

Characteristics of the Vernacular Settlements of the Krowe Community: Insights from the Romanduru Village, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia

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Abstract

Traditional settlements are often associated with residences that still hold customary and cultural values that are closely related to the beliefs or religions of a particular community rooted in a particular place beyond historical determinations. Such is the case of the traditional settlement of the Ata Krowe community in Romanduru Village, Sikka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. The Ata Krowe community speaks the Sikka language and lives in the mountains.

This research examines the characteristics of the settlement of the Ata Krowe community in Romanduru village. It employs a cultural landscape approach.

Findings show that the Ata Krowe community in Romanduru village has a centralized settlement concept and consists of several components including *watu mahang*, *wisung wanger*, *wua mahe*, and *Ai Tali*. The paper concludes that, as an old village, Romanduru village has a distinctive residential pattern: a sedentary concept based on the presence of springs. The existence of Romanduru village is inseparable from the existence of the *Buang Baling* clan, which is a tribe/clan that opened the land first and is honored as *Tana Pu'an*.

Keywords: Settlement, Cultural landscape, Sikka speakers, Ata Krowe community, Romanduru village

Introduction

Various ethnic groups inhabit the Indonesian archipelago. As time goes by and the population increases, nomadic habits are increasingly changing into sedentary cultures that require places to live. Needless to say, a place to live is inseparable from the environment in which people live. In the end, settlement patterns are formed in groups and form their order. The group then develops into a larger group with a leader who oversees the settlements. According to Živkovic (2019), settlements are human dwellings based on the totality of the community with all the social, material, organizational, spiritual and cultural elements that support it.

The settlements that eventually emerged on various islands in the archipelago also have had a very diverse order to the local terms of each existing settlement. Traditional settlements are often associated with residences that still hold customary and cultural values that are closely related to the beliefs or religions of a particular community rooted in a particular place beyond historical determinations (Crysler, 2000 in Sasongko 2005). Traditional settlements are settlements that still hold beliefs in ancestors and are composed of elements such as belief values, customs, and culture, where culture is a more dominant determining factor (Ayunurafidha, 2015).

Some traditional settlements that can still be found today in the archipelago include settlements in Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi Province. According to Hasanuddin (2008), three important components must be present in traditional settlements in Tana Toraja. These three components are *rante* (ceremony place), *liang* (burial place), and *tongkonan* (traditional house). In addition, traditional settlements with other characteristics are also found in Ngadha village, Ngada Regency, on the central island of Flores, East Nusa Tenggara Province; in Wae Rebo village, Manggarai Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province; and Bawómataluo village, Nias Regency, North Sumatra Province. In addition to these places, there are many more traditional settlements that can be found in the archipelago, one of which is the traditional settlement in Romanduru village, Sikka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia.

Romanduru Village is an area inhabited by the Ata Krowe community. The Ata Krowe community is one part of the Sikka community. The Sikka community is a Sikka language-speaking community consisting of three communities: Ata Sikka, Ata Tana 'Ai, and Ata Krowe. The Ata Krowe community is an indigenous community that inhabits the Ili/Kangae area (Butterworth, 2008). The Ili/Kangae area is part of Sikka Regency, in the central Flores Island of the East Nusa Tenggara Province. Ata Krowe is also known as the Krowe indigenous community.

The word Krowe means mountain and Ata means people. Thus, the title Ata Krowe refers to their identity as mountain people, which is closely related to the area where they live. Some symbols existed in Romanduru village, where the Ata Krowe lived. The first symbol is *watu mahang* known as the cornerstone. The second symbol is *wisung wanger*, which is the location where the main house of each clan is located. The third symbol is *wua mahe*, otherwise known as the *mahe* stone. The fourth symbol is *Ai Tali*, which is where the ancestral spirits reside, located in the traditional gardens of each clan. *Watu mahang*, *wisung wanger*, and *wua mahe* are located in the center of the village, while *Ai Tali* is in the traditional garden surrounding the village.

The Ata Krowe community lives in several villages, one of which is the Romanduru village. As an old village, It is occupied by more clans than any other Ata Krowe village and has a distinctive residential pattern. From the original story, it is known that the initial reason for people settling in the Romanduru village was because there was a spring. Spring water is a vital necessity for drinking, bathing, washing and so on. After getting spring water, they began to build houses and cultivate fields, and then established a *mahe*. The location of the *mahe* is usually not far from the location of the residence. Every clan that comes and settles in Romanduru village must have the permission of *Tana Puan*. Each clan/tribe that settles then gets the right to the land given by *Tana Puan* and is called *wisung wanger*. Within the *wisung wanger*, *Lepo Gete*, the dwelling house of each clan has been established. *Lepo Gete* is always owned by the eldest son in each clan. Apart from the eldest son and his family, other clan members had to live outside the Romanduru village. This limited the houses in the old village. However, further to these, there is uniqueness in the characteristics of the Krowe community settlements in this village.

In this context, this research examines the settlement characteristics of the Ata Krowe community in Romanduru village, Sikka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. Its aim is to explore the customary and cultural values that are closely related to the beliefs or religions of a particular community rooted in a particular place beyond historical determinations. its objective is to determine the characteristics of the community settlements in Romanduru village.

