

STUDY OF FORM AND MEANING OF SYMBOLIC INDIGENOUS HOUSE OF GORONTALO

(Case Study of Building Results of the Reconstruction of the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House of Gorontalo Regency)

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Abstract. *This research generally aims to gain knowledge about the traditional values of the Bantayo Po 'Boide Traditional House by trying to express the cultural values of the people of Gorontalo Regency. Specifically: First describe the architectural components of the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House of Gorontalo Regency including the roof, parts of the body and the bottom of the building; and second Expressing the meaning of the symbols in the Bantayo Po 'Boide Traditional House of Gorontalo Regency. This research uses descriptive method by collecting various qualitative and quantitative data relating to the form and symbolic meaning of the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House of Gorontalo Regency, while the data collection uses the method of Observation, Documentation, Interview and Literature Study. The results of this study are: 1) Total of poles house supporting totaling 32 is known as the symbol of 32 directions of the compass. This means that the leaders must have attention to all aspects of people's lives without knowing favoritism; 2) Total of the front steps that amounted to 8 as a symbol of 8 small kingdoms that helped so that the kingdom of Limutu became large; 3) The main pillars, total 2, are embedded directly into the roof frame, as a symbol of the pledge of unity between the kingdoms of Hulonthalo and Limutu; 4) 6 pillars have 6 main characteristics of the Gorontalo people, namely: Tinepo (tolerance), Tombulao (respect), Tombulu (devotion to the government), Wu'udu (according to fairness), Adati (obedient to regulations), and Buto'o (obedient to judges decisions). In addition to the meaning of construction, the writer also found a variety of decorative meanings found in the Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house. 1) The front of the house there is a stylized ornament of lotus and breadfruit plants and grouse. Symbol of lotus ornament of leaders who love democratic life. The meaning of breadfruit plants as protectors, while the grouse described as Gorontalo people who are small but agile and smart. 2) Ornaments on the edge of the banyan and triangular tree ceiling. The meaning of the banyan tree is strength and unity, while the triangle is the 3 elements of life (God, King, People). 3) Ornaments in the ventilation of doors and windows are stylized in the form of spears and shields, which have the meaning of guardianship or vigilance. 4) The living room ceiling ornament is a combination of lotus flowers and chains. Where the lotus means the leader of the people while the chain means the kinship ties of the kingdoms of Hulonthalo and Limutu. 5) Ornaments on lyst plank are stylized from jasmine plants which have the meaning of glory and friendliness.*

