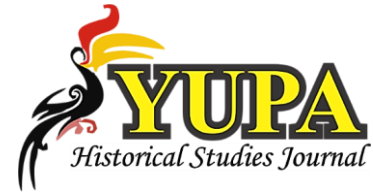


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Traditional Malay House Architecture (Case Study of House of Datuk Amar Sridiraja in Tanjung Pura District, Langkat Regency)

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Abstract This study aims to identify and analyze the form and architectural meaning of the traditional Malay house of Datuk Amar Sridiraja in Tanjung Pura, Langkat Regency. The house, which was built in 1827, is a cultural heritage that is still preserved today. The research method used is a historical approach with data collection techniques through direct observation, interviews with residents of the house, and literature studies. The results showed that Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house has Malay architectural characteristics that are reflected in elements such as stairs, doors, windows, poles, floors, ornaments, and roofs. Each of these elements has a symbolic meaning in Malay culture. The house's dominant yellow and green colors also have special meanings, symbolizing glory, majesty, and Islamic values. Although it has undergone several renovations, the house still retains the essence of traditional Malay architecture.

Keywords: Malay Architecture, Traditional house, Datuk Amar Sridiraja, Tanjung Pura

Abstrak Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis bentuk serta makna arsitektur rumah tradisional Melayu Datuk Amar Sridiraja di Tanjung Pura, Kabupaten Langkat. Rumah yang dibangun pada tahun 1827 ini merupakan warisan budaya yang masih terpelihara hingga saat ini. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan sejarah dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi langsung, wawancara dengan penghuni rumah, dan studi literatur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa rumah Datuk Amar Sridiraja memiliki ciri khas arsitektur Melayu yang tercermin dalam elemen-elemen seperti tangga, pintu, jendela, tiang, lantai, ornamen, dan atap. Setiap elemen ini memiliki makna simbolis dalam budaya Melayu. Warna kuning dan hijau yang dominan pada rumah juga memiliki arti khusus, melambangkan kejayaan, keagungan, dan nilai-nilai Islam. Meskipun telah mengalami beberapa renovasi, rumah ini tetap mempertahankan esensi arsitektur Melayu tradisional.

Kata kunci: Arsitektur Melayu, Rumah tradisional, Datuk Amar Sridiraja, Tanjung Pura



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INTRODUCTION

The Sultanate of Langkat is currently included in the government area of North Sumatra. Among the monarchies of East Sumatra, the Sultanate of Langkat is the oldest. In 1568 Dewa Sahdan, an Aru royal official from Tanah Karo, managed to avoid the attack of the Aceh Sultanate and built a kingdom in the area now known as Hamparan Perak. It was from this kingdom that the Sultanate of Langkat was born. (Arifin, 2002) Langkat borders the Strait of Malacca and Aceh to the north: Tanah Karo to the south: Sultanate of Deli in the East and Negeri Tamiang in the west. (Husin, 2013)

Langkat comes from a tree similar to the langsat tree. The langkat tree has a fruit that is smaller than the duku fruit but larger than the langsat tree. They call it bitter and astringent. Many of these trees are found on the banks of the Langkat river, on the banks of Batang Sarangan, which drains the city of Tanjung Pura. Unfortunately, the Langkat tree cannot be found today.

The Sultanate of Langkat is the richest sultanate in East Sumatra. In fact, the only Malay sultanate in East Sumatra that has a throne, chair, and chariot made of gold. The Sultanate of Langkat reached the peak of its glory during the reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz between 1897 - 1927 AD. Sultan Abdul Aziz built "Darul Makmur" in Kota Baru in front of the palace of Sultan Musa. Not only built a new palace, he also advanced the Langkat Kingdom very rapidly, both in the fields of politics, education, religion, and the economy. (Sulaiman Zuhdi, 2013). This can be seen from the Kingdom of Langkat which also left some relics both in the form of physical buildings and so forth. As one example of a relic building on a building, namely, Traditional Malay Customary House which is right on the edge of the Sumatra cross road or can be said to be right next to the MAN 2 Tanjung Pura school. This Malay Traditional Traditional House is the House of the Kedatuan, namely the House of Datuk Amar Sridiraja.

The Malay traditional house is a house that has an important aspect in the culture of the Malay tribe that inhabits the Malay Peninsula, coastal Sumatra island. This traditional house is an internal part of traditional Malay life that illustrates the cultural heritage will be rich and diverse. (Novriyadi, 2023). According to Law No. 4 of 1992 concerning Housing and Settlements, a house is a building used as a residence or dwelling in a household development facility. Traditional houses are symbols or characteristics of each region that have unique ideas and meanings for their inhabitants. (Widyarti, Setiawan, & Arifin, 2011)..