Theoretical Framework

The study of landscape has recently evolved into various approaches, one of which is known as the cultural landscape approach. Inga Maria Mulk and Tim Bayliss-Smith use the term "cultural landscape" to refer to landscapes formed because of human activities.

Culture exists in human thinking and doing and not in the landscape itself. Activities born from culture construct meanings that shape a place in the real world and influence it. The environment in which people live then forms the landscape because of a culture born from the human mind. In other words, a concept born from culture is then shared with other cultural actors to construct the landscape where people live (Mulk and Bayliss-Smith, 1999). There are three concepts of cultural landscape according to Mulk and Bayliss-Smith. The first is that the living environment has been modified because of human activities in that place. Second, the landscape is produced by a particular culture in a particular period, and what survives in it at that time. Third, cultural meanings are associated with the landscape and the allusions, symbols, and artifacts through which those meanings are expressed (Mulk and Bayliss-Smith, 1999).

A landscape formed from this cultural meaning can be studied through traces or remains that may survive in the form of objects (material culture) in mountains, trees, houses, hunting grounds, tombs, and monuments. Moreover, the origins of a place lie in the memories of the people who live in those places. A group of people will share a collective view of their "world" structured through names, allusions, and symbols that collectively identify and define what the group shares. These groups of people are then referred to as "ethnicities" that share their cultural identity (Mulk and Bayliss-Smith, 1999).

The writings of Mulk and Bayliss-Smith provide an initial description of the notion of cultural landscape. Cultural landscapes, according to the two authors, are formed due to human thinking in the form of culture. These cultures are then realized through material cultural symbols and mark the landscape where the people live. Human activities that influence the formation of the cultural landscape are then shared with other people through collective consciousness and cultural identity.

In contrast, Barret (1999) describes the meaning of landscape through a transformation approach. This approach is used to read the transformation of landscape use in southern and western England. Barret observes the continuous use of megalithic objects in the region from the Neolithic to the Iron Age. In fact, he sees this transformation as a transition in the utilization of megalithic objects along with a transition in the meaning in each period. Barret invites us to see a transformation not only as a transitional process of the meaning of a place and its objects but also to see it as a social process of occupying a place. This is where Barret calls this approach different from the traditional archaeological approach.

O'Brien (2002) also uses a landscape approach. He examines how the past and the sacred as elements are embedded in perceptions of landscape in late prehistoric Ireland. Like Barret (1999), O'Brien emphasizes the transformation in the use of megalithic sites in Ireland. One important note of O'Brien's argument is how he shows the transformation of meanings of "sacred" monuments and landscapes in the Southwest of Ireland through how these sites transformed from burial grounds to liminal and "sacred" spaces (O'Brien, 2002). This transformation is then mentioned not simply by observing how to transform a natural environment into a cultural landscape. The utilization of natural landscapes certainly involves social processes that go unnoticed. O'Brien's foresight can observe the transformation of land use, from a practical function: burial to a liminal sacred function. O'Brien mentions that when utilized as a burial location, there is an emotional relationship and memory between the buried and the buried. However, when it has been transformed into a sacred space, there is no social relationship between the buried and the buried. The relationship that exists is an emotional relationship and reinterpretation of the space whose identity is unknown.

This paper is conceptualized on the premise that employing these theoretical notions through a cultural landscape could be very helpful in examining the characteristics of vernacular settlements and particularly their cultural practices as manifested in the environment: landscape.

Review of Literature

Many have examined the characteristics of vernacular settlements. Concerning traditional settlements, Sudarmadi (1999) has examined the settlements around the East Nusa Tenggara region of Indonesia. Conducting research in the central part of the Flores Island, Sudarmadi's focuses on the megalithic settlement pattern in Ngadha village. Sudarmadi (1999) identifies the form of Ngadha traditional houses, the pattern of the village, the relationship between structures in the Ngadha society, and the relationship between megalithic culture and other aspects of the community. Sudarmadi uses a semiotic approach by interpreting the symbols depicted on the settlement components in Ngadha village and reveals the relationships between the settlement components.

Research on megalithic houses and villages has also been conducted by the Denpasar Archaeology Center in 2014. The focus of this research has been the architecture of traditional houses in Wae Rebo village, Manggarai Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. In addition to data in the form of traditional house architecture, the Denpasar Archaeology Center has also collected data on megalithic remains in the Wae Rebo village. These megalithic remains are indeed the context of the traditional houses. The Denpasar Archaeology Center shows that Wae Rebo village is a traditional village with megalithic cultural characteristics.

In contrast, Atmosudiro (1984) has examined ceremonial places in traditional villages. He does not explicitly mention land management, but mentions ceremonial places in East Flores. Atmosudiro shows that in general, ceremonial places are made in the front yard of the traditional house (*korke*), formed from andesite stone slabs arranged to form a low-walled building, with a four-square or rectangular plan. Around the walls are menhirs, which the locals call *baledan*. Within the ceremonial complex, there is also a *nubanara*, which is a circular stone structure located adjacent to the *korke*. In fact, Atmosudiro reveals that in East Flores, megalithic traditions are still ongoing. The megalithic tradition is also shown by the division of space, such as the place of this ceremony on residential land.

These research show that ample research has been conducted examining the characteristics of vernacular settlements in the world, especially in Indonesia. However, there has not been much examined in terms of the characteristics of the vernacular settlements of the Krowe Community living in the Romanduru Village, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia.

