



The Batang Haring: A Design Concept for Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church at Riang Batang, Central Kalimantan

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Abstract. "Eclectic mix" is a postmodernist perspective that displays a contemporary mode. It embraces the diversity of manifestations of cultural contexts to create novelty in the world of architecture, both in practice and theory. Empirical phenomena show that sacred architecture from around the world to the Nusantara is a manifestation of symbols and traditions of religious faith integrated with locality. A vernacular-based pre-modern perspective approach may potentially offer a unique architectural role to express its sacredness. This study aims to review the implementation as physical perspective, in which the *Batang Haring* concept serves as vernacular inspiration in the design of the Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo (SYMR) Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan. *Batang Haring* is an abstract idea that comes from the local wisdom of the Dayak tribe in Central Kalimantan. It presents a local uniqueness integrated with the symbols and traditions of the Catholic faith. The research method involves thick description and interpretive reflectiveness. The research steps are: 1) a description of the *Batang Haring* concept, 2) a comparative interpretation of symbols, and 3) a reflective understanding to express sacredness. This study concludes that the concept of *Batang Haring*, which appropriates symbols and traditions of the Catholic faith, can reveal sacredness that culminates in the reality of "process" as a reflection of "life" architecture. This is a manifestation of the "architectural brilliance" of the Central Kalimantan locality. Finally, this research is useful as a reference for developing knowledge of sacred architecture, especially Catholic Church architecture, which promotes local values in expressing the sacred.

Keywords: Sacredness, Locality, Postmodernist, Catholic Church, Appropriation.

1 Introduction

The scientific paradigm as a worldview toward an object serves as a foundation that influences architectural understanding. Postmodernism is a scientific paradigm characterized by dismantling the modern order that prioritizes unity by introducing diversity in reality [1]. It presents equality and adaptability to attain truth [2]. Postmodern thought in architecture emerges through a blend of past and present discourses, showcasing uniqueness as non-boring architecture [3]. Sensitivity to locality brings forth the identity where the architecture exists and is present [4]. Plural interpretations and richness of meaning are goals in presenting architecture [5]. Subsequently, the idea of "Being Indonesian and Global" (*Meng-Indonesia dan meng-Global*) reflects contemporary *Nusantara* Architecture [6]. It has an adaptive essence in its integration(*perpaduan*) [7]. This is a response of Indonesian architecture under the umbrella of postmodernist thought.

The design of sacred architecture globally displays religious tradition symbols contextualized with the place where the architecture exists. The place plays a significant role in mediating its sacredness [8]. This context of place gives sacred architecture an identity and richness of meaning in expressing its sacredness. This phenomenon has been present within the *Nusantara* (Indonesian archipelago) from the classical era to the present [9]. Catholic Church architecture is a form of sacred architecture that has developed in *Nusantara*. Post-Vatican II Council (1962-1965), the design of Catholic churches increasingly reflects a trend of diversity where local values merge with Catholic faith symbols and traditions [10]. This phenomenon has raised concerns about the potential fading of sacred meaning due to the overlap between Catholic faith symbols and traditions with local values. To address this issue, a study on the implementation of local values merging with Catholic faith symbols and traditions is necessary to reveal the sacred meaning.

Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church (SYMR) in Riam Batang serves as a place of worship for religious Catholics in Central Kalimantan. It has been a definitive parish church since August 2, 2023, branching off from Paroki Santo Josef Freinademetz - *Desa Telok, Kabupaten Katingan*, Central Kalimantan. Currently, the church is a stilt house (*rumah panggung*) with physical conditions and space functions that are not ideal for encountering "The Sacred." [11]. Therefore, a design study of the Catholic church building as a vessel for encountering "The Sacred" contextualized with its place is needed.

Scientific studies on church architecture have been conducted in several countries. These include studies on the formation and function of postmodern churches in residential environments considering local community needs in Poland [12]. Yuan studied the Jubilee Church in Rome, illustrating Meier's white design technique approach in architectural space [13]. Coomans conducted a pragmatic approach through the handbook "Le Missionnaire Constructeur," 1926, related to church construction in Northern China during Christian Inculturation [14]. Studies on the understanding of sacred architecture based on spiritual transformation and inculturation with a case study of Wooden Church Heritage in the Northeast of Thailand [15]. Dwijendra presented the concept of church architecture based on vernacular elements in Bali with a case study

of Pniel Blimbingsari Christian Church, Jembrana, Bali, Indonesia [16]. Studies on creating a sacred environment using natural light elements at Santo Kristoforus Catholic Church in Jakarta [17]. Trisno discussed the relationship between liturgy and spatial configuration in the architectural form of Santa Theresia Catholic Church in Jakarta, Indonesia, which emits a sacred expression [18]. Studies on form, function, and meaning in cathedral churches with a case study of Ijen Cathedral Church in Malang, Indonesia [10]. Joyce Laurens explored the relationship between form and meaning in inculturating architecture to enhance the sacredness of church architecture with a case study of Ganjuran Catholic Church in Bantul, Yogyakarta, Indonesia [19]. Rihadian stated that modern movement era Catholic church architecture has an identity of geometric shapes on facades, symbols, and simple ornaments, as well as pyramid-shaped roofs [20]. Studies on icon and symbol approaches applied to form, scale, lighting, material, and texture influencing human senses in experiencing space with a case study of Kalimantan Evangelical Catholic Church In Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan [21]. Studies on neo-vernacular architectural approaches in designing Catholic churches in Samarinda, East Kalimantan [22]. Studies on the interior of Gemma Galgani Catholic Church in Ketapang, West Kalimantan, as a manifestation of cultural acculturation where one point is the *Batang Haring* structure manifested in the interior space organization pattern [23]. From existing scientific publications, there is a lack of specific studies on the approach of using the Batang Haring concept as a vernacular inspiration that integrates with the symbols and traditions of the Catholic faith in Catholic church design.

