

## The Function of Woyap (Traditional House) in Community Life in Mamda Yawan Village, Kentuk District, Jayapura Regency, Indonesia

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### Abstract

### Original Research Article

Woyap is a traditional house for the Mamda Yawan people located in Mamda Yawan Village, Kentuk District, a local genius. Traditional homes are one of the many treasures owned by the Indonesian people whose culture must be preserved by the next generation. Traditional houses express the spirit and soul contained in the community. As an element of culture, namely the technological system, traditional houses have a significant role but are often forgotten. Therefore, the traditional house is an exciting object to be studied, starting from building construction that withstands the burden of making, using local materials, human labour to create it, religious meaning, and social and social-cultural functions. This research is a qualitative descriptive study by choosing a location in Mamda Yawan Village, Kentuk District, Jayapura Regency. The data collection method in this study was conducted by interview, observation, and documentation. The procedure for selecting the informants was selected by purposive sampling. This study aims to determine the function of woyap in the Mamda Yawan community in Kentuk District.

**Keywords:** Woyap, traditional house, function, community life.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

### 1. BACKGROUND

According to anthropology, culture is the whole system of ideas, actions and human creations in the context of community life made into human beings by learning (Peoples & Bailey, 2014). Similarly, according to Edward Burnett Tylor (in Sheeja 2013), culture is a complex whole, including knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and other capabilities acquired by a person as a member of society. According to Kidd & Teagle (2012), culture for society is indispensable as a "goods" or helpful material in self-identification and group. As a frame of reference, culture is a set of agreed values that governs how something ideal is realized. Culture as a symbol (material) refers to how culture is "used" to define group boundaries (Bernard & Gravlee, 2014; Miller, 2017).

Based on observing the above opinion, culture can also be understood as everything related to the realization of abstract knowledge and belief systems and others into social systems and physical signs (artifacts) in specific communities. Every ethnic group and cultural race on earth has various uniqueness and cultural diversity that characterizes it (Gay, 2018). As

found in the community, Kampung Mamda Yawan also has a culture that is its trademark, such as language, arts, knowledge systems, technology systems, and others. Between technology and culture have a link or inseparability. That is, both technology and culture have a reciprocal relationship or mutual influence. Traditional houses are one of the elements of culture as a conventional technology system which is a means of unifying all community members or society. Traditional houses are a valuable cultural heritage as part of the technological system that every ethnic group owns in every ethnic group, including in Papua.

Papua is one of the provinces in Indonesia which has the most expansive area with various tribes and their respective cultures. Pattipi (in Roembiak 1993) stated that Papua Province is inhabited by hundreds of ethnic groups whose distribution areas are ecologically geographically different between the coast and valleys, lakes, hills, and islands. The differences in customs also affect the differences in the structure and form of traditional houses in each ethnic group. According to Sutiari (2018), a traditional house is not just a building but an institution created for the complexity of life's goals. Traditional houses express the spirit and soul contained in the community.

Expression of the spirit and soul of community causes shape and organization of the traditional house to be influenced by its culture. According to Said (2004:47-48), a conventional house or traditional house is a building with a structure, manufacturing method, form and function as well as a variety of decorations that have their characteristics, are passed down from generation to generation and can be used to carry out life activities by residents. Traditional houses were built in the same way by several residents who previously underwent no or very few changes. Traditional houses are formed based on the traditions that existed in the community.

A traditional house is a house building that characterizes or is a typical building of an area that symbolizes the culture and characteristics of the local community. Traditional homes or traditional houses have a significant role but are often forgotten. Therefore, the traditional house is an exciting object to be analyzed starting from the aspect of building construction that withstands the construction load, the use of local materials, the use of human labour to create it, its religious meaning, and its social function and others. Overall in terms of structural aspects, traditional houses have their uniqueness and charm to be studied and studied further and developed with as complete information as possible to the community.

Likewise, the traditional house in the Mamda Yawan Village community, Kemtuk District, is also called woyap in the local language, has functions, religious and philosophical meanings, which are presented through carving motifs on poles. Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide input and feedback for related parties to introduce one of the attributes of local culture. Traditional houses as traditional technology in Papua, especially in Mamda Yawan Village, Kemtuk District, really need attention. Therefore, this research is intended to document the woyap building (traditional house) and describe activities related to the function of the woyap as a conventional house or traditional hall in Mamda Yawan Village.

## 2. Research Purpose

This study aims to determine the shape and material of Woyap and its function on the lives of the people of Mamda Yawan Village, Kemtuk District.