Background

Settlement forms characterized by megalithic traditions can also be found at the Bawōmataluo site, Nias Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia. According to Koestoro and Wiradnyana (2007), this site is a semi-macro settlement site located on a flat hill with a Southeast-Northwest orientation. The plan or form of the settlement arises from the existing land conditions; that the system of establishing residential buildings with ceremonial facilities is arranged following the landform. At this site, the shape of the ceremonial courtyard, the orientation of the ceremonial place, and the placement of the big house (traditional house) always have a connection with the condition of the hill that extends from West to East. The natural boundaries surrounding *Bawōmataluo* are steep valleys and ravines. Megalithic symbols that still survive today include *daro-daro* and *naitaro*. *Daro-daro* is a stone place located in front of the house decorated with carvings. *Naitaro* is a 3.5-meter-high building located adjacent to the *daro-daro*.

Apart from East Flores and Nias, megalithic settlements that can still be found today are settlements in Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. According to Hasanuddin (2008), in traditional settlements in Tana Toraja, there are three important components that must be present. The three components are *rante* (ceremonial place), *liang* (burial place), and *tongkonan* (traditional house). According to Hasanuddin (2008), all these components represent a set of activities in the life cycle of the community which has implications for the arrangement of each component for ceremonial purposes. Megalithic objects that are commonly found in Tana Toraja are *simbuang* (menhir). This menhir is often found in the *rante*, where the *simbuang* is planted as an initial activity that marks the holding of a death ceremony. From

Hasanuddin's writing, it appears that the characteristics of the villages in Nias, Toraja and East Flores are similar. They are the awareness to divide spaces as part of the settlement component.

Villages with megalithic traditions are also found in Pasunga Village, located in Anakalang Village, Katikuna District, Central Sumba Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province. People who live in this village are indigenous people who have lived for generations. A house belonging to the Central Sumba community is like a human body, which has its own function. Each element of the house shows the manifestation of daily life. The traditional house of Central Sumba symbolizes the relationship between the people, livestock, and Nature (*Marapu*). The collection of traditional village-shaped buildings is characterized by megalithic tombstones located in front of the house. The tombstones function as a form of communication between the residents of the house and the spirits of their ancestors. This belief exists because the house and tombstones are the dwelling places during life (*Uma Maruk*) and after death (*Uma Mati*), respectively.

Pasunga village consists of a collection of buildings including *Uma kamone*, goat pens and *Uma bina A* which is located at the outer end of the village. *Uma bina B* is located at the end before *Uma bina A*. *Uma kabulolo* is a house without a tower. *Uma padua* is in the center and *Ana uma* is a small house. Furthermore, *Uma adung* is the main house. *Uma bakul* is large. *Uma binakabanga* is located at the back of the village, *Uma labumudi* is under an orange tree, and *Uma galu* is a buffalo drum. The village also has *Uma Gudang*, the granary, and *Uma bina* which is located at the inner end of the village. There is *Uma bua*: a new house, *Uma kaitu*: a building for ritual ceremonies as well as *Uma majaga*, *Uma karoko*, *Uma kaba*, and the residents of *kabisu kaba*. In addition, there is *Uma labupau* near the manga tree, *Uma led* to store water supplies and *Uma labunaga* (Amos Setiadi & Aryanto Lewen, 2023).

Research on traditional settlements has also been conducted in Manggarai, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Although there are limited written sources, physical evidence still exists, such as traditional house buildings called "*mbaru gendang*", customs, and the land division system called "*linko*". They are silent witnesses to the past. One of the highlights is the similarity in shape between the *mbaru gendang* and the *linko*, which resembles a giant spider web with each element connected through a tight bond, reflecting the Manggarai people's philosophy of life that emphasizes the value of unity.

Architecture of the *mbaru gendang* has a distinctive form because of the evolution of previous customs that reflect the characteristics and identity of the local population. The *mbaru* (house) serves as a shelter from the heat and rain, while the *linko* (traditional garden) serves as a source of livelihood. The *mbaru gendang* is the cultural center of the Manggarai people and is located in the middle of the village. It acts as the central point in Manggarai. The *mbaru gendang* reflects all aspects of the culture and local wisdom of the Manggarai people.

Mbaru gendang is not just an ordinary physical or architectural building but reflects the complexity of their mindset and values. More than that, the *mbaru gendang* reveals social, cultural, religious, artistic and other aspects. As a symbol of culture and identity, it is the center of life for the Manggarai people, combining the functions of village government, cultural forum, and place of worship (Andari et al., 2023).

Hutaginjang Village is in Samosir Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia, located in a hilly area with an altitude of 1300-1400 meters above the sea level. Hutaginjang Village borders Lake Toba to the North, Pangururan Sub-district to the East, Pusuk Buhit Mountain to the South, and Ginolat Village to the West. Hutaginjang Village is a combination of eight hamlets which are a collection of 20-25 houses arranged in a linear formation. The majority of Hutaginjang villagers are members of the Sagala clan, which was the first to establish a settlement by *Ompu Pahoek Tuan Rikkor Sagala*. Therefore, the Sagala clan is called *margaraja* or royal clan group. The Sagala clan is also a landowning clan known as *partano*. The Sagala clan kinship system is seen in the application of the territorial principle adopted by the Toba Batak tribe. Other clans in Hutaginjang Village are: Siboro, Sigiro, Simarmata, Simanjorang, Sinaga, Sitanggang, Limbong, Purba, Sialagan, Malau and Situmorang, all of which are *boru* clans.

