THE ART ON MEGALITICAL RELICS OF WARUGA IN NORTH MINAHASA
Seni Hias Tinggalan Megalitik Waruga di Minahasa Utara

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Abstrak
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I. Introduction
I.1 Background
A prehistoric site showing human migration and cultural spread in North Sulawesi is common. Generally, there are settlement sites form that have paleolytic-neolithic and megalithic characteristics, as well as sites that have neolithic-paleometallic character- other, including sites that was found in Minahasa. Its distribution, especially megalithic in this region is quite a lot and shows the potential archaeological, because it is useful for data collection to reveal and reconstruct a cultural history and process in the past.

At a megalic era, it was known that there was a burial system using containers or without container. The development using containers was prevalent in Indonesia in different shapes, sizes, and decorations. One of megalithic tomb containers found in North Sulawesi, particularly in Minahasa called “waruga”.

The results from data collection and data description on the megalithic site that were found in Minahasa in general indicate the existence of pattern that was spread the potential megalithic sites. Research on this object has yielded quite diverse information of various activities in the region at the past. One of megalithic relics that was found in the Minahasan region is the megalithic object of the waruga. The research results on waruga megalithic carry an important picture of past activities, a funeral activity. The burial aspect is important for research, since many things can be expressed as activities, such as social stratification and belief at that time related to background of using large stones, even technology.

I.2. Problems
Until now, the research results on the object relics of waruga megalithic that spread in the Minahasan region have reached thousands of waruga, which already have been described and classified. The waruga are scattered in almost all parts of Minahasa, especially in North Minahasa relatively having dense spread compared to other Minahasan areas (Central, South Minahasa, and Southeast Minahasa). From the overall shapes and sizes of waruga scattering in Minahasan region, unique objects of cultural relics lies on decorative motifs, whether done through sculpturing as well as casting techniques.

So far, studies on waruga decorative art have not been done and known, so a description about social stratification or belief concept possibility through decorative patterns has not been much revealed. Therefore, in this paper it will be studied how roles of ornamental art inscribing or imprinting on waruga. Because of waruga’s wide spreads in Minahasa, a study area of waruga art be focused in Northern Minahasa region. This region is the largest waruga spread and has a wide variety of decoration.

I.3. Aim

To find data through decorative arts on waruga megalithic relics spreading in the North Minahasa, it is expected to be disclosed and reconstructed megalithic culture history, especially to the burial activity. In addition, this study results are expected to be utilized as input materials for regional planning and interests in education and cultural tourism in North Sulawesi region in general.

I.4. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Humans are inseparable from their dependence on nature. A tendency to use nature as life support means and infrastructures has applied since the past. Dependent indication on natural surroundings can be seen from how humans manage and use nature in everyday life. It can be seen on the megalithic relics spreading in Indonesia, including the megalithic relics scattering in North Sulawesi, for example container object of "waruga" grave which is commonly found in Minahasa.

As a region with a considerable amount of waruga resources, North Minahasa has become a strategic location for cultural development of waruga megalithic in the past. The use development of waruga containers in Minahasa Utara is long enough and has a wide variety of decorations, sizes, and shapes. Therefore, to reveal how the cultural developments occurring in this region in the past, it will be studied through the megalithic relics scattering in the region of North Minahasa.

In accordance with the study focus about this waruga, method used in the data search is collecting data horizontally through literature study and field survey using archaeological rules. Concerning the study focus on ornamental art of waruga in North Minahasa, the method in collecting data is inseparable from the survey activities to observe the symptoms supporting the objects existence on the field. The environment also becomes an important thing in searching data about resources supporting the object existence of these waruga.

II. Waruga Decorative Variety

Decoration is a basic form that will usually be a repeating ornamental pattern in a craft or art. Variety of ornamental itself can be distilled (stiliired), so that the form varies, even it can have spiritual meaning poured in
the stylization of decoration (Wikipedia: 2011).