## B. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTS

### 1. Theory

In this study, the author uses several theories that are considered relevant to explain or analyze research problems related to the material and form of the Woyap (traditional house) and the existence of the Woyap itself related to its function in the understanding of the Mamda Yawan community.

The theory of functionalism introduced by B. Malinowski wants to answer the fundamental question of the function (use) of and how culture (consisting of aspects and elements with their institutions) functions to fulfill the needs of human life. Culture is created and patterned as a human response to stimuli from various basic requirements that must be fulfilled (Kempny, 1992). A functional linkage between institutions (economic institutions, kinship, politics, religion, etc.) is needed for the cultural function to fulfill basic needs smoothly, orderly, and in balance (McCloud, 2018). In the context of the community in Mamda Yawan Village, in principle, Woyap has also become a traditional institution with a strategic and religious social position and function in building a personality character full of social norms that live and develop as a culture. The functional interrelationships between institutions analyzed three levels of abstraction customs and behaviour. According to Koentjaraningrat, the three levels of abstraction in question are related to social functions, namely:

Their influence on customs, human behaviour and other social institutions in society.

1. Its influence on the needs of a custom or other institution to achieve its purpose as conceived by the community members concerned.
2. Its effect on the absolute necessity for the integrated functioning of a particular social system.

According to him, the various exchange systems in society are the binding force and the driving force of the community and contribute to creating the principle of reciprocity that activates people's lives.

The semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce who put forward the triadic principle, namely sign, Object, and Interpretant (use of signs) (Peirce, 1992). Peirce's semiotics is more directed at understanding how human cognition understands its surroundings, both the social environment, nature, and the universe. Characters by analyzing data (architectural symbols) based on what is captured by the five senses to interpret by just seeing. The object is the second stage. The way to analyze data (architectural symbols) is based on the literal meaning or everyday meaning that is generally used to interpret the character. In other words, according to Chales Sander Peirce's theory of semiotics, semiotics is based on logic because logic studies how people reason, while reasoning according to pieces is done through signs. According to Piece, these signs allow us to think, relate to other people and give meaning to what the universe displays. In this case, humans have a variety of characters in various aspects of their lives.

In a social environment related to culture, all activities or activities are a sign of their identity. Culture has an enormous scope, starting from the social

environment, natural environment, behaviour, and habits that a person often carries out.

## 2. Concept

### 2.1. Function Definition

According to the Complete Indonesian Dictionary, the definition of function is the usefulness of a thing, the usability, and the work done. This definition has the same perception as the definition of function, according to Sutarto (in Nining Haslinda Zainal. 2008: 22), namely, the function is a breakdown of tasks that are similar or closely related to each other to be carried out by a particular employee, each of which is based on a group of similar activities according to nature or implementation.

### 2.2. Traditional House

Each region in Indonesia has its own culture. That culture is the identity of a tribe or region. A house that has a culture is called a traditional house. A traditional house is a building with a particular characteristic, used as a place of residence by a specific ethnic group (Lucy, 2007). The traditional house is one of the highest cultural representations in a tribe or community (Salazar, 2012). The existence of traditional houses in Indonesia is very diverse and has an essential meaning in history, heritage, and society's progress in civilization (Jaelani, et al., 2020). Danoe Iswanto (2008: 90) says that traditional houses are an ancestral heritage with values or philosophy that need to be preserved.

From the above definitions, it can be concluded that a traditional house is a representation of the highest culture in a community, group or ethnic group and is a cultural heritage that must be preserved because it has its values and philosophy. The people of Kampung Mamda Yawan have socio-cultural emotions towards the value of a house because the entire building has implications for their daily lives and their customs. Traditional homes are used for various conventional and kinship and community activities.

## C. METHODOLOGY

### 1. Research Type and Approach

This type of research is descriptive qualitative, namely a study that seeks to understand and describe data descriptively and systematically about the facts in the field. The approach used in this study is qualitative, which is a research paradigm to describe events, people's behaviour or a situation in a particular place in detail and depth in the form of a narrative.

### 2. Informant Determination Technique

The determination of informants was carried out purposively, totalling five residents of Kampung Mamda Yawan who had lived permanently (above 5 years) at the location of the research object. The five informants in question are ordinary informants who can represent information or provide their perceptions of the

significance of woyap as a place of inheritance of knowledge and others. It includes women leaders, village heads, as government figures who are also children of adat. As a critical informant in this research, a traditional figure called Ondoafi is involved in traditional activities in Kampung Mamda Yawan.

