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The Kori Agung Character of Heritage Temples: the Architectural References of Klungkung Identity

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Abstract

Klungkung had an essential role in the history of Bali; it was the central kingdom in Bali during the 15-19 centuries. As the central kingdom and the role model, Klungkung had a variety of architectural works that were uniquely different from those in other regions. It was necessary to explore the potential and characteristics of its architecture so that it can be used as a reference in creating architectural style in Klungkung. To study this characteristic, this paper analyzed its building forms and ornaments. *Kori agungs*, the main gate of the Balinese temple, were selected as samples to outline the architectural style. This study used field works to measure the existing buildings, especially buildings that are still original or have undergone reconstruction using appropriate conservation ways.

Keywords: Style, Characteristic, Architecture, Ornament

1. Introduction

The rapid development of globalization has forced regions and cities to develop even faster. It is a worldwide standardization in cultural, social, economic, political, and technological aspects through exchanging and integrating international knowledge and principles among regions (HKU, 2012). This standardization provides a challenge to areas to develop without negotiating their identity. Losing this identity to a region means losing its uniqueness and values in this competitive era.

Architectural practice is one of the significant components that express the distinctive identity of a society in a particular region. According to Amundsen (2001), four elements distinguish one place or area from others, one of which is spatial qualities (including architecture) and culture or history. As a significant kingdom in Bali in the 15-19th century, Klungkung is not only the center of government but also the center of cultural and ritual activities. The vital role of Klungkung in the past has produced various cultural practices, including architecture

(Agung, 1991). Cultural and ritual practices, including architecture, are a mean to express the strength of a kingdom's influence and to express its distinctive identity (Geertz, 1980; Nordholt, 1986).

Architectural productions are cultural products that express a commonality of tradition and culture among the members of a society and an otherness, or sharp distinctiveness, from non-members. To create an otherness, or sharp distinctiveness with others, many parts of Bali, especially many kingdoms in the 18s century, have a variation of their architecture, such as *bebadungan* in Badung and *gegianyanan* in Gianyar. The architecture expresses their status differences among the kingdoms to express their superiority. The variations of the styles are dialects in architecture in which the styles vary, but they still resemble. The dialects have operated as an idea of uniqueness that offers a sense of dignity. Each region has a different dialect so that many regions express the diversity of architectural dialects in Bali. In this context, localization and difference of the architecture can be seen as a resource to create boundaries and identity of Bali. However, since there is a lack of studies about the dialects of Balinese architecture, the formulation of each character has not been well identified, which academically can be justified based on evidence-based research.

The localization and diversity of Balinese architectural dialects have been influenced by the political agenda in Bali, primarily since the 18th century when Majapahit kingdom from Java conquered Bali in which the palace that is the central government of the kingdom is called *puri*. Bali was then ruled from the single primary *puri* (palace) of Klungkung, and the other *puris* such as Badung, Bangli, Tabanan, Karangasem were described as secondary independent palaces (Geertz, 1980). To express their superiority, the primary and secondary kingdoms performed state cultural practices in their territories to reveal their status differences (Geertz, 1980; Nordholt, 1986). Every palace, including Klungkung as the main palace, developed independently the Balinese culture that led to the differences in the implementations of cultural practices, including the architecture. They expressed themselves and created boundaries with others. In this context, tradition and culture can be seen as a resource to develop boundaries and identity (Derek & Japha, 1991; Hall, 1990; Proshansky, 1983; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000).

Heritage temples as the highest result of Balinese cultural and ritual practices in Klungkung were selected as the study case. Pura Kentel Gumi, Pura Penataran Tutuan, and Pura Penataran Taman Sari are considered as heritage temples which possible to be studied as a reference for the type of the architectural practices in Klungkung. The temples consist of many buildings and the main significant part that can demonstrate the identity of architectural style is the main gate, called *kori agung*, of the temples. The existence of the *kori agung* is necessary to explore the typical character of the Klungkung traditional architecture. This character can be used as a model in the development of architectural practices around the temple area in particular and Klungkung in general, and to maintain the diversity of architecture in Bali.

