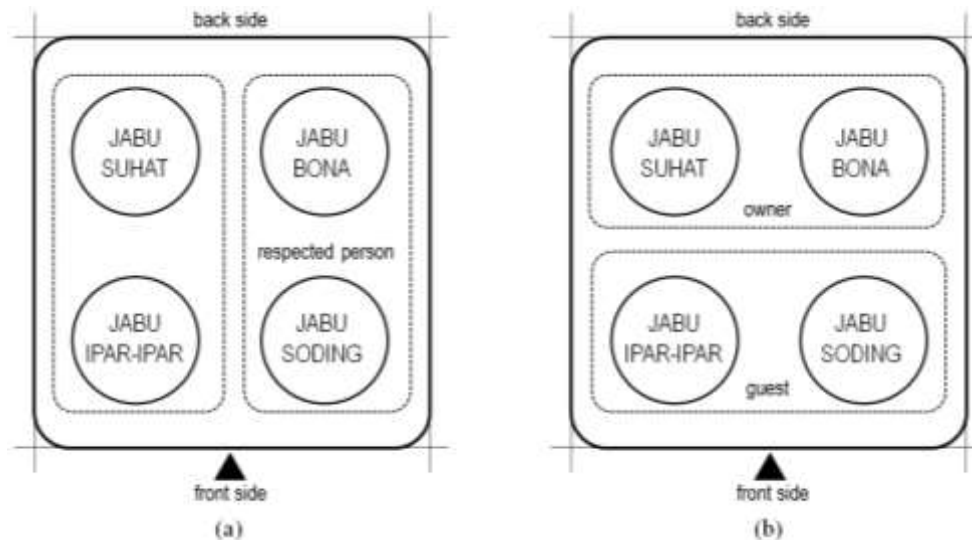


Fig. 13: Layout based on (a) Siamun concept; and (b) family relations.
Source: Processed based on information from informants (September, 2021)

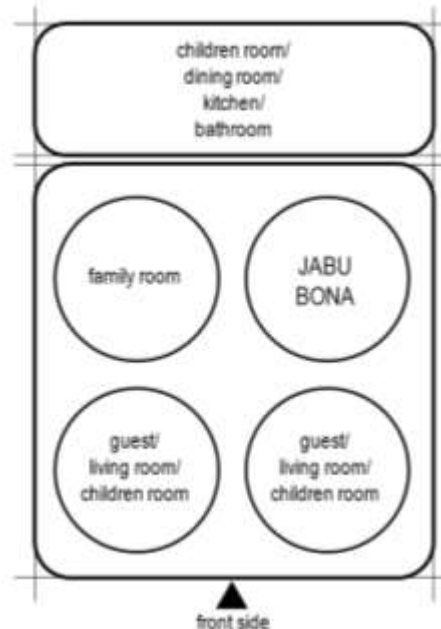


Fig. 14: Layout variations of the new houses.
Source: Processed based on information from informants (September, 2021)

In the Batak Toba vernacular houses, the meaning of *Jabu Soding* is very clear when applied to the *Manjahe Anak Boru* and it is intended for guests with family relations. *Manjahe*, which means 'separated', is a term addressing the owner's married children. Married daughters (*Boru*) belong to the husband from other clans, therefore they are considered guests related to the house owners. This status makes the daughter and *hela* (son-in-law) occupy *Jabu Soding*. Socially, the *son-in-law* becomes *Boru* (*Parmoruan*) and is given a permanent room with definitive space and barrier walls. This is not applied to the married sons because they and their wives are the clan successors of the house owners. Therefore, they still occupy the *Jabu Suhat* without any barrier wall.

Manjahe is the application of the Siamun concept indicating that the son-in-law who is married to the house owner's daughter (*Boru*) becomes the *Boru* party, while the owner is the *hula-hula*, a respected title in the Batak Toba. This finding reinforces that *Jabu Bona* position on the right side of *Jabu Soding* is occupied by the son-in-law. *Jabu Bona* is in a very important and respected position occupied by a house owner as an heir and the successor to a clan (descent).

