

Degradation of Function and Meaning of “Bantaya” at the Kaili Da’a Tribe Community in Central Sulawesi Case Study: The Kaili Da’a Tribe in Lekatu, Tipo Village, Ulujadi District, Palu City, Central Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT

“Bantaya” is a building that has an important meaning for the Kaili people, especially the Kaili Da’a tribe. Because it not only has sacred value but also profane. Although seen from the shape of the building is very simple, the function and meaning of “bantaya” are very crucial in the socio-cultural life of the Kaili Da’a tribe. Along with the development of globalization, there has been a degradation of the function and meaning of bantaya, especially in the Kaili Da’a tribe who live in Lekatu. The research objective was to identify the factors that cause a decline in the function and meaning of “bantaya” for the Kaili Da’a tribe who live in Lekatu. As an effort to preserve the cultural space assets of the Kaili Da’a tribe community. The method used is a naturalistic qualitative method. Collecting data through in-depth interviews and observations supported by recordings/documentation and literature studies. The sample selection using a snowball sampling technique. Meanwhile, the data analysis used inductive analysis. As background knowledge briefly describes the characteristics of the Kaili Da’a tribe and the history of its settlement. The results showed a decline in the function and meaning of “bantaya” in the Kaili Da’a tribe in Lekatu due to changes in livelihoods, changes in residential patterns and orientation, changes in existing/residential location, openness and interactions outside his tribe, and the influence of globalization.

Key words: “Bantaya”, Degradation, Function & meaning, The Kaili Da’a tribe, Lekatu.

Introduction

In the culture of the archipelago, there is a lot of flexibility in structuring the relationship between individual space and the unique natural environment of housing. As shown through semi-open space as a

transition between closed space and open space which is almost entirely public (Pangarsa, 2006). The transitional space in question is a dwelling that has a very subtle shift in the nature of space by using a boundary marker between public and private spaces. The meaning of this transitional space is a

balance between individual life and public life because this space acts as a social space. Where if problems arise between individuals, they are resolved in a transitional space. Both in the form of hospitality, village deliberations, and deliberations in deciding various problems in the community (Pangarsa, 2006)

Although in some traditional communities, these places to be residential spaces that tend to be closed. However, these spaces always exist in traditional settlements in Indonesia. Because it is a symbol of togetherness or harmony, especially in rural communities. Where there are kinship ties due to similar backgrounds and types of work and relatively the same life experiences (Indeswari *et al.*, 2013). Like Beruga in Lombok, Bale Sakenen in Bali, and Langgar-tanean in Madurese society which in addition to their sacred functions are also profane. In Sulawesi, there are beruga or weruga and bantaya as meeting places or resting places.

The Kaili Da'a tribe is known as one of the isolated tribes, living nomadically in the forest/mountains and building houses on trees called "Lante". After going through the resettlement process and receiving guidance from the Social Service, the community finally began to settle down (in nomadic). They began building and occupying settlements along the slopes of Mount Gawalise. However, there is still a group of Kaili Da'a tribes who live in the forest, isolated from the outside world. The settlements of the Kaili Da'a tribe are spread across 3 (three) districts and cities in Central Sulawesi. It can even be found up to the province of West Sulawesi. The settlement location of the Kaili Da'a tribe in Central Sulawesi is located in Sigi district which is concentrated in the West Marawola sub-district which consists of 12 villages, at Panasibaja and Kinivaro sub-district. In Donggala district is located in the sub-districts of South Banawa, Rio Pakava, and Panembani. Meanwhile, Palu city is located in Lekat, the Tipo village, Ulujadi sub-district.

In the past, Lekat was called "Lekat village" or "Lekat hamlet". After the formation of the Tipo village, it became the Lekat environment. The location of this settlement is close to the city center of Palu. The Kaili Da'a tribe is one of the isolated tribes in Central Sulawesi which is still thick with ancestral culture. They still carry out traditional ceremonies or rituals that are animistic even though they already adhere to beliefs or religions. Rituals that are routinely performed and should not be violated are life

cycle rituals (rites of passage), especially for women. Starting from adolescence to getting married and having children. This ritual activity is usually carried out in Bantaya.