Keywords: *Bantayo Po' Boide, Traditional House, Ornaments, Structure.*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini secara umum bertujuan untuk memperoleh pengetahuan tentang nilai tradisi Rumah Adat Bantayo Po' Boide dengan berusaha mengungkapkan nilai budaya masyarakat Kabupaten Gorontalo. Secara khusus : Pertama mendeskripsikan komponen arsitektur Rumah Adat Bantayo Po' Boide Kabupaten Gorontalo meliputi bagian atap, bagian badan serta bagian bawah bangunan; dan kedua Mengungkapkan makna simbol-simbol yang ada pada Rumah Adat Bantayo Po' Boide Kabupaten Gorontalo. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Deskriptif dengan mengumpulkan berbagai data kualitatif yang berkaitan dengan bentuk dan makna simbolik pada Rumah Adat Bantayo Po' Boide Kabupaten Gorontalo, sedangkan alat pengumpulan data menggunakan metode Observasi, Dokumentasi, Wawancara dan Studi Pustaka. Hasil penelitian ini adalah : 1) Jumlah tiang penyangga rumah yang berjumlah 32 diketahui sebagai perlambangan 32 penjuru mata angin. Ini bermakna bahwa para penguasa negeri atau pemimpin harus mempunyai perhatian atas segala aspek kehidupan rakyat tanpa mengenal pilih kasih; 2) Jumlah anak tangga bagian depan yang berjumlah 8 sebagai simbol 8 kerajaan kecil yang membantu sehingga kerajaan Limutu menjadi besar; 3) Tiang utama yang berjumlah 2 yang tertancap langsung ke rangka atap, sebagai perlambangan ikrar persatuan antara kerajaan Hulontalo dan Limutu; 4) Tiang depan sebanyak 6 buah mempunyai makna 6 sifat utama atau ciri khas masyarakat Gorontalo yaitu: Tinepo (tenggang rasa), Tombulao (hormat), Tombulu (bakti kepada penguasa/pemerintah), Wu'udu (sesuai kewajaran), Adati (patuh kepada peraturan), dan Buto'o (taat pada keputusan hakim). Selain makna konstruksi, penulis juga menemukan adanya makna ragam hias yang terdapat pada rumah adat Bantayo Po' Boide. 1) Bagian depan rumah terdapat ornamen yang di stilasi dari tumbuhan bunga teratai dan sukun juga burung belibis. Simbol dari ornamen teratai pemimpin yang mencintai kehidupan berkerakyatan. Makna tumbuhan sukun sebagai pengayom, sedangkan burung belibis menggambarkan sebagai orang Gorontalo yang bertubuh kecil tapi lincah dan cerdas. 2) Ornamen pada pinggiran plafon bermotif pohon beringin dan segitiga. Makna pohon beringin kekuatan dan persatuan, sedangkan segitiga yaitu 3 unsur kehidupan (Tuhan, Raja, Rakyat). 3) Ornamen pada ventilasi pintu dan jendela merupakan stilasi dari bentuk tombak dan tameng, memiliki makna penjaga diri atau kewaspadaan. 4) Ornamen plafon ruang tengah kombinasi dari bunga teratai dan rantai. Dimana teratai bermakna pemimpin yang merakyat sedangkan rantai bermakna ikatan persaudaraan kerajaan Hulontalo dan Limutu. 5) Ornamen pada lyst plank berbentuk stilasi dari tumbuhan melati yang mempunyai makna kemuliaan dan keramahan.

Kata Kunci : Bantayo Po' Boide, Rumah Adat, Ornamen, Struktur

1. INTRODUCTION

According to history in 1481 Gorontalo is a region in the form of a famous kingdom named Duluwo Limo lo Pohala'a, meaning that of the two main kingdoms (Hulonthalo and Limutu) into five kingdoms consisting of the kingdoms of Hulonthalo, Limutu, Suwawa, Bulango, and Boalemo [1]. The newly formed region into the 32nd province has even been given the 19th indigenous local. But unfortunately the palace artifacts of the kings who once ruled such as the kingdom of Hulonthalo (Gorontalo city) and the Kingdom of Limutu (now Gorontalo district) are no longer found. The consistency of the implementation of tradition so far is only limited to rituals / ceremonies that are more non-physical in nature such as the holding of birth parties, weddings, deaths, etc. while preserving culture in the physical form of buildings has gradually begun to be abandoned.

Gorontalo as the capital of Gorontalo Province, holds many cultural assets. Gorontalo has a variety of cultural products including arts, culinary and crafts typical of Gorontalo. In addition Gorontalo has a variety of cultural properties that are very admirable and amazing, one of the cultural heritage in the field of architecture is a traditional building, better known as the Traditional House. The formulation of traditional architecture in the opinion of Ali Mansur in Sukanti [2] is a building whose structure, function, decoration and manner of manufacture are

passed down from generation to generation, and can be used to carry out the activities of life as well as possible.

The objectives to be achieved in this research are to find out about the figure of the building as a custom architectural work and how far the traditional building concept of Bantayo Po' Boide and its decoration. In addition, to gain knowledge about the traditional values of the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House by trying to express the cultural values of the people of Gorontalo Regency.

2. METHOD

In achieving scientific writing, we need a method that will be used in research. According to Leedy (1997:3) (in Sumartono) research is the process of collecting and analyzing information (data) systematically to improve our understanding of the phenomena that we observe or draw our attention [3]. So the research method is a system of approaches used by researchers in collecting data and analysis.

