



Function of Motives in Karawo Gorontalo Embroidery Fabric

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to see and categorize some of the functions of the Karawo embroidered cloth seeing from the motifs in Gorontalo, Karawo itself is a typical traditional cloth originating from Gorontalo whose manufacture is produced by handicrafts. Karawo itself has a unique way of doing it, such as making karawo which requires patience and thoroughness, making karawo takes one week to make one karawo that is ready to use. To support the research, we use descriptive methods and the data collected in the preparation of journals are analyzed descriptively, data collection is also in the form of interview data and study results from literature sources. The results show that Gorontalo karawo embroidery has its own meaning to the function of the motifs that will be used as a complementary ornament of the cloth so that the karawo embroidery is formed. This is because each of the motifs continues to develop and shift to a more modern direction which makes the karawo motif in a certain function has its own meaning for its users which is then adjusted to what the consumer likes. However, this can add to the function of the more modern karawo motifs as time goes by which then choose to leave Gorontalo customary and cultural motifs. The conclusion of the research is to find that the karawo embroidery handicraft has a function of every motif that has been made, from traditional cultural motifs to modern motifs that tend to be liked or interested by users.

Keyword: Culture; Embroidery; Gorontalo; Karawo

INTRODUCTION

Gorontalo is the 32nd province in Indonesia which was inaugurated on December 5, 2000. Gorontalo is a city that has customs that are still very thick until now, because according to the customs of Gorontalo, namely "Adat bersendikan sara, sara bersendikan kitabullah". Gorontalo is famous for its many tours as well as its diverse culture and traditions, besides that Gorontalo is also famous for one of the craft cultures that have existed since ancient times.



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Gorontalo is very thick with traditional cultural artifacts, especially traditional bridal clothing using decorative Karawo embroidery. The uniqueness of the shape and ornamentation at the wedding of Gorontalo's typical fashion with the name Bili'u and is the source of inspiration and the forerunner of making Karawo embroidery. Ornaments that are now motifs for the formation of a karawo motif are implemented on the fabric so that it looks integrated with the Karawo fabric [1].

The original handicrafts from Gorontalo are filigree handicrafts or commonly called karawo which is a culture that exists to this day and makes karawo its own characteristics. The term karawo is taken from the word "mokarawo" which means perforating or slicing. The process of making it requires patience (see Figure 1), accuracy and foresight because the manufacturing process is still using humans without machine technology (handmade masterpiece), starting from designing, slicing fabric, pulling threads, to embroidering [2].

Karawo can be produced from the embroidery process by pulling or opening the threads from the fabric to form a pattern. Karawo itself is a typical regional fabric embroidery that was born from the craft and diligence of the Gorontalo community since the 17th century in embroidering fabrics to form patterns and motifs, which have become the identity and cultural values of the Gorontalo community. Currently, karawo embroidery is a leading commodity in Gorontalo Province, so various programs to develop karawo embroidery crafts, which have now obtained patents from the Government of Indonesia, are increasingly empowered for the development of the people's economy while maintaining and preserving Gorontalo's cultural heritage. Karawo embroidery, besides being used in the design of men's and women's clothing fabrics, can also be found in embroidered handkerchiefs, fans, veils, mukena, table cloths, bags, wallets, sandals and so on. To make one pattern of karawo embroidery requires 3 people with different tasks, where the first person is in charge of making patterns and motifs by drawing on graph paper, the second person is in charge of slicing and unraveling the fabric to be made karawo embroidery in accordance with the patterns and motifs designed, and the third person is in charge of embroidering the fabric that has been unraveled thread.

METHOD

Primary data was collected through observation in Karawo designer boutique and personal communication with Karawo Designer John Koraag and Fritz Koraag. Secondary data was obtained from literature study. The data was then retrieved descriptively to be concluded.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion in this study has been adapted to the research theme and adjusted to the information to be conveyed, the following discussion — discussion used in this study. After



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seeing what the meaning of karawo embroidery is related to determining the function of the karawo motifs that have been made in the karawo craft, then we can take the results and discussion of what has been researched from karawo embroidery in Gorontalo based on the literature sources that have been reviewed previously.

