

Sasadu: The Religious Social Spirit of Sahu Tribe Community in North Maluku - Indonesia

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Abstract

Development in various sectors of life will certainly have a major impact on society, both positive and negative. One of the negative impacts of modern development is the erosion of the values of the local wisdom of the community, including the values of local wisdom of Sahu people contained in their traditional house called Sasadu. The purpose of this research was to find out the philosophical values contained in Sasadu traditional houses and write them as part of the preservation of the values of community wisdom which would later be useful as a development filter. The method used was a combined method between library research supported by field research. The results found in this research were that the Sasadu traditional house in Sahu tribe community has a long history and traditional architecture which includes (1) social authority values; (2) legal values and social ethics; and (3) a belief system that is still practiced until now. Based on the results of this research, it can be stated that as a tribal community that still holds strong the local traditions of their ancestors (seen from the whole village that still has Sasadu traditional houses), Sahu tribe must prepare themselves by renewing their traditional pattern of view and being open to change without abandoning their religious social values, so as to anticipate the swift flow of modern development.

Keywords: Traditional house; Sasadu; Sahu tribe; West halmahera; North maluku.



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1. Introduction

The house is a private element that is cared for and if needed can be renovated by following the developments of architecture and its growing values. Likewise with traditional houses, through traditional architecture, world views, life views, social systems and respect for human life from previous generations can be known (Iwamony *et al.*, 2012).

North Maluku, especially Sahu tribe in West Halmahera regency is one of the tribes in Eastern Indonesia (KTI) which has a cultural uniqueness that continues to be maintained from generation to generation. One of the local knowledge of Sahu tribe which physically manifests is their traditional house called Sasadu, which can be found in every village in Sahu area. Sasadu, is the Sahu tribe's term for its traditional house and recognition of its identity as a community (Sasadu community). This means that the definition of Sasadu is not simply limited to the name of a public building, but Sasadu is also a set of values that governs the social order of Sahu tribe. These social values collected and lived together by Sahu people are the ones which when analyzed from the perspective of Geertz are referred to as "spider webs" which are networks of meaning woven, and function as nets (Geertz, 1992; Tjanu, 2008).

The problem in this research was that Sahu tribe community did not have enough ability to defend themselves from the onslaught of modern development that took place around them. Moreover, they are in a new expansion area where development continues to be encouraged. From the previous studies, for example Beolado regarding "The social change of the Talai and Padisua tribal community to the management of Sasadu culture in West Halmahera Regency" (Beolado, 2003), Wakim and Hikmansayah, who discussed Sasadu architecture and its function as the center of community activities (Hikmansyah, 2016; Wakim, 2015), and Nindatu, regarding the meaning of the rituals of field rice cultivation in Sahu tribe (Nindatu *et al.*, 2018), it appears that those studies did not touch up to the application of values to Sasadu as a filter of development problems that hit Sahu tribe community. Thus, this research is the first study in a series of studies that will answer such issue, which begins with finding and compiling religious social values in Sahu tribe community, which will be continued by showing the other side of those values to anticipate the adverse effects of ongoing development.

2. Method

This research was carried out in West Halmahera Regency, North Maluku Province. Data collection techniques used are library studies, interviews, and observations. Respondents in this study consisted of traditional leaders,

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community leaders, village heads, local governments, and communities who were chosen purposively as a comparison. To check the validity of the data, the researcher cross-checked the information obtained from different sources, namely information from the resource persons, the results of the literature review and the results of observations and discussions through a focus group discussion (FGD).

The data analysis process is carried out both during, during, and after the data collection process. In connection with the existence of a large amount of data that still has to be determined in relation to one another, it is necessary to classify the data according to type and characteristics in accordance with the research focus on Sasadu traditional house. The steps to analyze the data are: (1) data reduction, (2) "display" data, (3) understanding, interpretation and interpretation, (4) drawing conclusions and verification. To facilitate data analysis, hermeneutics-philosophical methods are used with methodical elements which include: description, verstehen, interpretation, historical continuity, analysis, and heuristics.

3. Results

3.1. Sahu Tribe in the Territorial of West Halmahera Regency Maluku Province – Indonesia

West Halmahera is one of the regencies in North Maluku Province. The total area of West Halmahera Regency consists of 11,623.42 KM² of sea area and 22,346 KM² of land area; the number of small islands in West Halmahera is 123 islands with details of 2 inhabited islands and 121 non-inhabited islands (Website of Halmahera Regency). The administrative area of the West Halmahera Regency covers 9 (nine) districts and 146 (one hundred and forty-six) villages. The districts mentioned are Jailolo district, South Jailolo, East Jailolo, Sahu, East Sahu, Tabaru, Ibu, South Ibu, and Loloda district. The traditional tribes in West Halmahera are Sahu, Tobaru, Wayoli, Gorap, Loloda, and Gamkonora. These tribes have long inhabited the large island of Halmahera, especially in West Halmahera. In addition to these tribes, West Halmahera is also inhabited by other ethnic groups such as Ternate, Sangihe, Makian, Papua, Ambon, Tidore, Jawa, Gorontalo, Tionghoa tribe, and many others. Each tribe has customs and traditions that reflect its cultural life. Given these conditions, West Halmahera has a wealth of traditions and cultures that are so diverse that they create a multicultural atmosphere in the community life (Barjiyah, 2015).

