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# Exploring Socio-Cultural Identity: Characteristics of the Architectural Design of Kori Agung Bangli

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## Abstract

The existence of vernacular architecture has given characteristics to the built environment and area. Vernacular architecture has become into a distinct personality that differentiates one location from another. Bangli architecture is one of the various kinds of architecture that evolved in Bali. Bangli architectural style has evolved from the 15th century to the 18th century AD. The characteristics of Bangli's distinctive architectural design can be seen in the main entrance building called *kori agung*. Today the architectural style in Bangli began to be replaced by the entry of other architectural styles in the surrounding area. For this reason, documentation efforts are needed to explore the identity and characteristics of Bangli architectural design. This article describes the identification of Bangli's architectural style characteristics through the *kori agung* as an object of the investigation. Data collection was carried out through field measurements, interviews and historical literacy. Architectural inspection techniques and graphical analysis are used in the analytical method, with architectural drawings and forms serving as the primary instruments. As a result, drawings, sketches and visual analyses are used to describe the architectural qualities of *kori agung*, which are typical of Bangli.

**Keywords:** Architecture, Characteristics, *Kori Agung*, Bangli

## 1. Introduction

The local architectural style in a place is an identity, characteristic, and aspect that distinguishes one place from another (Hoop, 1949). Local architecture, which is often termed vernacular architecture, is a built environment formed from the community's social needs (Salman, 2019). Exploration and excavation of past cultural traces can be done by tracing local architectural forms. Preservation of old buildings is one way to maintain local culture whose physical traces can be seen in architectural works. In addition, the excavation of cultural identity can be done by documentation and identification of architectural objects that have historical value.

Each region in Bali has architectural values that distinguish it from other areas. Cultural practices and rituals, including architecture, express their influence and distinctive identity (Nordholt, 1986). In practice, architectural styles in each area aim to reveal self-identity and create boundaries with other areas (Satria & Putra, 2020). Characteristics of architectural style can be seen from the shape, proportion, scale, shape, facade, and ornaments (Utami et al., 2013). In addition, the architectural style can also be seen from the ornaments. The decoration in

Balinese architecture cannot be separated from every part of the building in appearance and its meaning in appearance and its meaning (Gelebet, 1998).

Bangli Regency is one area with a long history that starts from pre-historic times to the era of modern Bali. These historical traces have formed unique architectural characteristics and can only be found in Bangli. The architectural style of the *kori agung* in Bangli is one part of the cultural roots of the Bangli people. The wealth of cultural values is a form of human culture reflected in the shape and form of architecture (Piutanti, 2015). Based on historical research, the existence of Bangli architecture has emerged since the Bali Aga era. This architectural style continues to grow until it finds its shape and characteristics during the middle Balinese/kingdom era. The legacy of Bangli's architectural style can be seen in various buildings scattered in *pura* (temples) and *puri* (palace) scattered throughout Bangli.

The evolution of the Bangli architectural style is inextricably linked to the *pura* and *puri* roles. As a building with an essential function, *pura* acted as the center of worship while *puri* served as the center of government. Some temples that have historical value and have a Bangli architectural style include the Pura Kehon, Pura Desa Taman Bali, Pura Dalem Penunggekan, and Pura Puncak Penulisan. All of these temples are scattered in various parts of the Bangli Regency. Meanwhile, two *puri* (palace) have Bangli architectural styles, including Puri Agung and Puri Denpasar, Bangli. In addition, there are also traditional settlements whose existence can still be seen today, including Trunyan Village, Penglipuran Village, and Sukawana Village. All of these architectural objects give an image of the architectural characteristics of Bangli.

However, with the development of technology, the existence of the Bangli architectural style has experienced various kinds of degradation. Multiple types of degradation are caused by biological age and the need for space and function to change the architectural style. In addition, exploration and study of Balinese architectural styles, which explores the character of southern Balinese architecture, causes the Bangli architectural style to get less attention. Modernization and mechanization of construction equipment have caused Bangli's architectural style to be replaced by contemporary architectural styles, which are easier and cheaper to work on (Achmadi, 2007). This phenomenon becomes a cultural problem. The existence of a place's identity is highly dependent on its spatial quality, including its architecture, culture, and history (Amundsen, 2001).