### 3. Data collection technique

To obtain data related to the focus of the problem, observation methods, interviews and documentation are used.

#### a. Observation

In this study, observations were made to observe people's behaviour in Mamda Yawan Village or groups carrying out activities around the Woyap (traditional houses).

#### b. Interview

According to Heru Irianto and Burhan Bungin (2001:108), an Interview is a conversion process to construct people, events, activities, organizations, motivations, feelings, and so on, which is carried out by two parties, namely the interviewer and the interviewee. In this study, data collection techniques through interviews will be carried out using interview guidelines and recording devices.

#### c. Documentation

Documentation is carried out before and after going out in the field to add references in this writing. Documents that become references, in this case, are in the form of research reports, journals and scientific papers.

### 4. Data analysis

Data analysis is a systematic way of testing something to determine its parts, the relationship between the details, and the relationship between the elements and the whole (Spradley 1997:129). Data analysis in this study was carried out from the beginning to the end of the research or data collection. Data analysis was carried out in three steps: data collection, data reduction, presentation in descriptions and explanations/interpretations, and concluding.

Data analysis is a process to process data obtained from research. Data analysis was carried out after the data and supporting evidence was obtained and then arranged systematically. As stated by Milles and Huberman (1992:19-20) that qualitative data analysis consists of three activity lines as follows:

#### a. Data collection

Data collection is an effort to collect data using interview, observation and documentation techniques.

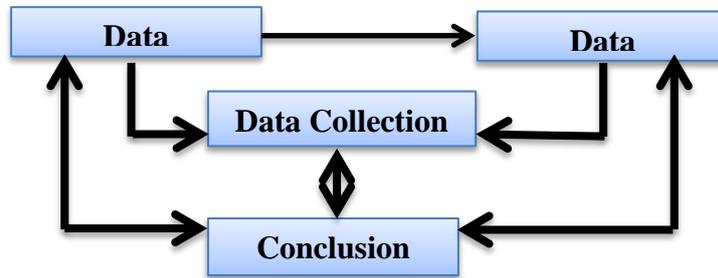
#### b. Data reduction

The purpose of simplification (data reduction) aims to sharpen, classify, direct, discard parts of data that are not needed so that conclusions are easy to draw for the verification process.

**c. Data Presentation**

Presentation of data is a collection of structured information that can provide the possibility of drawing conclusions or taking action. The presentation of the data is done simply so that it is easy

to understand. The research stages stated above were carried out in a cycle starting from the initial stage to the end of the research and returning to the initial stage (see chart 1.1) below:



**Chart 1.1: Data Analysis According to Miles and Huberman**  
Source: Afrizal 2014

**D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**1. Material and Shape of Woyap (traditional house)**

Materials or materials are substances or objects from which something can be made or items needed to make something. Building materials are any materials used for construction purposes. Some natural materials such as clay, sand, wood, stone, even twigs, and leaves have been used to build buildings. The materials or materials for making Woyap (traditional houses) of the Mamda Yawan people are mostly made of wood and Nibun leaves/sago leaves, which can be easily obtained around the village. The environment of Kampung Mamda Yawan is generally a hilly area rich in flora. Materials for making woyap include a) Wood: This material is used mainly in woyap buildings. Its function is as a framework, poles, roof supports, to stairs. The type of wood is ironwood. b) Bamboo: used to flank sago leaves (Woyap roofing material) and as roof support. c) Rattan rope/roots: Weave or tie Nibun leaves/sago leaves as a woyap roof. d) Sago leaves: used as roofing material for woyap buildings.

The presence of a traditional house or woyap in the life of the people of Kampung Mamda Yawan is an expression of the form of human work as part of their culture. In other words, woyap is a physical element of community culture that is formed from tradition. Traditional houses for traditional communities have non-physical aspects, built as a material embodiment of the relationship between humans and the universe, which is more than just a place of protection. Like other traditional houses, Woyap also has form, structure, and function. Architecturally, the appearance of the woyap conventional home is in the form of a place on stilts. The roof is shaped like a triangular prism.

There is a wooden staircase (0.5 m) at the front and back of the building, respectively. The rectangular shape of the woyap has 6 m long wooden poles, and the floor is made of planks with a floor distance of approximately 1 meter from the ground. It is intended to prevent water entry and determine the boundary between the inside and outside of the frame. In the middle of the woyap building, there are many pillars carved with specific motifs full of meaning (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1: Bangunan Woyap**  
Source: Photo of research results, June 2020

Generally, these buildings are made of wood, in the form of ironwood. The roofing material uses sago leaves which can be obtained around the village. Wood is used to make the woyap framework, which generally uses ironwood. Rope from roots or rattan, as a binder on the roof. Roofing material made from sago leaves. The materials for making woyap (traditional houses) are usually stacked the day before use.