2. Method

2.1. Methods

To explore the architectural identity of Klungkung, this study uses field study methods through measurements with both theodolite and meter tools in existing buildings. In this stage, sample building, especially the *kori agung* as the main front building in the temple, will be selected. In every selected sample building, ornaments, proportion, scale, material and texture were documented and investigated. The objects of investigation will be selected through method *stratified random sampling* in which the sample will be randomly selected, especially buildings that are still original or which have undergone restoration with appropriate conservation methods. Every selected building will be measured using a theodolite, especially for the locations that are difficult to be reached. On the other hand, ruler and other metre devices for the parts of the buildings that can easily be reached.

2.2. Identity and Ornaments

The word 'identity' is based on the Latin pronoun *idem*, which means 'the same.' Thus, identity is what is central, real and typical to something or someone (Hague, 2005). Hague (2005: 13) then quoted four elements typically present in a place identity that were identified by Amundsen (2001: 10-11) are:

- “ ● *Spatial qualities that distinguish the place from others – e.g. location, but also infrastructure, communication, and architecture.*
- *Characteristics or qualities of the inhabitants that distinguish them from inhabitants of other places – e.g. values, customs, physical appearance.*
- *Social conditions and social relations between the inhabitants.*
- *Culture and history, seen as a unifying element that connects the inhabitants to tradition and distinguishes them from 'the other.'*”

In the early days people built for protection. Then the more people improve their skills in building, the building becomes the language of form, which architecture begins to communicate. Up to a period, the word architecture is only intended for buildings whose motivation and "language" local community understand. In this case, there is no primitive term, but a modern one at that time (Gaudi, 1969). To form a Balinese cultural identity, the community had been influenced by the political and power conditions. This long history has been widely studied by various researchers such as Geertz (1980), Nordholt (1986), and Agung (1991). In this case, each era has tried to form own identity to express the boundaries and advantages of each era.

Architectural norms tend to be based on the exploitation of a combination of shapes, colors, and textures as simple technologies that designers want to develop and fight their own criticism (Gaudi, 1969). Ornaments, the proportion of buildings and their elements, as well as building materials, are components of traditional architecture that are different from others. There are differences in architectural styles from various places in Bali, such as the dominant style called *bebadungan*, which using bricks and the *gegianyaran* style, which prefers to use a combination of brick and *sandstones* (Putra, 2016; Putra, Lozanovska & Fuller 2013).

The word ornament comes from Latin, *onare*, which means decorating. This term initially includes elements and decorations that are adapted and developed from natural leaves. As far as these elements have stems, leaves, flowers, they are organic, while geometric elements are inorganic. In architecture, elements adapted into ornaments include geometric lines, natural leaves, artificial objects, and human and animal figures, in various settings or shapes, depending on specific 'recipes' that are recognized and referred to as 'principles' (Meyer, 1898).

Judging from its understanding, it can be said that the main function of the ornament is to add aesthetic value to it. But in its application to Balinese architecture, ornamentation is not only a decoration element or a mere decoration. The form and arrangement have a strong 'principle' and have been carried out for generations. Moreover, art in Bali is not only associated with nature but also social and religious life. This argument gives a different meaning than an ornament as a decorator in western architecture. As stated by Sunaryo (2009) that the presence of an ornament is not merely to fill in the empty and meaningless part, it is more so in past ornamental works. Various forms of ornaments have several functions, namely pure aesthetic functions, symbolic functions and useful functions.

In architectural Balinese ornaments and all decorative elements are known as decorative elements. Based on its basic form, this ornament is classified into four motifs, namely flora, fauna, nature, and religion. Which belongs to the flora are all elements that take the form of plants. The fauna motif takes the form of animals, such as *karang asti*, *karang goak*, *karang boma*, and various other animal statues, while those belonging to nature are those that take the forms and elements in the universe, such as fire, water, mountains, rocks, and others. The rest are classified into religious motives, including *murda*, *bentala*, *gegodeg*, and others.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Kori Agung of Pura Kentel Gumi

In general, the form of *kori agung* consists of three parts. The first part is “the head” of the building, “the body” as the middle part, and “the legs” as the lowest part of the building (Figure 1). *Kori agung* of Pura Kentel Gumi consists of these three parts. The head consists of three levels and a *bentala* at the top; the body consists of one main structure and one *lelengen* on each side; and the legs as the lowest part. The body part is also equipped with doors and curves of carved wood. Through this door, the equipment and offerings for ceremonies go in and out. The legs, which are the base of the *kori agung* consists of five steps made of brick.