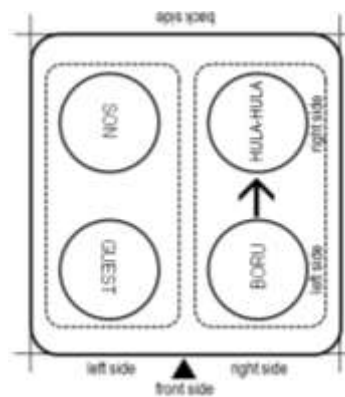


Fig. 15: *Hula-hula's* position on the right side of *Hela* (*Boru* Party).
Source: Processed based on information from informants (September, 2021)

In some residences, houses were developed into *Lapo* (palm wine shop), stalls, and homestay to meet the life needs of people. Fig. 16 shows the various zones in the area of residence as an economic space. *Lapo* is always found on the terrace by only adding tables and chairs without building physical elements. In contrast, stalls are added on the front side as a semi-permanent building. Meanwhile, a homestay is a permanent building in the form of rooms added on the side, rear, and on the second floor of the backside.

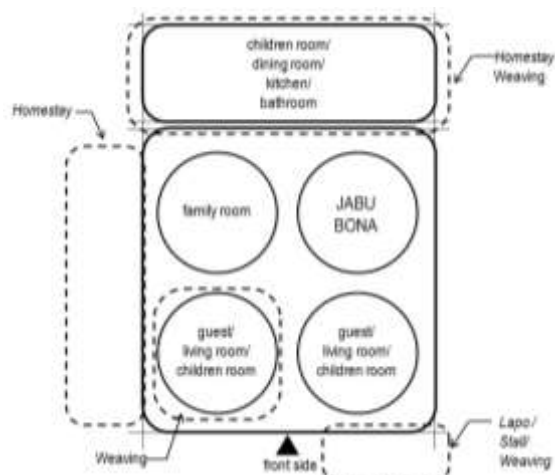


Fig. 16: Utilization of house space as an economic space.
Source: Processed based on information from informants and field observation (Sept, 2021)

The weaving process carried out in several spaces such as the living, family, and dining rooms, requires good lighting. Therefore, the selection of space adjusts these factors. The economic spaces developed such as the position of *Jabu Bona* do not interfere with the house layout. However, space transformation occurs as a result of the addition of the economic space, while maintaining its position.

Irrespective of the diverse spatial transformations, *Jabu Bona* is consistently located on the right side of the house. Based on the meaning, *Jabu Bona* is always positioned on the right side of the back, and the process of the first stone laying is placed on the side. *Bona* which means 'principal' or 'origin' is the point of various expectations presented through offerings during the construction to remind the inhabitants to always remember their origins. Therefore, it needs to be always present in every house.

The Meaning of *Huta* Courtyard

Spatially and functionally, the courtyard plays an essential role in a *Huta*. It functions as an open space that unites and connects houses with the *Sopo*. Furthermore, it also serves as a path that connects houses with a gate as incoming access to *Huta*. The observations and interviews found that the courtyard is an element of *Huta* that do not change. During the house and *Sopo* transformations, when the *parik* is no longer seen as an element of *Huta*, and the physical gate no longer manifests dominantly, the courtyard is maintained for its existence.

Physical conditions and architectural styles change periodically, while maintaining the spatial quality of the courtyard. The common changes in the architectural style and house dimensions are through the construction of the new houses, especially the permanent ones. This is because they are not permitted to pass the front barrier in the vernacular houses. The construction process is carried out by optimizing land on the backside and left-right of the house. However, it is not permitted to pass the front barrier. This is performed to maintain the quality of the courtyard, as a shared space and serves as a family spatial relation, as shown in Figures 17 and 18. The courtyard also plays a role in the cultural existence as a space for customary and cultural parties to be held by *Huta* residents.

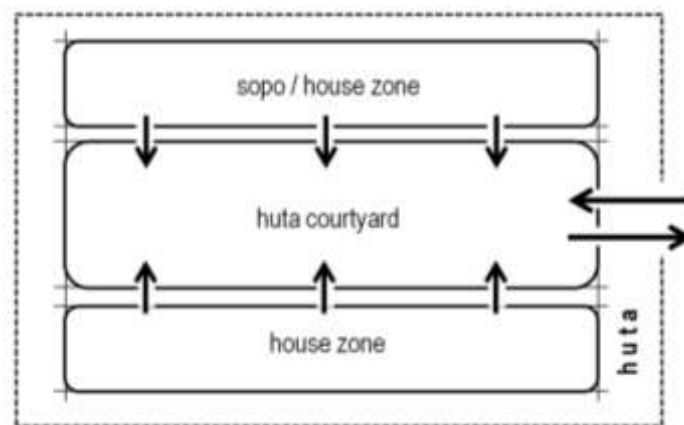


Fig. 17: Courtyard space as a shared space and access to outside the *huta*
Source: Processed based on information from informants (September, 2021)

Efforts to maintain and preserve the courtyard space are also carried out by preventing *Huta* residents from building house fences. This condition is different from houses not built in the vernacular settlements, which are allowed to have fences. This process is interpreted as an effort to self-separate from the *Huta* and its residents who are actually one big family from one lineage and the clan. The fence is allowed only to limit the *Huta* in the form of a *parik*, and not the house.

