

TRANSFORMATION OF LULO DANCE PERFORMED BY TOLAKI PEOPLE IN KONAWE REGENCY, SOUTH EAST SULAWESI

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ABSTRACT

This present study analyzes the transformation of *lulo* dance performed by Tolaki people in Konawe Regency, South East Sulawesi. From the perspective of cultural studies, the study analyses an empirical field reality related to the matter pertaining to transformation. The local culture which is transformed into the global culture has caused the *lulo* dance to change with its new form and meanings. There is one problem which needs to be analyzed in the present study. The problem is formulated in the form of a question, namely what ideologies which have inspired the transformation of the *lulo* dance performed by Tolaki people in Konawe Regency, South East Sulawesi. The study used the qualitative method and is intended to analyze the transformation of the *lulo* dance performed by Tolaki people using the critical, interdisciplinary and multidimensional approach of cultural studies. The data were obtained through library research, documentary study, observation, and interview. After being verified, the data were analyzed using several relevant theories; they are the theory of deconstruction, the hermeneutic theory, the theory of discourse of knowledge, and the theory of semiotics.

The result of the study shows that the transformation of the *lulo* dance performed by Tolaki people in Konawe Regency cannot be separated from the ideologies which have inspired it. They include the religiosity ideology, the educational ideology, and the economic ideology. The contact between the global culture and local culture has caused the *lulo* dance to transform. The global culture indicates that a new era has come; it cannot be stemmed and avoided, meaning that many aspects in the people's social and cultural life have transformed or changed.

Keywords: transformation, *lulo* dance, society.

INTRODUCTION

Most performing arts performed in the regions of Indonesia whose agricultural values are very strong have ritual functions. The ritual functions do not have anything to do with the events of life cycle which are considered important such as birth, tooth filing, the first haircut,

touching earth, circumcision and death but also with performing arts such as hunting, rice planting, harvesting and even the preparation of a war (Soedarsono, m 2002: 123).

Civilization, culture and the system of belief also change. The performing arts have changed since the independence of the Republic of Indonesia, one of which is the art of dancing. Its form has gradually changed. The rhythmic physical motions are made regularly with beautiful expressions which can vibrate the human feeling. The beautiful motions contain special rhythms (Soedarsono, 1985:16).

Tolaki people have many arts, one of which is the *lulo* dance. Tolaki people who support the *lulo* dance occupy the area of Konawe Regency, Kendari City, South Konawe, North Konawe, Konawe Island. This used to be known as the area of Konawe Kingdom and Kolaka Regency, North Kolaka Regency, and East Kolaka Regency which was known as the area of Mekongga Kingdom. Although Tolaki people occupy two different kingdoms, the *lulo* dance has been their collective identity. This dance was created from the ritual performed by Tolaki people to glorify the harvest time. Therefore, this dance is considered a sacred one performed by Tolaki people.

As a performing art, the *lulo* dance is made up of the musical and dancing elements. It is unique if compared to similar cultural arts performed by different ethnic groups in the Archipelago. The dancers performing it are hand in hand and perform a circle following the accompanying musical instruments. The harmonious movements of hands and feet with a high collective mobility make the dance beautiful.

The global culture has caused the function of the dance to change; it used to be performed for sacred purposes, but now it is performed for propane purposes; it used to be performed for ceremonial purposes, but now it is performed for a limited period of time; it used to express the values of the society's life, but now it tends to be performed as an amusement and a festival. The global culture has also caused the *tulo* dance to be differently defined. In other words, the value of what is understood of the dance has shifted. They have all affected the behavior and cultural practices of the Tolaki people living in Konawe Regency.

Based on what was described above, one of the problems of the present study is what ideologies have caused the *tulo* dance performed by Tolaki people in Konawe Regency, South East Sulawesi, to be transformed.

A concept plays an important role in research. According to Putra (2001:6), a theory can be constructed if the analytical concepts and how they are applied in the study can be well understood. Therefore, one concept which needs to be discussed in the present study is

the concept *ideology*. It needs to be made to be clear in order to be able to discuss the ideology which has contributed to the transformation of the *tulo* dance.

RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative method was used in the present study. The qualitative method can be used to understand the meaning of an object, society, situation and an event. It attempts to understand the field empirical cultural phenomenon. It is under the interdisciplinary multi-method studies which imply meaning and process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009: 2-6), and focuses on the naturalistic interpretation and approach of a matter with different paradigms. The qualitative study constitutes a specific approach in the cultural studies; in addition, it is unique from the naturalistic dimension (collection and field). As well, it strengthens the interpretative understanding of the human experience in which the researcher takes part 'participatory observation' (Endraswara, 2006:87-89; Denzin & Lincoln, 2009:5). The data in the present study were collected through observation, interview and documentary study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Basically, an ideology is derived from a myth and after it is established it becomes an ideology as what is stated by Barthes (2003: 122) that if a connotation is already established, it will become a myth and that if the myth is already established it becomes an ideology. Kumbara (2010:17) stated that a cultural ideology and tradition can be analyzed by finding out what the ideology in the tradition contains. According to Destuut de Tracy (in Noeliono-Budianto, 2004:128-130), an ideology is a collection of systemized concepts used as the basis leading to the life sustainability of someone or a group of people. An ideology is the ideal which is intended to be achieved by many parties in society. The supporting society usually spreads the ideology to its members who support it in different ways in accordance with their respective tradition and culture.

Ideology is less popular among Tolaki people; however, it does not mean that they do not have any ideology as, as a concept, they do not understand it. Common people do not understand what an ideology is as it is part of their lives and activities, causing them not to recognize it. Thompson (2003:18) stated that an ideology can tighten the social relation which binds the society's members by applying the values and norms they have agreed.

The result of the study shows that there are three ideologies contributing to the transformation of the *lulo* dance performed by Tolaki people; they are the religiosity ideology, educational ideology, and economic ideology.

First, the religiosity ideology is closely related to the Tolaki people's belief. The *lulo* dance cannot be separated from the art of motion as they are related to one another. In addition, it is also closely related to the Tolaki people's faith. In the past, when *sangia* (gods) in general and *sanggoleo mbae* (the goddess of paddy) in particular were worshipped, it was performed as part of the ritual. It was intended to make the *sangias* (gods) happy so human beings are avoided from what is known as *abala* (disaster). The Tolaki people believed that when the *sangias* (gods) were angry, many people would suffer from disease epidemics and disasters could not be avoided. In addition, plants (*tina'u*) in general and the secondary plants would fail.

Second, the education which contributes to the ideology which has inspired the *lulo* dance is the education which contributes to the character education. There is a traditional figurative expression *inae konasara iye pine sara, inae lia sara iye pinekasara* (those who appreciate tradition will be appreciated, and those who do not appreciate tradition will be punished). The education is directed to that expression meaning that people should be educated in order to be able to understand others. Such a conception is the cultural strength of the Tolaki people in constructing the cultured human character.

Third, the economic value which is related to the Tolaki people's way of thinking is the value which cannot be financially measured. The *lulo* dance reflects the great values of Tolaki people which have led to its creation. The need for the supporting people's knowledge of the *lulo* dance with its traditional teachings in Konawe has caused Tolaki people to have a cultural identity which is different from that the other societies have.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The transformation of the *lulo* dance performed by Tolaki people in Konawe Regency cannot be separated from the ideologies which have inspired it. *First*, the religiosity ideology, which is closely related to the Tolaki people's belief; in the past when the local people worshiped *sangias* (Gods) in general and *sanggoleo mbae* (the paddy's Goddess) in particular, the ritual was accompanied with the *lulo* dance. It was intended to make *sangias* (gods) happy so human beings could avoid what is known as *abala* (disasters). *Second*, the educational ideology, which is related to the moral values teaching the supporting people of

the *lulo* dance to understand other people. *Third*, the economic ideology, which contains the conception of welfare related to the human need for the traditional art which can support the financial need.

It is suggested that the *lulo* dance, as an art heritage from the ancestors, should be maintained by the Tolaki society as it contains great values which can contribute to the supporting society's character.

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