The discourse of integration refers to the term architectural appropriation. Understanding appropriation from the Latin root word *appropriare* is an act of taking or borrowing something. In philosophical terms, Ricoeur defines appropriation as a process that reveals new modes of existence [24]. Appropriation is "to make one's own what was initially alien." [25, 26] In the context of art, appropriation means borrowing elements from others to create a new creation in art [27]. The term appropriation in architecture rapidly developed in the postmodern era. It is a critique of orthodox modernism. Philip Johnson undertook this action for the architectural process with innovative and creative strategies in contemporary works [28]. Lee describes appropriation as an architectural process by bringing forth elements of past architecture in a new context [29]. Appropriation is seen as reuse with sources from historical elements, someone's art habits, past awareness, and present experiences dialoguing with the natural and social environment [30]. Understanding architectural appropriation as a whole is an architectural process by borrowing, adopting, and integrating to produce new architectural creations [31].

The context of the place in the case study of SYMR Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan, refers to the *Batang Haring* concept as a local value. *Batang Haring* or *Batang Garing* means Tree of Life. It is local wisdom from the Dayak Ngaju tribe (indigenous people of Central Kalimantan) [32]. This tribe believes that *Batang Haring* is a tree marking the beginning of life. This belief is written in the holy book Panaturan (the holy book of Hindu Kaharingan belief). *Batang Haring* symbolizes the Upper world and the Underworlds with paradoxical characteristics. These opposing conditions will collide harmoniously as a cosmic marriage, presenting a new order in the Middle World. *Batang Haring* resembles a spear pointing to the sky. The upper part is a manifestation of *Ranying Hatalla Langit* as the creator of the universe, illustrated

as the *Enggang* bird symbolizing the Upper World. The trunk, branches, leaves, and fruits symbolize the Middle World. Each branch displays three fruits pointing upward and downward, representing three major human groups descended from *Maharaja Sangiang*, *Maharaja Sangen*, and *Maharaja Bunu*. The lower part depicts a jug containing holy water and curved branches manifesting Jatha or the Underworld, often referred to as *Pulau Batu Nindan Tarung*, the place where humans first existed before descending to earth. This discourse explains that the *Batang Haring* concept is local wisdom and the mascot of Central Kalimantan, rich in meaning [33]. Scientific studies on the *Batang Haring* topic have been conducted. These include studies on *Batang Haring* as local wisdom related to tourism destinations in Central Kalimantan [34], studies on *Batang Haring* mythology and meaning [33], studies on ethnopedagogy relating *Batang Haring* to educational values that care for the environment [32], studies exploring *Batang Haring* decorative patterns as transcendent reality among the Dayak Ngaju tribe in Central Kalimantan [35], and studies on the harmony of *Batang Haring* values and meaning with sustainable development principles in Central Kalimantan [36].

From existing scientific publications, no specific studies were found on the *Batang Haring* concept applied to Catholic Church architecture with an appropriation approach. Therefore, this issue needs to be explored further as a reference source for Catholic church building designers. This research aims to review the *Batang Haring* concept that appropriates Catholic faith symbols and traditions to reveal sacredness in the SYMR Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan. This study offers an approach to architectural appropriation as a unique contribution to advancing the knowledge of designing Catholic church architecture, while also enriching the broader discourse on sacred architecture by emphasizing local values in expressing sacredness

2 Research Method

This research employs a qualitative approach and uses a multi-method strategy, specifically thick description and interpretive reflection. The thick description method refers to the thinking of Clifford Geertz [37], where the researcher describes architecture within the understanding of Onion Thick Description (see Fig. 1).

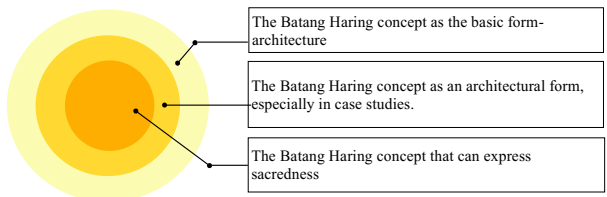


Fig. 1. Onion Thick Description Diagram for Understanding The *Batang Haring* Concept (Elaborated from the Onion Thick Description Clifford Geertz) Source : Author, 2024

Considering the issue of the *Batang Haring* concept applied to the Catholic Church with an architectural appropriation approach, the researcher will always integrate the *Batang Haring* concept with Catholic faith symbols and traditions in each layer of discussion. The contemporary mode is employed to facilitate a dialogue between the *Batang Haring* concept and Catholic faith symbols and traditions to reveal sacredness.