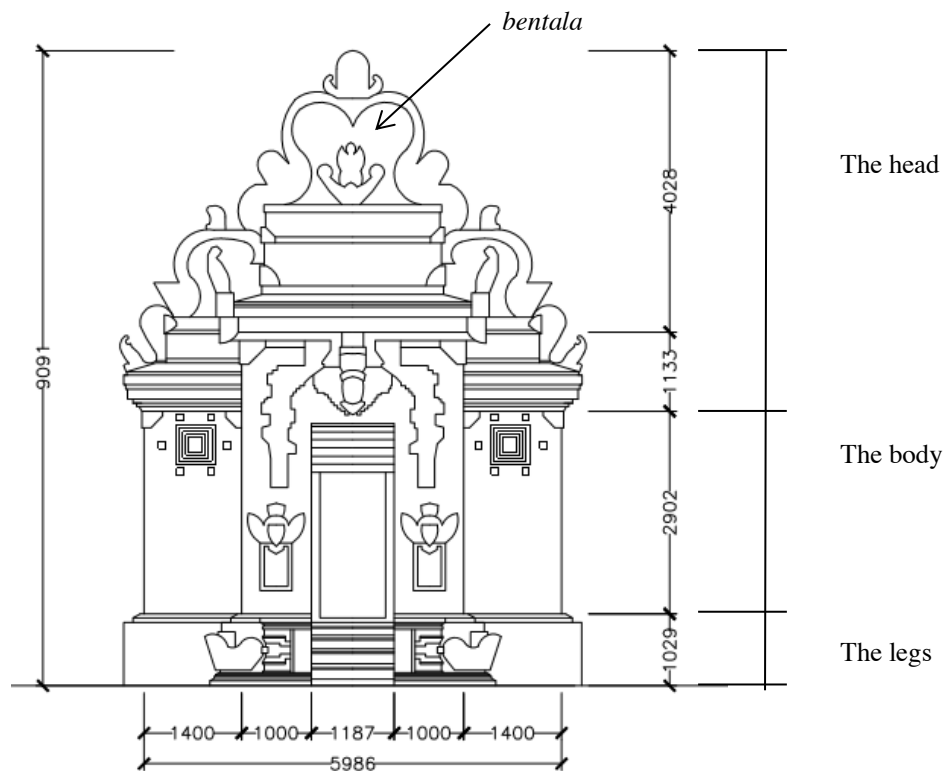


Figure 1. *Kori Agung* of Pura Kentel Gumi

Kori agung of Pura Kentel Gumi is made of a combination of brick and sandstone. In general, bricks are the main structure, while the ornament is generally made from sandstone. These sandstones are attached to the brick and carved in detail with the motifs of plants and animals (Figure 2). There are some types of motif used in this *kori agung* namely the anthropomorphic/ sub morphosis that use a part of animals or human body as an object, flora, geometric and *perimbunan* that combine some element of nature (Hartanti & Nediari, 2014). In some region, this ornament type is also called *keketusan*. As a part of the anthropomorphic/ sub morphosis type, fauna motifs, called *kekarangan* that can be found on the head of the building, is *karang goak* (the head of a crow). On the other side, the motifs at the top of the door consist of *karang boma* (the head of a giant), *karang tapel* (a mask) and *karang goak* (crow). The ornament on the legs as the base of the building is *karang asti* (the head of elephant). The other *kekarangan* is *karang boma*. This ornament is a giant head completed with flora ornament, crowns and hand. (Figure 2)



Figure 2. The ornaments on *Kori Agung* of Pura Kentel Gumi

The other dominant motifs used in this *kori agung* are the form of flora motifs, which are often called *patra*, which means leaves (Sudara, 1983). They are *patra samblung* and *patra tunjungan*, (see Figure 3). *Patra samblung* is an ornament that uses many parts of *golden pothos* or *creeper ceylon* (*Epipremnum aureum*) as an object. In Bali, this tree is called *samblung* so that the ornament that uses a combination of the leave, flowers and the fruit of the *golden pothos* as an ornament is called *patra samblung* (Jaya, 2013).