Bantaya is a place for activities related to customs and rules of life in the Kaili Da'a tribe society. This building has a simple shape but has a very important function and meaning in the life of the Kaili Da'a tribe. Like the 'Lobo' or baruga building in Kulawi society (Fig. 1). When they lived in the mountain forest, the bantaya had a very important function in the life of the Kaili Da'a tribe. Bantaya functions not only as a place for traditional activities/ceremonies, traditional and traditional meetings. But also as a community gathering place, a place to receive guests, a place to stay for travelers from other villages. In addition, it is also a place to gather and interact after days of leaving the family for gardening, as a place to eat together and rest for the head of the household (father) and boys. However, in its development, the function and meaning of bantaya, especially in the Kaili Da'a tribe in Lekat, have undergone many changes. Where most of the activities of the Kaili Da'a tribe are no longer centered in Bantaya, except as a place for custom and community meetings.



Fig. 1c. Bantaya in Lekat Village (RT.01)



Fig. 1.f. Bantaya in Lekat Village (RT.02)



Fig. 1c. Bantaya in Kamarora Village



Fig. 1.d. Bantaya in the Village of Kalora

Fig. 1. (a, b, c. & d) Some of the Bantaya Prototypes in Central Sulawesi

Source : Researcher, 2017

The meaning of the word degradation is a setback, deterioration, decline and so on which are related to quality, morals, rank, and others (KBBI, 1997). All buildings and constructions will undergo a degradation process from the time of construction. In this process, the building will tend to lose its performance because it increasingly fails to meet the needs, requirements, and expectations of users. Losses in performance can occur due to functional obsolescence, unfavorable cost balances, physical degradation, or a combination of these. The prediction of building service life has been widely studied and has become a separate field of science. Where more and more methodological developments allow rational and effective management and maintenance of buildings (Chew *et al.*, 2018). Particularly the extent of physical influence, endurance capacity, and cost of living also need to be considered (Gaspar and Brito, 2005).

The purpose of this research is to try to explain the phenomenon of the degradation of the function and meaning of bantaya for the socio-cultural life of the Kaili Da'a tribe in Lekatu, Palu city. Through naturalistic qualitative research methods, it is hoped that this research can reveal the factors that cause the degradation of the function and meaning of bantaya in the Kaili Da'a ethnic community in Lekatu. The importance of this research is one of the basic considerations that can be used in an effort to preserve bantaya as an asset to the cultural space of the Kaili Da'a tribe in particular and the Kaili tribe in general.

Research Methods

The qualitative method is a method that seeks to extract experience data from a number of informants based on their narratives. Then the researcher made an interpretation to formulate a concept from a finding. Research with this method is to develop knowledge or formulating concepts or theories (Ashadi *et al.*, 2018). The design is general and flexible, usually appearing when research is taking place in the field. The research objective was to find meaning based on the informants' experience by paying attention to the social background under study. Because problems in qualitative research require in-depth exploration of a phenomenon (Ashadi *et al.*, 2018).

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors causing the degradation of the function and meaning of bantaya in the Kaili Da'a tribal settle-

ments in Lekatu, Palu city. Researchers observe and record physical activity and community behavior related to the use of bantaya. In addition, awareness and knowledge and community experience about the function and meaning of bantaya are also studied. The results of these observations describe the phenomena observed in the study (Adian, 2010). Based on the results of initial observations in the field, it was found that the function of the bantaya in Lekatu was different when they lived in the mountains. Bantaya is a traditional building that has a crucial function in the socio-cultural life of topo Da'a. Based on this phenomenon, deep exploration is needed regarding the decline in the function and meaning of bantaya.

The data collection techniques are through in-depth interviews and participant observation with a number of informants. The selection of informants was selected based on the objective (purposive sampling) with the snowball sampling technique. Starting with the initial informant, in this case, the RT head, who becomes the guide/opening for the next informant. The number of informants is not limited depending on the results of the field and analysis until it reaches a saturation point. The informants in this case are the Lekatu community and a number of traditional leaders of the Kaili Da'a tribe, regarding the functions and meanings of Bantaya in their lives. so that the results of the interview can be obtained in full are supported by recording using audiovisuals.