Based on the problem to be studied, namely the study of symbolic forms and meanings, Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House of Gorontalo Regency, this research uses a Quantitative Descriptive method by collecting various data, physical elements, etc., and also a Qualitative Descriptive related to meanings, ideas, tradition in the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House of Gorontalo Regency based on the social and cultural background of the Gorontalo people.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 An Overview of Research Sites

Bantayo Po 'Boide traditional house is located in Kayu Bulan Village, Limboto District, Gorontalo Regency, precisely in front of the Gorontalo Regent's office. The Bantayo Po 'Boide traditional house construction project was carried out in December 1983 to January 1985, and was inaugurated on 15 January 1985 by the District Head of Gorontalo District II, namely Kol. (AU) Martin Liputo, SH. Previously Gorontalo was still included in the North Sulawesi region, then on December 5, 2000 Gorontalo became its own Province.

The word Bantayo has the meaning of a building while the word Poboide or Po' Boide has a meaning for a place to consult. So that the function of the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House is used as a place for deliberation by customary leaders and religious leaders to negotiate various community and royal issues. In addition to being the center of government and a gathering place for traditional elders in discussing traditional processions, it is also used as a place for holding typical cultural performances of Gorontalo. In addition to the aforementioned functions, the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House is also a place to preserve and develop the arts and culture of the Gorontalo area or it can be said as a traditional Gorontalo museum.

3.2 The Meaning and Utility of Building Parts and Components

Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house was built on a large plot of land 6480 m² and the area of the building is 515,16 m². In the construction of this traditional house has building components that have meaning and usefulness such as poles, stairs, roofs, and rooms. Not only building construction, each traditional building usually has a variety of decorations or ornaments that have a reflection of the people who inhabit an area.

Some building components that have meaning and utility are: pillars, stairs, rooms, and roofs.

3.2.1 Building Pole

The pole in this building serves as the foundation and support of the building. There are three types of poles, namely 2 main poles or in regional languages called "*wolihi*" and 6 poles on the

front porch and (supposedly) 32 basic poles (in regional language "potu") (see Figure 1). The meaning of each type of pole is as follows:



Figure 1 The main pole or *Wolihi* that stuck from the ground directly into the roof truss

There are two main pillars (*wolihi*) in the front of the building which are stuck on the ground directly to the roof truss. This pillar symbolizes the promise or pledge of unity and eternity that is eternal between the two Gorontalo - Limboto brothers (janji lou duluwo mohutato Hulontalo – Limutu) in the year of 1084 H (1664 M) (see Figure 2).

- 6 pillars have 6 main meanings or characteristics of *U Duluwo Limo lo Pohala'a*, namely *Tinepo* (Gracefulness), *Tombulao* (Respect), *Tombulu* (Devotion to the Government), *Wuudu* (In Fairness), *Adati* (Adhering to regulations), *Butoo* (obeying the judge's decision).
- The base pole (potu) serves as the foundation of the building (supposedly) 32 pieces, as a symbol of 32 directions of the compass. This means that the leaders must have attention to all aspects of people's lives without knowing favoritism.

The formation and number of base poles varies depending on the category of houses related to the social status of the Gorontalo people namely, 4×8 or 32 poles for the upper aristocracy including the king, 4×6 , 4×7 or 24 and 28 poles for the middle aristocratic or middle class / rich, 4×5 or 20 poles for ordinary people's homes.

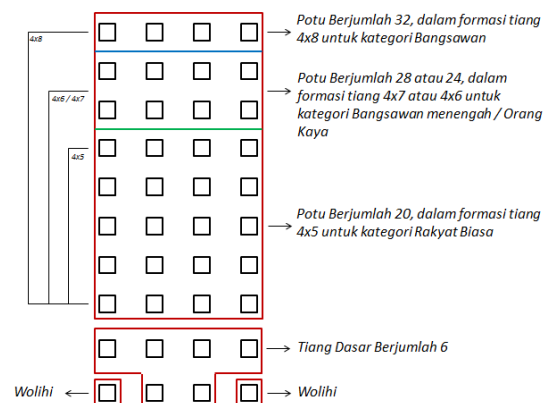


Figure 2 Sketch Formation and Number of Poles

3.2.2 Building Stairs

The stairs that have meaning are the front steps, there are right and left sides (see Figure 3). Each of them consists of 8 steps, as symbols of 8 small kingdoms (*Linula*), which in 1360 M these eight *Linulas* were made *Tapalu / Tapahula*, each named: *Linula Pantungo*, *Linula Panggulo*, *Linula Huangobotu Oloyihi*, *Linula Dulalowo*, *Linula Tilote*, *Linula Dumati*, *Linula Lawuwonu*, and *Linula Ilotidea*.



