

**PROMOTING KARO CULTURE AND TRADITION BY DESIGNING JAMBUR
AND TRADITIONAL MARKET AS A COMMUNITY CENTER IN BUKIT
LAWANG, NORTH SUMATERA, INDONESIA**

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ABSTRAK

Jambur and traditional markets are buildings that are often used by the Karo community. Jambur is used as a place to organize Karo cultural events such as marriage ceremonies, death (*simate-mate*), and others. The market is used as a place to conduct buying and selling activities. Nowadays, many markets also function as jambur. The community functions several kiosks or stalls in a row into a jambur, also known as *jambur los*. This is because existing jambur tend to be expensive, exclusive and only available in a few locations in big cities. This is less than the number of Karo people who still use jambur for all traditional activities. The unification of the jambur function within the traditional market has both positive and negative sides. The positive side of this unification is the availability of a multi-functional community center that is easy and cheap. In addition, this community center can function as a cultural expression and tourism promotion. The negative side is the problem of congestion and chaos due to market activities that tend to be dirty and crowded. This paper examines the design of a jambur within a traditional market in Gotong Royong Village, Bukit Lawang, North Sumatra. In addition to functioning as a community center, the design is also expected to promote Karo culture and the Bukit Lawang tourist destination. The method chosen was descriptive qualitative method and literature study where the author collected literature data about Karo culture, directly observed the environmental conditions of the object and interviewed residents of Gotong Royong Village. The design is expected to solve the problem of congestion and market chaos while supporting the expression of Karo culture and promoting the Bukit Lawang tourist destination.

Keywords: *Jambur , Traditional Market , cultural expression, Karo , tourism*

1. Introduction

Indonesia is a country that has many islands, so it is known as an archipelago. With so many islands, Indonesian people have many ethnic groups. Besides being known as an archipelago, Indonesia is also known as a country with diverse cultures. Sumatera Island is the third largest island in Indonesia and is one of the islands with many ethnic groups and abundant cultures. One of the tribes on the island of Sumatera are Karo tribe.

The Karo tribe has a rich variety of traditional culture, where this tribe has characteristics that distinguish it from other tribes, including clan, language, traditional clothing that is identical to the color red, kinship or kinship system, customs, belief system, and traditional house. Culture the Karo tribe can be said to be complete and intact and upheld till this moment. The Karo tribe has an identity carried since birth inherited from their parents that is clan. In one of the *rakut sitelu* statements (Sitepu, SE dan Erdoni, 2019) Clan became a road to make it easier to know *rakut sitelu*. *Rakut sitelu* is a kinship system of the Karo people which means triple ties. These three bonds include: *Kalimbubu* , *anak beru* and *sukut*. By mastering *rakut sitelu*, Karo people can more easily recognize their lineage and make it easier to carry out traditional ceremonies. The Karo tribe is very obedient to customs (customary rules) that have been passed down from generation to generation. This is because if one of the Karo people breaks the rules, they can be said to be "*laradat*" or someone who breaks the rules of Karo culture. Therefore, the Karo people, especially parents, often teach their children to participate in and learn about traditional events so that the children can learn about the customs of the Karo tribe (Purba et al., 2024)

The customs of the Karo community have several levels, such as customs for children, teenagers and parents such as *mbesur-besuri* (a seven-month event for a mother to be pregnant with a child) and *mengket rumah* (events celebrating a new home). This event was held to ask for salvation from God Almighty. Not only customs, the Karo people have a belief system before they knew Muslim and Christian, which is called the Pemena religion. This religion is a religion that has been passed down by the ancestors of the Karo tribe (Sitepu, SE dan Erdoni, 2019). By carrying out these customs, the Karo people generally use the jambur as a place for them to carry out cultural-based activities, every activity and *runggun* (meeting) is carried out in the jambur. However, along with developments over time many Karo people have no place to carry out activity, customs and culture . Therefore, quite a few of them carry it out in other buildings and the most are done in the market.