On the top of the *kori agung*, as a part of *bentala*, there are two *patra punggels*. *Patra Punggel* is inspired by the shape of plants. *Patra punggel* is mimesis of combination of many part of natural elements such as *batun poh* (mango seeds), *don paku* (young leaves that are still circular on the stalk of *diplazium esculentum*), *jengger siap* (crown of roosters), jack fruit pulp (wrapping skin of jackfruit which is inside jackfruit), *kuping guling* (the roasted suckling pig's ears), *pepusuhan* (new shoots), and *util* (the mimesis of scorpion's tail) (Gelebet et al, 1981).

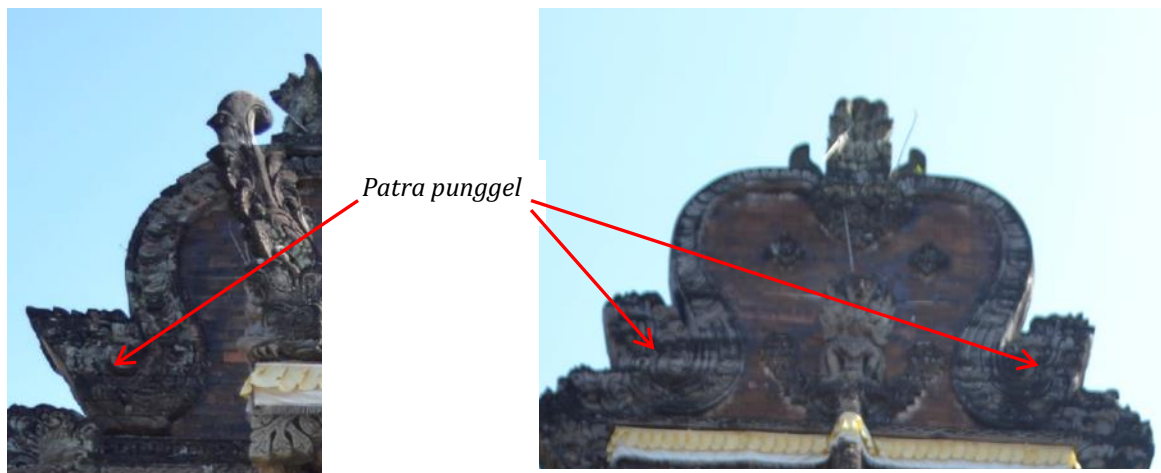


Figure 3. The ornaments of *patra punggel*

Moreover, the other ornaments in this *kori* use geometric patterns and natural material such as sand and stone as objects of the ornaments called *keketusan*. In this kind of ornament, the essential parts of plants, animals and objects are repeated to be a unified ornament. There are many kinds of *keketusan* in this *kori agung* including of the *ilut*, *bias membah*, *watu*, *bungan tuwung* and *genggong*. *Ilut* is an ornament that uses rotated rope as an object. *Bias membah* uses the process of moving sand on a beach or river while *watu* is the mimesis of stone. *Tunjungan* uses *nymphaea* or water lily flower called *tunjung* in Bali as an ornament. Moreover, the *bungan tuwung* use flowers of eggplant as an ornament (see Figure 4).