House building in Hutaginjang Village consists of the traditional type of *jabu bolon* and houses built in the style of the Angkola Batak tribe, as well as some modern houses. Organizational space in the traditional houses is divided based on the principle of family relations between the Toba Batak tribes. The four corners of the house are for each component in the *Dalihan na Tolu* philosophy: the house owner, *hula-hula*, *dongan tubu* and *boru*. The center of activity is in the middle part called *telaga*, visible directly from the outside towards the entrance of the house, functioning as a communal space for family gatherings. This *telaga* space separates the right and left side inner spaces, which are specially allocated areas for each family.

The Toba Batak settlement in *Hutaginjang* is inhabited by a wide circle of families, characterized by one clan surnamed Sagala which is more dominant than the other clans. In the dominant clan, there is someone who enjoys the highest social status and is held the most respected: the founder of the village titled *Raja Tano*. The location of *Raja Tano's* house is in the center of a row of houses, the first house built in the village, whose development moves towards the right and left of *Raja Tano's* house, a phenomenon observed in the most traditional architectural forms (Tobing & Hutabarat, 2019).

Tana Toa village is in the Northern hinterland of Kajang sub-district, Bulukumba district, South Sulawesi province. The area is inhabited by an indigenous community known as the Kajang people, who are led by people called *ammatoa*. Administratively, Tana Toa is equivalent to a village/kelurahan (village-level administrative body in the Indonesian system). It consists of two distinct social groups that differ significantly in many ways; perhaps most distinct is their worldview. One group strictly follows the teachings of Islam in daily life, while the other adheres to a belief system called *Patuntung*; this latter group is also widely identified as adhering to the Kajang belief system.

These Kajang community members inhabit different parts of the same settlement, with their respective territories identified as *Ilalang Embaya* and *Ipantarang Embayya*. The word *ilalang* means "inside", while the word *embayya* means "jurisdiction"; thus, *ilalang embayya* can be translated as "within the jurisdiction" of customary law. Whereas *ipantarang* means "outside"; thus, *Ipantarang Embayya* means "outside the jurisdiction" of customary law. In the context of government and administration, *Ilalang Embaya* refers to areas that are still under the authority of the *ammatoa* (customary leader). In contrast, *Ipantarang Embaya* refers to areas outside the authority of the *ammatoa* - that is, under the authority of the village government. These areas are separated by a large gate used to enter *Ilalang Embayya* (Sahabuddin, & Hildayanti, 2023).

Research Methodology

The research employs a qualitative case study research approach including a review of documents, observations, and interview as data gathering techniques. The document survey focused on literature that explains the vernacular settlement in any area. Data was collected by observation in Romanduru Hamlet. The observations focused on the material symbols and the village setting. Data was also generated through interviews of the local people to collect information about the settlement system and its value.

Data so collected is employed to describe the settlement setting in Romanduru. The description of the settlement is analyzed as a narrative of the vernacular settlement system in the Krowe community.

Case Study

The case study is in the Romanduru Hamlet, Rubit Village, Hewokloang District, Sikka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Romanduru Hamlet is located at S = 8° 41' 40.6" and E = 122° 20' 34.7. Romanduru Hamlet was chosen because the formation of the clans that inhabited the hamlet is the most varied among the other hamlets in the Krowe Community.



Fig. 01: Research location
Source: Taniardi, 2016

Findings

The characteristics of a cultural landscape can be assessed from two things: physical elements (tangible) as physical components that form the landscape and non-physical elements (intangible) as a process that becomes an instrument to form a cultural landscape.

Characteristics of the Settlement of the Ata Krowe community in Romanduru Village

The existence of natural boundaries shows that community groupings on Nias were based on agreements among the community to separate themselves from other groups. Although not specifically described, it can be seen from published literature that land arrangements among Nias communities have a clear foundation. As in Nias, the community known as the Ata Krowe community has its own system of land management. Indeed, it has been noted that land management in the Nias community uses natural boundaries as boundary markers between communities. However, this is not the case with the Ata Krowe community. This community does not refer to natural boundaries as the basis for land management. Land arrangements in the Ata Krowe community are based on agreements that have been passed down from generation to generation. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they do not refer to the landscapes around where they live.

Before looking at land management in the Ata Krowe community, it is useful to understand the customary view of Nature and the environment among the Sikka community. According to Dasi (2013), Sikka people understand that the natural environment has boundaries that have been set by God Almighty. According to this view, there are areas that are already inhabited and they should not be inhabited. In other words, conserved means prohibited areas.

These areas include the following.

1. **Residential area** (*klo'ang*)

The first settlement area is inhabited by a couple of families (looking for fertile areas) for generations. Over time, other families have followed. The first occupant is called *Tana Pu'an* (Landlord). Settlement areas can also be occupied by a group of people who have fled from elsewhere. These newcomers consist of various tribes that have different strong wungun. Each tribe builds a traditional house called *Lepo*.