This paper investigates Bangli's architectural style's characteristics by exploring cultural identity by exploring *kori agung* as one of the representations of Bangli architectural style with distinctive characteristics. *Kori agung* is one of the buildings that use the most easily observed Bangli architectural style. Three *kori agungs* were selected for the objects of investigation, including Pura Desa Taman Bali, Puri Bangli and Pura Penataran Gaga. Identification of the characteristics of the *kori agungs* in this study using visual observation techniques through photo and video documentation. An in-depth interview is carried out through a dialogue between the researcher and the community around the object to get a physical conception of *kori agungs* and descriptions related to history, rituals and related activities in it.

## 2. Balinese Architecture in Bangli Regency

The development and progress of Bangli architecture are closely related to the historical journey of the area. Based on historical searches, settlements in the Bangli area have emerged since prehistoric times. Prehistoric relics in Bangli were found in the southeast part of Lake Batur, precisely around Trunyan and Abang. Prehistoric relics in that place are tools made of stone, including hand axes and drawstring tools (Wikarman, 2013). In addition, evidence of architectural progress from the *perundagian* period, when the people used building experts to construct buildings, was found. During the *perundagian* period, humans were settled and could also produce tools made of stone and made of metal, bronze and iron. Some architectural objects that became relics and were found in Bangli include stone statues and menhirs. Most of the cultural heritage of prehistoric times is in the form of relics of worship facilities and tools and equipment for community life.

In the ancient Balinese era, evidence of heritage can be seen in the existence of the system, village patterns, and architecture of the Bali Aga. It can still be seen in Trunyan Village, Penglipuran Village, and Sukawana Village.

In addition, evidence of architectural developments during the ancient Balinese era was recorded in the Cempaga Inscription in 1103 Saka or around 1181 AD. Based on the inscription notes, it is stated that a kingdom has been established led by Maharaja Sri Haji Jayapangus, which is located in Pinggan Village, Bangli (Wikarman, 2013). From this evidence, it appears that human culture and architecture had developed in Bangli. This period of ancient Balinese civilization ended with an expedition against Bali by Mahapatih Majapahit Gajah Mada in 1265 Saka.

Gelgel's power marked the middle Bali period as a representative of the Majapahit Kingdom in Bali. At this time, the Bangli region was under the control of the Gelgel Kingdom in Klungkung. The Bangli Kingdom can be said to be self-sufficient after the rebellion of I Gusti Agung Maruti in Gelgel in 1686 AD (Wikarman, 2013). Over time, various kinds of development were carried out to form the area and center of government of the Bangli Kingdom. The spatial and regional structure at the center of the Bangli Kingdom began to appear with *puri*, market, the main intersection called *catuspatha*, and other *puri* for the king's relatives. Some of the relics from this period are *kori agung* Puri Bangli which is still intact. The subsequent development was during the colonial period. However, there are few architectural remains of the colonial period in Bangli. This is due to the relatively short colonial period and the use of a government pattern centered on the king who acts as an *adipati*, the representative of the colonial government, by using the *puri* as the center of government.

### 3. Method

To explore the design characteristics of *kori agungs* in Bangli a descriptive exploratory research approach was used. The exploration of the historic character and value of Bangli architecture was carried out simultaneously with the exploration of the physical aspects, namely the investigation of identity, the study of mass, proportions, materials, and ornaments. Meanwhile, the non-physical aspects were obtained by searching for historical aspects, community activities, and socio-culture, which were carried out through interviews. The interview method was conducted to find out the history of the establishment of *kori agungs* and the interventions and transformations that have been carried out (Aritama & Putra, 2021). The variables used were proportion and scale, materials and textures, and ornaments. These variables were used to analyze the shape and design characteristics of *kori agung*.

