

Presentation of Tortor Bejan at Traditional Ceremonies of the Batak Toba Community

Martozet^{1)*}, Eszter Tari²⁾, Dilinar Adlin³⁾, Tania Rizqy Octaviani⁴⁾, Liza Maysuri⁵⁾

^{1,3,4,5)} Department of Drama, Dance, and Music Education, Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia.

²⁾ University of Pecs, Hungary.

*Corresponding Author

Email : martozetfbs@unimed.ac.id

How to cite: Martozet., Tari, E., Adlin, D., Octaviani, T.R., & Maysuri, L. (2025). Presentation of Tortor Bejan at Traditional Ceremonies of the Batak Toba Community. *Gondang: Jurnal Seni dan Budaya*, Vol 9(2): Page. 573-583.

Article History : Received: May 24, 2025. Revised: Nov 21, 2025. Accepted: Dec 23, 2025

ABSTRACT

Tortor Bejan is an activity performed in the traditional death ceremony known as Mambejan or Patortorhon Parangin. In this ritual, the deceased is symbolically brought to life in order to commemorate their life. This tradition was formerly performed once every five years and lasted for forty days. However, over time, Tortor Bejan is now performed only once a year and lasts for a single night. This study focuses on the presentation form of Tortor Bejan. The analysis employs Soedarsono's theory of presentation, which defines dance presentation as the overall manner of performance, encompassing the main elements of a dance. The findings indicate that Tortor Mambejan is a ritual dance that symbolically revives ancestral spirits through a statue as a form of respect for ancestral contributions. Before the performance of Tortor Bejan, Tortor Mangaraksa Desa Nawalu is first performed by a male dancer. During the Bejan ritual, one highly respected ancestor is selected. If the ancestor passed away under the condition of Saur Matua, the Bejan statue must not be made of wood but from the ancestor's bones. The dance is called Tortor Bejan because, during the performance, ancestral spirits are symbolically revived through a "kailit" statue known as Bejan. The performance of Tortor Bejan uses costumes made of Batak Toba ulos fabric with traditional makeup and is accompanied by Gondang Suling Ni Happing Na Opat and Gondang Sahala Raja.

KEYWORDS

Tortor Bejan
Mangaraksa Desa
Nawalu
Presentation Form
Traditional Ceremony

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia possesses a wide variety of arts that form an integral part of its cultural heritage. In the context of education, culture plays an important role in fostering an attitude of appreciation toward cultural values, as these values contribute to strengthening local traditions in each region. The diverse forms of art found across different regions also constitute valuable cultural assets for their respective communities. One region in Indonesia known for its rich and distinctive traditional arts and cultural practices is North Sumatra Province. North Sumatra is home to eight ethnic groups, each with its own unique cultural and artistic traditions, including the Batak Toba ethnic group. The Batak Toba people are one of the ethnic groups with a large population concentrated in the northern part of the Tapanuli region and in Samosir Regency. Among the distinctive art forms of the Batak Toba community is a traditional dance known as Tortor Bejan.

Tortor Bejan is one of the traditional dances of the Batak Toba ethnic group. As a traditional dance, it has undergone a long historical development and has even been identified as a dance that is nearing extinction. As stated by Sekarningsih and Rahayani (2006), traditional dance is a form of dance that has experienced a long historical journey

and embodies values from the past that are preserved across generations and closely connected to customary rituals. For this reason, Tortor Bejan is regarded by the community as a sacred and holy dance, as it contains symbolic expressions of respect for ancestral spirits. This view is further supported by Djohan Arifin Nasution et al. (1991), who state that tortor is considered a sacred dance.

As previously mentioned, Tortor Bejan is a traditional dance that has existed for a long period of time. In the book *Tarian Etnis Batak Toba* by Parida Sibarani (2018), it is explained that traditional dances from North Sumatra have existed since the era of ancient Batak civilization. In recent times, Tortor Bejan has rarely been performed, in contrast to its practice in the past. In the cultural life of the Batak Toba community, Tortor Bejan is presented within a sacred customary procession as a symbol of respect for ancestral contributions. It also symbolizes the revival of ancestral spirits through statues that are carried around the village during the performance. This belief is associated with ancestral blessings for descendants, with the requirement that the statue must be carried by a male participant. The Batak Toba community holds a belief in ancestral spirits. Martozet (2024) explains that belief in ancestral spirits is closely related to life blessings, which are believed to bring success, honour, virtue, and continuity of lineage. The last known performance of Tortor Bejan took place in Humban Simarmata village before the dance was eventually prohibited, as it was considered impractical and excessively time-consuming due to its duration, which could last up to forty days. Consequently, Tortor Bejan has not been categorized as a performance dance but rather as a ritual practice.