Furthermore, the interpretive reflection method is the art of deeply understanding the meanings that give significance to the world where the sacred architecture exists. This method refers to the thoughts of Paul Ricoeur, where meaning appears as a message for the present [38, 39]. This interpretation requires critical reflection in revealing the sacredness of the Catholic church architecture object contextualized with the place where it is located.

The data collection techniques are: (1) Reference studies including discourses on the *Batang Haring* in philosophical and meaningful contexts, discourses on Catholic faith symbols and traditions, discourses on the concepts and theories of sacred architecture, especially Catholic churches, and discourses on the concepts and theories of appropriation in architecture; (2) Interviews with Father Donisius Dotan Tunti, SDV, the Parish Priest of Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan; (3) Documentation in the form of researcher's notes, photos, video recordings, and architectural drawings in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms related to the case study.

The analysis steps are: (1) Describing the *Batang Haring* concept articulated as the basic form; (2) Comparative interpretation of the *Batang Haring* concept appropriated with Catholic faith symbols and traditions in architectural forms (including the body building of architecture and interior layout); (3) Reflective understanding of the *Batang Haring* concept appropriated with Catholic faith symbols and traditions in Catholic church architecture to reveal sacredness. The conclusion of this research is to discover the layers of sacredness from the tangible to the intangible, serving as a message for the present.

3 Results and Discussions

The Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo (SYMR) Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan, represents sacred architecture for the Catholic religious community located in the locus of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. The location is in *Desa* Riam Batang, *Kabupaten* Seruyan, *Provinsi* Central Kalimantan. It directly borders West Kalimantan and is approximately 1002 km away, taking about 3 to 4 days of travel from Palangka Raya city [11]. The map of the location of the church and the condition of this site (see Fig. 2)

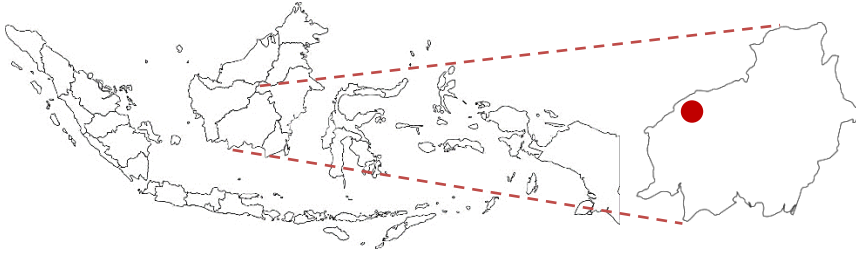


Fig. 2. Location Map and Overview Site of The Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church at Riam Batang, Seruyan Hulu, Central Kalimantan. Source: Author 2024

The natural environmental context reveals that the SYMR Catholic Church in Riam Batang is situated in a rural area, with travel time from the city of Palangka Raya via land and water transportation taking three to four days. The majority of the access route consists of large crushed stones and soil. The natural environment includes swamps and farmland with abundant timber resources, and several wood industry camps are present in the area [11]. The context of the natural environment provides a logical basis for the church's design to incorporate natural elements, namely wood, stone, and water.

The context of Catholic faith traditions is reflected in the name of Saint Justin Maria Russolillo, the patron saint of this church. As the "VOCATIONIST FATHERS," his vocationist spirituality is "Ascension to the Trinity with the Holy Family in the Church." The Blessed Trinity serves as the center and axis in the Society of Divine Vocations (a religious congregation founded by Saint Justin Maria Russolillo, SDV) [40]. Understanding the Blessed Trinity in the Catholic tradition means one God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit [41]. Brower analyzes the concept of the Blessed Trinity, asserting that there exists only one God, which includes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as divine entities. However, it is crucial to emphasize that the Father is distinct from the Son, and the Holy Spirit is not identical to either the Father or the Son [42]. This explanation shows that the Blessed Trinity is a symbol and tradition of Catholic faith to be applied to the SYMR Catholic Church. The Blessed Trinity is interpreted in the basic form based on the sequence of the sign of the cross (see Fig. 3).

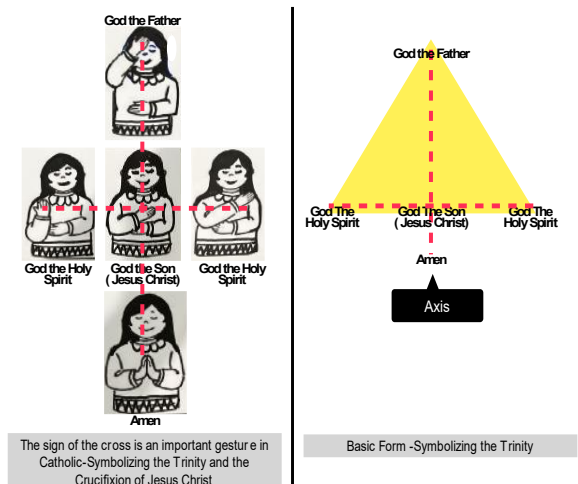


Fig. 3. The Blessed Trinity Concept and Basic Form. Source : Author, 2024

Currently, the condition of the parish church building is that of a stilt house (*rumah panggung*) church where the religious community gathers and worships, though its capacity remains inadequate. The rectory is still under construction (see Fig. 4).