Physical data collection is carried out through field surveys. During the field survey, measurements and data were collected on the physical form of *kori agung*. This data collection was done through photo documentation, measurements, and sketches directly in the field. Theodolite measurement aims to measure the layout of buildings whose positions cannot be reached by humans. The first process was to sketch the object, and measurements were made by determining several points as a reference, then the data were processed by computer media. Photo documentations are focused on the objects. They were measured regarding the details of the ornament, appearance, and object's perspectives. Data collection using architectural documents (drawings, sketches, photos, and layouts) is also used as a tool to explore the relationship between architecture and spatial activity (Lozanovska, 2002).

The processed data were displayed in tables, graphs, sketches, and drawings were then analyzed through the architectural examination method. This analysis was carried out by reading the results of research in the form of images and architectural forms as the primary tool in analyzing, then described descriptively about the condition and distinctive character of the *kori agungs* in Bangli building through a display in the form of graphics and pictures (Putra et al., 2019). The conclusions were in the form of characteristics, patterns, and architectural styles that distinguish the Bangli style *kori agung* and the characteristics of its identity.

### 4. Result and Discussion

Bali's historical developments, including Bangli history, cannot be separated from architectural objects such as the *puri*, the king's residence in the past, *pura* as a place of worship and a traditional settlement. Architecture as a cultural product expresses people's daily lives, traditions, and developing localities (Satria & Putra, 2020). Community characteristics will influence the development of architecture and buildings in the area. Each region has its characteristics. The uniqueness of architecture can be in the form of orientation, spatial, diversity of architectural designs, and the use of local materials (Wirawibawa et al., 2021).

Bangli architecture style is a characteristic that is embedded in every form of design for their *kori agung* in *puri* or *pura*. A *kori agung* is the entrance and exit door to the different hierarchical spaces. A *kori agung* in an aristocratic house in Bali represents the power and social status of the owner (Wirawibawa et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the existence of a *kori agung* in temples symbolises the level of sanctity of space in the temple area. In general, a *kori agung* consists of three main parts: the head, the body, and the legs, which are termed *tri angga* (Eiseman Jr, 1989; Gelebet, 1998; Hobart, 1978).

#### 4.1. The Kori Agung of Pura Desa Tamanbali

*Pura Desa Tamanbali*, also called *Pura Taman Narmada Bali Raja*, is located in Tamanbali Village, Bangli. The *kori agung* at this temple has existed since ancient times and has not undergone a restoration process. It uses a variety of detailed architecture and complex carved ornaments. The *kori agung* is one of the entrances to *utama mandala*, the main area. Based on the measurement results, the dimensions and proportions of the *kori agung* are an overall length of around 5.52 meters and a height of around 9.87 meters. It uses a combination of brick stone and sandstone, but it is more dominant in using sandstone. The *kori agung* is divided into three main elements according to the concept of *tri angga*, namely the head, the body, and the legs. The legs consist of the based element called *bataran*, stairs, and stair railing ornaments in the form of ornaments that reflect the shape of the elephant with pedestals. The height of the legs on *kori agung* is 3.27 meters. In addition, there are also two statues in the front of the *kori agung* that are usually called *Dwarapala*. The middle part consists of several parts, namely the *pengawak* (the main body of *kori agung*) and *lelengen*, the parts beside *pengawak*.