In North Sumatera, there are quite a lot of jamburs and markets that coexist. One of the two that exist based on observations are in Deli Tua and Namoterasi Village, Langkat. Jambur Stargin Deli Tua is one of the jambur found in Deli Tua where the building is often converted by local residents into their stalls for trading or making it a market. There is also the same case that the Namo Tating market, Langkat is the only market located in the village of Namo Tating which is often used by local residents as a jambur because of limited land and this building does have a sufficient area. This is one of those buildings where the jambur and market are the only buildings. This building is used when one of the building functions is not operational. Jambur is used as a market, and vice versa, the market is used as a jambur. Based on the author's observations, the jambur which was previously used as a market shows the loss of Karo culture because it was converted to another function. In carrying out customs and traditions, one of the buildings most often used is the jambur. Even though in ancient times, when the Karo people lived in traditional villages (for example Lingga and Dokan in Karo Regency, North Sumatra) Jambur was built in the middle of the village (Pratikno, 2021).

One of the two markets that function as jambur is Namo Tating market in Langkat and Jambur Deli Tua in Deli Serdang, both in North Sumatera provicve, where the main function of this building is jambur and market, but local people often use it for other functions, for example the market is used as a place to hold events based on Karo culture. Likewise, jambur is often used as a market when it is not being operated. According to (Fachry et al., 2023) the Delitua market is less comfortable for buying and selling activities, such as a very dirty location, lack of security, irregular arrangement of stalls and so on, making people often complain about the condition of the market. This happens because of the unawareness of residents in using space efficiently.



Figure1 . (a) Namotating Market, Langkat, North Sumatra ; (b) Jambur Stargin and market, Delitua, Deli Serdang, North Sumatra (Authors' documentation, 2024).

Problems that arise from unification jambur and market on one location or market at the same time works as jambur is :

- Make shape building not enough reflect architectural architecture Karo;
- Activity jambur and the market is less than optimal because must share space; and

- Creates dense circulation, chaos and traffic jams Because two functions which were made become one, no There is parking lot.

On the other hand, jambur and markets can be tourism promotion attractions which can also attract the attention of tourists so they want to know more about Karo culture, for example jambur which tourists can visit when not in use by the community to see the splendor of Karo architecture through one of the Karo buildings, and is equipped with with the availability of markets that provide places to sell traditional souvenirs that can meet the needs of tourists when visiting. Bukit Lawang is a famous tourist destination and is visited by many local and foreign tourists. According to Ginting & Sadikini (2018), continuity with the past can be realized in an area through the presence of historical buildings in that place so that harmony between the place and the values contained in it can be understood by the public. This statement is in accordance with (Pratikno, 2021) who said that currently jambur is the only Karo artifact that still exists and needs to be preserved. And by implementing this, Jambur can be better known to the outside community or tourists. In the process of using jambur, the Karo tribe's traditional kinship system can be implemented.

Therefore, this paper will prepare a planning design for the jambur and traditional market, one of the possible locations for Karo customs and cultural activities. In addition, the jambur and market are also designed as part of tourism as a means of promoting Karo culture.

2. Method

The method used is a qualitative descriptive and literature study method where the author collects data through literature about Karo culture. Besides that investigations were also carried out in a field that uses Jambur and markets in some locations. Draft drafted plans implemented in Gotong Royong village, District Bahorok Regency distance 2 kilometers from tourism destination tour Mountain Leuser, Bukit Lawang.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Jambur

Jambur is a place for elders to consult, a sleeping place for young people and male guests, and also a place for traditional Karo art attractions and a place to store granaries (Hadinugroho et al., 2021). It is a condition that if a village (*kuta*) has a traditional house, there must also be jambur available. The function of jambur is very important for village residents. Jambur is also used as a place to carry out social activities for the Karo tribe as a place for weddings (*lakon-lakon*), death ceremonies (*simate-mate*), youth deliberation gatherings (*guro-guro aron*) and so on. At first, the shape of this jambur was almost the same as the shape of the *Jabu Siwaluh* house but had a smaller size with parts that were also the same as the traditional *Jabu* part, namely a joint house with a skew structure but there are no walls or open spaces under the roof. Sometimes the bottom of the jambur is attached to a wall if it is used as a place to store rice.