Fig 4. Image of The Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church at Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan (Current Conditions) Source : RP. Donisius Dotantunti SDV, 2023

The scope of the church's service encompasses the Hulu Sungai Katingan and Hulu Sungai Seruyan regions. The Catholic population in Hulu Sungai Katingan consists of 557 individuals, while the Catholic community in Hulu Sungai Seruyan totals 1,307 individuals [11]. This situation logically necessitates the development of a Catholic Church design that can accommodate the congregation according to its capacity while presenting a concept that is contextual to the place where the church is located.

The design of the SYMR Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan, represents a new concept in the form of a worship building. This church features three building masses and one bell tower. The three building masses comprise the main worship building and two ancillary structures. The main worship building, named the Church of Allah Bapa dan Putera, comprises several spaces, including: (1) Sanctuary, (2) Sacristy, (3) Nave/area for congregational worship, and (4) Confessional. The two ancillary buildings, named the Church of the Roh Kudus, serve as an extension of the nave. A pond serves as barrier and a connector between the main worship building and

the two ancillary structures. The bell tower acts as a focal point, serving as a space for the bells and a time marker (see Fig. 5).

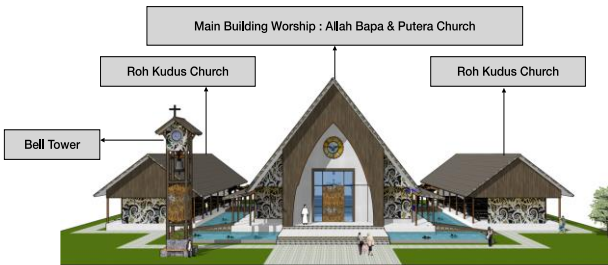


Fig. 5. Perspective Image of The Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church Design
Source: Author, 2023

The comprehensive design plan and elevation of the SYMR Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan (see Fig. 6).

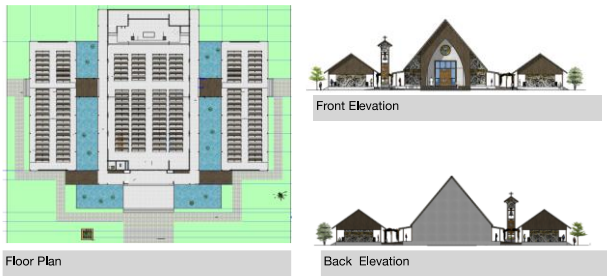


Fig. 6. Floor Plan - Elevation of The Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church
Design Source : Author, 2023

The design of the main worship building features an enclosure that is more closed than that of the ancillary structures. The wall enclosure employs a combination of solid walls and folding door openings made of wood. The interior reveals a repetition of wooden columns and trusses that lead towards the sanctuary. On the left and right sides of the sanctuary, there are niches (relung) for the altars of the saints, featuring objects of devotion dedicated to Saint Mary and Saint Joseph. The roof structure exhibits a gable form with overhangs on the right and left sides. The porch functions as a transitional space that connects the building with the outdoors. (see Fig.7)



Fig. 7. Perspective Interior of The Santo Yustinus Maria Russolillo Catholic Church Design
Source: Author, 2023

Furthermore, the two ancillary buildings feature gable roofs constructed of exposed wooden trusses. The wall enclosures are designed to be open, facilitating a relationship between the outdoor and indoor. The predominant use of wood is a reflection of the natural context.

3.1 The description of the Batang Haring Concept

The symbol of the *Batang Haring* as the Tree of Life represents the concept of a harmonious relationship between humans and God, humans and others, and humans and nature. The *Batang Haring* symbol manifests the cosmology of the three worlds: the Upper World, the Middle World, and the Underworld. The Upper World represents enlightenment. The Middle World portrays human experience. Additionally, The the Underworld signifies death and rebirth. All these worlds are interconnected by the axis mundi. Architecture translates the *Batang Haring* symbol into the division of zones: the sacred zone, the in-between zone, and the profane zone. The axis functions as the datum for each zone, providing symmetrical balance (see Fig. 8)

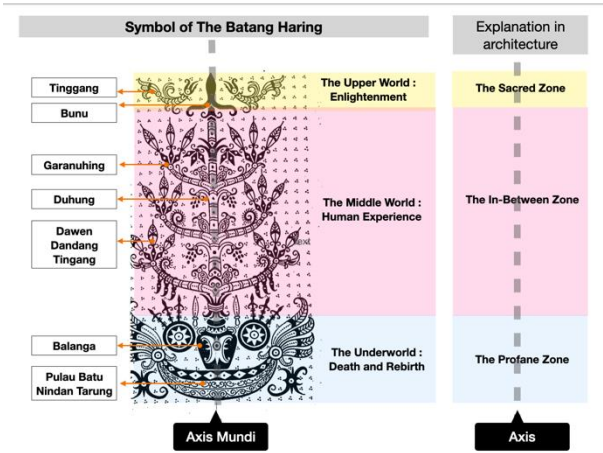


Fig 8. The Batang Haring Symbol in Architecture.Source : Author, 2024

The abstract notion of *Batang Haring* can be translated into the basic form of the body of architecture. The pinnacle of the roof represents the embodiment of the Upper World. The enclosing walls that accommodate ritual practices of humanity represent the Middle World. The base plane of the building is the embodiment of the Underworld. The body of architecture features an axis as the datum that unifies architectural elements. The imaginary axis provides balance, resulting in a form characterized by bilateral symmetry. Furthermore, the principle of hierarchy, from the profane to the sacred, is present from the base plane of the building to the roof, marked by the roof's pinnacle as the most sacred point. (see Fig. 9)