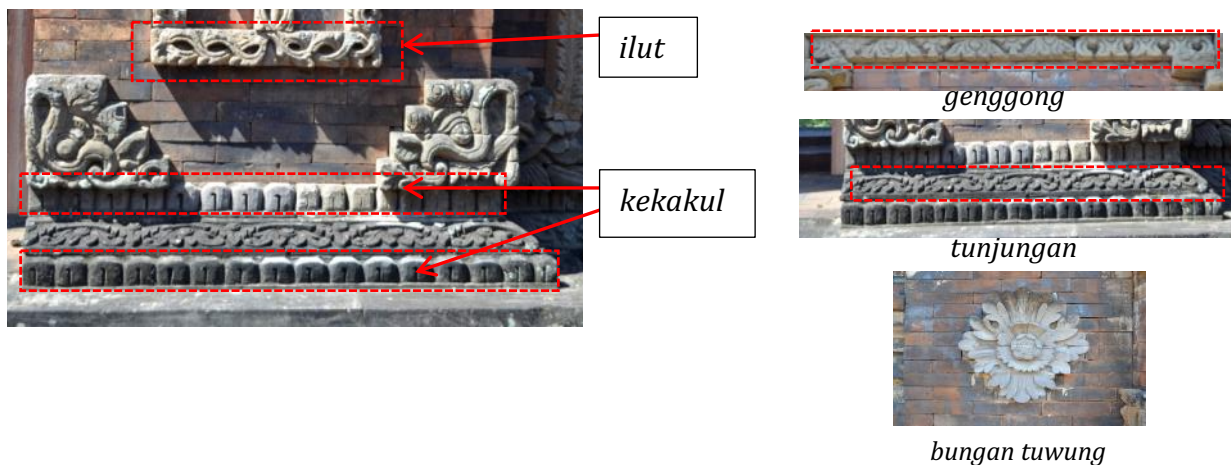


Figure 4. The ornaments motif of *keketusan*

3.2. Kori Agung of Pura Penataran Tutuan

Similar to the *kori agung* of Pura Kentel Gumi, the form *kori agung* of Pura Penataran Tutuan consists of three parts. The head consists of one level and a *bentala* at the top. The body consists of one main structure with a wooden door and one *lelengen* on each sides. The legs, the lowest part of the *kori agung*, is equipped with only one step made of brick (see Figure 5).

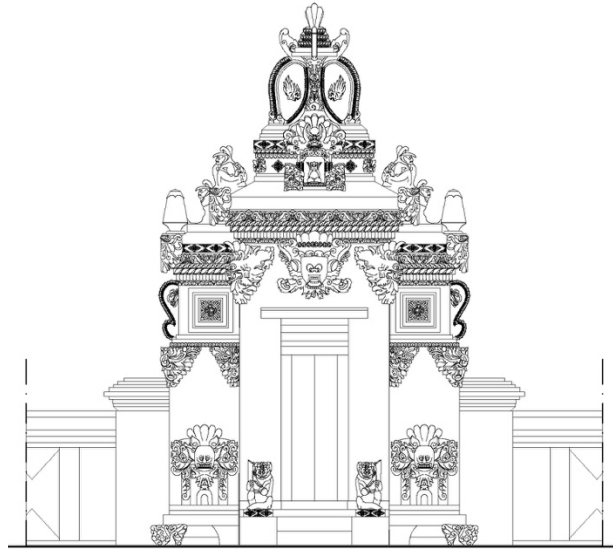


Figure 5. The *Kori Agung* of Pura Penataran Tutuan

As the first object, the *kori agung* of Pura Penataran Tutuan is made of a combination of brick and *sandstones*. In general, bricks are the main structure, while the ornament is generally made from *sandstones*. These *sandstones* are attached to the brick and carved in detail with the motifs of plants and animals (see Figure 6). The gate also has *karang boma* above the door, statues at the front, some *patras* including *patra punggel*, some *keketusans* such as *kekakulan*. However, there are some differences in relation to the ornaments in some parts. *Bentala* on the first object uses *patra punggel* as a base while on the second uses *karang goak* (the ornament of the crow's head). Under the *bentala* is a statue of a deity that can be found in the first object.