Besides having ethnic and cultural diversity, West Halmahera also has various historical and cultural relics in the form of both material and non-material. This is proven from the strong traditions and historic sites found whose authenticity is kept still. Historical sites whose authenticity can still be found and maintained include the buildings of the *Sasadu* Traditional House, the colonial relics of the colonial period, the caves during the Japanese occupation, the mosque, and the old church. But the existence of tradition, culture, and history gradually began to be damaged or lost so it is feared that it can no longer be learned by the younger generation. To that end, the Regional Government of West Halmahera is now intensively developing inclusive tourism programs including cultural tourism (Barjiyah, 2015).

From the historical side, Jailolo which is often written as 'Gilolo' (the capital of West Halmahera Regency) in European manuscripts is one of four (4) "Moloku Kie Raha" sultanates that is Jailolo Sultanate. According to a legend that was recorded until the 14th century, the Jailolo Sultanate was the oldest kingdom in North Maluku. The association of the Ternate Sultanate and the Dutch in 1551 made Jailolo vanquished (Arman, 2015). Since then, the entire area in north and south of Halmahera Island had been incorporated into the territory of Ternate (Barjiyah, 2015).

Two centuries later, exactly in 1798 AD, the Sultanate of Jailolo was re-established by Sultan of Tidore. He managed to expel the Dutch from Jailolo and proclaimed himself to be the Sultan of Jailolo. The new Jailolo Empire center stood on a hill located at the Sahu-Sidangoli intersection. Over the times, the footsteps and ruins of this palace have never been found. The track record can only be found live in historical manuscripts, stories, and ceremonies of tribal rites, like Sahu, Tabaru, Gamkonoro, Ternate, Wayoli, and Loloda. The Sahu and Tabaru tribes are the two largest tribes in Jailolo with each of the customs and culture and traditions (Arman, 2015). In this paper, the focus of the discussion is the Sahu culture; the more specific one is the philosophical values contained in their creativity through the Traditional House of *Sasadu*. Before discussing further *Sasadu* Traditional House on Sahu culture, first, there will be a little discussion about culture as the basis for the next discussion in this paper.

3.2. *Sasadu* in Cultural Perspective

Each region in Indonesia has its own cultural uniqueness. However, the uniqueness will change because change is a necessity in human life. Humans are required to always get around their life in order to survive in the swift currents of change. Culture, as it was born from human ability to anticipate the environment, must always be maintained and developed in order to maintain human life. Thus, Culture is an ongoing learning process. In this process not only is inventive creativity an important factor, but these two factors are also related to ethical considerations. Without this ethical judgment, a human cannot take responsibility for their culture, for the technology they use and develop, nor for the social structures and organizational forms (Peursen, 1988).

Based on the point of view above, the present reality with all its problems should be a point of reference in order to formulate many matters related to the change of human life in the future. Changes in human life that occurs, including changes in the physical environment, make people have to work around it and create cultures that are constantly adapted to the development of life if they do not want to lose identity in the ongoing changes. The basis and direction to be addressed in cultural planning are human itself so that humanization becomes the basic framework of cultural strategy (Moertopo, 1978). The recognition of change as an ongoing thing in human life leads

to the recognition that local wisdom has a place as a prima donna in that cultural change. Local wisdom as a local knowledge of community can thus take an important position in solving many of today's problems faced by humans.

Humans, including tribal communities spread throughout Indonesia in recent times, experienced many challenges in their lives. One of the challenges facing tribal societies with traditional knowledge, in general, is the issue of development. The issue of development exhaled by modern knowledge will lead to the eroding of local wisdom values into a globalized mindset that is wrapped up in the view of improving the economy of the community, which will make the indigenous culture disappear. In fact, the culture within which there is the local wisdom of the tribe if studied well can weight the economic development activities that are usually infiltrated by negative interests of the market and the state.

North Maluku, especially the Sahu tribe in West Halmahera regency is one of the tribes in eastern Indonesia which has a cultural uniqueness that continues to be maintained from generation to generation. This is supported by the various local wisdom of the Sahu tribe that has always been handed down from generation to generation. The indigenous houses in every village, the unique process of farming, also the dressing way of the community, traditional medicine, production system, and the pattern of relations among fellow human beings applied to this tribe becomes a challenge to be studied for the creation of a pattern of education and contemporary culture capable of responding to the challenges of community change, including the economic development issues discussed above.

The global knowledge manifested in development is directed towards improving the welfare of community but ignoring existing local knowledge systems will have a negative impact. The fact is clear that the neglect of the local knowledge system has an impact on the destruction of the environment, the eroding of cultural values, and so on. Thus the preservation of local culture becomes important to be put forward in human life today.