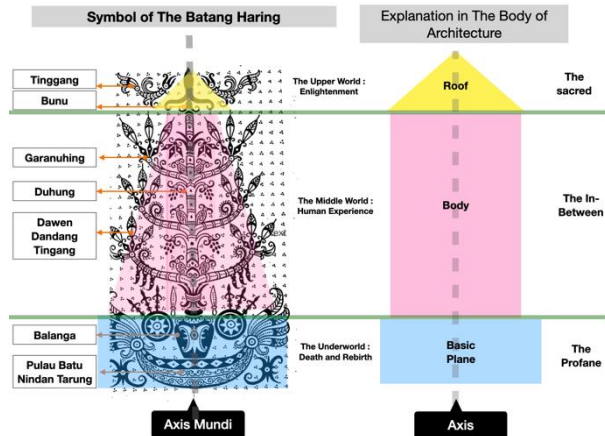


Fig. 9. The *Batang Haring* Symbol and The Body of Architecture. Source : Author, 2024

The body of architecture has a way of interpreting the elements of the abstract notion of *Batang Haring*. A detailed presentation is provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Elements of The *Batang Haring* and The Body of Architecture
(Elaboration of the *Batang Haring* symbol)
Source : Author, 2024

Elements of The Batang Haring Symbol	Literal Meaning	Elements of the Body of Architecture	Divisions of the Body of Architecture
Tinggang	Enggang bird / Hornbills	The top of the roof is a complementary ornament of a hornbill	Roof
Buru	Wooden Spearhead	Triangular roof	Roof
Duhung	Spear that connect top and bottom	Column	Body
Garanuhing	Fruit	Lighting that radiates upwards and downwards	Body
Dawen Dadang Tingang	The leaves are shaped like a hornbill tail feathers	The ornaments attached are leaves and branches to the walls of the enclosure	Body
Balanga	Jar	The water element that surrounds the base of the building	Basic Plane
Pulau Batu Nindan Tarung	The place where The Batang Garing grows	The base of the land where buildings exist and relate to nature	Basic P

Tinggang, represented as the Hornbill, is implemented as the pinnacle of the roof with a complementary ornament in the form of a hornbill. *Bunu*, depicted as a spearhead, is translated into a roof shape that tapers upward. *Duhung*, represented a tree trunk-spear, is represented as columns supporting the structure. *Garanuhing*, resembling fruit with

tips pointing both upward and downward, is manifested as lighting that shines both up and down. *Dawen Dadang Tingang*, representing leaves shaped like the tail feathers of a Hornbill, is expressed as ornamental vines and leaves on the building's façade. Furthermore, *Balanga*, symbolizing a jar, is represented by water elements that encircle the building's base. *Pulau Batu Nindan Tarung*, the place where the *Batang Haring* exists, is represented as the base plane of the building, establishing a relationship with the nature. Overall, the elements of *Batang Haring* can be embodied in the body of architecture, particularly in sacred architecture, which serves as a place where the religious meet the “The Sacred.”

The concept of *Batang Haring* can be translated into the basic form of the interior layout in sacred architecture, particularly in Catholic church architecture. (see Fig. 10). The Upper World, consisting of *Tingang* and *Bunu*, is realized as the altar space, which is the holiest area. *Duhung* is manifested as a reflection path leading to the altar. *Garanuhing* (fruit), which signifies the relationship among humans, and *Dawen Dadang Tingang* (leaves resembling the tail feathers of a Hornbill), which represents character within individuals, are embodied as a worship place where people engage with one another to encounter manifestations of “The Sacred”

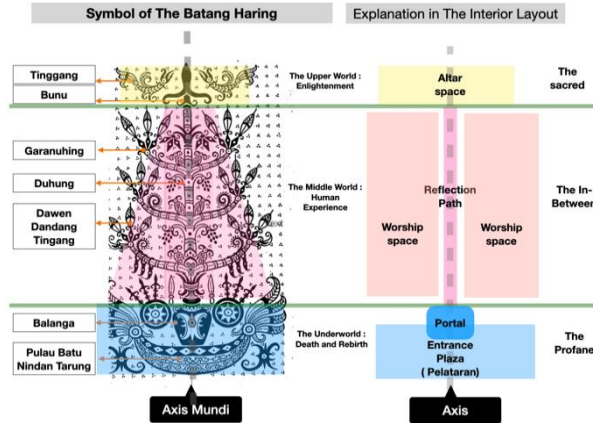


Fig. 10. The *Batang Haring* Symbol and The Interior Layout. Source : Author, 2024

Balanga (jar), filled with water, is implemented as a portal area marking the entrance to a more sacred space. This area contains water elements, symbolizing self-purification. Furthermore, *Pulau Batu Nindan Tarung* is realized as the entrance plaza, establishing a connection with nature. Overall, the elements of the *Batang Haring* concept can be translated into the basic form applied to the interior layout.