Field observations are made to observe directly the object of research. Namely observing the daily activities and behavior of the Kaili Da'a people. Especially related to the use of bantaya in their life. Another data collection technique is by tracing documents related to the history and characteristics of this community in its economic, social, and cultural life and behavior.

Data analysis was carried out since the beginning of the fieldwork to collect data. The data that has been collected is then reduced, grouped, and then interpreted. Data analysis was carried out continuously from the beginning to the end of the study. In the analysis process, the research will end if the data collected is saturated (repetitive or there is nothing new). The conclusions are inductively processed, starting from collecting more detailed data, evaluating, categorizing, abstracting to find the factors that cause the decline in the function and meaning of bantaya in the Kaili Da'a tribe community in Lekatu (Ashadi *et al.*, 2018).

Results

History and Settlement Process of the Kaili Da'a Tribe in Lekatu, Palu City

The Kaili Da'a tribe is one of the sub-tribes of the Kaili tribe in Central Sulawesi. The Kaili tribe itself is the largest tribe that inhabits the Central Sulawesi region. Basically, the sub-ethnic groups of the Kaili tribe are differentiated based on the dialect of the language used to communicate in everyday life. The Kaili sub-ethnic groups include Kaili ledo, Kaili rai, Kaili unde, Kaili da'a, Kaili tara, and Kaili ado. The words "rai", "ledo", "unde", "da'a", tara "and" ado ", have the same meaning which means "no".

The Kaili Da'a tribe or better known as the topo Da'a uses the Da'a language in their daily communication. Some people call this community "To Lare". The term to lare (mountain people) is often used to refer to people who come down from the mountains to the valleys to sell their crops. When living in mountain forests, moving (nomadic) from one forest to another with the aim of opening new fields. Or the term they call adat migratory (rotating

fields). However, over time, shifting cultivation activities have gradually changed (Faidi, 2015). Today the Kaili Da'a tribe has settled (unnomaden) because they have received guidance from the Social Service. They began to establish settlements along the slopes of the Gawalise mountains. Both on the slopes of the mountains, highlands, lowlands, and valleys.

The settlement of the Kaili Da'a tribe in the city of Palu is located in Lekatu, namely in the Tipo village of Ulujadi sub-district (Figs. 2 & 3). Precisely at RW. 04 which consists of 2 (two) RTs, namely RT.01 and RT. 02. Total area 32.34 ha with a population of 659 people and a number of heads of households of 181 households. Compared to the settlement of the Kaili Da'a tribe in Central Sulawesi, the Kaili Da'a tribe in Lekatu has a fairly long settlement history. Either because it was moved by the king/government through the resettlement process or because of customs/traditions. This community has settled in Lekatu since the beginning of 1977 until now. The residential location is ± 8.2 km from downtown Palu or about 1.2 km from the Trans-Donggala road, Central Sulawesi.