Cultural preservation is a human responsibility as a cultured being. Preservation is not to bring people back to their past lives, but the preservation is a willingness to learn from the younger generation and appreciation to the creations of previous generations. One of the cultural elements that deserve attention for conservation is the traditional house. The traditional house is one of the cultural expressions that should be given attention to conservation because traditional houses have unique architecture compared to modern houses. In addition to aspects of architectural uniqueness, in general, traditional houses reflect the value system that shapes the way people live in a particular context and time. Therefore, through traditional house architecture, view of the world, view of life, social system and respect for human life from previous generations can be known (Iwamony *et al.*, 2012).

One of the local knowledge of Sahu tribe that manifested itself physically is their traditional house called *Sasadu*. *Sasadu* traditional house can be found in every village located in the Sahu area. *Sasadu* is a Sahu tribe's term for its indigenous house and a recognition of its identity as a community (*Sasadu* community). It means that the notion of *Sasadu* is not simply limited to the name of a public building, but *Sasadu* is also a set of values that govern the social order of the Sahu tribe. These social values are collected and lived together by the Sahu people who, if analyzed from the perspective of Geertz, are referred to as "spider webs" which are networks of meanings woven and lived in the context of their cultural unity (Geertz, 1992; Tjanu, 2008).

Indonesia is a large country in Southeast Asia consisting of thousands of islands and thousands of ethnic (tribe) who live and evolve with unique traditions and religious beliefs so that cultural hues are different from each other. Cultural or multi-cultural pluralism in the view of Postmodernism is known as multiculturalism. Cultural diversity is one of the most important and greatest potentials in Indonesia's progress, gaining momentum to rise in the global era (Mahmashani, 2010). The rise of Indonesia to the global level must be supported by a pattern of cultural development, which includes also the pattern of development of traditional culture.

The discussion of culture is of course not a new thing because in its development the culture will be constantly studied and/or produced by humans as cultural actors. Spontaneously, one feels that the question of culture is an actual and urgent matter because it feels that it is an integral part of the culture. We cannot abandon culture, then discuss it as an objective observer or judge. Culture encompasses all sides and aspects of our lives as social beings (Bakker, 1984).

Cultures manifest in (1) a set of ideas; (2) the number of patterned behaviors; and (3) a collection of objects or artifacts. The first form is the most abstract form. As a set of ideas, culture cannot be seen or observed, because it is stored in a person's head and carried wherever he goes. Culture in the form of this set of ideas is called cultural system. In the second form, the culture is called social system. While in the third form, culture is as a physical form or commonly called as physical culture. The first form is called covert culture, while the second and third are called overt culture (Hendra, 2011).

The values that develop in a community as a result of culture are not simply present but are conceived and administered in such symbols or signs that are sometimes wrapped in stories, myths, as well as in other artifacts and physical cultures, for example, traditional house. Traditional house in certain cultures has meaning that is not limited to shelter but can serve as a public space and become the identity of the community.

Traditional house with its traditional architecture developed in the process is formed by interaction between humans, human and nature, and harmony of the human relationship with God Almighty. Nature is not only seen in a concrete way but is also viewed in the abstract including the universe (macrocosm), creating unique and distinct architectural forms from one place to another. Along with the development of science and technology, the traditional architecture also developed in accordance with the aspirations and inspirations of its supporters (Pattipeilohy, 2013).

Based on that, preserving traditional architecture is not solely for aesthetic satisfaction, but must consider the direct and indirect impacts on the welfare of the supporting community. Making traditional community into the modern community is not necessary by replacing its material culture, in which selection can be actualized and self-identity. In the era of globalization, it is necessary to think about the opportunities on the re-interpretation of

traditional architecture. This view absolutely provides an opportunity for the new and inspiring reappropriation of resources from past life values (Pattipeilohy, 2013).

The example is the Sahu tribe and their traditional house, *Sasadu*. When talking about *Sasadu*, it is not just about public buildings, architecture, but more as a social value device symbolized by a public building. Cultural symbols (in this *Sasadu* culture), play an important role in every phase of Sahu civilization. It is the *Sasadu*'s symbols that in the history of Sahu's community functioned as a kind of ideology that forms an awareness of identity as a *Sasadu* community (Tjanu, 2008).

Sasadu building is a traditional building (traditional house) built exactly in the middle of the village which is a community of Sahu tribe community. Generally, *Sasadu* building in the Sahu tribal area is built in areas very close to the highway or road that is generally passed by the community (the distance is ≥ 4 M). The location of *Sasadu* that is easily accessible to the people has a symbolic meaning that *Sasadu* is a collective home that gathers community from various circles; as well as the center of indigenous activities that protect all social activities of the Sahu community (Beolado, 2003).

For the people of Sahu, *Sasadu* traditional house and its environment become a place of various indigenous activities that are very important like the beginning of rice planting and early harvest, also a place to socialize for Sahu community from various social strata discussing issues of social life. Here is also the place of determining the candidate for the leadership of a family (clan, lineage) that represents their place to discuss various customary issues, such as the determination of inheritance rights, boundaries of land and other customary law (Beolado, 2003).