Figure 3 The Form and Number of Stairs of the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House

3.2.3 Building Room

The room in this Traditional House building is divided into 3 main parts, namely the foyer (*Sulambe* and *Palepelo*), "*Dulodehu*" which consists of rooms for receiving guests, meeting places, family room, as well as function rooms and "*Huwali*" namely rooms - rooms sleep (see Figure 4). The functions of each of these rooms are as follows:

1. *Palepelo*, in figure 4 the building plan is numbered **1**, it functions as a place for the guards who are on guard duty. *Palepelo*, in figure 4 the building plan is numbered **2**, it functions as a place for a hearing that is open to the public.
2. *Sulambe* left and right on the back in figure 4 the building plan numbered **3** functions as a patrolling place for guards on duty day and night.
3. *Dulodehu*, in figure 4 the building plans are numbered **4,5,6,7,8** and **9** function as rooms for receiving guests, family lounge, secret meeting rooms, dining rooms and function rooms. The secret meeting room is *dulodehu* which in figure 4 is a building plan number **5**, and the multipurpose room is called "*Tibongo*" in figure 4 building plan numbered **9**.

10 bedroom rooms with the following division:

- *Huwali lo adati*, in figure 4 the building plan numbered **10**, is a traditional room, functioning as a traditional arrangement. This is where all the preparations concerning tradition are arranged.
- *Huwali lo humbiyo*, in figure 4, the building plan numbered **11**, is the bridal chamber. This room serves as a wedding venue.
- *Huwali lo tulai bala*, in figure 4, the building plan numbered **12**, is the palace guard's room. This room serves as a place for Palace guards in security matters.
- *Huwali lo isi kaini*, in figure 4 the building plan numbered **13**, is a room for storing clothes. In this room where the great clothes of the king and queen are stored. Besides that, this room is also a place for storing tribute or valuable memories.

- *Hulipo Olongiya*, in figure 4, the building plan numbered **14**, is the king and queen's bedroom.
- *Huwali lo banta pulu*, in figure 4 the building plan numbered **15**, is the room of the sons of the king.
- *Huwali lo wadaka*, in figure 4 building plan numbered **16**, is the room of the royal daughters. In the existing rules in the royal palace, sons and daughters of the king are not placed in one room. The placement must be separate.
- *Huwali lo polamelalo*, in figure 4, building plan numbered **17**, is the dining room of the king and queen. This dining room must be safe to avoid unwanted possibilities.
- *Huwali lo bubaya lai*, in figure 4, the building plan numbered **18**, is the male maid's room. This room is specially occupied by male helpers.
- *Huwali lo bubaya bua*, in figure 4 the building plan numbered **19**, is the maid's room. This room is specially occupied by female helpers.



Figure 4 Room Plan of the Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House

3.2.4 Building Roof

The shape / model of the roof of the Bantayo Po 'Boide Traditional House is a two-tiered combination of saddle and shield (see Figure 5). On the front of the roof (*sopi - sopi / polombolo*) in the form of a triangle with a slope $\pm 30^\circ$ there are 3 small windows or vents. Which serves to provide air to the space under the roof. Adjustment of the roof to the tropical climate is the existence of a slit roof gap and windows in the gable as in the following picture:

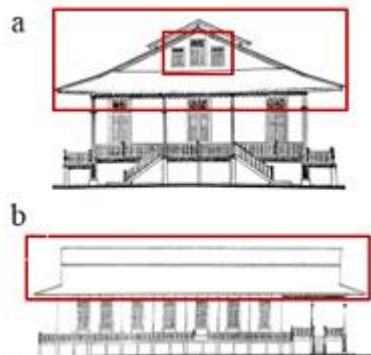


Figure 5 a) Front View Sketch, b) Side View Sketch

3.3 Decorative Variety in Bantayo Po' Boide Traditional House

Regarding decorative elements in the form of ornaments / decoration in the house contained in the thoughts of Gadamer in Siregar [4] as follows :

Architecture does not only concern the decorative aspects of the formation of a room, including ornamentation, but it has its own decorative characteristics, namely to attract attention to those who view it, satisfy its tastes, and to give new directions to the larger whole in the context of life that accompanies it. A building must be a solution to an artistic problem and draw on the magic of itself and the glorification of those who see it.