2. Arable area

According to the customary view, the cultivated area is divided into three places:

- a. Inland areas consisting of: *Nian opi uma kare tua* (an area for growing rice, corn, and yams); *Nian lema mu'u rodo kabor*, called *Mula ongen* (garden), which is precisely planted with coconut and fruit-bearing trees such as jackfruit, bananas, cacao, cloves, and others.
- b. A coastal area called *Nian Tu hini Rope apur* (a place to cook salt and burn lime).

3. Hunting area

Hunting grounds are found in the savanna forest, on the ground, on trees, in rivers, and at sea.

- a. The savanna forest is called *Nian Uter lego ahu la'an*, meaning the place to release dogs and arrows. Animals that live in the savanna are deer, mouse deer, wild boar and others.
- b. On land called *Nian seda sepet helo baur*, meaning a place to set snares and mines. The animals that live in this place are wild boars, porcupines, rats, and squirrels.
- c. Above the tree is called *Nian ilu horot lait labang* (a place to trap birds and insects)
- d. In a river called *Nian pepi plea neng ale* (a place to soak tuba roots and ale grass).
- e. In the sea called *nian eba rabang lola kawir* (a place to cast nets and throw fishing rods).

4. Prohibition area

- a. *Ilin pu'an wair matan* (mountainous areas and places of springs). These places should not be cultivated, as cultivation will lead to landslides and drying up of springs.
- b. *Olang Piren* (haunted places). These places are inhabited by spirits called *Uhekmanar*, who oversee nature and the environment.
- c. *Napun wiwir to'a we'ek* (the edge of streams and ditches). These places must be protected with trees and grass that have roots to prevent landslides.
- d. *Kokong 'repi tana 'redin*. *Kokong 'repi* is the edge of a ravine; *tana 'redin* is hard soil in the form of marlstone.
- e. *Nian sisa mita soba meran* (a place for performing healing rituals against natural disasters/curses).
- f. *Nian 'ogor wokor siot linok* (human waste disposal site). These are located on the left and right sides of the village, under large trees (Dasi, 2013:104-112).

Dasi's writing needs to be further examined, considering that Dasi does not specifically mention the Sikka community. The Sikka community (Sikka language speakers) consists of three communities, including Ata Sikka, Ata Tana Ai and Ata Krowe. According to Butterworth (2015), Ata Sikka and Ata Tana 'Ai are separated by physical and social differences. The Ata Sikka community lives in the western part of the Sikka district, which has historically been politically and economically dominant in the region, while the Ata Tana 'Ai community is a small community located at the Eastern end of the Sikka district. The term Ata Tana 'Ai means 'people of the forested land', an ethnonym used by the Ata Tana 'Ai themselves and others. The Ata Krowe community is geographically located between the Ata Sikka to the West and the Ata Tana 'Ai to the East, but the boundaries between the three groups are not clear (Butterworth, 2015).



Fig. 02 : Romanduru Hamlet
Source : Taniardi, 2016

As an old village, Romanduru village has a distinctive residential pattern. From the origin story of Romanduru, it is known that the initial purpose of people settling in Romanduru village was that there was a spring in this place. Spring water is a vital necessity for drinking, bathing, washing, and so on. After getting spring water, according to the story, they began to build houses and cultivate fields, then established a *mahe*. The location of the *mahe* is usually not far from the location of the residence. The people of Ata Krowe recognize the place where the house is built as *wisung wangar*. *Wisung wangar* is a piece of land, in which there is a main house belonging to one tribe known as *Lepo Gete*.

Lepo Gete is inhabited by the eldest son of each tribe. However, this condition is not strictly enforced. Take the *Lepo Gete* of the *Buang Baling* tribe, which happens to be *Tana Pu'an* in Romanduru village. The *Buang Baling* tribe's *Lepo Gete* is currently occupied by Abdon, the second son of the *Buang Baling* tribe. The eldest son, Firmus, chose to build a house next to *Lepo Gete* when he returned from migrating to Kalimantan. For Firmus, it was unwise to ask his younger brother and his family to leave the house when he was not yet married. Inside *Lepo Gete*, in the right corner, inside the front room, there is a corner stone called *watu mahang*. *Watu mahang* was erected during the construction of the house. On top of the corner stone, for those tribes who have rights to *Tana Howakhewer*, bamboo sticks containing ivory, gold, seeds, small stones and small woods are placed. The bamboo sticks containing these heirlooms were called *mokung*. Tribes that do not have rights over *Tana Howakhewer* do not have *mokung* on their corner stones, but only horizontal stone slabs. Just like *mahe*, the corner stone also has a sacred meaning. Usually, *watu mahang* domestic rituals within the scope of the nuclear family are carried out in this place. Every house must have this cornerstone, not only in *Lepo Gete*. However, the laying of *mokung* is only on the *watu mahang* found in *Lepo Gete*.