Yustika's (2017) explains that the form of dance presentation is a unified performance that integrates various dance elements, including movements motifs arranged into a cohesive whole, musical accompaniment, makeup and costumes, props, and other supporting elements presented in a structured and method, process, or arrangement of a performance from beginning to end, in which the elements of dance are harmonized with their supporting components. Therefore, dance presentation can be defined as the method or process of organizing movement motifs into a complete performance sequence, characterized by harmony among movements, musical accompaniment, stage setting, lighting, sound, makeup, costumes, and floor patterns. The organization of a dance is formed through its fundamental elements, which encompass all components necessary to realize the dance optimally as intended.

The form of presentation is crucial aspect to be considered, as it serves as an initial step and functions as a standard concept that is subsequently adopted and maintained. Through a process of reconstruction, the presentation form is systematically and carefully organized. An in-depth analysis must be conducted through research that takes into account the historical background of the dance, particularly the cultural context of the Batak Toba community.

In this study, the researchers examine the presentation form of Tort or Bejan, which constitutes an essential aspect of the dance and must be performed in accordance with its authentic presentation. Tortor Bejan presents both challenges and new insights for researchers, as it is rarely performed and is currently threatened with extinction. Therefore, this topic is considered significant for in-depth study to gain a deeper understanding of the presentation form of Tortor Bejan within the Batak Toba society.

METHOD

According to Sugiyono (2014), research methods are scientific procedures employed to obtain data for specific purposes. Based on their objectives, research methods may be classified into basic research, applied research, and research development, while in terms of their level of naturalism, they are categorized into experimental, survey, and naturalistic approaches. Experimental and survey methods are generally associated with quantitative research, whereas naturalistic methods are closely aligned with qualitative research. Referring to this classification, the present study adopts a qualitative research approach, as it seeks to understand cultural phenomena in their natural context and to interpret meanings embedded in traditional practices.

This study specifically employs a qualitative descriptive design, which, as explained by Bogdan and Taylor (cited in Moleong, 2018), aims to produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words derived from observed individuals and their behavior. Qualitative research prioritizes depth of understanding by utilizing open-ended interviews to explore attitudes, perspectives, feelings, and behavioral patterns of individuals or groups within their sociocultural environment (Moleong, 2018). Accordingly, this research focuses on capturing a comprehensive description of the presentation form of Tortor Bejan as performed in ritual contexts within the Batak Toba community.

Data collection in this study was conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and literature review. Observation was carried out directly in a participatory manner, allowing the researcher to engage closely with the research setting and to observe the performance elements of Tortor Bejan in a natural context. Interviews were conducted with key informants who possess substantial knowledge and experience related to Tortor Bejan, particularly Sepwan Partogi Sinaga (34 years old), who was directly involved in the reconstruction process of the dance. The literature review was undertaken to strengthen theoretical foundations and to contextualize empirical findings within existing scholarly discourse.

The data obtained in this research provide an overview of the presentation form of Tortor Bejan as performed in post-death ritual events among the Batak Toba community in Samosir Regency. These data take various forms, including written records, oral narratives, photographs, and video documentation. To ensure the accuracy, validity, reliability, and relevance of the data, the sources were systematically categorized into several types. Oral data were obtained through seminars and question-and-answer sessions conducted during the Independent Study course at Medan State University. Behavioral data were derived from observations of informants' actions and activities during these seminars, with Tortor Bejan serving as the primary object of study. In addition, visual data in the form of photographs and videos were collected as documentation during the research process, providing concrete visual evidence to support descriptive and analytical interpretations.

In qualitative research, the primary research instrument is the researcher themselves, who plays a central role in collecting, interpreting, and analyzing data. In this study, the researcher functioned as the main instrument, actively engaging in observation, conducting interviews, and interpreting cultural meanings embedded in the presentation of Tortor Bejan. The focus of the research is directed toward understanding the form of presentation of Tortor Bejan, encompassing its movement structure, performance context, and supporting elements. Data were gathered through seminars and in-depth interviews with informants and key sources who addressed issues both directly and indirectly related to Tortor Bejan, particularly those concerning its ritual presentation and cultural significance. Through this approach, the