A house not only serves as a dwelling place where life activities can be carried out, but is also a symbol of the perfection of life. A house is "the light of life on earth, a place of heredity, an anchorage for relatives, a place for trading, a debt owed by parents to their children." (Koentjaraningrat & Ahimsa-Putra, 2007). The traditional house of the Malay community across the city of Jambi supports the concept of *going green*, as shown by the raw materials used in the main manufacture of houses is environmentally friendly wood. The Malay community across the

city of Jambi strongly maintains its existence to honor the family and parents. (Putra, Surbajti, & Mailinar, 2020).

One type of house on stilts is a residential house that developed in residential areas. Houses on stilts are built to anticipate flooding and the threat of wild animals. Therefore, the formation of houses on stilts requires a structure that has the ability to support the load on the ground. (Wazir, Z. A., & F Anwar, 2020).. In its category, the house has its own characteristics and characters such as the Datuk Amar House which has a Malay architectural style inherent in ornaments, the use of yellow and green colors as a symbolic form of the tradition of the Tanjung Pura Malay tribe house. In addition, the house has two floors, the upper floor uses boards as the floor of the house and there is a corner of the room leading to the stairs down to the ground floor with the use of cement on the lower floor. This large house has 4 rooms and several large rooms as a place for family gatherings.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach to describe and analyze Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house as the main research object. This approach allows the author to reveal all relevant aspects related to the object of research. The research method used is a historical study, which includes the collection of historical sources, critical evaluation, and presentation of research results in written form. In the collection of sources, historical methods such as heuristics to collect sources, criticism or analysis of sources both in terms of external and internal, interpretation, and historiography for historical writing are used. (Abdurahman, 2003). In addition, this research also adopted two additional approaches to facilitate further analysis: an architectural science approach to explore the architectural characteristics of Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house, and an archaeological approach to uncover facts through direct observation of the object of research.

The research steps included direct observation at Datuk Amar Sridiraja's private house in Tanjung Pura Sub-district, interviews with one of the great-grandchildren of the house owner, Mr. Oka Lawauddin, and some of his family members, as well as literature study which included various sources such as books, articles, news, research reports, scientific journals, and online publications. In addition, documentation was conducted by taking pictures of the house using a cellphone camera to support visual analysis and physical documentation. This method was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of the history and architecture of Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house by combining a descriptive qualitative approach, historical methods, and architectural and archaeological science approaches.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History of Datuk Amar Sridiraja's House

Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house, built in 1827, located next to MAN 2 Langkat school, Jalan T. Amir Hamzah No.94, Pekan Tanjung Pura, Langkat Regency, has a rich history as the private home of a sultanate secretary during the time of Sultan Musa to Sultan Mahmud. Datuk Amar, a descendant from outside the sultanate of Langkat, played an important role as a secretary who was trusted and respected by the Sultans. This was confirmed by his descendant, Mr. Oka Lawauddin, who asserted that this house was acquired with the Sultan's trust as a reward for his services during his tenure as secretary.

The title "Datuk" bestowed on Amar by Sultan Musa shows appreciation for his position and contribution. In the Sanskrit context, "datuk" means "glorified person," describing the privileged position given to high-ranking officials below Tengku or as leaders outside the Tengku family. (Husny, 1978). The house was originally brown in color with tepas walls, which were later renovated by Mr. Oka Lawauddin's family by replacing the tepas wall base with planks for the upper floor and concrete for the ground floor. The renovation not only improved the physical condition of the house but also added aesthetic value with the combination of yellow and green colors, reflecting the strong Malay art and cultural characteristics of this house.

In addition to Mr. Oka Lawauddin's residence, the house is also home to his wife, siblings, children and grandchildren. The title "OK," which is used as a colloquial title, comes from the tradition of the family having the title "Datuk." Daughters of Datuk are titled "Aja," while sons of Datuk who are not titled Sultan are titled "Encek." The sons of Datuk who are titled Sultan have the title "Orang Kaya," indicating the hierarchy and tradition of honor passed down in the family. (Adisaputera, 2010).

This private house originally had 9 rooms, but was later reduced to 6 rooms. According to Mr. Oka Lawauddin, this decision was made because some of the rooms were too many and rarely used, so two rooms were demolished to expand the space and create the impression of a more spacious house. This reflects the structural adaptations made by the owner to accommodate the needs and optimize the use of space.

Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house is also rich in architectural details. There are many windows with distinctive ornamentation, including 30 small window combs and 5 large windows. These ornaments not only enhance the aesthetics of the house, but also allow natural light to enter the room, creating a bright and cozy atmosphere inside. In addition, the house has unique features such as two doors in one room, where one leads into the room and the other leads out to the living room. This feature reflects the layout and design designed for comfort as well as functionality in daily life in this traditional home.



Figure 1. House of Datuk Amar Sridiraja
Source: Personal documents (2023)

Architectural style of Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house

The influence of foreign ornaments on the house

Datuk Amar's house, which does not have too many ornaments, illustrates the simplicity contained in it. This can be seen in one of the clear ornaments that we usually find in every traditional Malay traditional house, namely jala-jala. Jala itself is an arrangement of wood or bamboo arranged crosswise. It is done crosswise so that there is air circulation into the house.

According to Mr. Oka Lawauddin, "this house is deliberately designed in a simple way but still has the typical impression of a Malay house". In addition to the mesh ornaments, there is also glass on the top of the large and small windows, this is what illustrates that Datuk Amar's house is still very simple with its ornaments. In this case there is no interference from any party in the shape or style of the ornaments on Datuk Amar's own house.

Uniqueness of Datuk Amar's House

Datuk Amar's house is designed in such a way that the use of Malay characteristics is clearly visible in the shape and architectural style of the house. The house is inhabited by Datuk Amar's descendants who care for and make this house can be seen until now. The uniqueness of this traditional house itself can be seen from the many stairs. This can be seen from the first staircase at the end of the porch to the second floor where there are more stairs in it for the way up and down from inside to the kitchen. Not only that, this two-story house had many rooms in the past, until finally Datuk Amar's descendants decided to dismantle two rooms to make the house look much wider than before. In addition, there are two doors leading to each room in the house, both of which can be opened from outside and from inside the house itself.

The Meaning of Color in Datuk Amar's House

A house is a shelter for a family in which they need a sense of security and comfort, in this case Datuk Amar's house also has the same function as houses in general. According to one of his descendants, Mr. Oka Lawauddin said, "This house used to have no specific color as it is now, but I myself did the painting stage to make the house look more beautiful and look more colorful than the previous color which was only brown". Now Datuk Amar's house is a typical Malay color, namely, the use of yellow and green in Datuk Amar's house. In addition to green and yellow which are more dominant in the color of the house, brown also decorates the corners of the door, and stairs of the house.

In the Malay tradition, the color yellow has a special meaning. Yellow, a color derived from gold and the sun, in addition to functioning as an aesthetic, also symbolizes purity, glory, majesty, and splendor. The yellow color is also commonly used by rulers or great kings who have power in a region. (Azmi, 2023). Meanwhile, the use of green is usually associated with enthusiasm, freshness, and calmness. In addition, green is a symbol of contemplation, belief (religion), eternity, and hope. In mythology, the green color symbolizes the scholars and grandfathers as a symbol of Islam. (Rengganis, 2022). So from this most Malay houses dominate the yellow and green colors as a symbol of the traditions that have long adorned the days of the Malay tribe around Tanjung Pura, Kab. Langkat.

Architectural Meaning of Datuk Amar Sridiraja's House

The type of architecture known as Malay architecture is dominated by the Malays, who are an ethnic group originating from the Austronesian family. (Indriani, Ratna, & Budiarto, 2019).. Architecture represents the cultural odyssey of a nation. Humanity cannot avoid the realm of architecture, be it the essence of the environment or the innate nature of the individual, as both will manifest themselves visibly through architectural forms (Antariksa, 2015). (Antariksa, 2015).

Malay architecture is also part of Indonesian Traditional Architecture which has a work in the form of buildings and environments, where the form, ornamentation, function and method of making are passed down from generation to generation. With this, the traditional Malay house illustrates the cultural value in which the house or dwelling is the closest embodiment of human culture. conventional houses that serve as a representation of various ethnic groups around the world. Houses that are built and used in the same way from generation to generation are traditional houses. (Sumintardja, 1981).

a) Stairs

Stairs are parts of the house that are used to go up and down. The stair post is rectangular with a pointed top. The hand of the ladder is installed parallel to the ladder pole and has a parallel shape of the hole under the hand of the ladder. The stairs of the house are made of boards with

good board strength, so that they can support the human body when on the stairs of the house. The number of stairs is proportional to the degree of ownership of the house. According to the number of pillars of Islam, the stairs consist of five levels (Nurannisa, 2014).