3.2 Comparative Interpretation of Symbols Through an Architectural Appropriation Approach in the SYMR Catholic Church

The architectural appropriation approach serves as the basis for adopting the *Batang Haring* concept, which harmoniously integrates with the symbols and traditions of the Catholic faith, particularly the Blessed Trinity, in the design of the SYMR Catholic Church.

The design of the body of architecture, in terms of spatial arrangement and mass, consists of three basic shapes: a triangle and two rectangles. These basic forms represent the manifestation of the *Batang Haring* concept, which harmonizes with the concept of the Blessed Trinity. The *Batang Haring* concept is divided into three worlds. The roof of the building, shaped like a triangle, symbolizes the Upper World, representing heaven. The main body, serving as a place for worship, takes the form of a rectangle, representing the Middle World, which signifies the place of human ritual. The base, also rectangular and complemented by water elements, embodies the Underworld, containing water that symbolizes self-purification and the place, where individuals exist in a profane condition.

Furthermore, the body of architecture, in terms of spatial arrangement and massing, manifests the concept of the Blessed Trinity. The pinnacle of the roof represents God the Father. The main entrance symbolizes God the Son (Jesus Christ). The door is interpreted as the Son, serving as a hierophany leading to an encounter with the Father. The body of the ancillary buildings on the left and right sides symbolizes God the Holy Spirit, indicating the presence of the Holy Spirit on both sides. Additionally, the base plane represents "Amen," signifying an act of affirmation that solemnly professes faith in God in three persons. When the *Batang Haring* concept appropriates the Blessed Trinity concept, the imaginary axis becomes the datum, uniting the *Batang Haring* concept with the Blessed Trinity concept. In the understanding of sacred architecture, this imaginary axis is universally referred to as the axis mundi. Figure 11 illustrates the implementation of the integrated concepts of *Batang Haring* and the Blessed Trinity in the church design.

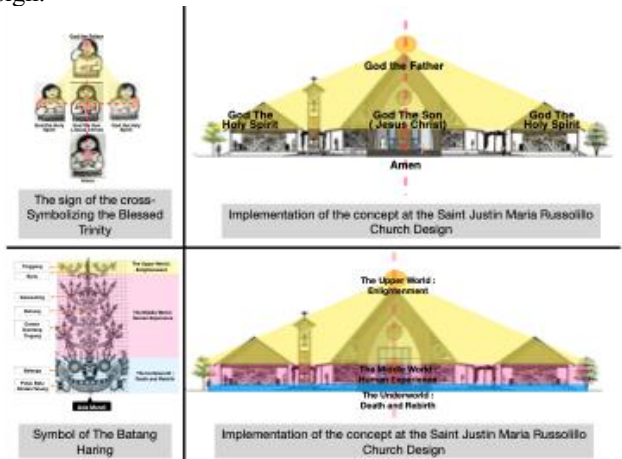


Fig. 11. Architectural Appropriation Approach on the Batang Haring Concept and The Blessed Trinity Concept in The Body of Architecture - The Entire Building Mass Author, 2024

The main worship building, referred to as the Church of Allah Bapa dan Putera, features a body of architecture with a gable roof adorned with an ornament of the Hornbill, symbolizing *Tingang*. This signifies "beyond the world," representing God and His existence. The triangular roof shape manifests *Bunu*, symbolizing a posture of reverence towards the presence of God. The body of the building is characterized by wooden columns and planks, adorned with ornamental vines and leaves with local character. This

represents *Duhung* and *Dawen Dadang Tingang*. This section signifies the relationship between humanity, God, others, and oneself. The lighting within the building's body symbolizes *Garanuhing*, representing the “fruits” of human actions that shine toward heaven and toward fellow humans. Additionally, the base of the building is characterized by an elevated floor and is surrounded by a pond, which signifies *Balanga* and *Pulau Batu Nindan Tarung*. This section signifies self-purification and the inhabited realm of humanity in a profane condition. This description illustrates that the *Batang Haring* concept is manifested within the body of architecture of the Church of Allah Bapa dan Putera, reflecting the connections between humans, God, others, and the nature. (see Fig. 12)