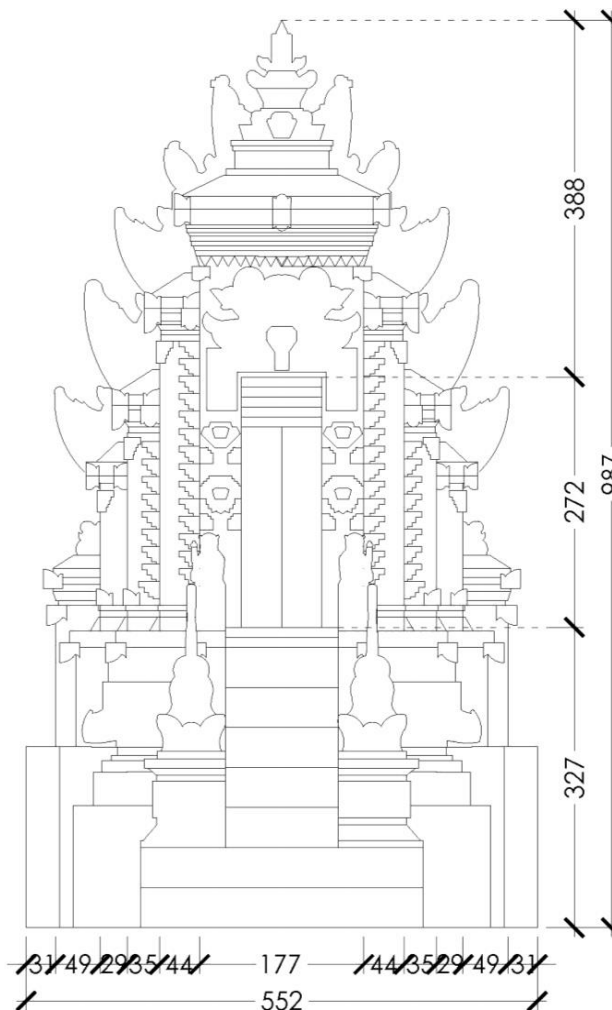


Figure 1: Kori Agung of Pura Desa Tamanbali

The head consists of several parts, including the *ulap-ulap*, above the main entrance. At the top of the *ulap-ulap*, a *karang boma* is a giant face ornament. Like other *kori agung*, the head consists of a two-level roof decorated by *util*, the scorpion tail shape, *karang goak* (raven head), *patra punggel*, *patra samblung*, and *patra punggel* and flower petal carvings (Suryada, 2012). *Patra samblung* is an ornament that uses many parts of golden pothos or creeper ceylon (*Epipremnum aureum*). *Patra punggel*, as the shape of plants inspires the other ornament. It is the mimesis of natural elements such as *batun poh* (mango seeds) and *don paku* (young leaves still circular on the stalk of diplazium esculentum). This ornament also consists of *jengger siap* (crown of roosters), *ampas nangka* (wrapping skin of jackfruit which is inside jackfruit), *kuping guling* (the roosted suckling pig's ears), *pepusuhan* (new shoots), and *util* (the mimesis of scorpion's tail) (Gelebet, 1998).

At the top, there is a crown ornament called *murda*, made of sandstone. In addition to several ornaments that are the main elements of *kori agung*, there are also ornaments attached to certain parts of *kori agung*. In addition, there are mask ornaments called *karang tapel*. *Karang tapel* represents a giant face with bulging eyes, an open mouth. The giant face is accompanied by teeth, fangs, and a protruding tongue. However, *karang boma* on *kori agung* Pura Tamanbali Village have different characteristics, the significant difference is the absence of a pair of hands gripping the vines. The carving was replaced with *patra punggel*, *bungan tunjung* (water lily flower) and *patra samblung*.



Figure 2: The Parts Ornament of Kori Agung of Pura Desa Tamanbali

#### 4.2. Kori Agung of Pura Penataran Gaga Tamanbali

Pura Penataran Gaga Tamanbali is located in Banjar Gaga, Tamanbali Village, Bangli. This temple is one of the oldest temples in Bangli, which existed before the Tamanbali Kingdom. According to people's beliefs, this temple was previously used as a *pasraman*, a dormitory for people to study religious knowledge, which can be seen from many traditional buildings called *bales* in this temple. The temple area is divided into three areas, namely *jeroan* (main area), *jaba tengah* (middle area), and *jaba sisi* (outer area). In the *jaba sisi*, there is a *wantilan*, a traditional building to perform many traditional music and dance. In *jaba tengah*, there is a *kori agung* which connects the *jeroan* and *jaba tengah*. The *kori agung* Pura Penataran Gaga is located at *jaba tengah* area, as access to the *jeroan* area. Based on the measurement results of the dimensions and proportions of the *kori agung*, the overall length is around 5.35 meters and the height is around 7.69 meters. The *kori agung* uses a combination of red brick and sandstone, the dominant ornament uses sandstone and the dominant part of the *kori agung* uses red brick.