research is able to generate an integrated understanding that serves as the basis for the subsequent discussion and analysis of findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Movement in dance constitutes a fundamental form of expression produced by the human body, functioning as a primary medium through which cultural values, symbolic meanings, and aesthetic intentions are conveyed. In dance studies, movement is commonly understood as having both semantic and aesthetic dimensions. Meaningful movements are those that carry specific symbolic significance rooted in cultural context, while pure movements are performed primarily for their aesthetic qualities and serve to support the overall visual and expressive structure of the dance. In addition, dance movements may be classified based on spatial dynamics into non-locomotor movements, which are executed in place, and locomotor movements, which involve displacement and transitions across space. Non-locomotor movements tend to emphasize symbolic expression and controlled bodily articulation, whereas locomotor movements function to connect sequences of motion and shape the spatial organization of the performance.



Figure 1. Formation of Tortor Bejan

Within the context of Tortor Bejan, movement occupies a central position as the core element that defines the character and ritual function of the dance. The movement vocabulary of Tortor Bejan predominantly draws upon the basic tortor movements of the Batak Toba tradition, which are performed in a restrained, grounded, and rhythmically measured manner. These movements are not merely decorative but are imbued with symbolic meanings related to respect, invocation, and communication with ancestral spirits. The dominance of non-locomotor movements in Tortor Bejan reflects its ritual nature, as the dancers' controlled bodily posture and limited spatial displacement emphasize solemnity, reverence, and spiritual focus rather than spectacle.

The movement motifs performed by the Pambejan, who are male dancers with a central ritual role, demonstrate this symbolic orientation most clearly. Movements such as *Situan Natorop*, which positions the hands at the chest, signify inner awareness and respect, while *Menolak Bala* symbolizes the act of warding off misfortune or negative forces. Other motifs, including *Mangaok Tabi* performed with the *Suhini Appang Na Opat* pattern and *Lakka Tolu* or *Langka Tolu* executed through the *Makassing Desa Nawalu* pattern, integrate subtle locomotor elements that guide spatial orientation without diminishing the dance's ritual restraint. These motifs are often interspersed with silat-based movements, reinforcing the Pambejan's role as a ritual mediator who possesses both physical control and spiritual authority within the performance.

Table 1. Movement Description of Pambejan (Malae Dancers) in Tortor Bejan

No	Movement Motif	Count	Foot Movement	Hand Movement	Head Movement	Body Movement
1.	<i>Situan Natorop</i> (center/chest position)	3x8	Feet positioned close together while performing <i>mangurdot</i> .	Both hands are joined and placed in front of the chest, accompanied by a forward bowing gesture (<i>Siamun</i> and <i>Siambirang</i> .)	Head remains upright, with the gaze directed toward the hands.	Body remains upright without bending.
2.	<i>Menolak Bala</i> (Rejecting Evil)	1x8	Step to the right to change position.	Both hands move downward from the previous position to the sides of the waist	Head remains upright, with the gaze directed downward	Body remains upright, facing to the right without bending.
3.	<i>Mangaok Tabi</i> with the <i>Suhini Appang Na Opat</i> pattern	4x8	Stepping and turning in place.	Hands are open, palm facing upward, with the left palm slightly facing forward. Hand movements are performed alternatively.	Head remains upright; during the right turn, the head tilts slightly with the gaze directed to the right.	Body remains upright without bending.
4.	<i>Lakka Tolu/Langka Tolu</i> with the <i>Makassing Desa Nawalu</i> pattern	4x8	Steps and movements follow the <i>Makassing Desa Nawalu</i> pattern	Hand position is similar to <i>mangaok tabi</i> , but wider and lower	Head remains upright, with the gaze directed forward.	Body remains upright with a slight forward inclination.

In contrast, the movement motifs performed by the Panortor, who are female dancers representing family members and ritual participants, emphasize gentleness, harmony, and collective participation. While *Situan Natorop* also appears in the Panortor movement vocabulary, its execution is softer and more restrained, reflecting a complementary rather than leading role. Movements such as *Sombah Debata* and *Mambuka Roha* express devotion, openness of the heart, and submission to divine and ancestral forces. The paired movements *Mangait Tusiamun* and *Mangait Tusiambirang* symbolically articulate balance and reciprocity, while *Embas* functions as a closing gesture that reinforces humility and composure. Together, these movement motifs construct a coherent choreographic structure in which each gesture contributes to the ritual narrative of respect, invocation, and ancestral remembrance.

