

Eating Culture as a Visual Representation of Space in Minangkabau Society (Study Case: Batagak Pangulu Event in Situjuh Batua)

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Abstract

The Minangkabau people are leading for their food culture, which is easily spot on Padang restaurants in various regions of Indonesia with their specialty food, rendang. The development of the Padang restaurant industry has indistinct the reality of the original culture of eating. It led to the uniformity of design forms, especially its space. The focus of the research is visual forms of space in traditional Minangkabau buildings which produce in their eating culture. The purpose of this study is to explain the culture of eating in the Minangkabau community carried out in a traditional building representing a visual form of space that facilitates its activities. This research conducted using a qualitative approach through a case study of eating activities at the Batagak Pangulu event at Balai Nan Tuo Situjuh Batua. The analysis accomplished by linking the elements of the city image with non-physical and physical elements in the practice of eating. The results show that the physical elements of Balai Adat building, objects supporting the eating activities, and clothing of people in attendance of event formed a visual representation of space based on the Minangkabau people's eating culture.

Keywords: *eating culture, visual representation, space, Minangkabau society, Batagak Pangulu.*

1 Introduction

The Minangkabau is well-known for its steady traditional teachings, its unique matrilineal kinship system, and also for its eating culture. Moreover, the public recognizes their eating culture through Padang restaurants with their specialty of rendang dishes (Lipoeto et al [1] and Franzia et al [2]). However, rendang for Minangkabau people themselves is pride and honor food that always presents at every traditional ceremony (Andam in Nurmufida [3]). They also interpret eating activities as a tribute for religious ritual and celebration of the life cycle that is essential in their traditional ceremony. (Lipoeto et al [1]).

Presently, modernization in society, social change, and social media as well as the evolution of restaurants, the commercialization of catering and the expansion of the food industry (Diaz-Mendez and van den Broek [4], Goodman et al [5], and Probyn [6]) cause changes in eating culture. The changes cause the indistinct of the reality of the original Minangkabau eating culture (Rekarti [7] and Nurti [8]) and lead to the uniformity of design forms (Sari [9]) in the development

of the space which facilitates its activities. Thus it is necessary to learn the visual form of the space facilities for eating activities based on the culture of the Minangkabau people, especially those carried out in their traditional buildings.

2 Issues and Objective

This research focuses on the visual form of space in traditional Minangkabau buildings represented in their eating culture. The case study for this research is eating activities at the Batagak Pangulu ceremony, as is a form of honor to celebrate a part of their life cycle. The selected ceremony is crucial in the life of the Minangkabau people and also involves all people in Nagari. This activity carried out in one of the Minangkabau traditional buildings, the Balai Adat, which is the object of this research.

The purpose of this study is to explain the culture of eating in the Minangkabau community carried out in a traditional building representing a visual form of space that facilitates its activities. In particular, it aims to reveal the findings of the visual form of the eating activities space at the Batagak Pangulu ceremony held at the traditional Minangkabau building Balai Adat. By all means, it is necessary to discuss the Balai Adat building to illustrate the overall space inside.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Eating Activities in Minangkabau Culture

Initially eating is one of the basic needs of humans in living their lives. Eating aside from fulfilling the necessities of life is also an activity related to human behavior and becomes the main basis in social activities (Newman [8]). According to Maximillian [9], eating has three main functions. They are biological functions in fulfilling hunger, social functions as part of social life, and psychological functions that are influenced by emotions and feelings.

Discussing the culture of eating in the Minangkabau community certainly is inseparable from how the basic philosophy of adat form. The Minangkabau tradition based on the traditional philosophy that is “Alam Takambang Jadi Guru” and “Adat Basandi Syarak-Syarak Basandi Kitabullah”. Both philosophies are the basis of customary rules in Minangkabau is called Adat Nan Empat. According to these rules, it also arranged procedures for carrying out traditional ceremonies in their life cycle.

Based on these rules, the Minangkabau community also has a proverb related to the culture of eating which is “Bicara selepas haus, berunding sesudah makan”. Depend on this proverb, the people of Minangkabau serve drinking and snacks as a service to welcome guests (Rekarti [3]). Besides, its meaning is also to ensure people feeling replete in conducting a meeting. Therefore, this proverb is the foundation of eating culture that is essential in the life of the Minangkabau people. In every opportunity and ceremony of Minangkabau people, it usually involves a banquet.