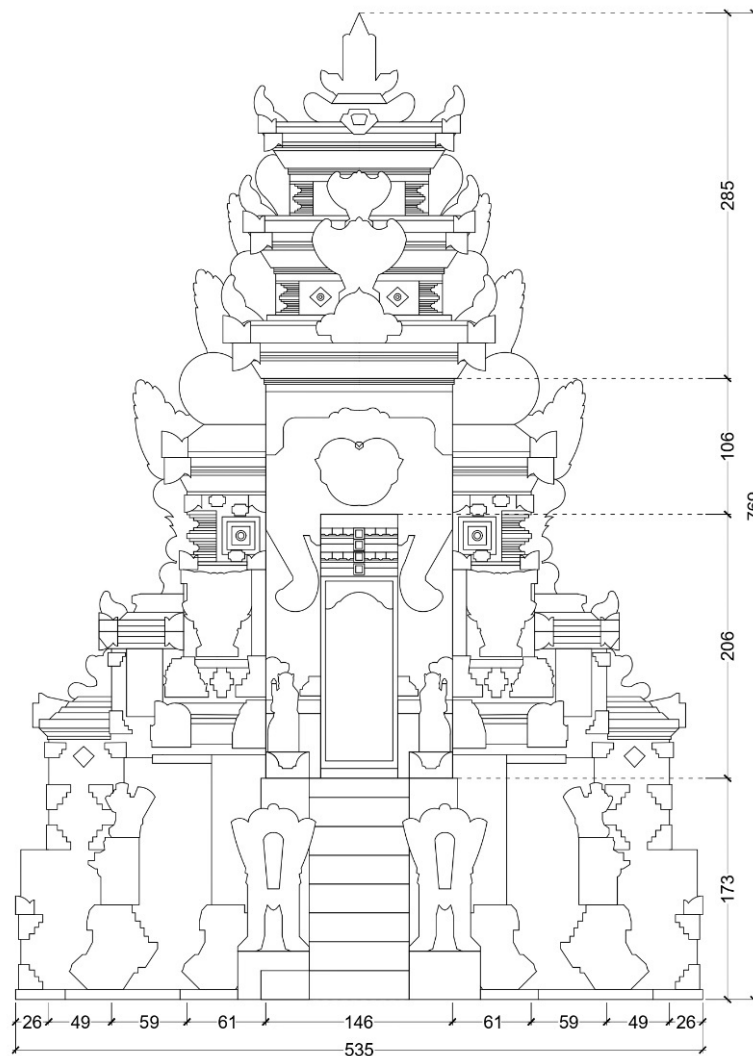


Figure 3: Redraw Kori Agung of Pura Penataran Gaga Tamanbali

The *kori agung* Pura Penataran Gaga is divided into three main elements according to the *tri angga* concept, namely the head, the body and the legs. The legs consist of the *bataran*, stairs, and stair railing ornaments that represent the shape of an elephant. The use of the elephant ornament at the bottom has the meaning of a strong elephant character so that it can give the image that the *kori agung* is a majestic and strong impression. The shape and variety of ornaments on the *bataran*/legs are unclear. This is because the surface of the material is covered with moss. However, some parts that can still be seen include *karang gajah*, the ornament of elephant face, at each corner of the based part called *bataran* of the *kori agung*.

The body consists of *pengawak*, entrance holes, and caping on the right and left. In the *pengawak* part there are ornaments in the form of *kakul-kakulan*, the snail ornament, *keketusan kuta mesir*, the representation of Egypt decoration and *karang boma*. There are various decorations in the form of patches of *garuda* (eagle) statues on the walls. Unlike the previous object, the *karang boma* ornament is equipped with a pair of hands equipped with carvings of vines. The *karang boma* becomes an ornamental variety filled with sculptures in the form of leaves and plants. This follows the mythological story of *boma* in Balinese culture, which describes *Boma* as *Banaspati*, large trees in the middle of the wilderness (Hobart 2003).