Table 2. Movement Description of Panortor (Female Dancers) in Tortor Bejan

No	Movement Motif	Count	Foot Movements	Hand Movements	Head Movements	Body Movements
1.	<i>Situan Natorop</i> (center/ches t position)	1x8	Feet positioned close together while performing <i>Mangurdot</i> .	Both hands are joined and placed in front of the chest, accompanied by a forward bowing movement (<i>Siamun</i> and <i>Siambirang</i>).	Head remains upright, with the gaze directed toward the hands.	Body remains upright without bending
2.	<i>Sombah Debata</i>	4x8	Feet positioned close together while performing <i>Mangurdot</i>	Hands are positioned in front of the head while performing the <i>sombah</i> gesture	Head slightly bowed, with the gaze directed downward.	Body remains upright without bending
3.	<i>Mambuka Roha</i>	1x8	Feet positioned close together while performing <i>Mangurdot</i>	Hands are opened and placed on both sides of the waist.	Head remains upright, with the gaze directed downward.	Body remains upright without bending
4.	<i>Mangait Tusiamun</i> and <i>Mangait Tusiambiring</i>	2x8	Feet positioned close together while performing <i>Mangurdot</i>	The right hand moves from right to left, and the left hand from left to right, with palms joined and slightly curved inward.	Head follows the direction of the hands to the right and then to the left.	Body remains upright without bending
5.	<i>Embas</i>	1x8	Feet are positioned in front of the abdomen in a crossed position, with palms clasped.	Hands are positioned in front of the abdomen in a crossed position, with palms clasped.	Head remains upright, with the gaze directed downward.	Body remains upright without bending.

Overall, the movement structure of Tortor Bejan demonstrates an integrated system in which meaningful and aesthetic movements, as well as non-locomotor and limited locomotor actions, are carefully balanced to support the dance's ritual purpose. Rather than prioritizing visual complexity or dramatic variation, Tortor Bejan emphasizes symbolic clarity, controlled bodily expression, and adherence to inherited movement conventions. Through this movement system, the dance becomes a medium through which the Batak Toba community articulates its worldview, particularly its relationship with ancestors and the spiritual dimensions of life and death.

The stage, understood as the spatial setting in which a dance performance takes place, plays a crucial role in determining not only the visual arrangement of a dance but also its symbolic and ritual meaning. In the case of Tortor Bejan, the stage is not merely a physical

platform but a culturally charged space that mediates the relationship between humans, ancestors, and the spiritual realm. Traditionally, Tortor Bejan was performed in open spaces such as village fields or communal yards, locations that were considered sacred and suitable for ritual activities. These open spaces allowed for collective participation and symbolized openness toward ancestral spirits, who were believed to descend and be present during the ritual. The choice of an open field also reflects the communal nature of Batak Toba society, in which ritual activities are not confined to private or enclosed spaces but are instead embedded within the shared social landscape of the community.

The sacredness of the performance space implies that Tortor Bejan cannot be staged arbitrarily. The selection of the stage is closely tied to ritual timing, social consensus, and spiritual readiness. In traditional contexts, the space is ritually prepared and symbolically purified before the performance begins, ensuring that it is appropriate for ancestral invocation. However, in contemporary practice, adjustments to the performance venue have become inevitable due to changing social conditions, spatial limitations, and practical considerations. Tortor Bejan may now be performed in adapted spaces, including cultural halls or designated ceremonial areas, while still attempting to preserve its ritual integrity. These spatial adaptations reflect a negotiation between tradition and modernity, demonstrating how ritual dances respond to contextual change while striving to maintain their symbolic essence.

Closely related to the stage is the organization of floor patterns, which constitute the spatial pathways and formations created by dancers as they move throughout the performance. Floor patterns in dance are not merely aesthetic arrangements; they function as visual expressions of social structure, ritual hierarchy, and symbolic orientation. In Tortor Bejan, floor patterns are generally composed of straight and curved lines, each carrying distinct expressive qualities. Straight-line formations, which commonly appear in horizontal, vertical, and diagonal orientations, convey a sense of firmness, order, and clarity. These patterns reflect the structured nature of Batak Toba customary law and kinship relations, emphasizing balance and social harmony.

The floor patterns formed by the Pambejan, the male dancers who play a central ritual role, are particularly significant. In movements such as Mangaraksa Desa Nawalu, the Pambejan's spatial pathways symbolically represent the act of guarding and spiritually protecting the village. The linear and forward-oriented movements reinforce the Pambejan's position as a ritual leader who mediates between the community and ancestral spirits. These patterns also suggest vigilance and responsibility, qualities associated with male ritual authority within Batak Toba culture. The controlled use of space, combined with restrained locomotion, underscores the solemnity of the ritual and avoids excessive spatial expansion that might detract from its sacred character.