Besides *wisung wangar*, *mahe*, and *watu mahang*, the sacred place for the people of *Ata Krowe* is *Ai Tali*. As explained in the previous article, *Ai Tali* is in the Heritage Land of each tribe. The *Buang Baling* tribe's *Ai Tali* is located on heirloom land which is now managed by Firmus as the eldest son. The *Mana* tribe's *Ai Tali* is in Natar Utut, the village below Romanduru village, on land owned by Mo'an Ferdi. The *Keytimu Wain* tribe's *Ai Tali* is located behind the *Keytimu Wain* tribe's *Lepo Gete*, which is now occupied by Mo'an Rafael. *Ai Tali* belonging to the *Keytimu Lamén* tribe is in Natar Utut, on land owned by *Vendi Lagar*. *Ai Tali* belonging to the *Klukut Mude Lau* tribe is in Ohe village, on land owned by Mo'an Manik. *Ai Tali* belonging to the *Lio Watu Bao* tribe is located near Romanduru spring, on land owned by Mo'an Pitalis Noer. *Ai Tali* belonging to the *Lio Lepo Gai* tribe is in Natar Utut, on land owned by Mo'an Gerpasius Padeng. *Ai Tali* belonging to the *Wewe Niur* tribe is in Eha village, on land owned by Mo'an Simon Nopor. The *Wodon* tribe's *Ai Tali* is in Woloklereng village, on land owned by Mo'an Henderikus Riko, the leader of the *Wodon* tribe. The *Ili Lewa* tribe's *Ai Tali* is in Eha village, on land owned by Mo'an Lajang.

All the old villages in the Krowe area have the same pattern. They all have components of *wisung wangar*, *mahe*, *watu mahang*, and *Ai Tali*. Another similarity is that the old villages are surrounded by *Siok Linok Ogor Wokor*. *Siok Linok Ogor Wokor* is a place used for urinating and defecating. People in the past, before having their own bathrooms, performed excretory activities at this *Siok Linok Ogor Wokor*. *Siok Linok Ogor Wokor* is located under large trees, usually *banyan* trees. These trees grow around the village and serve as the boundary between the settlement and the forest or cultivated land. Because these trees grow around the village, people use the tree closest to their house and do not exchange with other families. Tall bushes are used to cover the excretion activity. The feces are then eaten by domesticated animals, such as pigs that live at large because they are not kept in cages. After the *Siok Linok Ogor Wokor* boundary, there is a forest or cultivated land used by residents to grow crops or collect wood.

Every clan that comes and settles in Romanduru Village must have the permission of *Tana Puan*. Each tribe that settles then gets the right to land given by *Tana Puan*. The distributed lands that are still in the village are called *wisung wangar*. Within this *wisung wangar* was established *Lepo Gete*, the residence of each clan. *Lepo Gete* is always owned by the eldest son in each clan. If someone other than the eldest son lives there, it is usually through family negotiation. Apart from the eldest son and his family, other tribe members live outside Romanduru village. If there is still land in the *wisung wangar* area, there is no problem building additional houses besides *Lepo Gete*. This has limited the number of houses in the old village. Increasingly, tribe members live scattered in new villages, such as *Natar Utut*, which is located below Romanduru village. In the new villages, they no longer build *wu'a mahe* but are still obliged to place *watu mahang* in each house.

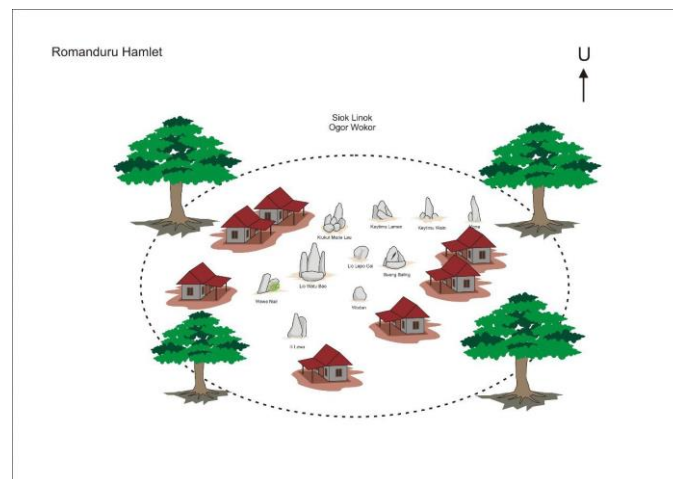


Fig. 03: Romanduru Hamlet Setting

Source: Taniardi, 2016

Symbolization of Material Culture in Ata Krowe Society

The material cultural symbols of the Ata Krowe community show how the cultural landscape in Romanduru Village is. *Wu'a mahe* is always located in the center of the village and is the focus of the cultural landscape. An old village is surrounded by *siok linok ogor wokor*, which used to be marked by *banyan* trees or other large trees. Today, the number of *banyan* trees is decreasing as many have fallen with age. The form of settlement in Romanduru village is centralized, with the *wu'a mahe* as the center point. Houses in Romanduru village are built around a collection of *wu'a mahe*. The cultural landscape of Romanduru Village as a representation of the settlement of the Ata Krowe community shows that the formation of the village landscape is based on individual experiences, namely *Du'a Wio Bota* and *Du'a Saru Watu* and then shared with other clans. When looking back at the origin story of Romanduru village, *Du'a Saru Watu* actually had a greater role

in initiating the shape of the cultural landscape of Romanduru village. Apparently, this did not cause problems among the Ata Krowe community in Romanduru village so that it did not change the traditions carried out. Similarly, the position of *Tana Pu'an* is now owned by the *Buang Baling* tribe and has not changed over time.