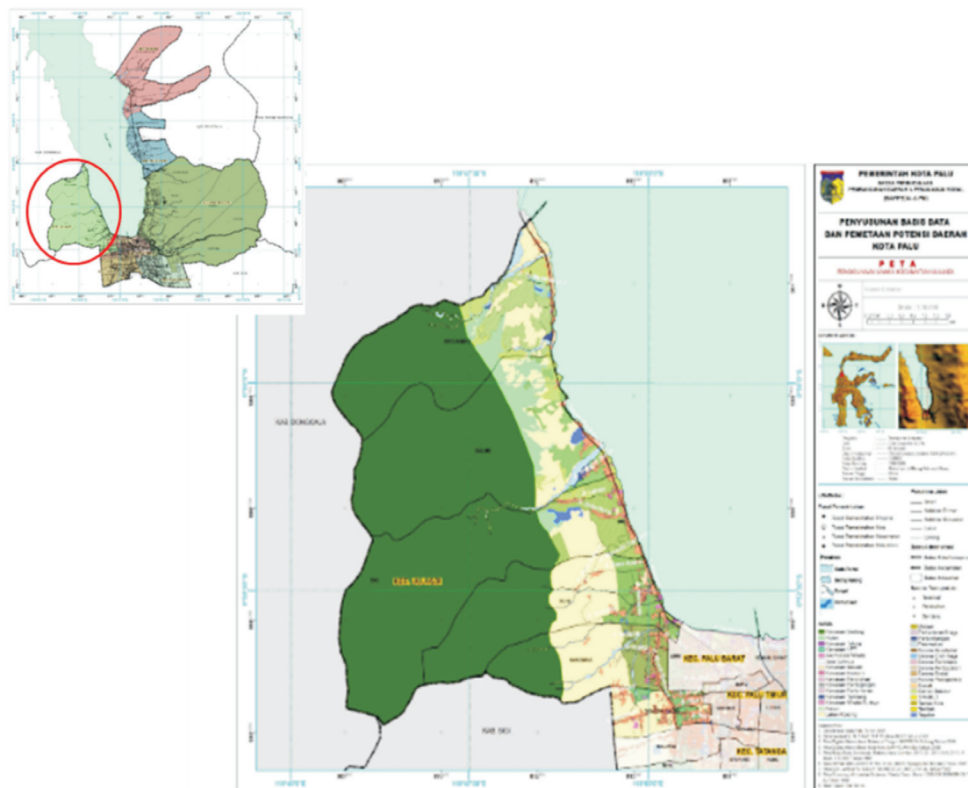


Fig. 2. Map of Ulujadi District, Palu City. Source: Bappeda and Investment 2017

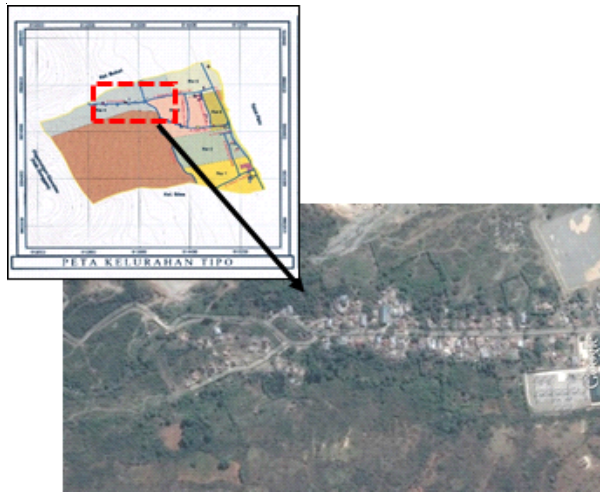


Fig. 3. Lekatu Village of Research Location. Tipo District. Ulujadi. city of Palu. Central Sulawesi
Source: Researcher's Documentation, 2017

Discussion

Degradation of Bantaya's Functions and Meanings at the Kaili Da'a Tribe Society

Like indigenous peoples in general, this tribe also has traditions or customs, norms, customary laws, and values that govern life in society. Even though they have embraced a belief or religion, they still carry out rituals that are animist in nature. They are very obedient to carry out rituals, namely the ritual of the life cycle (rites of passage). Starting from puberty, marriage, pregnancy period of 7 (seven) months until having children. Especially traditional ceremonies for girls who have entered puberty. According to their belief, if this ritual is not carried out it will have a bad impact on the girl. Besides that, they will be excluded from society. This ritual is routinely carried out and is now an annual activity called the Novati Traditional Party which is held in Bantaya.

Initially, the main livelihood of this community was farmers. When they live in mountainous forests they practice shifting cultivation or rotating fields. This is a tradition or custom of their ancestors. This habit of moving is caused by many factors including soil fertility, the condition of sick family members, or someone who has died. As Sely (2017) said:

Especially if a family member gets sick or dies, they will leave the village and even burn their house

These factors are the reasons why they moving

around the land garden and even burn their own houses. Their garden land is far apart, scattered, and grouped according to kinship. In addition to building houses in the garden land, they also make houses in the village. In 1 (one) village, there are several family groups of about 40 - 50 families. In the middle of the kampung is a bantaya, where all the houses surround Bantaya. Several sources explain:

"Every time you open a village, you will make a bantaya which is located in the middle of the village" (Paulus et al., 2017)

Bantaya is a traditional house and a symbol of the Kaili tribe. The function and meaning of bantaya for the Kaili people in general and the Kaili Da'a tribe, in particular, are very important. In general, the main function of Bantaya is as a place for traditional ceremonies, as a place to decide various problems in the community, as a place for traditional deliberation (customary law and sanctions), and as a place to receive government guests. The important meaning of bantaya cannot be separated from its function as a place for traditional activities/ceremonies and customary deliberations. In addition, it is also used as a meeting place and decision-making to solve social problems. Because of the strong kinship ties, every socio-cultural issue in the family is discussed and tried in Bantaya through traditional institutions. Bantaya is a place where people gather when performing traditional ceremonies, even in the days of the kingdom, Bantaya was a place to receive royal guests.

Bantaya is a central building for the Kaili Da'a people when they were still living in the mountain forest. Because it is a gathering place for residents who often leave their homes for long periods of time. This is due to the activity of planting field rice which takes a long time. Starting from the selection of seeds, planting, weeding to harvest. So that Bantaya becomes an alternative for residents as a gathering place with fellow communities. This habit is routinely carried out after living for days in the garden, which is located quite far from the house in the village. Bantaya at that time became a very crucial place in the socio-cultural life of this community. In the process of selecting seeds, determining when to start planting until the harvest festival, everything is done in Bantaya. In the topo customary community, Da'a does not know individual land ownership but communal ownership. Namely ownership in groups so that the use, arrangement, and use in

groups. So that when starting to plant until harvesting is done in groups. Included in the distribution of crops. This group is based on the kinship group of one lineage.

In the process of growing field rice until harvest, there are many taboos that should not be done. One of them is the head of the family who owns the field (male) during the planting season until harvest, he can't get together/sleep with his wife. So that the bantaya becomes a place of rest for the husband or man. Because if they violate they will be given a sanction/fine (nggivu) and the harvest will fail. Like some of the following interview excerpts:

"During harvest time, husband and wife cannot sleep in one house, men sleep on the bantaya because if they violate they will be fined and the harvest will not work". (Ruslin *et al.*, 2017)

"The location of Bantaya is in the middle of a village close to the cottage or residents' houses. The field rice ritual is carried out in Bantaya, all garden produce is brought to the Bantaya as thanksgiving and as a harvest birthday party. During the garden land, the bantaya should not be abandoned but guarded by parents who are served with food and drink. Set up the room as a resting place as well as a place to store traditional ceremonial equipment. Children are also prohibited from playing and making noise in the middle of the bantaya" (Paulus *et al.*, 2017).

Bantaya is a gathering place for this community after days of leaving the village. They eat together in the morning, afternoon, and evening, especially at the end of the harvest. Where each family member brings processed crops to be eaten together. Or a place to receive male guests or families who come from other villages. Bantaya, apart from being a place for traditional activities and customary deliberations, is also a place for harvest parties.

"Whenever there are male guests, they stay at the Bantaya and are served food (Asmin and Sulaeman, 2017)".

"The location of Bantaya on the mountain is in the middle of the village, used as a men's night bed, a traditional place or thanksgiving, parties or guest banquets. The agricultural products are cooked and brought to Bantaya and eaten together" (Sely, 2017)

The construction and area of Bantaya then and now are also different. At the time on the mountain, the size of the Bantaya is very wide because it accommodates many family members when gathering together either at traditional parties or eating to-

gether. There is a room as a bed for parents who look after the bantaya as well as a place to store traditional party equipment. In the middle of the bantaya there is a wood stove (fireplace) because on the mountain the temperature is cold. Bantaya roof material made of alang-alang material, walls, and floors of bamboo, ± 1 m high. The shape of the bantaya was and is still the same, a rectangle with a wall as high as an adult's waist. The difference is that now the area is smaller, the roof material already uses zinc, while the floors and walls use wooden boards

In Lekatu there are 2 (two) bantaya units, namely 1 (one) as a traditional place located on Rt. 02. The second, as a place to receive government guests or a place for community meetings / social activities, is located on Rt. 01 (Figs. 4 & 5). Because the current settlement pattern is linear and follows the road pattern, the Bantaya is no longer surrounded by residents' houses even though the settlement pattern is still grouped based on kinship groups with road orientation. Perletakan bantaya now considers the aspect of achievement from the houses of Da'a residents more.