The ornamental pattern use in the prehistoric cultural relics, especially megalithic era is numerous. Its presence in the megalithic period had several functions, such as symbolic, aesthetic, and constructive. From ornament variety contained in waruga’s container and cover in the Northern Minahasan region, some serve as elements of beauty and others have a certain background (as a symbol/magical element). The decorative techniques on the container and the cover of waruga are sculpting and scratching techniques that were commonly depicted on the front, back, and sides or sides of each section of waruga. The appearances of these ornaments on the front, back, and sides or sides of each section are also varied. Its cover is with a dense ornamental pattern, but its container is plain (on the waruga in North Minahasa). On other waruga findings, container sections are with the decorated motif variation, but the lids are plain. However, there are also the rich decorative motifs on both waruga parts, both on its container and cover. The ornamental motifs that were made, either on the waruga’s cover or container, generally not only in one decorative motif type, but also sometimes more than one decoration, so it looks full and beautiful. There is also a medium decorative pattern, where a decoration on waruga’s cover is not full or too much. In addition, there is also a plain or not found any decoration on the waruga’s cap.

The result of data processing on the spread of waruga’s megalithic site in the Northern Minahasa show various kinds of the ornaments that were made on the parts of the waruga’s container or cover. Waruga’s ornamental shapes or patterns that exist in North Minahasa can be grouped into ornamental patterns, among others:
- Fauna decorative pattern: a decoration form that has a shape or various and varied animal shapes. Generally, research results on waruga’s ornamental variety in Minahasa are animal species used are snakes and others, such as cattle/ox, pigs, birds, and combinations of poultry, snakes, and ruminants. Each Minahasan waruga’s ornamental motif variation of animal species is made in pairs or twins. Some are formed separately, but most animal motifs were made together of one body with two heads. This animal ornament or decorative pattern is found almost on every waruga spreading in Minahasa, especially in the north, whether done on its container or cover.

![Figure 1](image1.jpg) A fauna decorative pattern: a pair of cows found on Paslaten Site of North Minahasa

![Figure 2](image2.jpg) Info: a fauna ornamental pattern having a dragon-shaped (stylized) found on the Matelenteng site, North Minahasa.
- A human ornamental pattern: a decorative form that has a human shape pattern, whether as a whole human pattern, a human’s body part pattern, or other pattern shapes that describes a human feature. This human motif pattern was sculpted and drawn in the various shapes and in the varied positions. The result of data processing on the decorative ornaments that are spread in the North Minahasa shows that an ornaments of human decoration also lots enough are found on the megalitic site in this region. This pattern of human decoration in general is sculpting or drawing a human who has a kangkang pattern with the stress on a part of reproductive organ (both of man and woman reproductive organs). Beside that, there is another pattern of decoration that has a face pattern of human being in starring expression with a wide nose, and sharp teeth that were drawn standing up, as well as having torns. Another human description is a brave human form with a stright and strong body holding a weapon. Another decoration is a picture of a mother giving a birth in kangkang position and at a lower part between her both feet picturing a baby who is born from the mother as well as other human decoration.

Beside the above decorative patterns, some patterns found on megalic sites in other North Minahasa possibly show there is decoration or picture showing their professions or activities during their lives. The decorative pattern possibly appear in the future, where megalitic culture still live in Minahasa, although the existing belief values have developed and be suited with applied norms in the society. Generally, the findings with the pattern of those decorations are found on a location surrounding habitants’ settlements and are found at around the public graves that are still used as their cemeteries. In a site, it sometimes be found a mixture of waruga findings having a prehistoric decorative pattern. As an example on a waruga finding, there is a human together with an animal decorative patterns, such as a dog with a sharp tool meaning the buried people in waruga during the life has the profession.

- Flora decorative pattern: decorative form describing floral or plant decorative patterns, such as flowers, leaves, and all forms describing plant, both in a whole or parts, both be stilised or modified.
An ornamental pattern of Tassels/Kabalas/Kendi or mace: this decorative form is located on sides. This decoration is described as a tassel or an oval shape hanging down (carved one or two pieces). Some developing assumptions about the existence of the shape or pattern of ornaments (tassels): Minahasan people recognize the ornamental pattern of the tassels as a kabalas fruit, others interpret the ornamental pattern as a jug of water, and there are also some people who define the symbol as a club. This decorative motif is found almost on every waruga site found in Minahasa, not limited on waruga findings existing in North Minahasa region only.

Other decorative patterns: decorative shapes consisting of a combination of geometric motifs, such as the straight lines, the curved lines, boxes, gunongan (inverted triangle), circles, as well as triangles. This pattern of a geometric ornament includes the oldest motifs in the prehistoric art of the ornament. The motif uses a line shape and abstract space meaning a form cannot be recognized as natural object. This motif evolved from repeating form of dots, lines or fields, from simple forms to complex patterns. In addition to geometric ornamental patterns, also found several other decorative patterns, in a decorative motif shape of the sun and moon, such as found on the Minawanua site, Treman village.