3.3. History of *Sasadu*

In general, each area will have a traditional building or in another name: traditional house. In Indonesia, it can be mentioned for example Rumah Gadang (Minangkabau), Joglo (Jawa), Gapura Candi Bentar (Bali), Musalaki (Nusa Tenggara Timur), Betang (Kalimantan Tengah), Tongkonan (Sulawesi Barat and Sulawesi Selatan), Baileo (Maluku), and Honai (Papua). Some of the traditional houses mentioned above are icons or traditional houses that represent several provinces in Indonesia in general, or in other words have been generalized to represent the province at the national level as common knowledge. What is to be emphasized here is that in some provinces the representation is the result of agreement or "coercion" vertically from the holders of the mandate of political power that sometimes do not represent all parties, in this case, the ethnicity of the area.

This is not intended to argue or reject the traditional icons, but rather to emphasize that in addition to the traditional icons that have been famous above, there are also traditional houses in other tribes in Indonesia that is sometimes different from the traditional provincial house icons that have become a common knowledge. North Maluku Province (1999 separated from Maluku), also has its own traditional house, separated from the icon of Baileo Traditional House in Maluku. Even North Maluku itself knows some traditional houses based on tribes that inhabit it. Let's just mention Folajikusesurabi (Tidore), Hibualamo (Tobelo), and *Sasadu* (Sahu, Halmahera Barat). *Sasadu* Traditional house is one of the traditional buildings of North Maluku which is quite famous as it is often introduced lately through Jailolo Bay Festival activities and other cultural promotions by the Regional Government of West Halmahera.

Sasadu traditional house building is not a single family home but is a joint house owned by the Sahu tribe. *Sasadu* is a building that is closely related to the customs of the daily life of Sahu community. It is a large building with a roof made of woven sago leaves. This building consists of several wooden structures decorated with various ornaments based on local wisdom owned by the people of Sahu tribe (Barjiyah, 2015).

Sasadu's historical narrative until it is shaped as a public building as it exists today goes through a long historical process. According to some oral traditions, the naming of *Sasadu* is derived from the story of the life of Sahu ancestors who originally used Sadu or Saduo'o (stone holes, caves) as a refuge from various threats. To make Saduo'o (cave) a place to live for people whose lives are still nomadic is certainly not very supportive, therefore they established a house with forest betel leaf without walls (in Sahu language, it is called Calaisa) as a refuge. From Calaisa, it is then developed again into Sungu (walled house). Furthermore, this Sungu building is made in booths so it is named Kekecong (Tjanu, 2008).

From Kekecong, it is then evolved into Dous or Do'us which is a family living house with bamboo walls and the roof made of sago leaves. At this stage of Dous civilization, the people of Sahu tribe have begun to live by building relationships with one another. Although at this stage, they still live in groups called Rera (family group), which is the community there are several Dous as their houses (Tjanu, 2008).

The life of the community that lives in some of these *Dous*, certainly experiences a dynamics of life (not static) in the social process. In this social process, it is certain that the living needs of the community are increasing. With the increasing need, the community group consisting of several *Dous* also need a place where they can jointly discuss and overcome the problems. This family or clan then agreed to build *Wala Lolom* (house of gathering), a building house without walls built in the middle of the community. So *Wala Lolom* serves as a place for deliberation and talks about community issues.¹

In the next phase of civilization, the people of Sahu tribe living in the valley of Ji'o Japung (now Sahu Valley), began to form war fleets to defend the region from the threats of outside expansion. One of Sahu's most famous war fleet is Kagunga Tagi-tagis (Kagunga = Warship, Tagi-tagis = walking). Kagunga Tagi-tagis was used for territorial defense in Maluku sea waters. The might of this fleet of war was then symbolized by constructing a public building, whose architecture was designed to resemble or similar to Kagunga Tagi-tagis, and this building is known as Kagunga Tego-tego (Kagunga = Warship; Tego-tego = sitting or more precisely on land). In Kagunga Tego-tego,

war logistics were prepared, problems were solved, agricultural activities were initiated and ended here, as well as rituals for salvation were done.²

Figure-1. *Sasadu* according to W. Kiikenthal in 1896



Source: (Tjanu, 2008)

The function of Kagunga Tego-tego is increasingly complex, when the people of Sahu tribe no longer made the voyage and preferred to settle as an agricultural community. Kagunga Tego-tego that became the only symbol of the power and existence of the Sahu tribe community was then considered no longer describe the power of the fleet of Kagunga Tagi-tag; So that the Kagunga Tego-tego changed its name to *Sasadu* until this day (Beolado, 2003; Tjanu, 2008). *Sasadu* itself, etymologically comes from the word Falabua (in Ternate, Fala = house, Bua = law, so Falabua means house of law). And other versions say that the name *Sasadu* comes from the word Sasa'dua (in Sahu, Sasa'dua = assemble, embrace). Thus from some of the origin of the word, the social function of *Sasadu* gets the form as a source of value of life that collects (Tjanu, 2008).

Figure-2. *Sasadu* Traditional House in Sahu tribe community in 2017.