3.2 Traditional market

Traditional markets are markets built and managed by the Government, Regional Governments, Private Sector, State-Owned Enterprises and Regional-Owned Enterprises including cooperation with the private sector with business places in the form of shops, kiosks, los and tents owned / managed by small, medium, self-help or cooperative traders with small-scale businesses, small capital and with the process of buying and selling merchandise through bargaining (Handayani et al., 2019). Meanwhile, according to Gilarso (2004) at book "*Pengantar ilmu ekonomi makro*" traditional markets are markets that bring together sellers and buyers who can carry out *face-to-face transactions*. This market already has a strategic location and in particular there are times when this market is only open on certain days, which is due to local cultural factors. Most of the merchandise traded in this market is based on local customs. Therefore, it can be concluded that traditional markets are markets managed by the

government or private sector in certain areas with the aim of connecting sellers and buyers in buying and selling traditional goods or local products, such as traditional goods, plants, fruits, vegetables and others originating from the local area.

3.3 *Jambur and Market as Expressions of the Karo Culture*

Based on the definitions above, jambur and market can be used as a form of maintaining Karo culture with this cultural expression. Where the cultural expression in question is in this case the jambur and market can be proposed as a forum for cultural expression . Jambur, which can be a place to learn about Karo culture, can be used as a place to learn about Karo culture. When there are no events, people can visit it, for example to see what Karo culture is like, which is currently just a jambur left by the ancestors of the Karo tribe which has not yet been destroyed . As Priyo Pratikno said, the jambur is one of the Karo architectural artifacts that still survives today , metaphorically forming new hues, auras and new socio- spatial . Jambur was a traditional hall in ancient times which until now is still used to carry out traditional ceremonies, kinship meeting rooms which are experiencing commodification . Apart from that, the market is a supporting factor for cultural expression as a place to trade traditional Karo cultural tools, souvenirs as a form of maintaining Karo culture by displaying typical Karo tribal items.

3.4 *Tourism*

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest earners of foreign exchange for a country, which has the aim of improving the quality of people's lives (Ginting & Narisa, 2019). In addition to cultural expression, jambur and traditional markets can also be an aspect of tourism whose main purpose is to showcase Karo cultural heritage through tourism. In relation to the jambur and traditional market, it will be designed as a place for Karo cultural expression and tourism. The proposed location is Gotong Royong Village, Bukit Lawang, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Where in this village the majority of the population is Karo, which is about 60% of the population is Karo, and this area is a tourist area, so it will have a positive impact by preserving Karo culture and with the jambur and traditional market being able to also improve the quality of life of the local community.

3.5 *Design Concept*

3.5.1 *Separation of Space as an Expression of Culture and Tourism*

The jambur and the market will be designed separately with the aim of mutual focus regarding the placement of the forum as a place to carry out Karo cultural expression and the placement of other functions to support tourism. This is done so that the Karo community's activities are not disrupted in carrying out Karo culture-based activities and tourism supporting activities. Even though both buildings have the same main goal, namely to attract people to learn about Karo culture through jambur and markets as aspects of tourism, both buildings will be more efficient when each can focus on highlighting its function. This can be done by applying a transition space in the form of circulation or transition space in the form of a space that is able to separate the two building functions in one area (Ching F.D, 2023). This is one form of design that is expected to solve the problem of congestion and market chaos while supporting Karo cultural expression and promoting the Bukit Lawang tourist destination.

3.5.2 *Use of Ornaments as Symbols of the Karo Culture*

At this time, many jamburs are only built in the same shape as halls in general, not reflecting Karo culture. Jamburs should have details of Karo cultures such as the *Siwaluh Jabu House* in general, namely *Bindu Matagah* , King Sulaiman's footprint carvings, *Pengret-ret* (lizard symbol), *tupak salah silima-lima*. This also applies to markets as a place for buying and selling that reflects Karo culture, such as the *Kabanjahe fruit market, Karo*. *Bindu Matagah* as a symbol of purpose as *curse silamehuli* (bad things) or get rid of matter evil , a carving of King Solomon's purposeful footprint as repellent spirits evil , anti- toxic , and also functional as instruction road So that you don't get lost easily, *Pengret-ret* or lizard symbol has a purpose as

antidote devil , make family harmony , prosperity and vigilance in Karo culture, and the carving of *Tupak Salah Silima-lima* as a sign of how great the universe is at night where u carving This located at the door enter House custom as symbol about sturdy kinship *Merga silima* in nature Karo people (Husin, 2021).