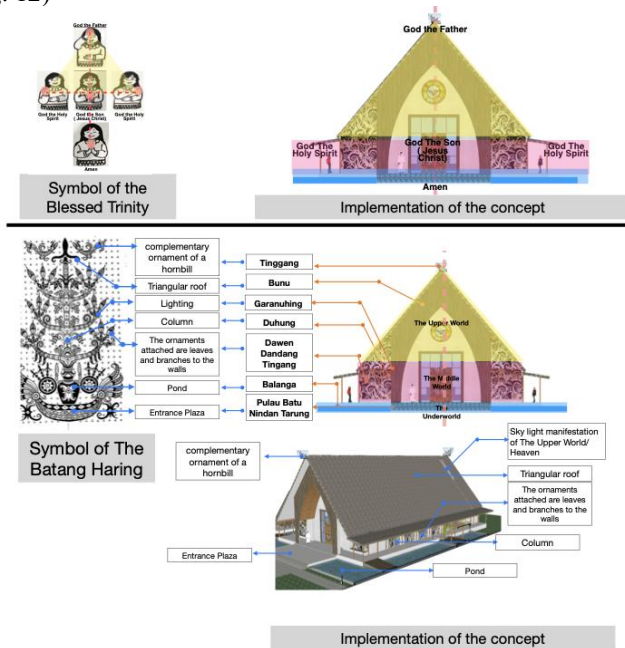


Fig. 12. Architectural Appropriation Approach on the Batang Haring concept and The Blessed Trinity Concept in The Body of Architecture - Main Building Worship Author, 2024

Likewise, the body of architecture in the main worship building manifests the concept of the Blessed Trinity. The pinnacle of the roof represents God the Father. The body of the building, which accommodates ritual activities, symbolizes God the Son. Meanwhile, the The corridor areas on either side, closely related to the outdoor, represent God the Holy Spirit, who is present in everyday life and close to nature. "Amen," as an affirmation of the Blessed Trinity, is manifested in the solid and strong base plane. The datum in the concepts of *Batang Haring* and the Blessed Trinity is embodied in the imaginary axis, giving the building a character of bilateral symmetry. (see Fig. 12)

The interior layout design of the main worship building manifests the concepts of *Batang Haring* and the Blessed Trinity. The interior layout is based on the design principle of a balanced bilateral symmetry, unifying the elements that comprise it. The sanctuary and sacristy represent the Upper World, signifying the most sacred realm. The elevated floor serves as an indicator that the sanctuary is the most significant area

within the church. The nave and confessional symbolize the Middle World, reflecting *Garanuhing* and *Dawen Dadang Tingang*. This section signifies the relationship between humanity and oneself, presenting “fruits” as a process toward an encounter with God. The middle pathway leading to the sanctuary embodies *Duhung*, representing the connection between heaven, the world of ritualistic human life, and the profane realm. The entrance door and the container for holy water (stoup) represent *Balanga*, signifying purification that directs humanity toward holiness. The entrance plaza, which connects to the outdoor, represents *Pulau Batu Nindan Tarung*, signifying a profane space where early humans resided prior to undergoing self-purification (see Fig. 13).

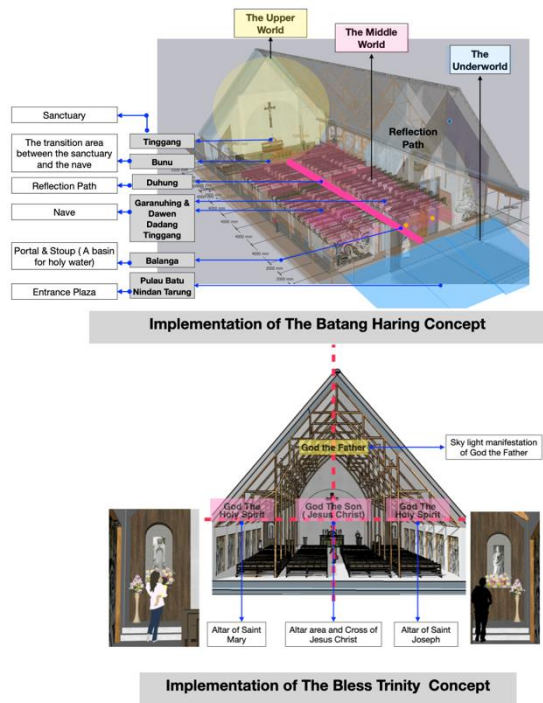


Fig. 13. Architectural Appropriation Approach on The Batang Haring Concept and The Blessed Trinity Concept in Interior Layout - Main Building Worship. Author, 2024

The sanctuary, as the holiest area within the church's interior, features a skylight that allows celestial light to enter the altar space. This ambiance represents the presence of God the Father. The altar, serving as the point view of the sanctuary, and the cross, symbolizing Christ's sacrifice, embody the presence of God the Son. Moreover, the Altar of Saint Mary on the left side and the Altar of Saint Joseph on the right side represent the Holy Spirit, where the lives of the saints accompany humanity on the path to holiness. The sanctuary presents an imaginary axis that binds its constitutive elements together. The vertical axis connects the altar space with the enclosing roof and celestial light, signifying the relationship between God the Father and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ during the consecration of the Eucharist in the altar area. The horizontal axis relates the main altar, symbolizing Christ, with the Altar of Saint Mary and the

Altar of Saint Joseph. This is how architecture expresses the Holy Family in the Church as a spirituality of vocationist, as advocated by Saint Justin Maria Russolillo. Overall, the discussion of the interior layout demonstrates an architectural appropriation approach between the concept of *Batang Haring* and the concept of the Blessed Trinity in expressing the sacredness. (see Fig. 13)

3.3 Reflective Understanding to Express Sacredness

The design of the SYMR Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan, represents an architectural approach to expressing sacredness. Local uniqueness, intertwined with symbols and traditions of the Catholic faith, is implemented in architectural form.