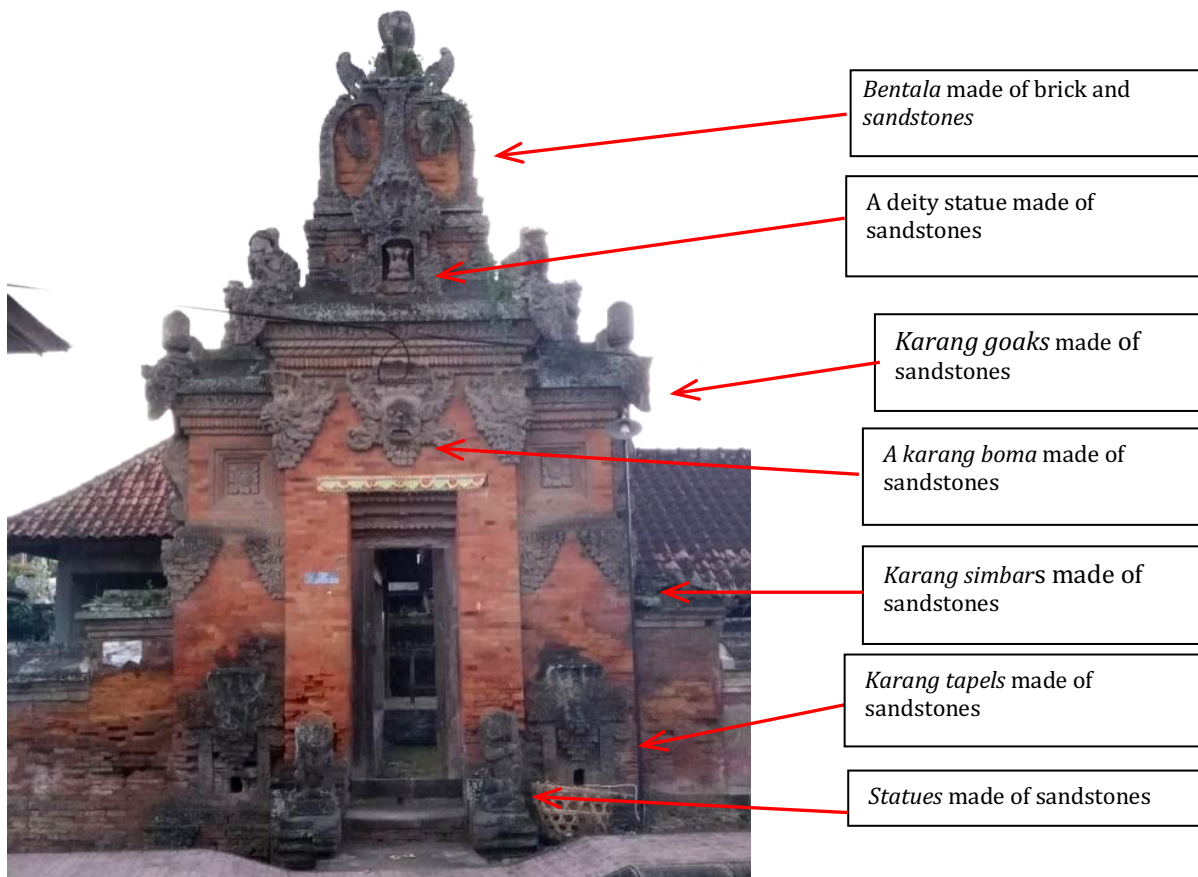


Figure 6. The ornaments on *Kori Agung* of Pura Penataran Tutuan

3.3. Kori Agung of Pura Penataran Taman Sari

As other gates, the *kori agung* of Pura Penataran consists of three parts. The head consists of five levels and a *bentala* at the top. The body consists of one main structure with a wooden door and three *lelengen* on both sides. The leg is equipped with seven steps made of brick. In contrast to the temples in the abovementioned *kori agungs*, the *kori agung* of Pura Penataran Taman Sari has three doors. The main door for the ceremonial equipment is in the main structure of the body, while the other two doors are in the first *lelengan* that flanks on the main structure of the body. At the above of every door is *karang boma* (see Figure 7).

The material used in this *kori agung* is brick as the basic structure and sandstones as an ornament. Ornaments found on the roof are *bentala*, *karang naga*, *karang tapel*, three statues of deities, and various ornaments with plant motifs. In the body of the *kori agung*, there are *kekarangans* such as *karang goak*, *karang boma* and various *pepatra* and *kekutusan*. At the foot of the *kori agung*, there are *kekarangan* ornaments with fauna motif such as *karang asti*. Beside the three doors in this *kori agung*, the other difference is *karang naga* (the mimesis of dragon) on the roof of the *kori agung*. There is two *karang naga* in which their tail goes up to the *bentala* (see Figure 7).