Additionally, Minangkabau has a kinship system according to maternal lineage or matrilineal. The kinship system is useful in explaining the role of the sumando, ninik-Mamak, bundo kanduang, and children in family life. It also illustrates their duties and roles in preparation for banquets. This system is built based on how to continue the descent, firstly based on maternal ancestry and secondly based on women’s marriage in the community (Suarman [11]). It indicates that women have an essential role in this system as a decent connection. This system is also closely related to the

inheritance rooted from women and the role of men as Mamak to maintain it. The men maintain both the inheritance and the family means being an advisor and listener to his nephew.

Men marrying Minangkabau women are guests in the family and called Sumando. Sumando has a minor role in family life yet still asked to take an initiative in every activity. Women in a family are responsible for all matters and have the right to ask all the needs of the family to the head of the clan. Men become Mamak in family and are responsible for their kemanakan, children of their siblings, and obedient to the pangulu. Children obey their mothers who are bundo kanduang and must ask and discuss with Mamak. The Pangulu is one of the Mamak in the family who is responsible for all the rules. The following picture is an illustration of the matrilineal kinship harmony in Minangkabau.

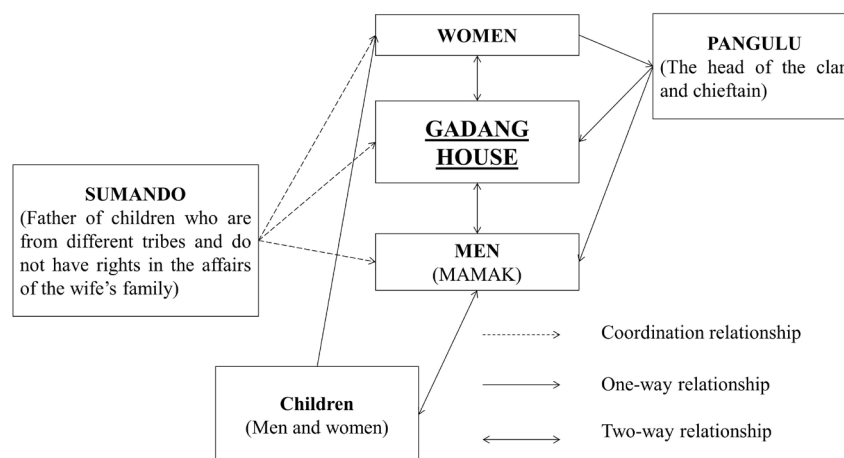


Figure 1. Illustrative diagram of matrilineal kinship in Minangkabau, Suarman [11]

3.2 Theories of Space and Culture

According to Kevin Lynch [12] in the theory of imageability revealed that the physical environment is an independent variable in determining the physical quality associated with identity and structure in mental images. These are the qualities found in objects that build a visual image, especially in a city. The content of the city image from what has been studied by Lynch (1960), which refers to physical form classified into five types of elements, namely paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. However, the image principle conveyed through the five elements can also be used in the discussion of space and culture.

The first element of paths acts as space for circulation to occur during the process of eating culture. Edges can be in the form of boundaries that indicate the character of the space. The third is the district, it is the position of the eating space to other space and the division of the area in the building (layout). Fourth, the nodes are points of the crossing of activities in the house that affect eating culture activities. The final element is the landmark which is the essential objects in the space that are markers, direction, and orientation when eating takes place. These things will be the basis for discussion of the visual form in the eating space facilities of the Minangkabau community.

3.3 Batagak Pangulu Ceremony

This ceremony is the most sacred and crucial so that it gets special attention in its execution. In this event, Pangulu swore to be the clan leader with the title of Datuak (Suarman [11]). In its implementation, it carried out with Islamic law by slaughtering buffalo, which is Baralek Gadang (massive party). The aim is as a legal condition for the title given and as gratitude for the chosen ideal leader. Besides, this event also aims to convey to the public that there is a change in pangulu.

There are four factors cause this replacement what makes the election of Pangulu did carefully. 1) *Baputiang Diateh Tanah Sirah*, if the previous Pangulu has died. 2) *Hiduiak Bakurilaan-Mati Batungkek Budi*, when the previous Pangulu was unable to do their job in a long time. 3) *Gadang Manyusul Gadang Manyimpang, Basiba Langan Baju, Padi Sarumpun Disibak Duo*, there is a growing in the number of children to be led. 4) *Mambuek Kato Nan Baru*, there is the establishment of a new community that also needs new Pangulu.