Meanwhile, the interior space is used for drying rice, corn, and other garden products, which are a source of income, as shown in the Fig. 18. The harvest is consumed not only as a

family need, rather as an additional source of income. *Huta* residents take advantage of the courtyard for these various needs, especially in the front of the house as a kinship space passed down by the founder to the descendants.



Fig. 18: Courtyard in *Huta Sait ni huta*
Source: Documentation of Manurung (May, 2021)

The courtyard is used as a shared space for the interaction between close family relations and for cultural events. Family relations make residents use the courtyard like a family room in a house for daily activities such as socializing, weaving, and playing for the children. In traditional party events, it accommodates ceremonial activities carried out by the residents.

The meaning of vernacular settlement

The *Siamun* concept is also used to plan the settlement scale. The right concept manifests spatially in the form of a gate, with the existence of a *Huta* permitted by the *horja*, a customary council consisting of representatives from the king of the *Huta*. The establishment is spatially marked by the construction of the *Huta* Gate. Conversely, *Sopo* shows the *Siamun* concept of the houses, which initially function as a rice storage area before it is converted into a house for the *Boru* (the son-in-law and daughter of the house owner) in the *manjahe* concept. The function transition help build the *Siamun* concept on a residential scale in the interior layout. On the *Huta* scale, the positions of the *boru*, *hula-hula*, and *harbangan* (gate) parties form a triangle. *Harbangan* is located on the right side of the house of the *huta* owner and descendants, while *hula-hula* (*huta* owner) is on the right side of the *boru*. The courtyard is presently a common space uniting and strengthening the relationship between the 3. Fig. 19 shows that the *harbangan*, as the spatial existence of the *huta*, is on the right side of the king of *huta*'s house. Meanwhile, the right side of the *sopo* and *Sibaba ni Amporik*, is the residence to the king of *huta* and *boru* party, respectively.

Huta in the Meat Village no longer have *sopo* due to the use of its location to build houses for the growing population. Presently, many young *Huta* no longer have semi-permanent and permanent Batak Toba houses, previously used to store rice. Without a *Sopo* and a Batak house, the existence of a *Huta* persists due to the disasters and abandoned by its inhabitants. This shows that the *Huta* is not merely a physical and spatial form. Rather, it is cultural. Furthermore, the *pomparan* space (descendants) authorized by the *horja* is a customary council consisting of the king's representatives. According to preliminary research, *Huta* is located anywhere in the environment, such as the hillside, and on the flat land by the lake. The orientation lead in various directions and the area depends on the land owned by the king. Although it is not bound by the orientation and the condition of the site, a *Huta* only exists when legitimized and approved by the *horja*. This means that *Horja* has the authority to decide

the existence of the descendants. Spatially, the existence of *Huta* begins with the construction of a gate, which is a symbol of the legitimacy of *horja*.

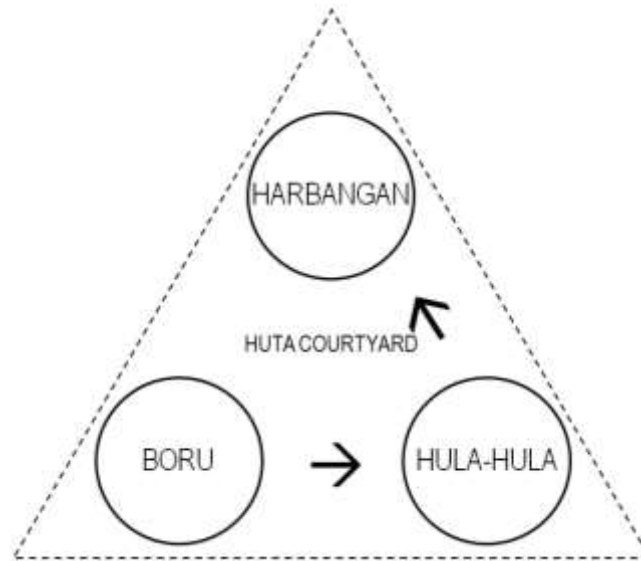


Fig. 19: The position of the *hela* (the *boru* party) in the *huta* scale (vernacular settlements).
Source: Processed based on information from informants (September, 2021)