Figure 2. Placement of Datuk Amar's House Stairs
Source: Personal documents (2023)

a) Doors

The main door depicts the clarity of two doors with the original color of the door leaf completed. As for the door of the upper room, two door leaves are deliberately made with the characteristic rectangular box and are colored green, yellow and brown. The front door (ambang) and the back door (telo) are two types of doors that exist in traditional Malay architecture. In general, doors are made low so that people who want to enter or exit have to bend down. This ensures that the person who wants to enter or exit understands the local customs and traditions. (Aurelia, Winandari, & Iskandar, 2019).



Main door and downstairs room door
Source: Personal documents (2023)

b) Window

Usually called "*casement*" or "*pelinguk*", windows are similar in shape to doors but smaller or lower. There is a deliberately designed combing on the window board. The shutters also consist of one to two doors. In addition, the height of the windows in each house is not always the same; some of these differences are due to different floor heights and other traditions.

Windows also have certain meanings. Windows made as high as an adult standing on the floor symbolize that the owner of the building is a kind person and knows about traditions and customs, while windows made lower symbolize that the owner of the building is a friendly person and open to receive guests (Salam, 2017). (Salam, 2017)



Figure 4. Window on Datuk Amar's House
Source: Personal documents (2023)

c) Mast

Traditional Malay house poles can usually be round or square. As for Datuk Amar's house itself, it has 6 poles to support the upper floor and was replaced with concrete after previously using wooden poles. The pillar is located between the front door and the right corner of the front of the building. The pillars indicate that the house was built according to customs and that other family members should support the household.



Figure 5. The front pillar of the house
Source: Personal documents (2023)

d) Floor

This traditional house uses floors made of wood and also made of cement. It can be seen that the use of stilt house floors still maintains a natural impression. The wooden floor starts on the second floor of Datuk Amar's traditional house. While the terrace and also the kitchen floor with cement that has been plastered. The floors of Malay houses are not the same height. The floor of the main house is usually higher than the floor of the front and back verandas, usually five to six feet off the ground. The floors of the upper class houses are made of one-inch thick selected planks, while the floors of the lower class houses are only made of round or woven bamboo.



Figure 6. Floor of Datuk Amar's House
Source: Personal documents (2023)

e) Ornaments

One of the ornaments that are often found in traditional Malay houses as a form of heritage in the past is the white mesh ornament. Mesh ornaments are found on the terrace around the terrace of Datuk Amar's house. The jala-jala ornamental variety is only brown-brown or lime-white in color, with the arrangement of wood parallel and in opposite directions. Folk houses have door screens and window screens decorated with this beautiful variety.

It has no special meaning in the use of mesh motifs, because this motif, a simple decorative variety as air circulation and adds decoration to the terrace and air circulation in the room. Simplicity is defined as considerations that prioritize the form and understanding of the core (*principal*). Additional factors, such as luxury, sophistication, and complexity of form, should not be considered. (Kartini, 2014).



Figure 7: Mesh Ornament
Source: Personal documents (2023)

f) Roof

The roof of this building is in the form of a folded kajang roof structure, having a hallway shape at the front that is different from the previous section. This roof also illustrates a straight, fair, righteous nature and upholds a sense of mutual cooperation and deliberation. (Rahman & Kurniawan, 2021).



Figure 8: Combination roof
Source: Personal document (2023) and Traditional Architecture Book of North Sumatra Region (1997)

CONCLUSION

Based on the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house is an important example of traditional Malay architecture that still survives in Tanjung Pura, Langkat Regency. The architecture of this house reflects strong Malay cultural values, as seen from the use of typical elements such as multilevel stairs, double doors, ornate windows, supporting poles, multilevel floors, mesh ornaments, and kajang folding roofs. Each architectural element has its own symbolic meaning, for example, the number of steps symbolizes the degree of the homeowner and the height of the windows depicts the character of the homeowner. The use of yellow and green colors in the house is not only an aesthetic element, but also symbolizes the values of glory, majesty, and religiosity in Malay culture. Although it has undergone several changes and renovations, the house owner has tried to maintain the essence of traditional Malay architecture, demonstrating efforts to preserve cultural heritage. Thus, Datuk Amar Sridiraja's house is not only a residential building, but also a cultural artifact that holds Malay history and values, making it important to preserve and learn more.

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