In contrast, the floor patterns of the Panortor, the female dancers, emphasize collectivity, relational balance, and familial participation. The performance typically begins with the dancers arranged in two straight lines, with the Pambejan positioned at the front, symbolizing leadership and ritual guidance. As the dance progresses, the formation shifts into a two-way configuration in which dancers face each other, with the Pambejan positioned at the center. This spatial arrangement visually articulates the concept of relational reciprocity, a core value in Batak Toba social organization. At the conclusion of the performance, the dancers form a linear formation and exit the performance area together, symbolizing closure, unity, and the completion of ritual obligations. Through these floor patterns, Tortor Bejan constructs a spatial narrative that mirrors social structure and ritual progression.

Makeup, as an element of dance presentation, serves to enhance facial expression and

support character portrayal. According to Hayatun Nufus (2022), makeup is an artistic practice intended to emphasize beauty and conceal imperfections in order to achieve an ideal appearance. However, in the context of Tortor Bejan, the function of makeup diverges from theatrical aesthetics and instead aligns with ritual modesty. As a sacred dance, Tortor Bejan avoids excessive visual embellishment that might overshadow its spiritual purpose. Consequently, makeup is applied selectively and with restraint.

Female Panortor dancers apply light and natural makeup to maintain a clean and respectful appearance without drawing attention away from the ritual action. This minimal approach reinforces the dancers' role as participants in a sacred ceremony rather than performers seeking visual prominence. In contrast, Pambejan dancers typically do not use makeup at all, emphasizing authenticity, naturalness, and spiritual seriousness. The absence of makeup underscores the Pambejan's ritual function, positioning the male dancer as a conduit for ancestral presence rather than a character to be aesthetically dramatized. Thus, makeup in Tortor Bejan operates as a subtle supporting element that reinforces ritual values rather than theatrical display.



Figure 2. Costume and Makeup of Female Dancers

Costume further strengthens the ritual identity of Tortor Bejan through its simplicity and symbolic significance. The costumes worn by dancers are predominantly composed of ulos, the traditional woven textile of the Batak Toba people, which carries deep cultural and spiritual meanings. Female dancers wear ulos as a skirt, complemented by another piece of ulos wrapped around the chest to resemble a blouse. This manner of dress reflects modesty and ritual appropriateness while also emphasizing ethnic identity. The placement of the ulos is not arbitrary but conveys social status: unmarried female dancers wear the ulos crossed over the shoulders, while married women place it over the right shoulder, signaling marital status and social role within the community.

Male dancers perform bare-chested, wearing ulos draped over the shoulders or across the back, and often tying an ulos around the head. This costume configuration highlights physical strength and ritual readiness while maintaining cultural propriety. The exposed torso of the Pambejan symbolizes openness and sincerity in ritual engagement, reinforcing the dancer's role as a ritual intermediary. Overall, the costumes of Tortor Bejan reflect a balance between functionality, symbolism, and cultural identity, avoiding ornamental excess while foregrounding meaning.

The dancers themselves constitute a central element in the presentation of Tortor Bejan,

as they embody the ritual roles and social relationships embedded within the dance. As articulated by Prastiawan and Suharyanto (2016), art serves as an expression of human feelings and inner experiences, communicating communal values and fulfilling spiritual needs. In Tortor Bejan, the Pambejan functions as the principal dancer and ritual leader, embodying authority, responsibility, and spiritual knowledge. The Pambejan must possess not only technical mastery of movement but also an understanding of kinship relations, customary law, and ritual protocol.

Female dancers, or Panortor, represent family members and community participants who collectively support the ritual process. Their movements, formations, and interactions reinforce social cohesion and communal involvement. Rather than functioning as supporting performers in a theatrical sense, Panortor dancers actively participate in the ritual, contributing to its spiritual efficacy. Through this distribution of roles, Tortor Bejan reflects the hierarchical yet interdependent structure of Batak Toba society.

Dance music serves as an indispensable component of Tortor Bejan, reinforcing both emotional expression and ritual structure. In dance performance, music functions not only as accompaniment but also as a temporal and structural guide for movement sequences. The synchronization between movement and music creates an aesthetic unity that enhances the overall impact of the performance. In Tortor Bejan, musical accompaniment plays a crucial role in establishing the sacred atmosphere and guiding ritual progression.