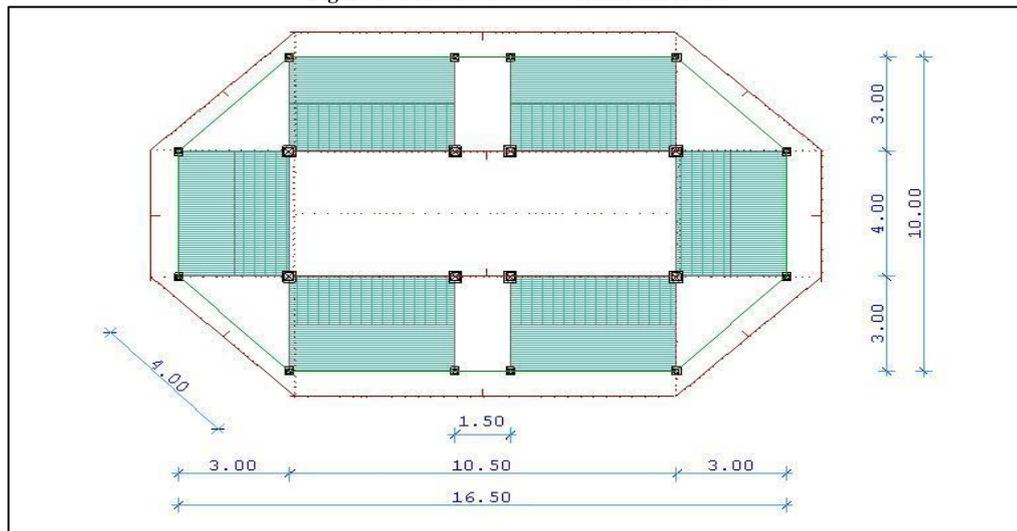
Source: personal document

3.4. Architecture of *Sasadu*

It is recognized that the world now has one architectural style. Its embodiment is "Modern Architecture" also called "International Style" architecture. This pattern is the result and progress and development of science and technology of the 19th and 20th centuries that resulted in some of the needs and requirements of life to be relatively similar in the world's societies. The selection of building techniques, building technology, building materials of industrial products and the same educational standards of architects/technicians, are applicable everywhere, which then reinforces the architectural facial tendencies in cities and major cities of the world to be similar to each other. The origin of this style and its developmental history, has long been thought and written and is now a knowledge of the history of world architecture (Moersid, 1980).

On the other hand, although it is not yet (or not) included in the knowledge of the history of world architecture mentioned above, actually in other parts of the world (including Indonesia) there is still architecture with a very different style from the modern one. We may call it indigenous architecture, local architecture, very distinctive, built according to the cultural traditions of the people concerned. This local architecture is usually associated with residential or residence and buildings as well as its complementary structures (granaries, shrines, encounters, etc.). These buildings were founded according to the concepts, values, and norms inherited from their ancestors. The manifestation of the form as seen today can be regarded as not much different from the embodiment of the same outcome of tradition in the past although small or large changes may have occurred in the past (Moersid, 1980).

The building structure of *Sasadu*, embracing the frame construction system (skeleton) with the main elements of the primary and secondary columns are tied together by the transverse, longitudinal and circular beams into a solid unity (rigid). All of these columns are not planted into the ground, but they rather stand on the foundation of a whole stone (not a split stone) (Hikmansyah, 2016). The arrangement of columns can be seen in the following figure:

Figure-3. Structure of *Sasadu* Traditional House

Source: (Hikmansyah, 2016).

The structure of *Sasadu* traditional house (Hikmansyah, 2016) above, can be explained as follows:

- The main columns supporting the highest saddle roof section numbered 8 are arranged in two stripes, each of 4 are in the deepest row, directed lengthwise.
- On the left and right side of the main poles directed lengthwise, arranged side poles (secondary) 2 pieces for each. The side pole supports the saddle roof forwarding. The number of side pillars is 16 pieces.
- In the front and rear are arranged 2 rows of secondary poles in the main pole line, which supports the forwarding of the roof. The number of secondary pillars behind this front and the rear side is 8 pieces. The total number of columns is 32.

Generally, *Sasadu* buildings in Sahu tribal areas are built in areas very close to highways or roads that are generally passed by the community (Distance is ≥ 4 M). The location of *Sasadu* that is easily accessible by the community has a symbolic meaning that *Sasadu* is a collective home that gathers people from various circles. (Tjanu, 2008). *Sasadu* does not only have one building but it spreads to some areas that become the village (Gam) of Sahu tribe, which includes three districts, namely Jailolo District, Sahu District, and East Sahu District. Although *Sasadu* is scattered in some sub-districts and villages, Sahu people have a similar pattern for the placement of their traditional house. In every village (gam), *Sasadu* is located between two rows of residential houses that are arranged opposite to each other. So the houses here look like encircling a traditional house (Barjiyah, 2015).

