

# Study of Visual Meaning of Ornaments of Grave People of Minahasa District, North Sulawesi Province

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**Abstract.** This study aims to examine the meaning of the Waruga tomb ornament in North Sulawesi, precisely in Minahasa Regency. Waruga graves are tombs used to lay bodies as a belief of the people of North Sulawesi, especially the Minahasa tribe. The result of this research is to explain the visual meaning of the waruga tomb ornament. The approach used in this research is a qualitative descriptive approach, which means that the researcher collects data related to the graves of waruga, either in the form of books or materials related to the object under study, namely the waruga grave. The data collection technique is done through observation, interview, documentation study and document study. So that the conclusion of this study is that there is a meaning contained in the waruga tomb ornament, one of which is the meaning of the animal found in the grave which symbolizes the body that is inhaling semesa is a hunter and another meaning is that the person buried in the waruga grave is adjusted to work, drajat and rank during his lifetime. The waruga grave has been the grave or the main grave of the Minahasa tribe since ancient times until now, in one waruga grave there can be several people in the waruga grave according to the agreement of the family or elders in the North Sulawesi area, especially in the Minahasa land.

Keywords: Visual Study; Ornaments; Wruqa Cemetery

## 1. Introduction

Visual study is a study that looks at analyzing and eating on an object under study, in this study, the waruga grave which is a grave that has historical value as well as a mystical story from the people of North Sulawesi, especially the Minahasa land. Graves are burial places for people who have died, graves are used as a marker so that families can recognize the graves of people who have died, in Indonesia there are graves that have stories so that many people are curious about these graves, one of which is the Waruga grave in Minahasa, Sulawesi Province North. The culture of big stones or what is known

as megalithic culture is a culture that recognizes the use of large stones to make objects in buildings. This culture is one of the cultures that once played an important role in human civilization in the past. These cultural relics are found in Egypt and South America in the form of a pyramid (pyramid), in the Pacific Islands in the form of menhir statues, in China and Vietnam in the form of stone troughs (sarcophagy), in Laos and Japan in the form of stone barrels. (stone vat), or in England in the form of stone hangs and so on. Such cultural relics are found in Tanah Minah: one of them is in the form of stone burial chests (stone cisti waruga).

Waruga graves have never been formally researched before, they are only used as tourist attractions which are often visited by people around Sulawesi and other areas. In Indonesia, megalithic remains in the form of such stone burial containers are found in various areas including Central Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Sumba, Sumbawa, Bali, Java, Kalimantan, South Sumatra, Nias and North Sumatra. Stone graves in Indonesia consist of dolmen grave, stone cist grave, stone vat, keranda batu or sarcophagy (sarcophagy) and rock cliff grave. Grave sites in Central Sulawesi are scattered in Poso Regency, namely in the Valley, Besoa, Bada Valley and Lema Napu, such as the Pokeka site, Tadulako site, Hanggira site, Lempe site, Padang Hadoa site, Bulili site, Watulumu site, Watunongko site and so forth. In South Sulawesi, among others, it is found in Gojeng and in Toraja.

## **2. Method**

This research is written with a qualitative descriptive method, the author observes in detail the parts of the mosque and it can be seen from the person who designed the shape of the grave and the people associated with the construction of the Waruga Grave.

## **3. Result**

According to experts, there are two routes for the distribution of nations with megalithic nations to Indonesian territory, namely: firstly through the western route which enters the western part of Indonesia, and the northern route which enters the eastern part of Indonesia (Heekeren 1972; Soejono 1976). Megalithic culture in Indonesia leaves objects in the form of: menhirs, dolmen, terraces, stone graves, megalithic statues, menhir statues, sarcophagi, stone mortar, stone scratches, stone with holes, stone altar, pandusa and others (Sukendar 1996/1997: 2-3). The megalithic culture in North Sulawesi seems to have entered this area through the northern route which spreads to the eastern part of Indonesia.



**Figure 1.** A View of Waruga Grave

Another important megalithic cultural relic is the rock cliff burial found at Toraut in Bolaang Mongondow. These rock cliff graves are similar to rock cliff graves in the Toraja area, South Sulawesi. The remains of this megalithic culture take the form of man-made rectangular holes in the rock cliffs. The holes are thought to function as a burial container for storing or placing bodies of deceased community members, because some of them still store human bones and grave provisions in the form of clay objects.