A. Overview of Gorontalo Karawo Embroidery

Filigree embroidery is an interweaving of threads that are linked to one another and form a beautiful motif, then filigree embroidery in community life has several dimensions including: religious, social, cultural, and economic. These dimensions construct individual actions that give meaning to the existence of karawo embroidery [3].

Once saved from extinction during the Dutch colonial period, now karawo is again under threat of extinction. Not because it was colonized but the cause of the extinction is the lack of appreciation from the community, generally teenagers who are interested in wearing karawo cloth, as well as the lack of embroiderers today.

Nowadays Karawo makes a livelihood for entrepreneurs or shop owners, karawo embroidery businesses formed into groups of embroiderers have spread in various places. Then there are also group leaders who will deal directly with embroiderers, related to the division of labor.

Every embroidery in Indonesia has its own uniqueness and characteristics. Karawo has its own characteristics that make it different from other embroideries in Indonesia.

The distinctive feature of karawo that makes it different from other embroideries lies in the manufacturing process which has been written in a special report published by the Gorontalo City Tourism Office written in the making of karawo as follows:

1. Designing; The initial stage of designing the karawo embroidery
2. Slicing and Pulling; The most risky stage so it requires discipline and accuracy so as not to make a mess of the fabric.
3. Embroidering; Embroidering according to the initial design
4. Binding; The last is the finalization stage of making karawo by tying back what has been sliced and pulled out in the second stage.



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Figure 1 Karawo embroidery that requires patience

B. Gorontalo Traditional Clothing at a Glance

Gorontalo culture is the ninth of about nineteen cultures in Indonesia [4]. Islam present in Gorontalo has implications for various aspects of community life. These influences include the existence of the principles of *adat bersendi syara, syara bersendi adat* which later changed to the addition of the third *adat* principle, *adat bersendi syara, syara bersendi Al-Quran*, but the basic philosophy of *adat* and the source of customary law (*butaqolimo*) was not changed but in its implementation in each customary institution adjusted to Islamic teachings [4].

Philosophically, the religious culture of the people in Gorontalo City recognizes the existence that basically grows and becomes an inseparable part in the process of struggle between religion and culture that occurs in almost all regions in Indonesia in the process of structured Islamization. [5]

Gorontalo traditional clothes were originally made for traditional purposes such as weddings and sacred events in Gorontalo [6]. Traditional clothing such as at traditional weddings in Gorontalo, especially the bride and groom will wear these traditional clothes or can be called *Bili'u* which has ornaments located on the crown to the clothes which adapt from contemporary Karawo motifs. The motif on the crown in *Bili'u* symbolizes the marriage custom of Gorontalo people. The motif is harmoniously combined with symbolic meaning. The unity of the motif is reflected in its meaning [7].

Although the motif on the crown is unique and interesting, the use of the motif when applied to Karawo is less desirable for Karawo users. This is due to the assumption that not all Gorontalo people accept the concept of still having to do with Gorontalo culture, people have now abandoned the concept by bringing natural motifs with motifs that can vary and continue to grow.



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Figure 2 Gorontalo Bili'u traditional clothing

Although the lowermost goal of Bili'u does not necessarily represent positive customary symbols, it serves to display the beauty of Gorontalo brides (see Figure 2). [8]

C. The Meaning of Karawo Motifs According to Gorontalo Culture

Research on karawo motifs based on the philosophical values of Gorontalo culture has been conducted by Mulyanto in Koniyo [9]. The research aims to consider karawo motifs that have been made with sources through the philosophical values that exist in Gorontalo, which are aimed at adjusting to the character of karawo users and seen from the study of human character. The karawo motif makes the philosophical value in Gorontalo cultural objects. The results of the adjustment of the karawo motif based on philosophy are 25 limited to 10 by looking at the characteristics of Gorontalo culture and the design of the karawo motif (see Table 1). Of the 10 motifs that have a cultural philosophy here are visuals of some of the karawo motifs that have been given by karawo motif designers (see Table 2).