As previously described, *wu'a mahe* plays an important role in the Krowe community, including those living in Romanduru. Before linking the *wu'a mahe* and land management, we first describe the *wu'a mahe*. In the previous section, it was mentioned that in Romanduru village, there are 10 *wu'a mahe* that represent the 10 tribes that live there. Among the 10 tribes, the *Buang Baling* tribe is a privileged tribe, because it acts as *Tana Pu'an*. In his article entitled "Identity and Precedence in the Transformation of Sikka Society: The Case of Ata Krowe", Journal of the International Society for the Study of Vernacular Settlements, David Butterworth (2015) mentions that in his 2009 paper, he already mentioned this *Tana Pu'an*. In Krowe, the *Tana Pu'an* institution is an important focal point for organizing social relations, and this is supported by the delegation of authority according to the ideology of origin (Butterworth, 2015: page 279). Still in the same paper, Butterworth mentions that each *ulayat* (which is also referred to as a customary community), has a source or founder of descent, collectively called *Tana Pu'an*. This is the tribe whose ancestors were the first to settle there, building the tribal square (*wisung wangar*) and erecting the ritual altar (*wu'a mahe*). The most senior man in the *Tana Pu'an* family, calls himself *Tana Pu'an* (Butterworth, 2015: page 280).



Fig. 04: *Wua Mahe* in Romanduru Village
Source: Taniardi, 2016

Butterworth then draws on his 2009 paper to illustrate the relevance of *Tana Pu'an's* continuity to decisions about public land use in the village. Butterworth begins by recounting the histories of various ancestral groups encoded in ritualized language verses called *ngeng ngerang* (generation dispersal), which describe the wanderings of a clan's nautical ancestors and their eventual settlement in a particular village/*ulayat*. He then took the example of the *ngeng ngeran* of the *Buang Baling* tribe. Two sisters from the tribe, Wio and Bota, first discovered a spring that became the basis for the village of Romanduru. After Wio and Bota built their tribal square and ritual altar (called *wu'a mahe*), members of other descent groups arrived and settled. The next stanza mentions that women named Saru, Watu, Laju and Plu'e from the *Klukut Mude La'u* and *Mana* tribes arrived and settled with the *Buang Baling* clan (Butterworth, 2009: pages 280-282).

According to Butterworth, the *Buang Baling* clan is the 'big brother' to the other clans. Each clan can perform its own rituals without the approval of *Tana Pu'an*. However, any activity that has a collective impact must be authorized by

Tana Pu'an, for example planting and harvesting rites, the institution of public laws and prohibitions (*uru tada*), and other matters related to public roads, waterways and boundaries all require *Tana Pu'an's* authority (Butterworth, 2009: page 282).

Butterworth's account is like that of traditional leaders in Romanduru. One of them is Mo'an Goris, a traditional elder from the *Keytimu Lamén* tribe. According to Goris, the ancestor of the tribe that inhabited Romanduru was *Buang Baling*, just as Butterworth describes. A different version is that the tribe that was later 'invited' to settle was the Mana tribe, which is then considered the younger brother of the *Buang Baling* tribe. Meanwhile, the tribes that came later were 'ordinary citizens'. As *Tana Pu'an*, *Buang Baling* has the right to determine who can live in Romanduru and reject others until finally 10 tribes settled until now. *Tana Pu'an's* authority also includes "dividing" land for the tribes that inhabit Romanduru. The Krowe people recognize land called "*tana wawi pepiara piong*" or terminologically translated as 'ancestral pig land'. Within this land is the Ai Tali owned by each clan. This land is usually located behind each clan's *wisung wangar*, unless for example the land belonging to the *Wewe Niur* clan is in a neighboring village. The second land is referred to as '*tana howakhewer*'. Unlike '*tana wawi pepiara piong*', '*tana howakhewer*' is not owned by all the clans living in Romanduru. The tribes that own '*Tana Howakhewer*' are: *Buang Baling*, *Mana*, *Keytimu Lamén*, *Wodon*, and *Lio Watu Bao*.

These two types of land have different characteristics and treatments. "*Tana wawi pepiara piong*" is also known as heirloom land. This land is owned by the clan, usually passed down to the eldest son in the family. management of this land is also carried out by the family of the eldest son and his descendants. This land can be legalized with a certificate but cannot be traded.

The second land, '*Tana Howakhewer*', was not owned by the five tribes, but was 'controlled'. The five tribes had the right to obtain garden produce from '*Tana Howakhewer*', which was their territory. Before the lands in Romanduru and its surroundings were planted with plantation crops, such as cloves, vanilla and cocoa as they are today, they used to grow rice and corn. In the past, when harvest time came, a portion of the produce from the rice and maize was handed over to the clan that owned the '*tana howakhewer*'. Similarly, when the people who inhabited the '*tana howakhewer*' area performed rituals and slaughtered pigs, they had to share some of the meat with the '*tana howakhewer* owner'. Today, this tradition is no longer practiced. However, they expressed a desire to revive this tradition by strengthening the position of *Tana Pu'an* as the authority.