Fig. 4. Bantaya in Lekatu Village (RT.01)

Source: Researcher, 2017-2018



Fig. 5. Bantaya in Lekatu village (RT.02)

Source: Researcher, 2017-2018

When moving from one place to another, the concept of placement and functions of the *bantaya* as described above are still being carried out, the last one was while living in Mount Posirunju. Except when they are transmigrated to a place provided by the government. First, they did not make *bantaya* because the forms and patterns of settlements were made and planned by the government. Second, they did not stay long in the transmigration location so that customary activities and others were only carried out in the house *totua adat*.

Since 2009, the people of the Kaili Da'a tribe have not planted field rice anymore. The current generation no longer wants to plant field rice because there are too many rituals and restrictions to be passed. Apart from waiting for the harvest for about 9 months too long, sometimes the results could not meet the needs of the family. Currently, they only plant short-term crops (*palawija*) such as *kasubi* (cassava), *joules* (corn), bananas, and other short-term crops. For long-term crops such as hazelnut, coconut, or cocoa. Because they no longer plant field rice, the harvest party activities are no longer being carried out because there are no more crops.

Increasing economic needs and an increasing number of family members mean that the Lekatu community does not only depend on agricultural produce. Because the results of farming are decreasing and the area of processed land has also decreased. This is because the land previously managed by 1 (one) family is then divided into several families. They start looking for jobs and activities to earn additional income by working in the informal sector such as masonry workers, asphalt workers, washing workers, construction workers in cities, and others.

Changes in *topo Da'a* livelihoods were also triggered by rampant excavation stone activities in Lekatu. Around 1999 the people of Lekatu started to become stone collectors and workers. This work is carried out by most of the people of Lekatu, especially men aged 12 - 40 years. Even in the last 2 years, Lekatu women are also involved in this work. The reason is, the income earned from this job is quite good. In a day the average ranges from 70 thousand to 80 thousand. This activity starts from 5 am to 5 pm. The ease of getting a job and an income in less time than farming is one of the reasons why they stay in Lekatu. No longer moving around like their parents used to be. Their jargon: "The sun has not risen yet, had get money" (The sun has not risen but the money has come). In addition, Lekatu is the

location of their ancestral land and is not far from the city center. Ease of access and many alternative jobs that allow them to seek additional income. In recent years, some Lekatu residents have also started making charcoal in their gardens. This activity is time-consuming so that they can no longer do the habit of gathering in the *bantaya* like they do in the mountains.

Bantaya's location, which is no longer in the middle of a village, also makes them lazy to gather in *Bantaya*. When living in the mountainous forest, the forms and patterns of the settlements were grouped based on kinship and scattered. In each group of settlements, a *bantaya* is built and the orientation of the houses is facing the *bantaya*. The houses in groups surround the *bantaya*. Making it easier for them to come and gather in *Bantaya*. However, the placement of *bantaya* is no longer surrounded by people's houses even though the settlement pattern is still grouped based on kinship groups.

The change in the location of the *Bantaya* and the orientation of the shelter was due to the government through the Social Service arranging and repairing roads. The orientation of the residence is no longer facing the *Bantaya* but facing the road. The houses are arranged in an orientation following the road pattern (North-South direction). Today most of the residents make houses following the pattern set by the government. However there are some residents who orientate their houses to the East as is their custom in the mountains. When they first opened residential land in Lekatu they were still grouped based on kinship and scattered. However, in its development, it is no longer after being given semi-permanent housing assistance and settlement pattern arrangement by the Social Service. Changes in the shape and pattern of settlements as well as the orientation of these dwellings are other factors that have caused the decline in the function and meaning of *bantaya*.