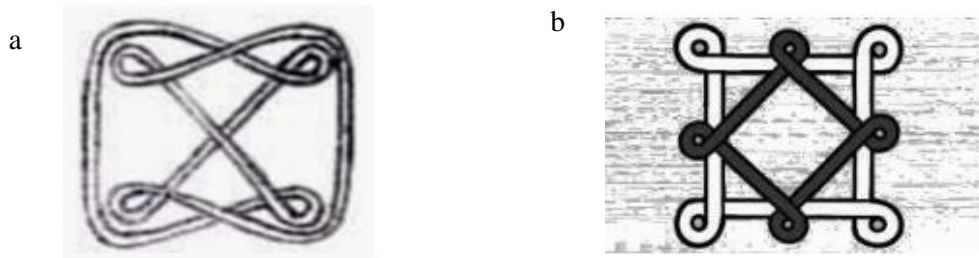


Figure 2 . (a) The size of the *Bindu Matagah* ; (b) King Solomon's footprint carving, (Source:Husin, 2021)

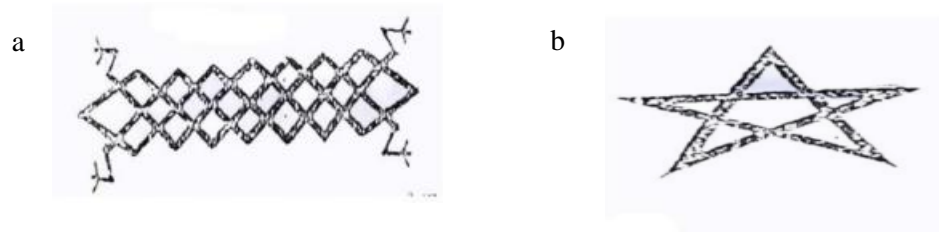


Figure 3 . (a) *Pengret-ret* (lizard) ; (b) *Tupak's carving is wrong with silima-lima*, (Source:Husin, 2021)

3.5.3 As a Tourism Aspect

The function of jambur and market is not only as a place to carry out traditional Karo cultural events or as a forum for Karo cultural expression and as a buying and selling activity, but jambur and market can also be used as tourist attractions. This is able to attract tourists to want to know more about the basic Karo culture of *the Jabu Siwaluh House* which has meaning related to the existing symbols so that it attracts the attention of tourists to learn about Karo culture through jambur and enjoy Karo culture-based tourism activities through the traditional market. This is one form of supporting tourism in culture that refers to creating facilities, infrastructure, and infrastructure typical of supporting community life in an area such as historical heritage buildings (Choirunnisa & Karmilah, 2022).



Figure 4 . Jambur merga silima, (Source: <https://jamburmergasilima.blogspot.com/2015/01/rumah-adat-siwaluh-jabu.html>)

The picture above is a jambur building which resembles the shape of a traditional *Siwaluh Jabu house* which was inaugurated on December 21 2014. The founder of this building is a community figure, namely Daulat Daniel Sinulingga (former regent of Karo 1995-2000 and 2005-2010) and the implementer of the construction is Nelson Sinulingga. The location of the traditional house is between Kacaribu Kandibata villages, Kabanjahe District, Karo Regency. In the future, this building will be used as a Karo cultural tourist attraction.

3.5.4 Jambur and Traditional Market Design

The jambur and market will be circulated efficiently to make it easier for people to come to the two buildings. Apart from that, it is important to provide parking areas for vehicles of residents or tourists with the aim of reducing congestion due to parking vehicles on the side of the road. Apart from that, the jambur will be made to highlight the Karo architecture and the market will also be able to follow the Karo appearance or ornaments which reflect Karo culture. By fulfilling this, the needs of the jambur and the market will be met in order to provide a platform for the community and tourists to express culture and provide tourist enjoyment for visitors who will visit the market. Because on the other hand, jambur and markets can be attractions for tourism promotion which can also attract the attention of tourists who want to learn more about Karo culture, for example jambur is a place visited by tourists. Bukit Lawang is a well-known tourist destination and is visited by many local and foreign tourists. According to Ginting & Sadikini (2018), continuity with the past can be realized in an area through the existence of historical buildings in that place where the harmony between the place and the values in it can be understood by the community, where the statement is appropriate with Pratikno saying that currently the jambur is the only Karo artifact that still exists and needs to be preserved. And by implementing this, Jambur can be better known to the outside community or tourists.