The shape of the building provides an association on the shape of the ship³, an octagonal with a high center section taking saddle shape and also indicates the part as the most important part of the building. This section is the most important part because at that point various social issues are discussed and resolved, various rites are performed, various inaugurations in public office as well as various cultural values are given and accepted. Meanwhile, the portion of the porch is short. Generally, Sahu people understand that this is meant for everyone who enters that they should bow down as a sign of respect for their culture.⁴ Building raw materials are raw materials that can easily be found around the lives of Sahu tribe community (Gufasa Wood, Bamboo, Enau, Sago, and so on). (Beolado, 2003; Masinambow, 1983; Tjanu, 2008).

Sasadu Roof is made of sago leaves. Each bunch of sago leaves measuring 1.5 meters is arranged and tied to a bamboo to form a rectangle. *Sasadu* roof shape looks unique, the distance between the roof with the top of *Sasadu* look far away. The top of *Sasadu* looks higher and the roof of *Sasadu* looks lower because it has a symbolic meaning in which the higher top refers to God and the low roof so that anyone entering must bow down to point human's respect for God and their neighbor.⁵

The architecture of the *Sasadu* building is a traditional building model that can also be associated with a public building construction filled with symbols of social life. These symbolic meanings can be seen and understood from the uniqueness of the construction of the *Sasadu* building. The building is made by not using modern adhesive materials such as glue or nails, but only by using the science of building a traditional house that is hereditary inherited. After this building stands firmly, then it is knitted with *gumutu* (rope made from the enau tree belt), and one interesting thing here is that the knitted *gumutu* (or Sirang in Sahu language) on each joint of the building, is knitted unbroken (only 1 rope which circles up to the entire *Sasadu* building).⁶

Sasadu has six entrances/exits and no door leaves, which symbolize the hospitality of the Sahu community. They are open and willing to accept anyone who visits their house or territory. Although it looks open, there are certain rules to enter *Sasadu*. During the traditional ceremony, the door on the left side of the building corner is the main door that is only for customary elders and invited guests, while the public can enter through five other doors. The Sahu tribe built its traditional house with a certain size unit taken through customary decisions and local wisdom that has been owned since the ancestors.⁷

Sasadu is supported by eight main pillars. Once the first time *Sasadu* was built, the height of the pillar was not based on the meter but based on the height of one female body. So, the woman stood up plus her sitting position plus nine fists above her. So even if you do not use the eight-pole meter, the height will exactly match the height of the

woman. The *Sasadu* floor, formerly made of compacted soil, but as it progresses, much has been replaced by a mixture of cement and sand. This floor change is due to hygiene and food hygiene that often accompany the events in it. On the floor of *Sasadu*, there are six long chairs called *dego-dego* coupled with four long tables called *tataba*. *Dego-dego* serves to seat men and women while *tataba* serves as a place to serve food during traditional ceremonies.⁸

The complex architecture of this building has meaning. The building is full of symbols of Sahu's life. Traditional building sciences that do not use glue and nails above illustrate that although only with its cultural values, in *Sasadu* culture, Sahu people can survive to build their lives and social relationships. Likewise, the symbolization of a rope knitted throughout the building unbroken, illustrates that in the *Sasadu* culture, the Sahu are integrated into a solid solidarity bond.⁹ The architecture of this *Sasadu* building, undeniably has a number of cultural meanings inherent in it. There are many things in *Sasadu* architecture that are not easy to understand simply. The assumption is, to be able to comprehend the comprehensive symbolic meaning of the construction of this building; a deeper and further interpretation of this cultural context is needed as well.

4. Discussion

The Sahu people view *Sasadu* (*Sasadu's* building), as a symbol illustrating their existence as *Sasadu* community (custom). It means that with the existence of the *Sasadu* building in the middle of their lives, it is a picture that they are still firmly adhering to social and religious norms in the culture, In other words, it can be said that *Sasadu* is a building that symbolizes the "soul" of the Sahu community.

By discussing the religious social spirit contained in *Sasadu* culture represented by the traditional house building, at least three important points can be expressed, which are: 1) social authority of *Sasadu*, 2) legal values and social ethics, and 3) a belief system firmly held by the *Sasadu* community.

4.1. Social Authority of *Sasadu*

Discourse on authority is a study that is generally always associated with public space. Public space or sociologically called community always requires an authoritarian force (political, religious or cultural authority) for the social equilibrium of its community whatever its form (Toffler, 2005). The authority for the intended balance is a power of institution, determination or legitimated symbol, which can encourage and even force individuals in a community to live by a general provision (Paloma, 2007).

A set of life-value devices which in Sahu community is symbolized by a public building (called *Sasadu*) is a force of social legitimacy. *Sasadu* has the authority to legitimize the various social dynamics within the Sahu tribe community, as it is the centerpiece of various Sahu community activities. Sahu people view *Sasadu* as the most sublime value of life that their ancestors had lived and bequeathed to this day. The value of this life must be obeyed by everyone who feels as *Sasadu* community.