The head consists of three *tumpang* (level) of the head. Each *tumpang* consists of ornaments, including *karang goak*, *karang sae*, *bungan tuwung*/representation of eggplant flower shape, and *util*, made of a combination of brick and sandstone materials. At the top, there is a *murda* ornament conical to the top and flanked by *karang goak* on all four sides of the *murda*.

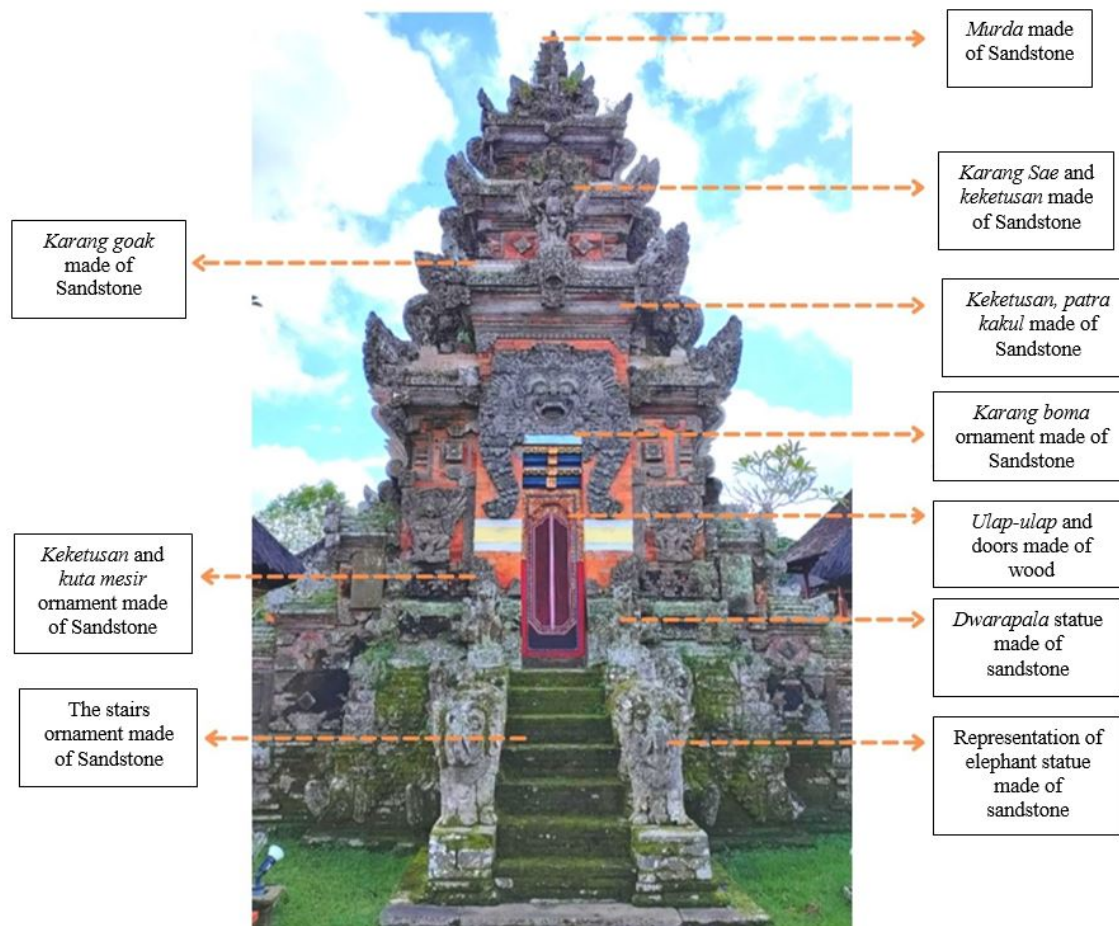


Figure 4: The Parts Ornament of Kori Agung of Pura Penataran Gaga Tamanbali

#### 4.3. Kori Agung of Puri Agung Bangli/ Bangli Kingdom Palace

Puri Agung Bangli is located in the center of the town of Bangli, which was established in 1518 AD (Wikarman 2013). Puri Agung Bangli is a palace that became the initial center of government of the other *puri* in Bangli. The ancient relics are classified as highly preserved for their authenticity, including the kori agung, which is still preserving the authenticity of the carving styles and various Bangli architectures. Based on the interviews and field observations, the *kori agung* is an object that has never been renovated. So, it is estimated that it is an architectural object that originated from the early establishment of the Bangli kingdom. As the main entrance to the palace, the *kori agung* is made with large dimensions enough to give a majestic impression and provide security for the king and his family. These dimensional differences distinguish the most powerful traits around the region.



