

# Study of Neo-Traditional Architecture of Hibualamo Traditional House Between Form, Function and Meaning Relationship as a Representation of Tobelo Culture

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**Abstract:** Hibualamo Neo-Traditional Architecture is a traditional building in the North Halmahera area built by the Tobelo tribe. The long history of the presence of the Hibualamo House is something important and symbolic for the people of Tobelo in particular and North Halmahera in general. However, it has since been restored in 2007 by the North Halmahera regional government. There has been a change or acculturation in architecture, both in terms of the use of materials, the shape of the building facade, and adjustments to the function of the building. This new application of hibualamo architecture has given rise to controversy over whether the existing hibualamo buildings still apply the cultural values of the Tobelo tribe, like the original hibualamo buildings. This research aims to examine the application of Neo-Traditional Architecture to the Hibualamo traditional house from the architectural aspect, namely form, function and meaning related to Tobelo tribal culture. A qualitative descriptive research method will be carried out by reviewing the literature on Neo-Traditional Architecture, Culture and Hibualamo Traditional Houses. Then the results of in-depth analysis and study will show the extent of the relationship between form, function and meaning that represents the culture of the Tobelo tribe. The research results show that the Hibualamo Neo-traditional Architecture is an architectural novelty, but its existence is still proven to be in accordance with the principles or cultural values of the Tobelo people of North Halmahera.

**Keywords:** Hibualamo Architecture, Tobelo Tribe Culture, Neo-Traditional

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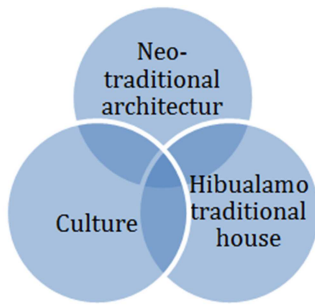
## 1. Introduction

The diversity and richness of tribes has given birth to many architectural works in the archipelago [1]. Hibualamo is a unique work of traditional architecture. Where the basic shape is octagonal [2]. The uniqueness of the Hibualamo traditional house is a representation of the culture and traditions of the Tobelo people. Hibualamo as a traditional house has become a symbol or regional identity. Since the restoration in 2007 by the local government of North Halmahera, there has been a change or acculturation of architecture, in terms of the use of materials, the shape of the building facade, and the addition of building functions, so that it becomes more modern. Instead of this, there is a need for studies related to these changes, to obtain their relation to the culture of the hibualamo people.

Traditional architecture is a physical form of culture that includes solutions implemented by previous societies that are passed on to generations. However, in its development, over time, traditional architecture has undergone changes in design form [3]. At this level, Hibualamo as a traditional building too, there has been a physical renewal of the building. Yuswadi explained that traditional architecture includes solutions and changes in physical architectural styles which can be explained or defined as Neo-Traditional concepts or new traditional architecture.

To achieve the research objective, namely, to study the Neo-Traditional Architecture of the hibualamo traditional house from an architectural aspect, namely its form, function and meaning related to the culture of the Tobelo tribe. Hence the need for a study scheme related to culture, Hibualamo traditional houses and Neo-Traditional Architecture.





**Figure 1.** Study scheme.

Descriptive qualitative method, seeks to analyze the relationship of the three, so as to prove that the Hibualamo traditional house is a new architectural work, namely Neo-Traditional Architecture. Because the descriptive method is a method that aims to collect data and images related to the topic to be researched, it is described according to the topic [4]. It is hoped that this research can provide an understanding of Neo-Traditional Hibualamo Architecture.

Hibualamo as a single traditional house has a distinctive shape, which cannot be found in other Tobelo traditional buildings. The basic shape of the building is octagonal with the philosophy of our house together with Ngana or Mahetete and the house of the O'ria dodoto brothers. This house is known for its openness to anyone who comes from various directions [2]. Initially, Hibualamo served as a meeting place for the Tobelo indigenous people to continue their traditions and culture. Then its function developed into a meeting place for government agendas and recently it is often used as a place for cultural arts performances and so on. This is normal because it is explained that this change is an effort by society to create a new artificial environment to meet needs in accordance with the ability to develop new space without losing its cosmological value [5].

As part of the culture of the existence of hibualamo in North Halmahera, it is believed to have started when the ancestors of the Tobelo Tribe, which consisted of nine Soa (Soa: a kind of clan or family kinship group), moved to leave the area where they came from in Talaga Lina (Talaga: lake) to a place where more promising in terms of improving the standard of living. Five of the other nine Soa headed for the Kao region and the other four headed for the Tobelo region. The four Soa are Soa Lina, Soa Huboto, Soa Mumulati, and Soa Gura. The group that came from the four Soa headed north (O'Koremie Uku, meaning towards the north wind) which is now known as the Tobelo region. According to the agreement of the four Soa, a large house was built which is known in the local language as Hibua Lamo. The shape of the Hibualamo building, at that time, was relatively round and simple because it was heavily influenced by the event of wrapping the gadoro or iwi or uri around each wrist [6].