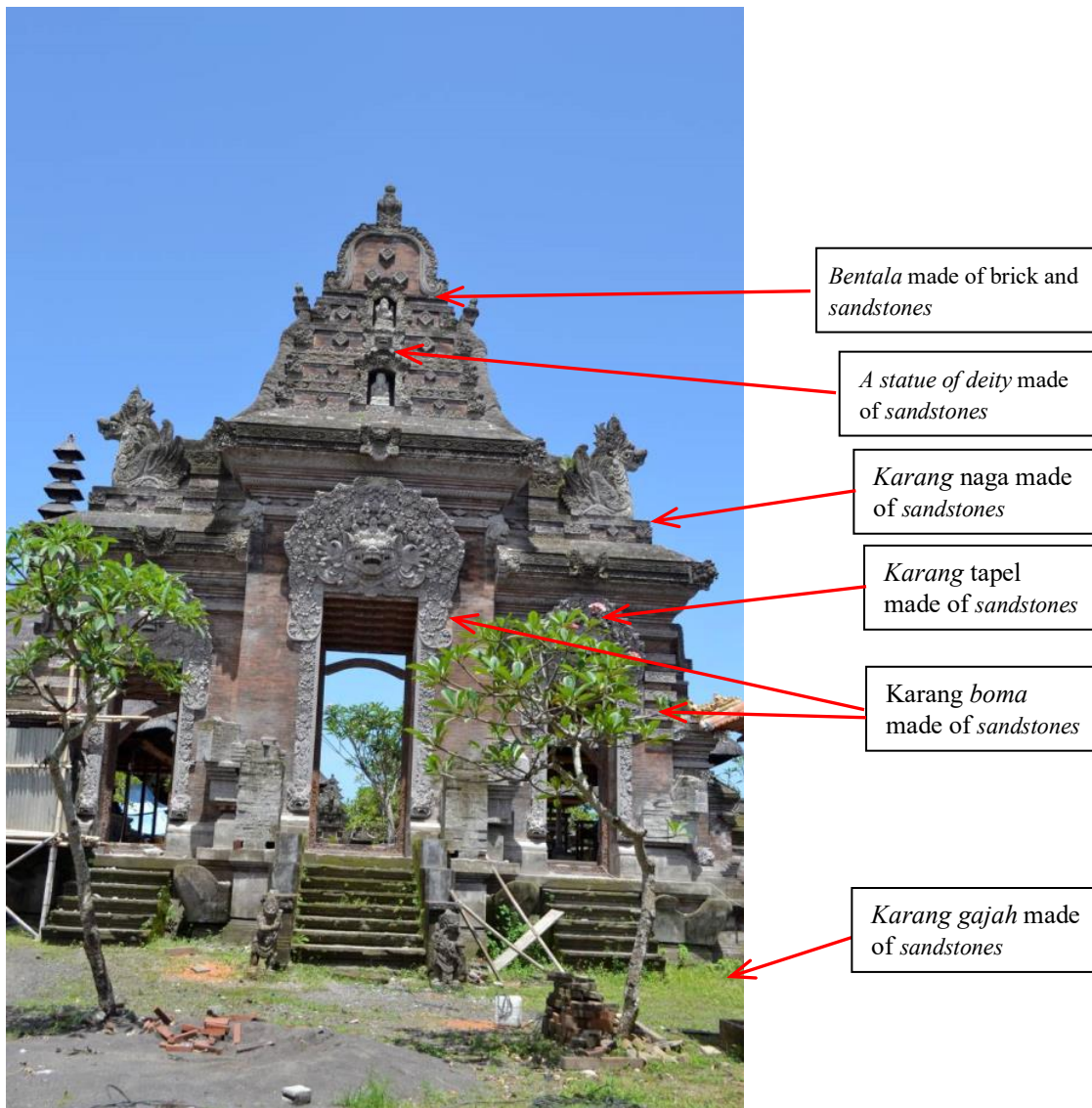


Figure 7. The ornaments on *Kori Agung* of Pura Penataran Taman Sari

CONCLUSIONS

The form of the three *kori agung* consists of three parts. They are the head as the upper part, the body as the middle part, and the legs as the bottom part. Each part has ornaments as decorative elements that are the combination of *anthropomorphic/ sub morphosis*, flora, geometric and *perimbunan*, which combines some elements of nature. The material used as ornaments is *sandstones*, while the main structure is made of brick. However, the differences between the three *kori agungs* are the number of doors and the ornament of *bentala* and roof. The variations present dialects in the architectural style of *kori agungs* in Klungkung in which the styles vary, but they still resemble. The dialects have operated as an idea of uniqueness to create an otherness or sharp distinctiveness with others.

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