D. Usage Function Based on Gorontalo Karawo Motifs

According to the results of interviews with karawo designers, John Koraag said that the use of karawo is different in function and motifs used. Karawo in function is usually used at official events, some people do not use or are reluctant to use karawo casually. However, it all comes back to the motif that will be used, whether in the form of symbols or regional icons, because in general Gorontalo cultural motifs can only be used and are usually used at official events.

In addition, the use of karawo is differentiated functionally by the motifs that have been developed at this time because karawo is one of the fashion designs. The making of karawo to be developed into a fashion design produces several functions in it, including the function of identity markers, the function of representing natural wealth, the function of decoration, the function of evoking memories, symbolic functions, and the function of personal interests. The



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function is present in a motif or it could be an ornament that will be used on the karawo cloth. An explanation according to Sudana [10] of some of these functions can be seen on Table 3.

Table 1 Cultural significance of Karawo motifs



No	Karawo Motif	Cultural Philosophy Meaning
1	Areca Tree	Straight, Protect, Honest
2	<i>Makuta</i> / Crown	Useful for others
3	Crocodile	Law, Advice
4	Rope/Knot	Brotherhood
5	Coconut	Nobility, determination, sturdy, unite, good personality, honest, refined, trustworthy, exemplary, wise, sharing
6	<i>Pahangga</i> / Palm Sugar	Human Status
7	<i>Alikusu</i> / Gate	Upholding religion, spirit of life, contributing to the world
8	<i>Lale</i> / <i>Janur</i>	A leader who loves his people
9	Banana	Spirit to live, to contribute to the world
10	Cane	Warm, expressive, stubborn



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Table 2 Huwayo and Pahangga Motif

No	Visual	Description
1		A motif from huwayo which in Indonesian means crocodile which has a philosophical value of law and advice which if assessed from a person's character means perfectionist and peace-loving.
2		Depicts a motif of pahangga which in Indonesian means palm sugar which has a cultural philosophical value, namely the status of a human being who, if judged by one's character, is a pursuer of achievement.

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Table 3 Function of Karawo Motif

No	Type of Function and Sample of Visualization	Description
1	<p>Identity Marker</p> 	<p>The function of karawo ornaments as identity markers includes regional identity, cultural identity, social group identity, and individual identity. These identity functions are recognized when karawo ornaments are applied to clothing. For example, karawo Muslim clothing, which is a mode of Muslim clothing applied with karawo ornaments. There are many such fashions and they may be mass-produced, but they become distinctive when karawo ornaments are applied.</p>
2	<p>Representation of Natural Wealth</p> 	<p>The motifs of karawo take many sources from the natural wealth in Gorontalo, such as coconut, fish, corn, and so on. Ornaments such as corn are a representation of the city of Gorontalo as a corn producer and a natural resource in Gorontalo. The karawo ornament that functions as a representation of natural wealth is widely applied as an ornamental variety on various types and modes of clothing. For example, on the long blouse model in figure 6, the karawo ornament is applied on the front (bottom and top) of the blouse symmetrically so that it seems balanced. The color composition of the motif (yellow, green, blue, purple) looks prominent because it is combined with a dark blue blouse. The presence of the karawo ornament is harmonious with the basic structure of the outfit and does not change its function as an outfit.</p>
3	<p>Decoration</p>	<p>The decorative function is the most widely used ornamental function in karawo motifs and appears on every product or object to which ornaments are applied. The decorative</p>