From a philosophical perspective, Hibualamo also has five philosophical elements that are very strongly embedded in the culture of the Tobelo people, these five elements are O'dora (the fruit of love for fellow humans), O'hayangi (the fruit of love for fellow humans), mutual love or the spirit of mutual cooperation), O'baliara (is an attitude that exists in a

strong emotional connection, in establishing a harmonious relationship), O'adili (a sense of justice that is maintained in everyday life), and O'diai (the value of honesty and truth) [7]. The traditional hibualamo house underwent restoration or rebuilding by the North Halmahera government in 2007. It was built in Gamsungi Village, Jalan Mumulati. Then it was recognized as a cultural heritage building by the Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2010 with no registration: 2010000502.



**Figure 2.** Hibualamo Traditional House after restoration in 2007.

The relationship between architecture and culture is very close, as explained by Rapoport (1969) that architecture is a space where humans live which is not only a physical form but also part of the principles of cultural institutions [8]. Just like traditional architecture which is the work of a cultural community.

Traditional architecture is a communication relationship between humans, their natural geographical environment [9]. Also added, explicitly traditional architecture is an architectural tradition that has been carried out by various ethnic groups for a long time [10]. In line with this opinion, traditional architecture also has characteristics that reflect its existence based on the culture of the local community and its environment [11]. The distinctive characteristics are also explained, namely that traditional architecture can be seen from the aspects of the roof, buildings and ornaments [12].

However, in its development, traditional architectural works have become increasingly modern in their preservation efforts due to limited material needs and the development of the times. So that as a solution, architecturally, traditional architecture shows a new architectural style or is known as Neo-Traditional Architecture. This, along with the construction of Hibualamo, has shown the principles of a new architectural style, or what could be called neo-traditional Hibualamo architecture. Based on cultural communication (indigenous community consultation) and adaptation to natural conditions (material needs), which can be recognized among architecture observers or practitioners.

Traditional is closely related to the diversity of tribes and nations who live based on their culture and philosophy, so efforts are needed to understand this culture [13]. Traditional itself is part of art, a characteristic of culture and settlement [14]. As explained by Koentjaraningrat, architecture is one of



the three forms of culture, namely the physical form, while two of them are the form of a system of behavior and the form of a system of ideas [15]. However, understanding a work of architecture does not stop at the physical form of a building, this is explained further, that every architectural work in its design process must prioritize the elements of

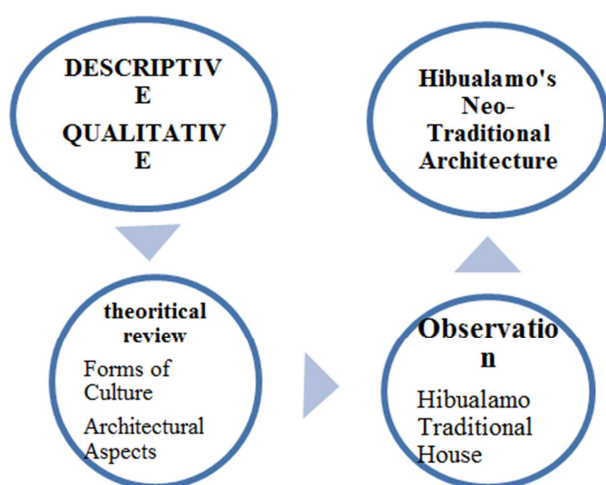
form, function, and meaning.

In this way, Hibualamo as a neo-traditional architecture can be understood by looking at the architectural relationship (form, function, and meaning) with the three forms of culture (physical form, behavior system, and idea system).

**Table 1.** Architectural, Cultural and Hibualamo Relations.

Architectural form	Cultural form	Hibualamo
function	Physical form	Building form
meaning	behavioral systems	building function
	idea system	Ideas based on tradition/culture

## 2. Research Methods



**Figure 3.** Method research.

Methods Descriptive qualitative research will be carried out by examining Neo-Traditional Architecture, Culture, and Hibualamo traditional houses as well as field observations. Then look at the extent to which the relations of form, function, and meaning with the cultural forms of the Tobelo Tribe form Neo-traditional architectural works.

More than that, it is hoped that studies related to cultural

and architectural aspects can be studied together with direct field observations of the hibualamo traditional house. So as to get a complete understanding of hibualamo's neo-traditional architecture.

## 3. Results and Discussion

As described above, integrating architectural aspects and three forms of culture can represent Hibualamo's neo-traditional architectural works. In this way, the relation can be described as follows:

### 3.1. Hibualamo Architectural Form

In the architectural form of hibualamo, it refers to the overall form which consists of three enclosures, namely, the scope of the floor, walls and roof of the building.