III. Discussion

In a megalithic culture period in some regions in Indonesia, it has emerged an idea of making stone. Although there were based on a same belief, but in reality megalithic objects in each region are different. The megalithic objects are different, but they have a basic concept that was embraced at that time and have a source from a belief about an existence of supra natural power, such as strength in ancestral spirit. It is necessary to worship the spirits using means or buildings made of stone (Haris Sukendar, 1993: 152).

One of the megalithic relics in the Minahasa in the Northern Sulawesi is a rock tomb of "waruga". It has been argued that it is composed of two parts, namely a box, rectangular, round, and
other containers, which are parts planted in soil and a closing portion is sometimes reminiscent of a shape roof. A shape of a waruga container was basically adjusted to a posture of a corpse who would be placed inside the waruga, such as in a squat position with two hands folding and knees drawing down to his/her chin. This squat burial position of the corpse in this way has actually already existed since the prehistoric times. Generally, this squat burial position method is also often found in the prehistoric sites in Indonesian area. In the Karo Batak tribe it is known that they buried the ancestors with sitting postures and in the Southern Nias tribe it was indicated by the existences of stone troughs or a four-square vessel to place the corpse. In Sumba Island it is also already known that the uses of the large stones as the burial infrastructures, in the forms of stone crates consisting of four standing fruits as well as stones that were placed transversely. Some stones are planted fully in the ground, but others are only partially and their cover made at the top. They are flat rocks where corpses are shelved and carved with kabaina (woman) and kamonina (man). Another example, in Bali also found many vessels of stone intended as a grave container (Bertling: 1932).

A waruga cover form in the Minahasan region is generally formed like a house (bumbungan) roof. It brings assumption, in a waruga era, a society had belief that graves were considered as cloning houses. Those cloning houses were made to give an honour and comfort for those people who were already died. In other areas of cloning houses giving an honour, such forms of burial are also already quite well known. For example in the Napu valley, there are many old graves with tombe consisting of only piles of stones. One of the old graves with tombe consisting of stone piles in the Napu valley has a form of house. However, the form of waruga spreading in the Minahasian does not all show the roof-shaped cover (limas). In lots of waruga that were found in Minahasian area, especially in the northern part, the appearance of the waruga’s cover is more diverse and varied, while those that were found in the southern part look simpler. However, if we look at the basic concept of manufacture is the same, where waruga is still divided into two parts like a house, have a body and roof as its cover.

Another interesting thing that can be studied from the cultural heritage findings of this “waruga” megalithic is the decorative patterns that were placed on the containers or the covers of the waruga. Survey results conducted on waruga sites scattering especially in the North Minahasa region show the existence of variations of decorative patterns carved / scrawled on the container and cover of waruga. Decorative patterns that were emblazoned on waruga is functioning symbolic as well as serving aesthetic. A decorative pattern having symbolic function or meaning is generally adapted to growing beliefs of time. Besides, it can also show the profession or activity of the person during his life when the person alive. While a decorative pattern having aesthetic meaning is generally only an beatiful expression or mere art beautifying the object.

- A pattern of a human decoration: a sculpture or a painting of human is a pattern of an ornament that is quite commonly found in the waruga in the Northern part of the Minahasian region in North Sulawesi. The forms and styles of the various human were made both in the containers and the
cover of *waruga*. Generally, this decorative pattern is not intended as a decorative ornament, but rather as a "revelation" of something or more meaningful to religious-magical elements, but they do not always do the same. In some places, such as Maumbi and Airmadidi sites, *waruga* findings have a woman ornamental pattern of standing on legs with a baby head hanging down, it shows 'partus' (*maton tunuwu*). According to society's telling that the woman died in childbirth, so she would be placed in a *waruga*, and if anyone would open the cover of *waruga* would consider the baby was born (Bertling, 1932). Another opinion about the decorative pattern description is more pointed to the profession of the dead. It is mentioned that such picture of a decorative pattern brings a notion that the dead had been a nurse. Several other ornamental patterns are illustrated by a frightening expression and style with a projection of their reproduction apparatus, as can be seen in *waruga* in the Kawiley and Tumaluntung villages. In the Minahasan society beliefs, the embodiment of such images aims to avoid those who have died or those who were relatives and abandoned because of the evil forces that were surrounding theirlives. If the dead as a Tonaas or respected and honoured person in his neighborhood (*kampung*), an ornamental pattern imposed on a grave (*waruga*) is a human carving steadily holding a weapon/mean.