The habit of eating together is no longer practiced, except at traditional *Nokeso* or *Novati* parties (Figure 6 and 7). Previously, the traditional *Novati* / *nokeso* activities were carried out several times a year. It depends on the readiness of family funds that will carry out the customs. However, in recent years this activity has only been carried out once a year. It is considered more practical and saves money because it is carried out together with several families. So that activities gather in *Bantaya* only at

traditional parties. Currently, apart from being used for traditional parties, bantaya is only used for social activities such as Posyandu activities for the mothers of Lekatu residents (Figure 8 and 9).



Fig. 6. “Novati” traditional party in Bantaya
Source: Researcher, 2017-2018



Fig. 7. “Novati” traditional party in Bantaya
Source: Researcher, 2017-2018



Fig. 8. Posyandu activities in Bantaya
Source: Researcher, 2017-2018



Fig. 9. Posyandu activities in Bantayya
Sumber: Researcher, 2017-2018

The activities of gathering in Bantaya are no longer carried out because of their attitude that is starting to be more open to people outside the tribe. So that interaction and communication are not only among their tribes but also outside the tribe. Close access to the city allows much alternative entertainment to replace the habit of gathering with family or relatives. The impact of globalization also affects the decline in the function and importance of bantaya. The interaction between individuals and families is decreasing not only because of busy work which takes time to gather. But technological developments are replacing direct interaction with communication via electronic media. This gave birth to an individualist attitude that began to influence this society, especially in the younger generation. Currently, the function of the bantaya is no longer like the image of the past, but only as a place for traditional ceremonies and social service activities.

The function and meaning of the bantaya have decreased, not only the factors mentioned above. The younger generation is now less interested in maintaining and preserving the traditions of their ancestors. There are too many rules and restrictions for them to obey. Moreover, local culture is heavily influenced by western culture. Currently, bantaya is only used at certain times and activities as a place for customary deliberations and a place for customary activities which is only carried out once a year. Also only as a place to receive guests from government officials and Posyandu. As a cultural symbol, especially in the Kaili Da'a tribe community, Bantaya's function as a unifying space is decreasing.

Even so, gathering activities are still carried out by parents, teenagers, and children. But only in

small groups around or in front of their house (Fig. 5). This is one of the characteristics of the Kaili Da'a tribe. They have strong kinship ties because they come from the same ancestor. This can be seen from the phenomenon of informal interaction spaces created in front of or next to the house. Like in Tambale, dego-dego or sou-sou (pondok). This activity is usually done in the afternoon or evening, even in the morning if they don't go to work. Bantaya is no longer cared for and taken care of, children are free to play in it, and ironically it is a place for drying clothes for residents who live near Bantaya.

Conclusion

Through naturalistic qualitative methods, this research can dig deeper into the factors that affect the decline in the function and meaning of bantaya in the Kaili Da'a tribe in Lekatu. This can be observed and revealed through descriptions and in-depth interviews as well as observations of the activities and behavior of the Kaili Da'a tribe in Lekatu. The decline in the function and meaning of bantaya is caused by several factors. Changes in the main livelihood from farmers to the informal sector of employment. Even though they are still farming, they have changed the types of commodities they cultivate. Namely, from the type of field rice to secondary crops. Time to gather as is usually done in the mountains is decreasing because of the busy work activities. So that they do not have time and reason to gather in Bantaya except for customary activities.

Changes in patterns and orientation of housing also affect the decline in function and meaning of bantaya. The shape of the settlement is linear and the location of the Bantaya is no longer in the middle of the settlement resulting in access to its reach a bit far. So that young people, especially lazy parents, come to Bantaya, even if only to interact or communicate. The next factor is the change in the existing/location residential which was originally in the mountains and then settled in the lowlands near the city center. The location of the settlement which is close to the city center gives easy access to various alternative places of entertainment. Furthermore, this community openness factor facilitates and expands interaction and communication with people outside the tribe (city people). And finally, the development of electronic media and IT has started to enter the Da'a tribal settlement in Lekatu, so that interaction and communication are decreasing

among them, especially among the younger generation.

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