The architectural form of the Hibualamo building in terms of the floor covering, that is, the basic shape or floor plan, is octagonal in shape and is divided into inner and outer parts. Covering the wall, the wall that is not visible is the outside of the building and what is visible is the inside of the building or can be seen and touched with brick wall material, pillars, windows and doors which are carved with ornaments. And the roof covering consists of three roof arrangements and is circular following an octagonal shape and a boat shape symbol at the very top of the roof.

**Table 2.** Floor covering.

<p>1. Floor covering</p>	<p>Hibualamo was built right in the center of Tobelo. Gamsungi Village, Mumulati Street. The basic form or building plan is an octagonal shape. There are two floors in the building. Still maintaining the philosophy of the basic shape of the building, it is also divided into two parts, namely the inside and the outside.</p>
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Table 3. Wall covering.

## 2. Wall covering



The walls of the building have used modern materials. The doors, windows and pillars are enriched with the same ornaments and carvings. the philosophy of color in the Hibualamo traditional house with different meanings. The black color symbolizes solidarity, and the red color represents the fighting spirit of the Canga tradition or the sailors of the Tobelo people who drove out invaders. While yellow symbolizes intelligence, splendor and wealth. And the white color symbolizes the holiness of the 10 Hoana people who currently inhabit the North Halmahera region.

Table 4. Roof covering.

## 3. Roof covering



On the roof of the building, there are three roof arrangements. boat symbol on the top roof or roof ridge. The material on the roof of the building has used modern materials and the boat symbol on the roof shows the meaning of the identity of the fishing community.

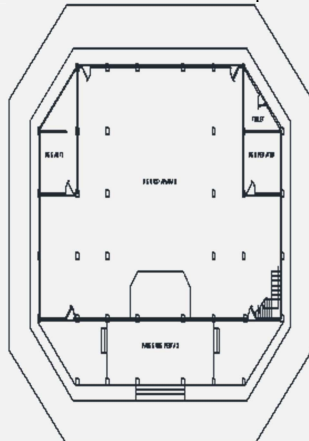
## 3.2. Functions of Hibualamo Architecture

The form of cultural behavior as a function of the building in the architectural aspect. Initially, Hibualamo functioned as a place for deliberations and meetings for the Tobelo indigenous people to continue their traditions and culture.

Then in its function, it developed into a meeting place for government agendas and recently it has often been used as a venue for cultural arts performances. So that the room in the hibualamo building is adjusted to its function. The hibualamo room is as follows:

Table 5. Hibualamo traditional house plan.

## Hibualamo traditional house plan



Meeting room  
Operators room  
Changing room  
toilet  
Stage

Often used by local governments, indigenous peoples, youth organizations, and so on. As for the function of the building, it has developed from only being a place for deliberations to various other activities. while the 2nd floor only functions as a multipurpose room



### 3.3. The Meaning of Hibualamo Architecture

The form of cultural ideas as the meaning of hibualamo architecture. Hibualamo architecture is a concrete manifestation of the cultural ideas of the Tobelo tribe and has become a symbol or regional identity. This can be seen in every corner of the Hibualamo building which is full of meaning, starting from the octagonal shape which means our common house "ngana tau Mahahite" and the house of relatives "o'ria dodoto," which is known for its openness to anyone. coming from various directions. Also the pillars, doors and windows that are carved up to the roof of the two-tiered building and the symbol of the shape of a boat on the top of the roof mean that the Tobelo people are part of an ancestral tradition, namely fishermen in fulfilling their basic needs and sailing in the sea to drive away invaders (Canga/pirates). who seek to enter and seize the wealth of Nature.

## 4. Conclusion

As a result of the discussion, it can be concluded that Hibualamo's Neo-Traditional Architecture has undergone modern changes. However, the implementation of cultural forms still prioritizes the principles or cultural values of the Tobelo Tribe. There are many reasons for this change, but hibualamo is also a traditional building born through socio-cultural traditions, identity, and in accordance with the needs and development of the Tobelo tribe. So without eliminating local wisdom in the construction of traditional houses in this modern era. The architectural aspect between the relations of form, function and meaning in the form of physical culture, behavioral culture and social systems is a complete understanding and becomes one part that can be explained together.

Hibualamo's architectural form is an octagonal shape. This is still based on the understanding and philosophy of nanga tau mahete or our common home. this philosophy, is the attitude of openness of indigenous peoples to anyone who comes from anywhere.

The function of Hibualamo Architecture has developeddara only as a place for indigenous peoples' meetings to become a multifunctional building with various activities carried out, both by the local government and the Tobelo community.

The explicit meaning of Hibualamo Architecture is a regional symbol or identity, but in every shape and form of the building as a whole it has its own meaning.

Against this conclusion, presumably preservation efforts in maintaining a regional identity for a neo-traditional architectural work are part of the spirit of culture or local wisdom possessed.

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