Figure 3. Gondang and Gong Batak

The instruments used include taganing, gordang, ogung, hesek, and sarune bolon, which together form the Gondang Sabangunan ensemble. Each instrument contributes distinct sonic qualities that shape rhythm, melody, and texture. The deep resonance of the gordang and ogung establishes a solemn and authoritative soundscape, while the sarune bolon provides melodic contours that guide dancers' movements. The rhythmic patterns generated by the ensemble regulate tempo and signal transitions between ritual phases, ensuring coherence between sound and movement. Through this integrated musical system, Tortor Bejan achieves a balance between sensory immersion and ritual order.

In addition to movement, music, costume, and space, ritual properties play a vital role in the Mambejan ceremony. These properties include a cup, tolu bolit, a keris, baskets, betel leaves, bane-bane leaves, water, kaffir lime, hajut, lime, gambier, tobacco, mats, flour, eggs, and rice. Each item carries symbolic meaning related to purification, protection, fertility, and ancestral respect. These ritual objects are not merely decorative but function as tangible mediators between the human and spiritual realms. Their presence reinforces the sacred character of Tortor Bejan and situates the dance within a broader ritual framework.

From a broader perspective, the form of presentation of Tortor Bejan can be understood as an integrated system in which movement, space, costume, music, performers, and ritual

properties function cohesively. According to Soedarsono (1978), dance presentation encompasses all elements that support performance, including movement, floor design, makeup, costumes, performance venue, props, and musical accompaniment. Aina (2017) similarly emphasizes the interdependence of these elements in shaping dance presentation. This study adopts Soedarsono's framework to analyze Tortor Bejan, recognizing the form of presentation as a foundational concept that guides revitalization efforts.

Within the cultural life of the Batak Toba community, Tortor Bejan is performed as a sacred ritual procession symbolizing respect for ancestral services and the revival of ancestral spirits through statues carried around the village by male participants. The last known performance took place in Humban Simarmata before the practice was discontinued due to its extensive duration, which could reach up to forty days. As such, Tortor Bejan is not categorized as a performance-oriented dance but rather as a ritual ceremony governed by strict customary rules.

The presentation form of Tortor Bejan reflects a complex integration of aesthetic restraint, ritual symbolism, and cultural values. Each element of the performance contributes to its function as a medium of ancestral communication and communal identity. As a ritual dance threatened with extinction, Tortor Bejan offers valuable insights into the relationship between dance, belief systems, and social structure. Documenting and analyzing its presentation form is therefore essential not only for academic understanding but also for cultural preservation and intergenerational transmission.

CONCLUSIONS

Tortor Bejan is one of the traditional ritual dances of the Batak Toba ethnic group that is currently facing the threat of extinction due to its increasingly rare performance in contemporary society. Within the cultural life of the Batak Toba community, Tortor Bejan occupies a significant position as a sacred ceremonial practice rather than a performance-oriented dance. It functions as a symbolic medium through which respect for ancestral services is expressed and ancestral spirits are ritually revived through the use of a Bejan statue. This dance is not merely an artistic expression but an integral component of the Mambejan ritual, which embodies deeply rooted beliefs concerning life, death, and the continuity of lineage.

The performance of Tortor Bejan is carried out prior to the placement of ancestral bones into the Sarpogabus statue, marking a crucial transitional stage within the ritual sequence. The family plays a decisive role in determining which ancestor is to be honored, followed by the reopening of the grave to retrieve the bones and skull. In circumstances where the skull has deteriorated, the Bejan statue is crafted from gambiri wood and carved to resemble the facial features of the ancestor, reflecting adaptive practices that maintain symbolic meaning despite material limitations. These procedures highlight the strong connection between ritual practice, ancestral veneration, and collective memory within the Batak Toba community.

The presentation of Tortor Bejan demonstrates a tightly integrated relationship between movement, music, space, performers, and ritual properties. The musical accompaniment, consisting of taganing, gondang, ogung, hesek, and sarune bolon, reinforces the inseparable bond between dance movement and sound, guiding both the structure and spiritual atmosphere of the ritual. Through this integration, Tortor Bejan manifests as a holistic cultural expression in which aesthetic restraint and symbolic depth take precedence over performative spectacle.

This study underscores the importance of documenting and analyzing the presentation form of Tortor Bejan as a strategy for cultural preservation. By examining its structural elements and ritual context, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of Batak Toba intangible cultural heritage and provides a foundation for future revitalization efforts. Preserving Tortor Bejan is not only a matter of safeguarding a traditional dance but also of sustaining the cultural values, belief systems, and ancestral connections that define the identity of the Batak Toba people.

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