A reflective understanding of sacredness can be traced through four layers, progressing from the tangible to the intangible. **The first layer** pertains to the understanding of sacredness that refers to the creative process, which presents the exotic forms of architecture. The design of the SYMR Catholic Church introduces a source of creation: The *Batang Haring*, which appropriates The Blessed Trinity. This source of creation inspires one another, facilitates the exchange of knowledge, and enhances each other's skills. This results in an architectural concept that superimposes the local with the universal. This condition brings forth the sacred meaning of interculturalism as a unity within diversity. Unity is manifested in the design of the SYMR Church, embodied in the body of architecture and the interior layout. Diversity is represented in the source of creation derived from local wisdom, as well as the symbols and traditions of the Catholic faith.

The second layer refers to the understanding of sacredness that pertains to the creative process of bringing forth memories of the past. The historical context holds a special place in expressing sacredness. The design of the SYMR Catholic Church represents a rebirth of the culture of the Dayak Ngaju tribe as a hallmark of local excellence in Central Kalimantan. The *Batang Haring*, symbolizing the Tree of Life, embodies the harmonious relationship between humans and God (*Ranying Hatalla Langit*), humans with one another, and humans with nature. The *Batang Haring* is situated within the domain of natural religions, whereas the Blessed Trinity in the Catholic faith belongs to the realm of Abrahamic religions. Based on this, an encounter with "the Sacred" in the Catholic faith will be achieved when religious individuals are in harmony with the nature. The nature holds a special place when the memories of local history are brought to life. This condition enhances the sacred significance of rebirth as a revival of local wisdom, allowing the architecture of Catholic churches in the *Nusantara*, particularly in Central Kalimantan, to embody local cultural identity while promoting social and environmental sustainability.

The third layer represents an understanding of sacredness that refers to the creative process of presenting something "other." This is a metaphorical creative process. The concepts of *Batang Haring* and the Blessed Trinity, as implemented in the design of the SYMR Catholic Church, express sacredness through the dialectic of two opposing conditions. Locality, emerging from natural religions, contrasts with the universality of symbols and traditions of Catholic faith, which stem from Abrahamic religions. Two opposing elements are unified through a metaphor, represented by the vertical axis as the way of life. This serves as the path for humanity's search for connection with the transcendent, reflecting a universal faith.

The fourth layer reflects an understanding of sacredness that pertains to the creative process of conveying messages for the present. This represents the deepest expression of sacredness through a meditative approach. The design of the SYMR Catholic Church, as a manifestation of the concepts of *Batang Haring* and the Blessed Trinity, conveys the sacred meaning of a life that is “in process” toward “The Sacred.” The notion of being in process serves as a contemporary message derived from the vertical axis, which acts as a datum for both the concepts of *Batang Haring* and the Blessed Trinity. God is “beyond the world,” while human reality involves the ongoing journey of encountering “The Sacred.” The existence of the SYMR Catholic Church represents an expression of the journey toward “The Sacred.”

Table 3.2: The layers of reflective understanding
Source : Author, 2024

Layer	The Reflective Creative Process of Sacredness	The Sacred Meaning
First	The exotic forms of architecture	Interculturalism as a unity with diversity the Natang Haring, which appropriates the concept of the Blessed Trinity.
Second	The Memories of the past	Rebirth as a revival of local wisdom refers to the Batang Haring, symbolizing the tree of Life
Third	Spear that connect top and bottom	The vertical axis as the way of life
Fourth	The meditative approach as conveying messages for the present	The reality of life as ‘in process’ toward ‘The Sacred’

4 Conclusion and Suggestions

The results of the research conclude that: **First**, the *Batang Haring* concept, which appropriates with the Blessed Trinity as a symbol and tradition of Catholic faith, can be implemented in the body of architecture and interior layout. The *Batang Haring* concept harmoniously integrates with the symbols and traditions of the Catholic faith. This concept is capable of expressing sacredness in four layers: the layer of form exotica, the historical layer, the metaphorical layer, and the meditative layer. The last layer serves as the culmination of sacred meaning as a reflection of the message for the present time.

Second, *Batang Haring* as the design concept for the SYMR Catholic Church in Riam Batang, Central Kalimantan, reveals sacredness that culminates in the reality of "process" as a reflection of "life" architecture. This has a connection with the relationship of architecture in a deep relationship with nature, community, spirituality, and adaptation to change. The "process" represents the "architectural brilliance" of the Central Kalimantan locality as the locus of the SYMR Catholic Church design. This finding supports and complements the *Arsitektur Nusantara yang mengkini* (Contemporary Theory of Indonesian Archipelago Architecture) which possesses an adaptive nature. This represents postmodernism in the knowledge of *Nusantara* Architecture.

Third, this research has limitations in the application of the *Batang Haring* concept, focusing on the form elements in architecture. Recommendations for further research include the study of the *Batang Haring* concept applied to the elements of atmosphere and spatial perception to further refine it. It is hoped that the results of this research can become an inspiration and design strategy for Catholic churches in Central Kalimantan and the sustainability of sacred architecture that emphasizes local identity.

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