The woyap building consists of a row of twelve pillars. Each of the four pillars on the left and right sides, and four more in the center of the building. The inner pillars of the building are carved with various motifs. The engravers appointed are certain people who are entrusted because of their carving skills besides them as part of the indigenous community. The choice of motifs is inspired by the history of their ancestors or the origin of their ancestors (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Some carving motifs on the central pillar of the Woyap traditional house**

Source: Photo of research results, September 2020

A giant seashell is also hung on a pole that functions to communicate to residents in the building center. In addition to the central pillars of the woyap building carved with specific motifs, several sections of

the beam across the top of the posts (engraved). The exact position of the carved beam is parallel to the front and back of the Woyap building (see picture 3).



**Figure 3: Carved cross-section of the beam**

Source: Photo of research results, September 2020

The form of Woyap in the form of a house on stilts, in its manufacture, as described previously, uses materials that come from the surrounding nature. Therefore, even this traditional house building is environmentally friendly. In this context, the forest that produces woyap materials will always be maintained and preserved. It means that the community of Mamda Yawan village lives in their environment and interacts with the components in their environment. These interactions can occur with biotic and abiotic components as well as socio-cultural. The human view of the natural environment can be divided into two groups, namely the inherent (holistic) perspective and the transcendent view. According to a holistic

perspective, humans can separate themselves from biophysical systems, such as animals, plants, mountains, rivers, etc. However, humans still feel a functional relationship with these biophysical factors to form a socio-biophysical unit. This condition generally applies to simple people as well as what happened to the community of Kampung Mamda Yawan. The rules of their ancestors are used as norms to protect their natural environment. These rules become habits, obligations, taboos, and taboos that directly or indirectly maintain the natural environment.

Likewise, the colours used in carving motifs come from nature. The red colour is obtained from the

red fruit that is rubbed and dried (Damle). The white colour is obtained from coral processed into lime, or it can also be obtained from the sap of the milk tree (Ibong git). The brown colour is obtained from the fluid of a specific type of tree (Sben). The black colour is accepted from pot charcoal which is given water and cooked (interview October 2020). In the selection of wood, ironwood is considered to be durable and robust. Structurally, woyap is divided into two parts, namely the roof and the floor.

## 2. The Functions of Woyap

Activities carried out in the Woyap environment are not without reason but because of a cultural system such as values, rules, ideas, beliefs, knowledge and others that cannot be seen (intangible). Based on the results of the interview, it is known that there are several functions of the Woyap for the Mamda Yawan people, namely:

### a. As a place to transfer knowledge

Education for a child is an essential factor and a necessity as has been carried out for generations by the ancestors of the Mamda Yawan people to the next generation. Boys are trained from the beginning with various knowledge such as how to garden, hunting: driving away pigs, shooting pigs (Jubi pigs), making Jubi (arrows), and war training. In the Woyap, boys as the next generation are also introduced to the function of the traditional house, including knowledge of ethics and morals. For the first time, coaching has been carried out by parents for the youth (boys). It is intended that at any time when asked, they are ready, including in the future, and they can survive or survive. As stated by Mr. Titus (60 years old), as a traditional elder in Mamda Yawan Village:

“In the past, the ancestors....who could....the older people gave lessons to the youth or for the conventional war they were ready to hunt....they were prepared to build a house and prepared they were ready...asked for gardening. It's called youth education. He just made the laws. You can't disturb people who have wives, and you must respect your parents. If you are on the road, you can't bother people's wives.” (interview on September 2020)

Based on the interview above, it is known that the role of parents is vital in sharing knowledge with generations. Especially in Woyap, the transfer of knowledge is carried out as a place of learning. Woyap has also become a traditional institution with a strategic and religious position and function in building a personality character full of social norms that live and develop as a culture. Likewise, carve is only taught by certain people whose traditional structure is Samdgu (who is responsible for painting motifs). Other knowledge is traditional dances – dance parties and Toki Tifa (at Tifa). Although the function of Woyap is only prioritized for boys in gaining knowledge, it does

not mean that girls are not equipped with knowledge. Mama Vince (49) stated that knowledge about skills in domestic life is taught to girls. For example, making Noken, cooking, making waist covers, and taking care of yourself, namely tidying your hair (interview September 2020).