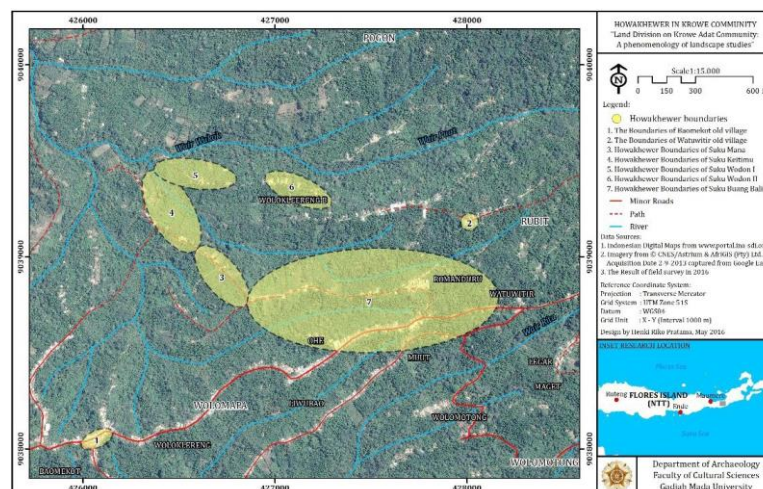


Fig. 05: *Tana Howakhewer* in Krowe Community

Source: Archaeology UGM, 2016

Land arrangements in the Krowe indigenous community cannot be separated from the role of *Tana Pu'an*, as the holder of authority in Romanduru. The *Buang Baling* tribe as *Tana Pu'an* still holds legitimacy over this land arrangement. By Butterworth (2015), this legitimacy is the meaning of the word *Tana Pu'an* itself (*tana*: land, *pu'an*: source). As the source, or arguably the origin, the *Buang Baling* Tribe has the right to regulate land ownership and maintain the continuity of this 'regulation'. by Butterworth, this relationship is then called precedence. Referring to Fox (2009) on this precedence, he mentions that:

"The concept of precedence defines a relative relationship. It is significant not in its focus on this single relationship but rather in the possibility it offers for a concatenation of relationships, thus producing an 'order of precedence' in which relations are recursively arrayed asymmetrically from one to another. As such, precedence involves the conjunction of two analytic categories: recursive complementarity and categorical asymmetry (Fox 1994). A complementary category consisting of two elements - one of which is considered as 'anterior' or 'superior' to the other, such as 'elder' > 'younger', 'first-born' > 'last-born' or 'trunk' > 'tip' - is applied in recursive, or repeated fashion, to produce an ordered series. This series is an 'order of precedence'. Importantly, an 'order of precedence' can operate at various levels, differentiating relations within families, within larger social groups or throughout an entire society. The bases for the construction of precedence at different social levels may vary and, significantly, may be contested, reversed and reordered."

Fox, 2009:?

Fox (2009) explains how this precedence is relevant to explain the *Buang Baling* tribe's authority and legitimacy over land in Romanduru. As the "big brother" and "source", the *Buang Baling* tribe should be respected and in a superior position to other tribes. The *Buang Baling* tribe opened the land first for the tribes that came later, so their services should be appreciated by giving respect that is manifested in obedience.

The legitimacy of this precedence is then represented through symbols that are mutually agreed upon. These symbols are in the form of poems, *wu'a mahe*, *watu mahang*, *wisung wangar*, *Ai Tali*, and inherited myths. Until now, no one has challenged this relationship, because the Krowe people believe that the *Buang Baling* tribe is *Tana Pu'an*, which cannot be replaced. Both the *Buang Baling* clan and other clans realize that the position of *Tana Pu'an* cannot be replaced, because it has been determined by the ancestors and if violated will bring disaster to the Krowe people in Romanduru.

Conclusion

This study concludes that The Ata Krowe community has a settlement concept consisting of several components including *watu mahang*, *wisung wangar*, *wua mahe*, and *Ai Tali*. The cultural landscape of Romanduru Village as a representation of the Ata Krowe community village shows that the formation of the village landscape is based on individual experience, namely *Du'a Wio Bota* and *Du'a Saru Watu* and then shared with other clans. As an old village, Romanduru village has a distinctive residential pattern, namely the concept of settling based on the presence of springs. This means that when the need for water is finally fulfilled, then building a place to live and establish a *mahe* starts. The Ata Krowe community in Romanduru village also recognizes the term *lepo gete*, which is the main house occupied by the eldest son, while other children must live outside the village, this makes the houses in Romanduru village limited in number.

The existence of Romanduru village is inseparable from the existence of the *Buang Baling* clan, which is a tribe/clan that has opened the land first so that its services must be appreciated by giving respect which is realized by obedience. The legitimacy of this precedence is then represented through symbols that are mutually agreed upon. Until now, no one has

challenged this relationship, because the Ata Krowe community believes that the *Buang Baling* clan/tribe is *Tana Pu'an* which cannot be replaced.

Based on a cultural landscape study of the Ata Krowe community in Romanduru village, Sikka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia, it is concluded that the form of settlement in Romanduru village is centralized, with the *wu'a mahe* as the center point. Houses in Romanduru village are built around a collection of *wu'a mahe*.

This is a unique characteristic of the Romanduru village, Sikka Regency, which is not present in any other village in exactly the same manner. However, there may be similar characteristics of villages elsewhere, but that may still not undermine the cultural landscape that has given identity to this community. This research thus demonstrates that the approach using 'cultural landscape' is a useful approach to reveal the underlying patterns of vernacular settlements as illustrated in this paper.

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