

UMAH METEN IN ARCHITECTURE MEANING

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ABSTRACT

Umah meten is a traditional Balinese building. *Umah meten* also has other names such as: *Omah meten*, *Bale meten*, *Bale Daje*, *Bale Paturon*, *Bale Sakaulu* and *Bale Sakutus*.

Other buildings besides *Umah meten* in traditional Balinese dwellings, are: *Bale Dangin*, *Bale Dauh*, (according to the cardinal directions), the other names are adjusted to the number of columns, if there are four columns it is called *Bale sakepat*, if there are six columns it is called *bale sakenem* and so on until the columns 12 called *bale sakeroras*. However, among the names of these buildings, only *meten* is called *UMAH*. While the others are called *Bale*. Why is only *meten* called *Umah*? This is what we should know so that we understand the uniqueness of *Umah meten*. This study explores several references to answer questions in this study. There are references in the field of architecture, there are those in the field of culture and religion, and there are also references in the field of tourism. This reference is deliberately used, not only from the field of architectural engineering. However, also in other fields. Because to answer this research question, it is necessary to look for its relation to other field references so that the relevance of the answer can be accepted.

It was found in this study that *Umah meten* is meaningful as a guideline for the size of other building layouts. *Umah meten* also provides an understanding of a unified building in a traditional Balinese house, where *Umah meten* has a door for entry and exit. Meanwhile, another building called *Bale* has no doors. A link was also found between *umah* and the rice fields, so that in one *paumahan* unit there is always a barn as a place to store produce from the fields.

Keywords: *Umah*, *meten*, *Umah meten*, *meaning*, *architecture*

1. INTRODUCTION

Balinese traditional architecture is increasingly viral in the world after the G20 Summit in the Nusa Dua area of Bali. In almost every meeting of the 17 world-class heads of state, traditional Balinese architectural themes were presented, starting from getting off the plane at Ngurah Rai Airport, to the lunch spot. All of them feature traditional Balinese architectural themes. Indeed, even before the G20 Summit, Balinese Traditional Architecture was already well known in the world. However, the moment of meeting world-class heads of state in 2022 in Bali further strengthens the fame of Balinese traditional architecture at the world level. This research is not to discuss the virality of Balinese architecture, it's just that the theme of traditional Balinese architecture is still the main subject of this research. Namely about *Umah meten*. Why is *Umah meten* taken as the object of study? Because until the time this research was carried out, no specific study had been found on *Umah meten*. What was found was a study of the structure and construction of *Umah meten* (Lanus, et al, 2017).

The purpose of this study is to find out the meaning of the word *Umah* which is affixed to this *meten* building, as well as to explain other meanings that might be contained in the term *Umah meten*. The hope from the results of this research is that the people

of Bali and outside Bali will know and understand the meaning of *Umah meten*. And then they can appreciate the values contained in the meaning of *Umah meten*.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Umah meten as the only building in a traditional Balinese house called *umah* should be disclosed. To describe the meaning of the traditional Balinese building architecture called *Umah meten*, the author uses the library study method. In searching the literature, the author uses several references related to the field of architecture, the field of culture and religion as well as references in the field of tourism. From the references used, physical data is obtained in the form of pictures, non-physical data in the form of information explaining the existence of *Umah meten* in Balinese homes. Explanation of non-physical data is in fact related to the presence of physical data. It is only from this connection that the meaning of *Umah meten* is obtained in the context of architecture.

3. RELATED RESEARCH/LITERATURE REVIEW

Law No. 4 of 1992 concerning Housing and Settlements, states that: a house is a building that functions as a residence or residence and a means of fostering a family. In Balinese the word for house is *Umah*, *Umah* as a designation for houses of groups outside the Brahmana and Kshatriya groups (I Gst. Ngoerah Gde Ngoerah, 1981, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. 1982). From the word *Umah*, this becomes the designation of *paumahan* in traditional Balinese architecture.

Several references are related to the theme of this research, including: *Asta kosala Kosali*, *Asta bumi*, *Asta Kosala Kosali* is a guidebook that contains the principles of building Balinese buildings. While *Asta bumi* is a reference that explains the size of placing buildings in a traditional Balinese house.

Umah meten is a closed building, while *Bale* is an open building. The building for storing rice is called *Jineng*, and the building for cooking is called *Pawon*. (I Gst. Ngoerah Gde Ngoerah, Prof. et al, 1981).

Umah meten is classified in the *Sakutus* typology (eight pillared building). *Sakutus* is classified as a middle building with a single function for beds called *Bale meten*. It is located in the *kaje* section facing kelod to *natah* facing *bale sumanggan* (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1982).

Umah meten besides having a function as a bed, also serves as a place to store valuables or sacred objects. In some places *Umah meten* is interpreted as a sacred building (a place to store sacred objects, for example: heirloom keris or sacred ceremonial objects), but in other places it is interpreted as a profane building as a place to sleep.

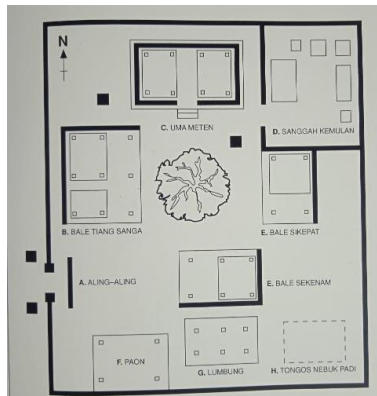
Observing traditional Balinese architecture, in *paumahan* there are several buildings, some are called: *Bale*, *Jineng*, *Pawon* and *meten*. The only building in the *paumahan* (Balinese house) which is called an *umah* is the *meten* building, so it is called the *Umah meten*. There are no other buildings that are called houses.