- A pattern of fauna decoration: with an appearance of animals, such as snakes, dragons, owls, cows and others that are also can be found on *waruga* in Minahasa, especially in the Northern part of Minahasa. Snake motifs are sometimes described as realistic (*waruga* motifs found in Kuwil, Kalawat subdistrict), and others as ornaments for fringe coverings (snake ornaments in Maumbi and Treman). This snake motif is depicted with a fringe ornament consisting of a two-headed snake (*wewengkalen*). Some opinions or notions about snake symbols that are developed in prehistoric times, including: according to R. P Knight in the "symbolical language of ancient art", it is said that a symbol of a serpent has a meaning to give life back, a snake has a property to change skin and clearly renew youth. Similar to Kruyt, serpent symbol flourishes in a bread island and Marindanim (Irian Jaya South Coast). In the places, the snake symbols indicate that these animals cannot die, just exchanging their skin. Another case with an author of R. R. Marett in his folklore title: "Pre-Animistic Religion", it is said that the form of these animals are creepy and they like to live in the places of graves (Bertling, 1932). In Minahasa itself, the snake animals, especially the black snakes are considered as unlucky animals. Some people even assume that snakes (small black) are the order of Mitu or the spirit of the dead one. An opinion and belief developing in those days shows that to avoid misfortune, the dead were protected from ancestor spirits and it is necessary to make symbols on grave keeping eternal realm. Other animal motifs on the *waruga* that are also found in the Northern part of Minahasa are owls. Although they are not many, they are found, example in one of *waruga* in
Sawangan and Airmadidi. In the beliefs of the Minahasan community and still believed today, even used as a symbol of the Minahasan region, this owl is regarded as a vehicle or pet of the gods and is the bearer of the news. Beside these two animal motifs that are quite surprising in waruga, such as those found in Kema, Treman, Pangairan Lontak, and Sawangan, there are motifs in the realistic or symmetrical ornaments. The meanings or mythologies of these cow animals in the period of prehistory are not widely known. The images of these cow animal mythologies are then expanding in the next periods of the times. Belief development in animal mythology is growing in a Persian region and Asia Minor (8th century). The cows have the meaning of Phalis, that can be interpreted as a virility or courage (Bertling, 1932).

In the beliefs of the Minahasan people themselves, these cows are not so often spoken, as a matter of snakes and birds, so the meanings and functions that are contained in them until now are not yet clear. However, if you see these animal motif workmanship and placement that are quite regular and patterned (a two-cow facing each other, with big bodies and mighty in Pangairan Lontak, Paslaten,). Surely, motif of two big/mighty cows facing each other means more than just as a mere decoration?!. The mythology developed in Indonesia, for example in Bali, where it is very holy as a sacred animal. Has such a belief of a very holy or sacred cow animala also ever been developed in Minahasa as well? Until now it still need to look for a proof, either through the narrative of history or other information.

- A flora pattern: the floral motif or the motif of plants in the prehistoric period has not developed yet. In prehistoric era there was no plant ornament, but then in Hindu era influences coming from India. The ornament of plants or the flora motifs become very common and they become a part which is a major in the world of the ornamentation in Indonesian country area (Aryo Sunaryo, 2009: 153). Decorative plant patterns that were found in some waruga scattering throughout North Minahasa are generally stylized and species are not clearly identified, making it difficult to give an existence sense.

Similar to a faunal animal pattern in Paslaten, a floral ornament presence, for example lotus flower ornament is illustrated by buds with stilir leaves at Tumaluntung, influenced from outside Minahasa. Not yet known meaning of some decorative motifs of plants in waruga in North Minahasa, but when compared with a lotus ornament in Bali, according to Herayati (1999/2000) in Aryo Sunaryo (154). The ornaments of this lotus flower have several symbols of the purity and sanctity (a belief of Hindu). In Buddhist belief, lotus is a purity symbol because it appears impeccable from mud (Sunaryo: 154). Another possibility that can be delivered at this time is a flora decorative motif in some waruga in Minahasa with an aesthetic function or to further highlight a beauty element in a waruga’s container.