In general, the appointment procession of Pangulu is slightly different in each region. Some of the regions hold the ceremony in a simple way and others on a large scale. Almost in all of the regions, the Batagak Pangulu ceremony carried out every few years. Since it requires a great cost and a long process in determining someone can be appointed to be Pangulu or not. This event has two main stages, the preparatory stage called Manantuan Baniah and on the day of performed the position oath called Malewakan Gala.

At Manantuan Baniah or preparatory stage, several processions are carrying out before the appointment of someone to be a pangulu. 1) The agreement of the sakambuik garam family is a meeting of a Pangulu determination attended by all family members of the nominated candidates. 2) The *sapasakuan* unanimity and ratification of Ranji is a verification and examination of the submitted candidate's appropriateness by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates. 3) Conveying the results of the agreement of the *sapasakuan* to the association of the Ninik-Mamak Nagari and handing over the Ranji by the adat official (*manti*). The goal is as a sign of agreement between the sakambuik garam and the *sapasakuan*. The officially appointed Pangulu candidates must pay adat money. 4) After reaching an agreement than Manakok day is holding, which is the determination of the day of taking the oath or promise. When the day has been determined, a notification is carried out to members of the Ninik-Mamak Nagari to attend the Malewakan Gala (inauguration ceremony).

On the day of the Malewakan Gala, there were several main activities carried out. 1) Notification of the people who inaugurated his sako title to all members of association after all pangulu are present. 2) Reciting verses from the Al-Quran. 3) Proceed with to wear the Deta (wearing of pangulu traditional clothes). 4) Oathing vows or promises and continued with praying as a form of gratitude for the success of the Malewakan Gala without any obstacles. 5) Attending the banquet together with all of the people present at the Malewakan Gala event. 6) Parading the settled Pangulu from Balai Adat to Induak Bako house accompanied by traditional art music. This stage of the procession varies in different regions. Some of the regions are doing parade at the beginning of the event from the Pangulu house to Balai Adat. Besides, at this ceremony, all committee members, guests, and the appointed Pangulu candidates must wear customary clothes by their respective titles.

4 Methodology

To achieve the objectives of this study, the method used is a qualitative approach. This study uses data from a literature review, direct observation, and interviews with the respected people in the case study area about eating activities at the Batagak Pangulu ceremony. The data is also from the visual analysis of the elements of Balai Adat building in facilitating their eating activities. The collected data analyzed by linking the elements of the city image with non-physical and physical elements in the practice of the implementation of the eating culture. There are two stages in collecting data, the study of the traditional building of the Minangkabau community, the Balai Adat, and direct observation of the visual form of the space at the Balai Adat as a dining facility during the ceremony.

As a case study, direct observations accomplished at the Batagak Pangulu event at the Balai Nan Tuo, traditional hall located in Situjuah Batua, Limapuluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra, Indonesia. The reason is that the Batagak Pangulu ceremony in Situjuah Batua held at the time of this study conducted. The event rarely carried out as it is on a large scale. The Batagak Pangulu in Situjuah Batua was holding again after 10 years. Additionally, the Balai Nan Tuo building has developed from the original form of the Balai Adat in Minangkabau. The following picture is an overview of the location of the Balai Nan Tuo that facilitates the Batagak Pangulu ceremony.

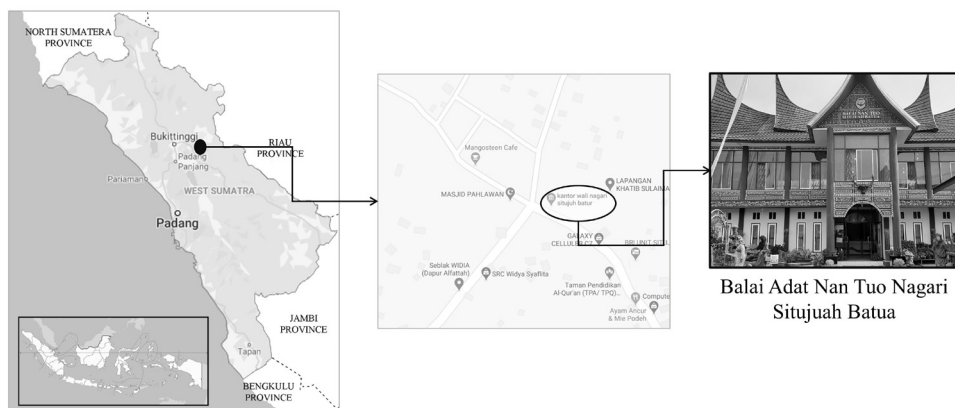


Figure 2. Location of the research object (<https://google.com/maps> & personal documentation)