### a. As a place for gathering and deliberation

Based on the interview above, it is known that the role of parents is vital in sharing knowledge with generations. Especially in Woyap, the transfer of knowledge is carried out as a place of learning. Woyap has also become a traditional institution with a strategic and religious position and function in building a personality character full of social norms that live and develop as a culture. Likewise, carve is only taught by certain people whose traditional structure is Samdgu (who is responsible for painting motifs). Other knowledge is traditional dances – dance parties and Toki Tifa (at Tifa). Although the function of Woyap is only prioritized for boys in gaining knowledge, it does not mean that girls are not equipped with knowledge. Mama Vince (49) stated that knowledge about skills in domestic life is taught to girls. For example, making Noken, cooking, making waist covers, and taking care of yourself, namely tidying your hair (interview on September 2020):

“...for the place of deliberation... Decisions are implemented. The decision of the dowry, in Woyap. Problems in other villages, conflicts....talk about everything in this Woyap” (interview on July 2020)

Woyap is also a place to socialize for Mamda Yawan people from various social strata who meet here to discuss various problems of social life. According to an informant named YL (49 years old), that "all social affairs that can disturb the peace of the residents are discussed and resolved here (interview July 2020)".

Based on the description above, the function of the woyap as a place for gathering and deliberation includes:

1. Planning the implementation of traditional ceremonies to be carried out,
2. Work that is of common interest involving the participation of all communities, especially those who have been given responsibilities by traditional elders such as community service to work on the Ondoafi garden, and
3. Settlement of customary cases carried out by local communities such as divorce, land problems that occur in the community, namely in terms of inheritance, and land boundaries between villages.

### b. As an information center

When there is an inauguration or inauguration of Ondoafi, the main Tifa is sound from the woyap. Mamda Yawan as a Tifa holder will receive a sign from

the neighbouring village, namely Sabron. From Woyap also obtained reply information, symbolizing Tifa's return from Sabron, which means a sign of being ready to join. For the Mamda Yawan people as residents, woyap is also an information center using the available seashells (formerly). How to blow a clam also indicates the type of information conveyed—for example, sad news, news to carry out traditional ceremonies, Ondoafi training, and others. However, nowadays, seashells are no longer used due to more advanced technological systems (mobile phones, speakers).

### c. Sebagai wadah pemersatu

Woyap is located in the middle of a residential area, close to the house of traditional leaders/village heads and not far from the road. It is intended to be easy to reach and easy to gather all community members who are scattered in the village and become the center of traditional village activities. In Woyap all residents are united in one common activity such as the payment of dowry and others. Residents who have been busy for some time, especially in gardening or hunting activities, as well as office routines, can then gather in a fluid atmosphere.

### d. As a place for traditional ceremonies

As described above, Woyap, a gathering place to gather and unite all residents, is also a place to hold traditional ceremonies. For example, the dowry payment, the inauguration of Ondoafi, the Sadamani ceremony, a dance party ceremony played by children. This dance party dance is performed during the dowry ceremony or the inauguration of Ondoafi as a symbol of local culture, all done in Woyap.

## E. CLOSING CONCLUSION

A traditional house is a conventional house built and is the highest cultural representation in a community/society. Certain ethnic groups such as the Mamda Yawan people as the Kemtuk tribe also have a traditional house called woyap. As a conventional house, woyap is in the middle of traditional nets, social relations, customary law, myths, etc. Woyap is a traditional house located in Mamda Yawan Village, Kemtuk District, a pearl of local wisdom (local genius). Based on the research results, it can be concluded that woyap has significant cultural meaning for the Mamda Yawan people. Woyap expresses the spirit and soul contained in the Mamda Yawan community. The traditional house or woyap is located in the middle of the village of Mamda Yawan on the road and in the field area. This position makes it easy for anyone who wants to visit (easy access). A traditional house or traditional house is a building with a structure, method of manufacture, form and function, and a variety of decorations that have their characteristics, are passed down from generation to generation, and can be used to carry out life activities population. The woyap building

is slightly different from the general residents' houses, with a construction consisting of a roof and a floor.

## SUGGESTION

Along with implementing the special autonomy of the Papua Province, it is necessary to pass on various knowledge to the next generations. It is possible if there is cooperation between multiple parties. Knowledge and understanding of traditional technology systems with local wisdom is a must to maintain the sustainability or existence of local culture. The concrete form of inheritance is to include it as local content.

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