Sasadu authorities are still very dominant in influencing and legitimizing various village government activities in the midst of the Sahu community. The village government always uses cultural symbols in *Sasadu* to gather the community. The Office of Village Head or Village Hall, built by the government has not been used properly. The cultural and emotional ties of the Sahu community are still very much united in common with *Sasadu's* culture, so wisely the government must use *Sasadu* as the authority that legitimates various government activities. Even a village head who has not been indigenously inducted into the traditional house of *Sasadu* will not have any authority in the eyes of the Sahu indigenous peoples in his working area.¹⁰

Sasadu Authority as a force that sustains various social processes within the Sahu community, can be seen also in the matter of the settlement of community affairs. Various social matters can be discussed and resolved openly in *Sasadu*. *Sasadu* is seen as a place that has a sacred value so that the various oaths and covenants spoken in *Sasadu* are abstinence to be denied. The denial of the oath or covenant is believed to bring disaster or cursing in life.¹¹

Apart from the presented reality, it appears that the meaning of *Sasadu* apart from its cultural function has penetrated into a symbol of social authority that binds the community. This matter can be maintained and developed for the progress of Sahu community in particular and West Halmahera in general. This social authority is further strengthened by the inclusion of the *Sasadu* icon in the West Halmahera regency symbol, which is believed to inspire every duty and responsibility as the community in developing the region in which they are located.

4.2. Values of Law and Social Ethics

Sasadu, is the center of activities related to legal and ethical actions within the Sahu community. In *Sasadu*, the Sahu community received teaching and introduction of customary law and received advice and discourses. In *Sasadu*, the people of Sahu tribe are treated legally based on their actions.

The Sahu know their customary law called *Bubita*. *Bubita* or customary law of this community is usually delivered at certain ceremonies in *Sasadu*. In the *Sasadu* community tradition, *Bubita* is delivered by *Mangomior* (Head of the custom) to the community (*Walasae*, *Walangatom*, and *Ngoarepe*), at the opening of certain events in *Sasadu*. At the time of the delivery of the law, it is usually formulated directly with messages or warnings to the public, so often these legal values are called *Bubita re Bererong* (Law and Message, warning, or advice). The legal values in this *Bubita* are the practical rules relating to the daily way of life (which includes ways of thinking and acting) of the Sahu community, as well as certain rules that must be obeyed throughout the execution of the ceremony.¹²

Apart from the above legal values, Sahu community life is also guided by three philosophical frameworks or three forms of moral foundation. The three joints of this moral foundation are the basic form of thinking of the Sahu people in living their lives as *Sasadu* community (*Ngowa Sasadu*). So *Sasadu* culture sustains a social process or a lifestyle that characterizes: *First, sere'i re gugasa*; a facial expression depicting one's readiness to be open to receiving something that comes from outside, even though it is a burden to them. *Sere'i re gugasa* is usually also interpreted as a polite way to bring yourself into building relationships with others. *Second, ede re Bahasa*; A polite way of speaking in expressing something to others. And *third, ruku re Cingari*; is a living norm or a worldview of Sahu people not to be mutually prestigious, respectful, and not greedy in an effort to achieve various achievements in life. So the Sahu people are also forbidden to corrupt or rob anyone else's rights.¹³

4.3. Belief System

In a legal and formal way, Sahu community adheres to two major religions in Indonesia, namely Islam and Christianity. In terms of quantity, the majority of Sahu people embrace Christianity. It can be compared with the ratio of the number of villages (*Gam*) of the Sahu community in West Halmahera District, which amounts to ± 28 villages spread over three sub-districts. One of the villages is Tacim village, which is a formally Islamic village.

The picture of the legal-formal religious life in the Sahu community is not intended to conclude that it is the System of belief of the Sahu community. Sociologically, religion has a form of belief system, but a form of belief system that lives in the community is not necessarily recognized by religion; Especially if this understanding is realized in the context of Indonesia state where religion tends to be understood as something that is legal-formal. With this sociological background, this article is about to present a discussion of the belief system of Sahu people that is not limited by the formal forms of conventional religion.

The people of Halmahera, including Sahu community, always respond that the reality of their life is never deserted from his particular religious consciousness. The whole sphere of life, in the fields of agriculture, fishing, childbirth, human relationships, and human attitudes toward the natural world, is always lived in relation to their consciousness of religiosity (Nanuru, 2011). The belief in symbolic cues, sacred places, sacred life norms, and many other things experienced in life is a belief system that is so inherent and inseparable from their lives.

As already mentioned in the Sahu figure above, the Sahu community is a community of people who generally live in rural areas with professions as farmers. The context of life that integrates with nature makes the Sahu people reflect on their religiosity life, always departing from the symptoms they experience in the realms of life. The belief system that lives among Sahu people has a strong form of power, capability of shaping a person's sensitivity to the Divine will for his life, as well as shaping the attitude and behavior of a person in responding to his neighbor and the natural surroundings (Nanuru, 2011; Tjanu, 2008).