5 Balai Nan Tuo di Situjuah Batua

There were fewer literature studies that explained the traditional hall building of Balai Adat in Minangkabau. The characteristics of the Balai Adat are unexplained, especially in the Minangkabau custom rules compiled in the Adat Nan Ampek. According to Kartikawening [13], the Balai Adat is well-known as the house of the Pangulu which used as a place of the meeting and holding traditional ceremonies. The Balai Adat is also a place for carrying out community activities in Nagari. In 1975 there were several changes in function at the Balai adat as there was a change in the authority of the community leaders from Nagari to village administration. This causes Pangulu no longer holding the highest authority in the Nagari.

Based on the observations in the field, the Balai Adat building form is similar to the Gadang house building which is rectangular and gongjong roofed. The difference is in the size of the space and no cubicles in it. The Balai Adat contains only an open space with a rise of floor level on the right and

left at the end of the building called anjuang. It also built 2 meters higher from the ground with the entrance or porch in the middle of the building. This building has a symmetrical look on the right and the left. The following pictures are examples of Balai Adat buildings in Minangkabau.



Figure 3. Example of balai adat buildings, Balai Adat Alahan Panjang and Balai Adat Nagari Tigo Jangko (<https://solokkab.go.id/hal-wisata-religi-balai-adat-nagari-alahan-panjang.html>, dan <https://twitter.com/minangofficial/status/828907213489991681>, 2020)

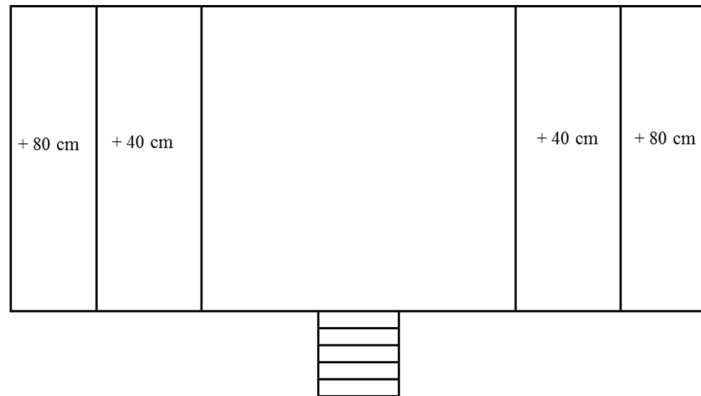


Figure 4. Layout of balai adat buildings generally (personal illustration)

The form of the Balai Adat building also has developed some changes. This building particularly used when holding a meeting and carrying out traditional ceremonies. Based on the example of the Balai Adat above (figure 3), the shape of the building is still intact yet the use of the material has changed to be more modern. This further changes found in the Balai Adat located in the Kawasan Saribu Rumah Gadang and Situjuh Batu regions. The following are images of Balai Adat in those locations.



Figure 5. Example of balai adat buildings, Balai Adat Alahan Panjang and Balai Adat Nagari Tigo Jangko (<https://solokkab.go.id/hal-wisata-religi-balai-adat-nagari-alahan-panjang.html>, dan <https://twitter.com/minangofficial/status/828907213489991681>, 2020)

At the Balai Adat in the Kawasan Saribu Rumah Gadang, the principle of spatial planning looks like as the most Balai Adat located in Minangkabau. It consists of an open rectangle space with raised floors on the right and left of the building. The differences are built on the ground without height difference, the material used, and the presence of a foyer, a small space, before entering the open space in the Balai Adat. Besides, there is also an addition to the mass of the building for an office and toilet. The following is a floor plan from the Balai Adat in the Saribu Rumah Gadang area and the interior images.