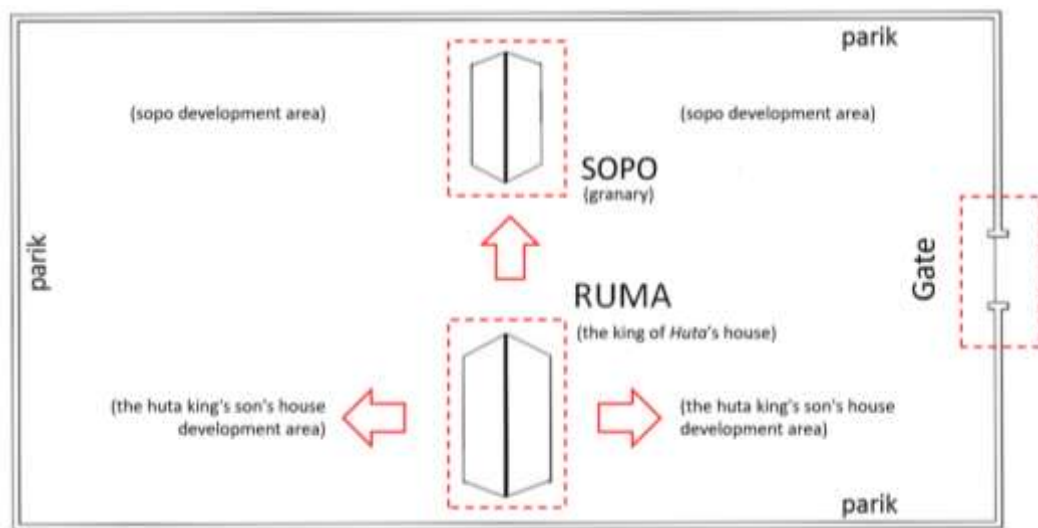


Fig. 20: Stages of *Huta* clearing in Meat Village.
Source: Processed based on information from informants (August, 2021)

A *Huta* tends to culturally stand assuming it is approved by a *horja*, a representation of a *pomparan* and physically manifests in the construction of a gate. This becomes a symbol of the official establishment of a *Huta* followed by the construction of houses, *Sopo*, and *Parik*. Furthermore, a *Huta* is established through the traditional partying by *horja*, and the construction of gates. It is then followed by the construction of the king of *Huta*'s house, *Parik*, and *Sopo* which takes up to 3 years, as shown in the Fig. 20. This shows that *Huta* affirms the existence of *horja* and *pomparan*, and is not merely a residential space. *Pomparan* is proclaimed by the establishment of territory for each of its descendant clans. The existence of this clan was realized by the king of *Huta* through the descendants who built the other houses.

Spatially, *Huta* is a clan's territory, with the existence of the *pomparan* confirmed through the development and manifestation of residential spaces by the descendants. In the

context of residential spaces, *Huta* is different from other villages with its leader elected by voting. The founders of this clan tend to strengthen its existence through the construction of the descendants' houses until a community is formed. *Huta* is not affected by the number of houses and each consists of 'rooms' for the descendants of their owners. On the other hand, the courtyard acts as a 'family room' which functions as a shared space for the cultural events. Even though in its development there are changes in the physical and architectural styles, the *Huta* layout remains the same and the buildings are lined up in 2 rows and are oriented to a courtyard which is a common space.

The Meanings of Village Space

This research shows that *horja* is not a spatial embodiment of *pomparan* or a physical unit of *Huta* on a macro scale. Rather it is a traditional community that represents the king of *Huta* in the Meat Village. However, the research found patterns formed by its layout. For instance, all *Huta* in the Meat Village are descendants of *Sibagot ni Pohan* from the 4 children of *Tuan Sihubil*, *Tuan Somanimbil*, *Tuan Dibangarna*, and *Raja Sonak Malela*. At the mezzo level, *Huta* is a representation of the *pomparan* that manifests physically based on each clan (the grandson of *Sibagot ni Pohan*). It is built based on the genealogical closeness, starting from the linkage and closeness of the clan (the grandson of *Sibagot ni Pohan*) to the formation of *pomparan* (the son of *Sibagot ni Pohan*).