Starting from the description of the belief system of the Sahu tribe people above, the following describes three matters relating to the belief system that lives in the Sahu community. *First* is beliefs about symbolic cues among the Sahu. There is a belief that the sound of certain animals has symbolic meaning. For example: the sound of the lizard is interpreted as a symbolic gesture that has a warning meaning for someone who wants to do a job or a journey. Someone who wants to go to the field (garden), to the sea to catch fish, or to the forest to hunt, then hears the sound of lizards when deciding to travel, he should consider his intention. The sound is believed to be a warning of *Jou Malamo* (the Divine), because the intention of the person's heart is not good or because there is "something" that will happen. If so then the person is asked to do, what is called a *maniata* that is a ritual of inner struggle to reevaluate the concerned intentions in the work and the journey being planned. If the significance of the sign above is noticed, the sign is responded to in response to the intention of the heart or the inner struggle. Thus, the signs of signaling are interpreted as "legitimater", or "refusal" of the heart-intention or inner struggle that a person has in life.¹⁴

Second, in addition to believing symbolic cues, Sahu community also believes certain places to be considered sacred. These places are usually called *Jere*, *Golawo* and *Walen* (one of the places where the worship rituals of *Jou Malamo* are performed.) The ceremony at this place is led by a *Gomater* (= Pastor in Christianity) which means that the place has a pendulum or its owner. Therefore, before the work of demolishing or clearing land, for the sake of agriculture or the place of the village, religious ceremonies with the intention of begging the blessing of *Jou Malamo* as the owner of the universe must be held first. This awareness encourages everyone to be cautious and not to do evil deeds in the environment such as to dispose of impurities, immoral practices, and destructive activities. Everyone should respect those places. Hence, there is a religious awareness that the natural world is not merely the fulfillment of economic needs; Nature also has a spiritual value. Therefore humans need to have respect for it, and the appreciation of this religiosity is able to shape the attitude and behavior of the Sahu community to the surrounding nature.¹⁵

The third is the belief system of life as a mystery. Incidents, such as natural disasters, misfortune in livelihoods, sickness, and death, are experienced by the Sahu as part of the most fundamental life experience, which can not be completely explained. This kind of awareness bursts from the inner depths of everyone as a sign of the recognition that life is a mystery and that human can only live this mystery. With this there is an existential awareness that human really has no certainty in them. Human is a finite being, who can not be proud of themselves. This awareness is able to form a person's sense of religiosity to be humble in living their life. All this is reflected in the three philosophical frameworks of the Sahu people's morality: *Sere'i re gugasa*, *Ede re bahasa*, and *Ruku re cingari*. These three things can at least be interpreted as a way of living; that this life should be fought not by puffing out the chest, but with a bowed head and full of consciousness in living the mystery of this life.¹⁶

5. Conclusion

The Sahu tribe, with all its limitations, has contributed to the development of culture through its religious social traditions and spirits, which are expected to permeate the values of common life as a community and nation. The values contained in the *Sasadu* culture embodied in the *Sasadu* traditional house will continue to be preserved, although global challenges with modern knowledge and the flow of development continue to hit the local culture of community. The values of positive social authority, living law and ethics as well as the tribal belief system that directs the steps of the Sahu community are the social capital in stepping up the life-step of community facing the challenges of global development current. The values of the religious spirit of this culture also became the last bastion when bloody horizontal conflict in tribal, religious, racial and inter-group afflictions occurred in Maluku and North Maluku in 1999. These values also become adhesive when conflict due to identity politics occurred in general election of regional head in West Halmahera, North Maluku - Indonesia.

Acknowledgment

Our highest appreciation goes to DRPM since this paper is a part of research funded by DRPM in Hibah Disertasi Doktor scheme 2017.

Notes

1. Interview with Customary Head of Desa Gamtala, 22 Juli 2017.
2. Processed from Interview with Customary Head of Desa Gamtala, Customary Leaders of Idam Gamlamo Village and Customary Vice Head of Worat-Worat Village.
3. compared with *Kagunga Tagi-Tagi* = Sahu Tribe Warship.
4. Interview with Customary Head of Desa Gamtala, 22 July 2017.
5. Interview with Customary Head of Desa Gamtala, 22 July 2017.
6. Interview with Customary Head of Desa Idam Gamlamo, 23 July 2017.
7. Interview with Customary Head of Desa Gamtala, 3 October 2017.
8. Interview with Customary Head of Desa Gamtala, 3 October 2017.
9. Interview with Head of Desa Idam Gamlamo, 3 October 2017.
10. Interview with Customary Head of Desa Worat – Worat, 4 October 2017.
11. Interview with Customary Vice Head of Desa Worat – Worat, 4 October 2017.
12. Interview with Customary Leaders of Desa Cempaka, 14 October 2017. The same is also conveyed to the author while interviewing Customary Leaders of Desa Idam Gamlamo dan Customary Vice Head of Desa Worat – Worat.
13. Interview with Customary Leaders of Desa Idam Gamlamo, 14 October 2017.
14. Interview with Customary Leaders of Desa Idam Gamlamo, 14 October 2017.
15. Interview with Customary Leaders of Desa Idam Gamlamo, 15 October 2017.
16. Interview with Customary Leaders of Desa Idam Gamlamo, 15 October 2017.

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