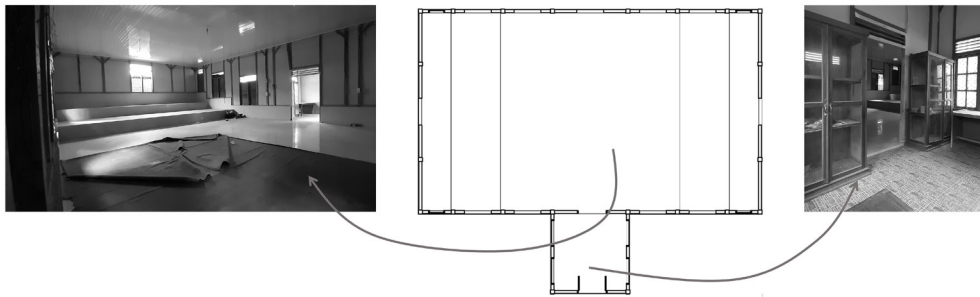


Figure 6. Layout and Image of Balai Adat in Kawasan Saribu Rumah Gadang, Solok Selatan (Personal Illustration and Documentation)

The Balai Adat building in Situjuh Batua is a mix-functions building for traditional hall and Nagari office. There are two floors, the first floor designated as the office area and the second floor as the Balai Adat. The shape of the building remains as a rectangular with a gonjong roof except for the added stairs on the side of the building leading to the top. The spatial planning is still intact with the addition of a foyer in the middle of the building. Moreover, there is no level increase on the right and left ends of the building as to be a storage room and toilet. The following picture is a floor plan for the Balai Adat in Situjuh Batua and the image of the interior.

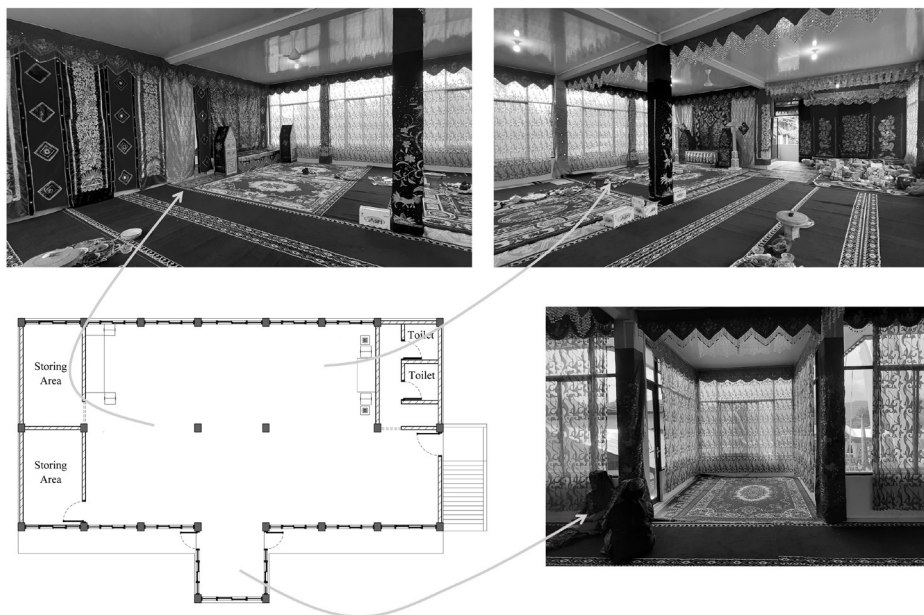


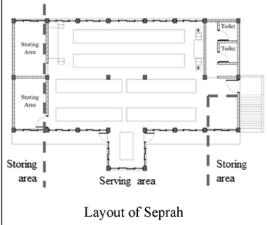

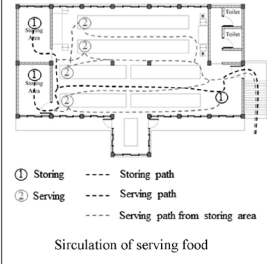

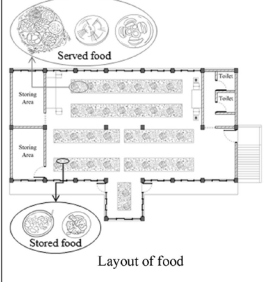

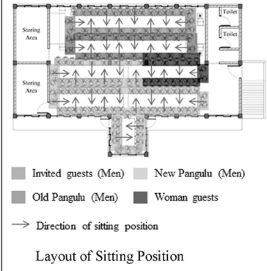

Figure 7. Layout and Image of Balai Nan Tuo in Situjuh Batua (Personal Illustration and Documentation)