So the same is true of the decoration that is found in the traditional house of Bantayo Po' Boide, the thought states that there is an inevitable relationship between a building and human life.

3.3.1 Ornaments Under the Porch Fence Pole



Figure 6 Ornaments Under the Porch Fence Pole

Seeing from the visual overall this ornament looks like an ornament with plant motifs (see Figure 6). But after extracting the information it turns out there was a stilation of animals in it. According to information from Mr. A.W. Lihu as the traditional leader of Limboto (*baate lo Limutu*) that the ornamentation located at the bottom of the porch fence posts is a stilation of grouse, lotus flowers and breadfruit plants. The three forms are combined in a series of ornaments, by making a symmetrical pattern of repetition, which is the same left-right. The style of the ornaments above is a traditional style. Called the traditional style because this ornament is tied to the philosophy of the Gorontalo region.

1. The shape of grouse on the ornamentation of the Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house, which is below the porch fence post as follows:



Figure 7 Grouse Ornament

The grouse has the characteristics of being small, agile, clever, sensitive to the environment and loud voice (see Figure 7). The application of grouse in the Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house as

a symbol that Gorontalo people are generally small (short) but agile and smart. For his agility, Gorontalo people are diligently seeking fortune and are easy to accept / absorb knowledge and renewal. In addition the symbol of the grouse illustrates that Gorontalo people are very sensitive and love their environment.

2. The shape of the composition of the lotus flower in the ornamentation of the front of the Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house is precisely under the porch fence poles as follows:



Figure 8 Lotus Ornament

According to Mr. A. W. Lihu (Limboto Traditional Figure), the special feature of the lotus flower is that it can live above the surface of the water and is between two natural elements, water and air. This is meant as life. While the nature of the lotus that grows spreading is interpreted as a symbol of democracy. So the lotus flower according to Mr. A. W. Lihu contains the meaning of a populist life (see Figure 8).

3. The form of the composition of breadfruit plants on the ornamentation of the front of the Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house, which is below the porch fence post as follows:



Figure 9 Breadfruit Ornaments

The symbol of this ornament is interpreted as a queen who must protect her sons and daughters, family members who are in her palace and family relatives who have been tied with a marriage rope (see Figure 9).

3.3.2 Ornaments on the Porch Ceiling



Figure 10 Ornaments on the Porch Ceiling

The shape of the ornament on this porch ceiling is the motif of the Lotus Flower plant by repeating the pattern repeatedly and alternating from small to large to form the letter (T), in accordance with the shape of the porch ceiling. This symbol of lotus flower means as a leader who loves populist life by carrying out holiness without distinguishing social status, religion, understanding and so forth (see Figure 10).

3.3.3 Ornaments on the edge of the porch ceiling



Figure 11 Ornaments on the edge of the porch ceiling

The pattern of arranging this ornament is repetition in a row. As for the traditional and modern style (see Figure 11). The traditional one is geometric pattern (triangle), while the modern one is plant pattern (Banyan Tree).

1. Banyan Tree Ornament

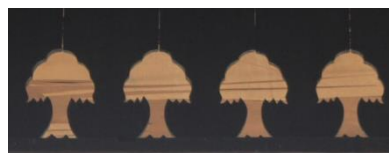


Figure 12 Banyan Tree Ornament

According to Mr. A. W. Lihu (Limboto traditional figure), this motif was made by including political elements in it, namely the element where this motif was dedicated as a symbol of political parties in the era of Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house construction. This was also confirmed by Mr. D.K Usman (Gorontalo traditional figure).