Siahaan is the only clan in the Meat Village with the most *Huta* who are closely related to Hamlets II and III. Besides having spatial closeness based on the clan, it also has spatial closeness to the *Huta* Simanjuntak and Hutagaol, as children of *Tuan Somanimbil*. This pattern is also formed by other *Huta*, such as Tampubolon and Sibarimbing, as the children of *Tuan Sihubil*.

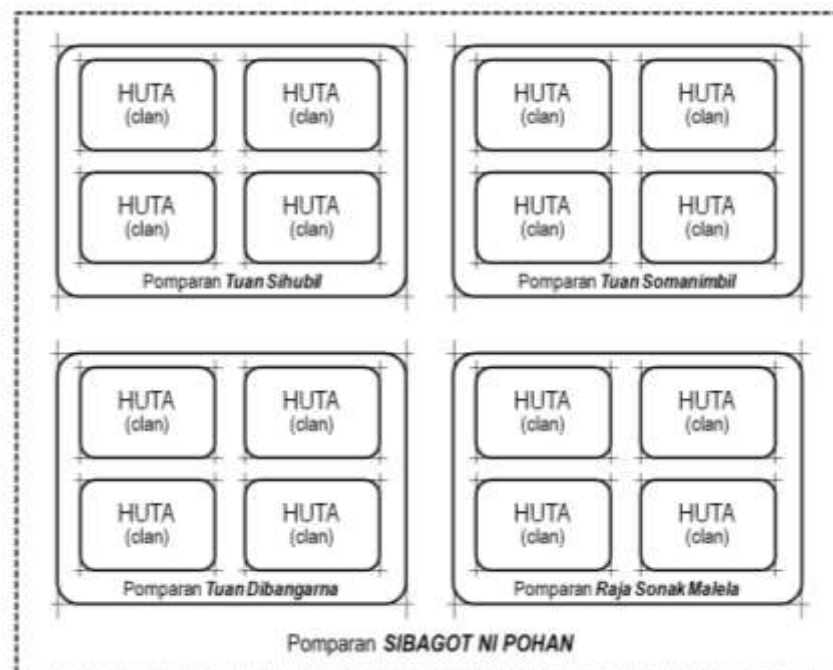


Fig. 21: Spatial planning of the village in the form of the spatial existence of the *pomparan*.

Source: Processed based on field findings (October, 2021)

The findings show that the village spatial planning is a manifestation of the spatial *pomparan* at the macro level. The *Huta* forms the space as a settlement that represents the clan and is established based on the genealogical closeness in a clan or *pomparan*. Therefore, the more macro the spatial layout, the higher the scope of the genealogy. *Huta* is a representation of the *pomparan* area in the spatial layout of the *messo*, established based on the spatial relations

of the clans in the *Sibagot ni Pohan pomparan*, as shown in the Fig. 21. Each *Huta* is surrounded by residents' rice fields and is connected by a network of village roads. Furthermore, the *Huta* space, rice field, and the road network form a village layout surrounded by hills and the Toba Lake.

Conclusion

In conclusion, architectural space in the Meat Village is *Bona*, which means the 'origin' or the 'principal'. Furthermore, the transformations in architectural styles over hundreds of years have not diminished the meanings of the space. *Jabu bona* is always present in various architectural style transformations, and occupies an honorable position on the right side of the owner, as the heir and successor of the clan. Meanwhile, *huta* is the existence of a lineage (*pomparan*), and can only stand when legalized by *horja*, which is the representation of the *pomparan* and the king of *huta* representatives. The establishment of the *huta* is the embodiment of the existence of the *pomparan*, expressed through the gate. This means that the position of the gate needs to be on the right side of the king of *Huta*'s house. Space on a micro, mezzo, and macro scale is a manifestation of the existence of the descendants of *Sibagot ni Pohan*. Subsequently, the more macro the spatial layout is, the higher the scope in the genealogy, and *vice versa*.

The meanings of architectural space in residential houses and the vernacular settlements in the Meat Village are maintained despite the transformations due to modernization and lifestyle shifts. The meaning of spaces on micro and mezzo scales are references in the development of architecture in the Meat Village. Therefore, the developments due to modernization and lifestyle is oriented to the locality inherited from the ancestors.

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