Other types of megalithic objects, namely stone altars, dakon stones and menhir statues are also remnants of megalithic culture found in Minahasa Land. The number of findings of this kind of megalithic objects is not large and the area of distribution is also very limited. Menhir statues are usually made of a single stone, shaped like an upright stone (menhir) but have simple anthropomorphic sculptures, showing the head and face as well as the hands and body, while the legs are not depicted (Sukendar 1996/1997: 3). Menhir statues are simple stone statues that are meant as a depiction of cultured ancestors. This thing is usually also a means for perform ceremonies of worship of ancestral spirits. There are 2 menhir statues in Tanah Minahasa that have been found (Santoso 1999/2000). Although the number of menhir statues found in Minahasa is only a few, it can provide an illustration regarding the possibility of a connection with menhir statues from other areas, especially with simple stone statues found in the Pacific islands and menhir statues from the Poso region of Central Sulawesi (Bada Valley, Besoa Valley and Napu Valley).

Other megalithic remains are stone altars and dakon stones. These objects are generally made of natural stone chunks that have not undergone much modification, but the dakon stone has holes like the dakon game. The types of megalithic objects in the form of stone altars and dakon stones do not seem to have a prominent role. This is evidenced by the number of findings that are not too many and the area of distribution is limited in this area. A stone altar is a boulder of stone in the shape of a square or even often irregular shape, which has a flat part, especially on the surface (the top) so that it resembles a table. This type of megalithic object is usually used as a means of performing religious ceremonies by people who have belief in ancestor worship. Likewise with the dakon stone found in North Sulawesi, it is also a ceremonial tool to ask for help from the spirits of the ancestors in order to obtain a good harvest and hope for soil fertility. In North Sulawesi, these types of megalithic objects are found in Tanah Minahasa and Bolaang Mongondow.

#### **4. Discussion**

Among the various kinds of megalithic cultural heritages found in North Sulawesi, especially in Tanah Minahasa, waruga is a very dominant megalithic cultural heritage. Waruga is mostly found in the North Minahasa area, namely in Likupang sub-district, in Dimembe sub-district, in Airmadidi sub-district, in Kauditan sub-district, Kalawat district and others. Waruga is also found in Minahasa (Induk) District, namely: in Langowan District, Tareran District, and Kawangkoan District. In this area waruga is also found in Tondano, as well as in Kakas District. Waruga in the Tomohon area are found in all sub-districts in Tomohon City. Waruga is also found in Minahasa Selatan District, namely in Lelema Village, Popontolen Village, Popareng Village and Tumpaan Village in Tumpaan District; as well as in Rumoong Bawah Village in Tombasian District, and in Radey Village in Tenga District. In Southeast Minahasa District, waruga is found in Palamba Village in Ratahan District.

An interesting tradition of this funeral process is that the deceased will be kept in a stone grave in the shape of a cube with a size of approximately 2 meters high and 1.5 meters wide. In addition, the stone grave has a roof like a triangular roof. Why is the grave shaped like a house? because ancient local people in Minahasa believed that people who died were interpreted as snakes that shed their skin. So that in order to help change the real life to the spiritual realm, a stone grave is made.

**Table 1.** Meaning of Waruga

Waruga type	Mean
	Triangle-shaped: means that humans consist of three realms, namely the realm before birth, after birth and after death
	the number of individuals who were inside the stone graves. This information can be seen from the carved lines on the side of the waruga roof. If there are two lines, then in a stone grave there are two people in it. In addition, there are waruga that has a plain roof or no carvings. The meaning of plain is thought to be the oldest waruga's grave.
	Mean
	The meaning of the person who was buried in this waruga during his life worked as a breeder before he died

	<p>Hence the person who is buried in this waruga is a dotu or a leader of all his life</p>

It can be seen that waruga has its own uniqueness and mystery. Waruga that is largest in North Sulawesi, especially the Minahasa. The shape of the waruga is as shown in table 2.1 above. People were buried in waruga according to their status and degrees during their lifetime.

### 5. Conclusion

In Indonesia, precisely in North Sulawesi province, Minahasa district, there are graves that have mysterious stories and have strong historical value for the people of North Sulawesi, especially the Minahasa. Waruga graves are graves made of stone or clay that have existed since ancient times in Minahasa, North Sulawesi. The shape of the waruga grave follows history, the throne and the work of people who are buried in one waruga.

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