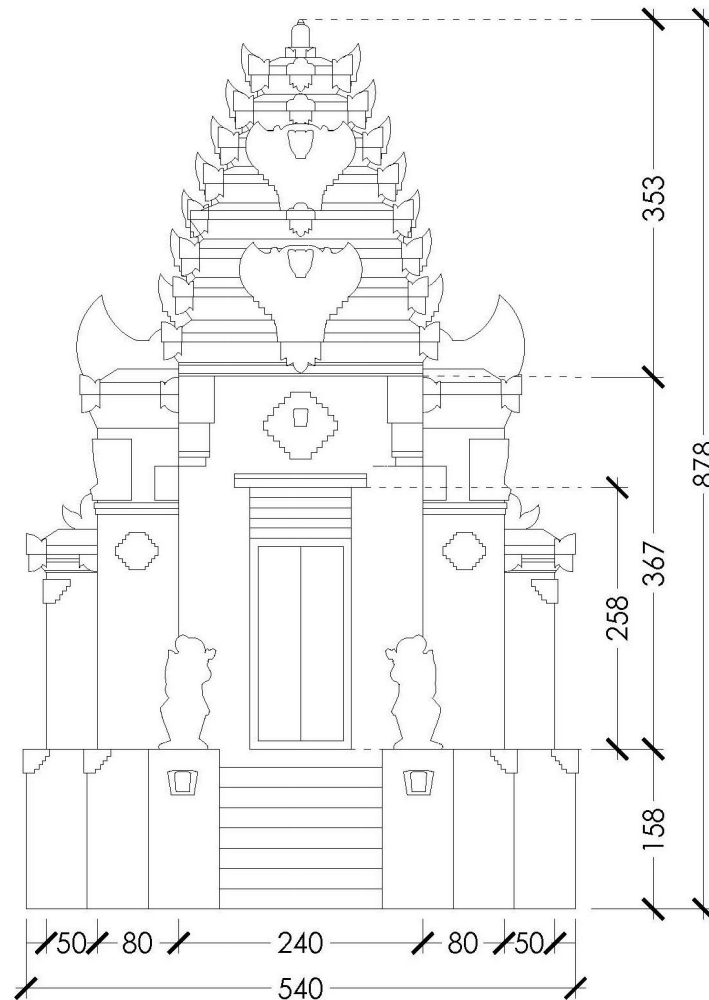


Figure 5: Redraw Kori Agung of Puri Agung Bangli

Based on the results of documentation and measurements, the total width of *Kori Agung* is 5.4 meters, while the height up to the *murda* is 8.78 meters. Overall, the *kori agung* Puri Bangli uses a combination of brick and sandstone. The material used is quite hard on sandstone material, almost like stone, so that the existence of *Kori Agung* is still intact and can survive the influence of weather and climate.

*Kori Agung* Puri Bangli has a *tri angga* concept, consisting of three main parts: the legs, body, and head. The legs consist of the base, starting from the *bataran* (based part) to the stairs leading to the door. The body consists of *pengawak* with two *lelengen* on the right and left and is equipped with a *caping* (small part next to *lelengen*) on the left and right. The height of the door is 2.58 meters. At the top of the door, *ulap-ulap* is made of carved and unfinished wood. At the top of the door, ornaments are made of sandstone. While on the left and right, there are *karang goak* (raven ornament) with sandstone material.