6 Results and Discussions

The Batagak Pangulu ceremony in Situjuh Batua is part of the 2020 Baralek Gadang Art and Culture Festival. The event began with a parade and ended with a banquet involving the entire community. The series of main activities at Batagak Pangulu events held in the field next to the Balai Adat building. The Banquet activities are carried out specifically in the Balai Adat.

The data in this study obtained through observation of the physical form of the building and interviews with the committee of the Batagak Pangulu ceremony in Situjuh Batua. Then the data compiled based on the process of eating culture during the ceremony. Next, each process compared to the image of the physical aspects of the space. The following table is the analysis of case study based on eating culture holding at the Batagak Pangulu ceremony inside the Balai Nan Tuo building in Situjuh Batua.

Table 1. Analysis of case studies based on the process of eating activities with the physical aspects of the space.

Eating Process	Building Layout	Image of Area / Spatial	Physical Elements
Preparing	 <p>Layout of Seprah</p>	 <p>Seprah fabric as food mat</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Building elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wall - Coloumn Eating activities components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mattres -Seprah mat
Serving	 <p>Sirculation of serving food</p>	 <p>Stored food Served food</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Stored food - Foods prepared jointly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rendang - Gulai Nangka Served food - Foods prepared individually by each family of will be appointed Pangulu <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A set of side dishes - Rice in Cambuang - Juadah, a set of traditional food
	 <p>Layout of food</p>	 <p>Food types and cutlery</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Seprah fabrics Cutlery Stored food Served food
Eating	 <p>Layout of Sitting Position</p>	 <p>Eating condition</p>	<p>People who attended the event used different types of traditional clothes according to their title</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Men <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invited guests -Old Pangulu -New Pangulu Women guests

In the process of preparing food, it completed outside the Balai Adat building as it is inappropriate with the building function for a meeting place and office. From the spatial planning of the building, it consists of storage space, open space, and toilets with the borders of walls and typical Minangkabau wallcoverings. Open space is a serving area that is directly from the entrance. In this area, seprah fabric stretched as a base for serving food while dividing the space into several areas. Moreover, the storage room is located at the end of the building, opposite the entrance. The space near the entrance also used as additional storage space as the original storage location at long distance.

There are two types of cooking methods in preparing all of the food at this event. First, the cooking activities are carried out jointly by the committee for its special food, rendang, and jackfruit curry. The second method is the family of each appointed Pangulu prepares 5 liters of rice served in Cambuang. Juadah is a traditional food, and a set of side dishes, cakes, and fruit. Moreover, they also asked to prepare other eating utensils such as teapots, drinking water glasses, dinner plates, and bowls.

The existence of two ways to cook this dish causes adjustments to the procedures for serving in the morning of the ceremony. Dishes cooked by the appointed pangulu family immediately served on seprah that had previously been prepared by the committee. While the dishes cooked together by the committee will be stored first in the storage room. Later, it divided into plates and smaller bowls to serve with other foods. This configuration leads to a high level of human movement in the border space at the storage area and close to the entrance.

Foods arranged on the prepared seprah become a sign direction of the seating position and the center of the orientation in the eating activities. Besides, there is a tendency for seating positions at this event to separate male guests, female guests, the old Pangulu, and the newly appointed Pangulu. The tendency of this seating position visualized from the difference in traditional clothes used by people who take part in this eating activity. As a result of the traditional clothes are vary according to their respective titles in the Minangkabau community rules.

7 Conclusion

This study found that three things formed the visual representation of space as an eating culture facility for the Minangkabau community at the Batagak Pangulu event. First are the physical elements in traditional buildings of the Balai Nan Tuo in Situjuah Batua. These elements are walls, columns, and built-in sitters wrapped in typical Minangkabau fabrics and floors covered with carpet. The second is the object supporting the activities of eating, namely seprah cloth as a base for food, food served, and cutlery. The third is the different forms of traditional clothing used by people who attend eating activities at this event. These three things form the visual representation of space based on the eating culture of the Minangkabau people.

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