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		<p>function relates to the role of ornaments in adding aesthetic value or visual appeal to a product. This function is clearly seen in karawo ornaments applied to various fashion modes and is the main motivation for the application of these ornaments in fashion.</p>
4	<p>Evoking Memories</p> 	<p>Many karawo motifs are processed from past artifacts with historical value. For example, the Otanaha Fort motif is applied to a men's shirt as shown in figure 8. The function of the Otanaha Fort motif karawo ornament applied to the men's shirt is not primarily to beautify the structure of the garment, but to evoke memories of the Portuguese occupation of Gorontalo and the architectural skills of the community in the past. Such a function emerged from the designer's inspiration gained through studying history. The making of motifs in the karawo serves to evoke memories in a fashion design development with the emergence of a trend of fashion detailing styles to imitate the past. This can add to the dynamism and diversity of karawo fashion design.</p>
5	<p>Symbolic</p> 	<p>The symbolic function of karawo can be interpreted through colors and motifs related to the representation of the culture and customs of the Gorontalo people. An example of the application of the symbolic function on karawo can be seen in the pahngga motif applied to the jacket model (figure 9). The application of these ornaments to clothing not only adds to the artistic value of the clothing, but is also able to communicate the meanings of local wisdom.</p>
6	<p>Karawo Carnival Festival</p>	<p>The karawo motif as a function of the karawo carnival festival is now widely applied for festival purposes who want to apply whatever motif they want to the competition part. Of course, these motifs are no longer dependent on the natural resources in Gorontalo or the customs or functions mentioned earlier. For example, the Whale Shark motif was used for the Karawo carnival festival in 2017.</p> <p>The whale motif is used as a karawo ornament because of a unique phenomenon where a whale called Whale Shark often visits one of the beaches in Gorontalo, precisely the whale</p>



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	<p>shark is present in the waters of Tomini Bay, Gorontalo, the location is in Botubarani Village, Kabila Bone District, Bone Bolango Regency which until now has become one of the attractions by tourists.</p> <p>In addition to the Whale Shark motif, every year the Gorontalo Regional Government takes the initiative by creating a separate theme each year. The Karawo Festival is one of Gorontalo's traditional festivals that aims to popularize Karawo, which is held annually in Gorontalo City, especially at the end of the year because it coincides with Gorontalo's birthday. The first Karawo festival was held on December 17, 2011.</p> <p>The Karawo Festival is usually enlivened with karawo handicraft exhibitions, parades and karawo fashion shows participated by the blood government, banks and businesses. The festival also involves hundreds to thousands of people from students, local government and the general public. In 2017, the theme for the karawo took the Maleo bird, one of the typical birds of North Sulawesi region as the ornament of the karawo worn.</p> <p>The karawo motifs are also not only made on the clothes to be worn but the karawo motifs are also applied to the necklace or to the crown to be used and have been modified according to the theme chosen by the government and are usually worn during the karawo carnival held in Gorontalo.</p> <p>However, these motifs are usually worn during the karawo festival carnival celebrations only and are not worn during formal events. The motifs used during the karawo festival carnival are diverse and not only based on cultural philosophy.</p> <p>The karawo craftsmen are difficult to apply karawo motifs because the karawo carnival is not immediately displayed in the form of a cloth or motif because they have to wait for the theme chosen by the government in the karawo carnival to be held later. Therefore, these craftsmen must be prepared to think carefully about what kind of costume will be made.</p>
<p>7 Personal Interests</p>	<p>Nowadays, some people have abandoned karawo motifs that use customs and culture from Gorontalo, karawo embroidery also has the function of applying motifs to karawo as a personal interest, karawo motifs that have no connection with Gorontalo or are trending in the Gorontalo area. Without looking at the culture in Gorontalo, it is purely a desire from the user to make a karawo that is different from the others. For example, karawo motifs inspired by Spongebob cartoon animation.</p>



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	<p>The study found that the making of a karawo motif requires the approval of local customary leaders in order to become a motif, but now karawo making ornaments and motifs can get ideas from anywhere according to what the user wants. This also makes the karawo motif continue to grow until now.</p>
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CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the research that has been done, that karawo until now its users can be distinguished from the function motif or the diversity of ornaments that will be used. All returns to the character of its users by adjusting what they like, this makes karawo continue to grow both in terms of motifs to its use in function. Karawo is also still preserved by the government, as seen from the karawo festival which is held every year except in 2020 and 2021 which may not be held due to Covid-19 in the Gorontalo area. Then the preservation of karawo also continues to be preserved through public servants who are required to use karawo.

Suggestion

After the research, it was found that the development of karawo embroidery in Gorontalo needs to do something like:

- Increase the source of written literature, especially in the Gorontalo regional library.
- Providing knowledge to the wider community as written in this journal about karawo has the function of the motif itself.
- As one of the cultural heritages in Gorontalo, it is necessary to preserve it by using karawo as a form of appreciation to the Gorontalo community.
- Introducing karawo embroidery to the younger generation such as in schools so that karawo can be recognized across generations.

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