The top is the head which consists of nine *tumpang* (roof level). Each *tumpang* consists of ornaments, including *karang goak* and *karang boma*, which are more superficial. On each *tumpang* lift on the right and left, a ledge has a geometric shape that tends to taper off using sandstone. Each *tumpang* has ornaments, so the higher the geometric shape of the roof the higher it gets smaller. At the very top of *Kori Agung*, *murda* is used as a top ornament.

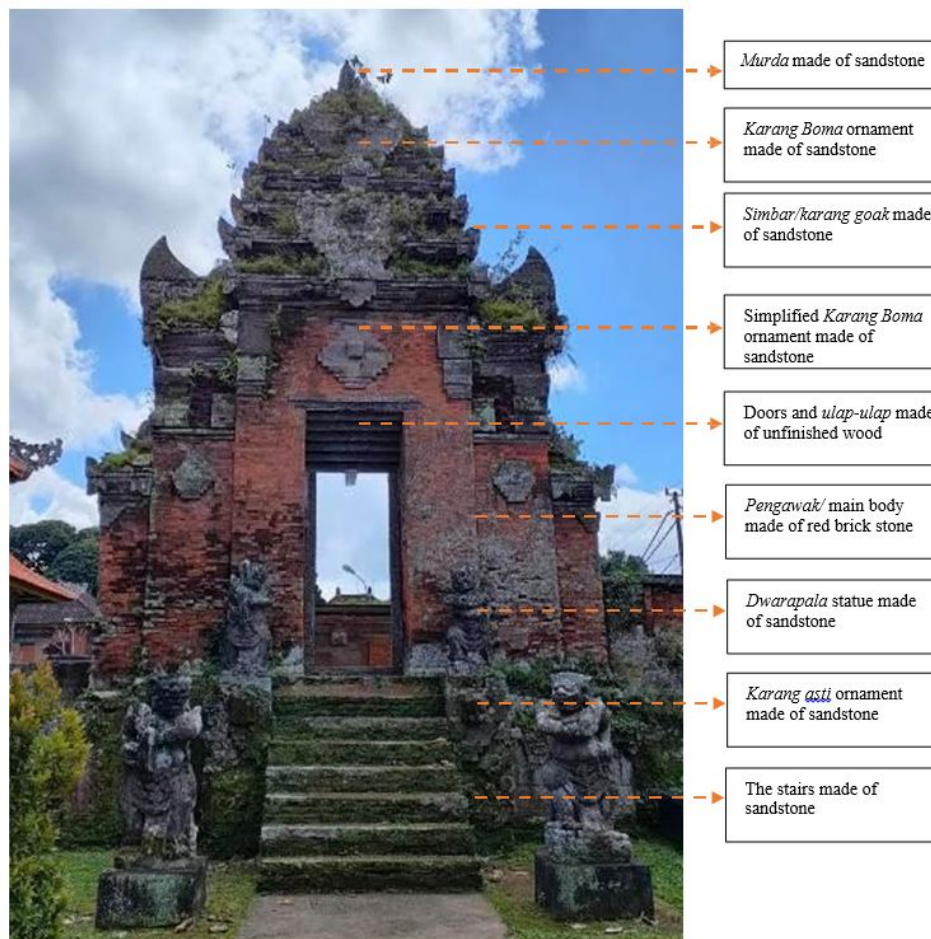


Figure 6: The Parts Ornament of Kori Agung of Puri Agung Bangli

## 5. Conclusion

The development of Bangli architecture cannot be separated from the role of history and the factor of change in power that gives color and characteristics to its architectural style. From the analysis that has been carried out, the architectural characteristics of Bangli can be seen from the form, building elements, materials, and ornaments used in each field. In Bangli architecture, the *tri angga* concept is classified into three distinct components: the legs, the body, and the head. With the mass composition on the head, the proportion of the *kori agung* in Bangli appears rather slim. Additionally, this pattern is distinguished by the appearance of util on both the right and left sides of each *tumpang*. The continued existence and preservation of architectural objects in Bangli reflects the community's resolve to protect its cultural heritage. The preservation and uniqueness of these architectural objects may represent an opportunity for cultural tourist growth.

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