- Decorative patterns of Tassels / Kabalas / jags: Other important decorative motifs that are almost and always presenting in the waruga is a motif of tassel that is next to the top of the cover of the waruga. The tassel motif is carved or/and also scratched in the various shapes as well as in the various models. The simplest form is
depicted as a *kabalas* (rounded) or pitcher (two forms are in *waruga* spots in Minahasa), and others are described more ornamental found in some *waruga* in Treman and Maumbi. This decorative motif of tassel pattern is always placed on the top of the cloak cover of the *waruga*, thus this motif brings the belief that this object is the unity with the cover or the roof of the *waruga*. This motif is also an evident in the existence of Minahasan community houses in the past, where they placed tassels or wooden bars on the roofs of their houses, as a symbol of the robustness of the house. According to the Mogot (the Old Langowan’s Law) in “The Waruga & Hockerbestattung”, it is explained that this tassel motif is the picture of the old orange flowers that are from the Tombaloi tree. These woods are used as reinforcement tools (so strong as well as good) and people also like to carry these woods when they were faced with some problems, especially after hearing a warning from bird. Symbols of tree flowers are tied to a leader’s shoulders in war as a reinforcement making them brave. It is clear that a tassel motif is more intended as a symbol of protection and strength, and good deeds. In the art of prehistory or belief that is developed during a megalithic period this symbol is unknown. It is seen on symbols on an ancient house’s roof in Indonesia, such as Minang and Toraja house wearing buffalo headdress or on people’s home on Roti Island wearing deer headdresses on the roof. Does this tassel of *tallalo / tombaloi* on the roofs of the ancient houses have the same meaning? Proving the clarity, it is certainly needed a deeper historical search given the historical data about it until now that is still vague and unclear.

- Other decorative patterns: Other common ornaments emblazoned or scrawled on *waruga* are combination motifs, such as flower and geometric ornamental patterns, *tumpal*, and others ornaments. They show decorative ornamental patterns developed during prehistoric times in Indonesia in general. Geometric ornamental patterns are quite commonly found in *waruga* spreading in North Minahasa. These geometric ornamental patterns also include the oldest motifs in the pre-historic ornamental arts. A motif uses lines and fields that are abstract meaning a form cannot be recognized as natural objects. These motifs evolve from the form of repeating dots, lines, or fields from simple to complex patterns. Geometric motifs illustrate objects, but because a form has undergone a change, difficult to recognize.

On *waruga* in North Minahasa, it was found a decorative motif in ornamental pattern of sun and moon. Sun’s description is a round shape follows surrounding light lines and a full round or crescent moon. The motif is placed at a cover top, the sun and moon as a symbol of human life originating from God. The sun and the moon are seen as elements of life in the form of day and night.

In the next period, when a modernization and religious norm have been presented in Minahasa and surrounding, a decorative pattern development began to vary and override the magical ornaments. Embellishments at the time seemed more beauty, aimed at remembering a loved or respected person. No research on a perception truth of ornamental patterns in Minahasa, but a community believe it.
IV. CLOSING

Waruga is one of the findings of grave containers in Indonesia that has enough potential to reveal one of cultural traits, in a form of megalithic beliefs in Indonesia, especially in Minahasan society in past. A waruga distribution covering almost every area in North Minahasa indicates that in the past the North Minahasa was a fairly intense area using this container equipment as a burial facility and is quite popular. It cannot be separated from the conveniences prepared by the natural surroundings and human wisdom in the exploitations.

A megalithic culture development in the Minahasian region, if judging from the pattern of waruga’s ornamental development, it can be seen a Minahasa society dynamism addressing culture development. The uniqueness and the characteristic of the waruga can be seen on the shape, on the the size, and on the patterns of the ornament that were carved or were scratched on the container and the cover of the waruga. Decorative pattern varieties on waruga spreading in Minahasa illustrates trust values in Minahasan past. However, because of a following era and cultural development, especially a foreign cultural influence during a Minahasan territory occupation by foreign nations, the decorative patterns also have developed. In a next era, patterns describe about various life activities experienced by the person placed in waruga. When modernization existing in this region, a pattern development on waruga focused on a beauty aspect. Finally, the container use of this waruga grave stone disappeared around 1700s along with the religion influences in Minahasan region.

The diversity of the decorative patterns that was found in waruga spreading in Minahasa, certainly add to the diversity repertoire of Indonesian ornamental art in general and North Sulawesi in particular. An ornament beauty is able to increase an ornament diversity knowledge of an Indonesian decorative arts. In addition to a waruga’s decorative motif beauty, it can be used as decorative motifs on regional fabrics. Therefore, it can be worth selling and serve as one of tourism promotions in the area of this North Sulawesi.

Bibliography


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