But it is different with the opinion according to Mr. Suwardi Bay as a Culturalist Gorontalo, according to him the character of the banyan tree is in line with the philosophy of life of the Gorontalo tribe, among others: high spirits, long life tendencies, want to protect the weak, have ideals of peace and prosperity and promote unity (*buhuta*) and integrity (*walama*) (see Figure 12).

2. Triangular Ornament (see Figure 13)



Figure 13 Triangular Ornament

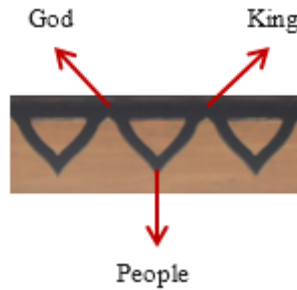


Figure 14 Application of Triangle Motifs

The geometric motifs of the triangles above, in addition to their role to beautify, the meaning of this triangular motif are the 3 elements of life namely God, king (ruler) and the people (see Figure 14).

Explanation of the picture above does not mean that the position of the king is equal to God, but a king must have the attributes of God (*Asma'ul Husna*). This is intended so that the king as a leader can lead his people well, wisely so as to create a peaceful, safe, prosperous and happy life.

3.3.4 Ornaments on Door and Window Vents (Figure 15, 16, and 17)



Figure 15 Ornaments on Door and Window Vents

The ornamental motifs on this vent were inspired by the form of the Gorontalo royal heirloom which was a kind of spear called a *juwele* and a round shield called *periso*.



Figure 16 Spear Motif**Figure 17** Shield Motif

The symbolic meaning of this ornament is as self-preservation or vigilance and ward off the dangers that interfere with the comfort of the occupants of the house.

3.3.5 Ornaments in the Central Ceiling

**Figure 18** Ornaments in the Central Ceiling

There are 3 ornaments found in the ceiling of the living room, namely Lotus Flower, Geometric Motifs (Rope / Chain) and small lotus flowers of different shapes (see Figure 18). Lotus flowers contain symbolic meaning as leaders who love democratic life by carrying out holiness without discriminating social status, religion, and so forth. While geometric motifs (ropes / chains) contain symbolic meaning as a bond of brotherhood between the two major kingdoms namely the Kingdom of Gorontalo (Hulonhalo) and Limboto (Limutu). While the small lotus which is between them and on the left and right side there are also lotus flowers, but different in shape means that the two kingdoms are located between the lake Limboto (*Bulalo lo Limutu*).

3.3.6 Ornament On the Edge of the Roof

**Figure 19** Ornament On the Edge of the Roof

The ornaments on the edge of the roof are in the form of plant motifs inspired by jasmine flowers (see Figure 19). The pattern of arranging this ornament is symmetrical with varied repetitions (big-small-big-small). This Jasmine ornament has a certain symbolic value according to the Gorontalo social system. Where the jasmine flower has symbolic value which means purity, friendliness and glory.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Thus it can be concluded that Gorontalo people reflect one of their cultural values through traditional architecture. As you have already known, the Bantayo Po' Boide traditional house is a reconstruction from the house of the Gorontalo tribal community. This is a special characteristic for Gorontalo because the original building of the Gorontalo Traditional House is no longer found or has been changed. With the construction of this traditional house, it again shows that the Gorontalo Regional Government believes in the importance of collective awareness for the people of Gorontalo of the existence of its ethnic history.

4.2 Suggestions

- Considering the importance of regional history books, both to meet the demands of the school curriculum (elementary to tertiary institutions in the region) as well as for the interests of other parties such as foreign scientists or tourists, written sources that serve as a reference for writing are increasingly scarce, so the research and preparation of the history of Gorontalo can be initiated by the regional government for a long time.
- To prevent the loss of identity of the Gorontalo people, the importance of maintaining traditional architecture must be done regularly, such as replacing old wood, replacing a damaged zinc roof, repainting dull parts, and also maintaining parks around the area of a traditional house. Because every human being in the next generation will relearn all the images of traditional symbols that exist in traditional architecture that have been excavated and passed down from generation to generation.

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