The only research that examines *Bale meten Sakaulu* or *Umah meten* was conducted by Lanus, et al, 2017. Their research focuses on the problems of the structure and construction of *Umah meten*, not on the study of its meaning.

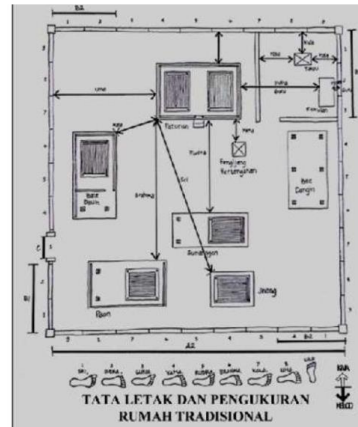
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Umah meten as guru

Asta Bumi (a library that guides the layout of buildings in Bali) as a guide in measuring the location of buildings in the house's yard. Include, that the measurement of the layout of the building in one housing unit follows the *astawara* calculation, starting from: *Sri – Indra – Guru – Yama – Rudra – Brahma – Kala – Uma*.



Picture 1. Denah Plan Unit Rumah Tinggal Tradisional Bali
 Source : Walker Barbara & Rio Helmi. 1997



Picture 2 Pengukuran Rumah Bali
 Source: Rumawan S., 2021

The distance between the *Umah meten* building and the *paumahan* wall (the wall on the side of the *kaje* or the side that is considered the main part of the area) falls on the *guru* measurement. This indicates that *Umah meten's* building has indeed become a teacher for placing other buildings in *Umah's* yard. The *guru* in a general sense is considered a guide, so *Umah meten* is generally interpreted as a guide in terms of placing other buildings in a house's yard. So the layout of traditional Balinese buildings such as: *pawon*, *jineng* and other *bale-bale* always starts from *Umah meten*.

The Dutch-Indonesian dictionary writes that the word *meten* means measure, and in every traditional Balinese house design it is found that the placement of other buildings in *Umah's* yard always starts from *Umah meten* to the other *bale-bales*. Just as the distance from *Umah meten* to *Pawon* falls on the measure of *Brahma*, from *Umah meten* to *Jineng* falls on the measure of *Sri* and so on. So that the measurement for placing a building in one *Umah's* yard always starts from the *Umah meten* building, therefore it is only natural that *Umah meten* is a guidelines of other Balinese buildings.

Umah meten is related to rice fields

On the other hand, especially in the word *Guru*, teacher is also another name than *Shiva* or *Batara Guru*. This can be read from the following passage: According to mythology In Java , *Bathara Guru* is the god who rules over the three worlds, namely *Mayapada* (world of gods or heaven), *Madyapada* (human world or earth), *Arcapada* (underworld or hell). He is the embodiment of the god *Shiva* who governs revelation , gifts, and various knowledge. *Batara Guru* has a magic (wife) named *Dewi Uma* and *Dewi Umaranti* (wikipedia, 2022). From this explanation, an understanding is obtained that *Umah* is no other part of the word *Dewi Uma* (*shakti* or wife of *Betara Guru*). *Dewi Uma* is one of the goddesses who controls the rice fields. The word rice field in Balinese is called *carik*. And it is also known that in a *paumahan* there are often granaries where rice fields are stored. So, in this case it is true that *Umah* is related to *uma* or rice fields, because it is proven by the existence of a granary or *jineng* building in *paumahan*.



Picture 3. Jineng (granary)

***Umah meten*, the only building with doors**

In everyday language in Bali the word *Umah* means house or place to live. This can be believed when in the conversation the question is found: " *dije umahe gus ?*" (where is his house sis). The word *Umahe* refers to the word house or place to live. The meaning of the word *Omah* in the Javanese – Indonesian Dictionary is a place to live; house

In this word, *Omah* can be interpreted as coming from the phrases *Om* and *Ah* . *OM*, in the understanding of the Balinese, is the origin of the universe itself and also the symbol of God that is imagined to appear in the *word of God* or *sabdamaya* (Haryati S, 1985). *Om* is the sacred value of the form of *Omah*. While the phrase *AH*, in the respiratory system in Bali means going out (breathing out). So that in the embodiment of the *Omah* or *Umah* it becomes a building with a door to be able to enter and leave the *Omah* building. Buildings other than *Umah meten* do not use doors or you can call it a *bale* without doors. Only *Umah meten* has a door.



Picture 4. Tampak *Umah meten* (*Omah*)



Picture 5. Tampak *Omah Blumbungan*
Source: Harimurti St. 2020

5. CONCLUSION

The acquisition of the meaning of *Umah meten* into architecture can only be summed up in a word transformation. Namely from ideas in the form of concepts that are transformed into a form, space and activity. This transformation from an idea in the form of a concept (*umah meten*) to a form of space and activity shows that there is a close relationship between the form of space and activity, this relationship is embodied in a word, namely *Umah meten*.

The meanings attached to *Umah meten* in the context of architecture include:

Umah meten as a guide in measuring other buildings in *paumahan*.

Umah meten is related to the place where the Balinese work, namely the rice fields or *uma*.

Umah meten, is the only Balinese building that has a door as an entry and exit route, entering and leaving from *umah meten* to *natah* and then exiting *paumahan* to the rice fields.

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