Table 1. Categories of Space Used in Jambur and Markets as Cultural and Tourism Expressions.

Activities	Space
Weddings, simate-mate (death ceremony), runggun (meeting), social cultural activities	Jambur
Shop, selling (typical of Karo cultural)	Market
Shopping and cultural expressions, tourism activities	Jambur and Market

Jambur and traditional markets that apply Karo culture are proposed to provide freedom to the community in learning culture. The second separate function of the building is to provide comfort between doing Karo cultural activities or cultural expressions and buying and selling activities which can also be a means of supporting tourism for visitors and tourists because Bukit Lawang is a well-known tourist village. With this facility we can introduce Karo culture even better. The proposed facilities are the Jambur facility as a multipurpose place for Karo culture and the market as a place to sell traditional Karo culture and support tourism. The most important thing that is implemented in the design is to be able to solve the problem of

congestion and chaos in both building functions in the area in the form of utilizing the transition area to meet the social activity container and tourism aspects.



Figure 5. Jambur and Market Plan (Source: Author’s Design Plan, 2024)



Figure 6. Jambur and Retails Perspective View, (Source: Author’s Design Plan, 2024)

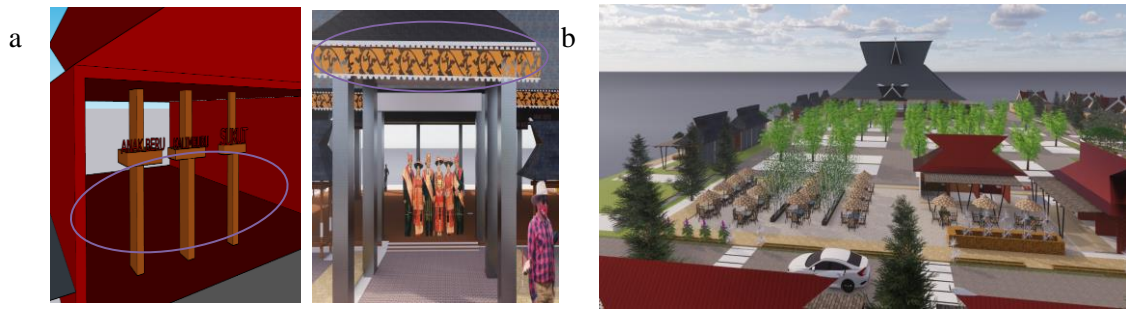


Figure 7. (a) Jambur details applying *Rakut Sitelu* and Karo Ornaments ; (b) Jambur and Market Bird View, (Source: Author’s Design Plan, 2024)



Figure 8. The 3D model of jambur and traditional market in Gotong Royong village, Bukit Lawang, (Source: Author’s Design Plan, 2024)

4. Conclusion

In North Sumatra, especially Bukit Lawang , there are no separate jamburs and markets. Even though jambur is one of the karo artifacts that still exists today, it has always been used for other functions. This cultural heritage is no longer maintained and is starting to fade, so the potential for cultural tourism is starting to decrease. The decreasing potential of cultural tourism objects has resulted in fewer foreign tourists visiting the village. who visited.

One idea that can be given is to create an innovation that aims to streamline space utilization in carrying out cultural expressions and traditional markets to support tourism. The author proposes the design of a Jambur and traditional market with a cultural program where visitors can visit the Jambur as a place to learn Karo culture when it is not used by the local community

to hold Karo culture-based events and the market as a tourism support and tourists can enjoy the atmosphere of the Jambur and the traditional market in Bukit Lawang where 60% of the population is ethnic Karo. This traditional jambur and market will have an impact on the development of Karo culture and is expected to increase visitor interest in visiting Bukit Lawang village as a famous tourist destination. In addition, the application of the transition area between the jambur and the market is efficiently designed with the aim of being a transitional space to reduce the crowdedness in the use of space. With this, the previous negative side will be solved.

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