

THE EXISTENCE OF GONDANG BATAK MUSIC IN THE DEATH CEREMONY OF SAUR MATUA IN PURBATUA, NORTH TAPANULI

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ABSTRACT

This research using descriptive qualitative method that focused on the existency of gondang Batak traditional music in *Saur Matua* funeral ceremony in Purbatua, North Tapanuli. The death ceremony of *Saur Matua* has a function as a media to preserve Batak traditional culture. This study analyse the musical form, function, and the unique activity of gondang Batak using ethnomusicology approach. Data collection techniques are interviews and documentation. The researchers found that there is an effort to preserve Batak cultural heritage through gondang Batak traditional music such as introducing gondang Batak music to the younger generation, practicing Gondang Batak in a daily basis, and understanding the forms and function of the instrument. It is also found that there are 6 functions contained in Gondang Batak and meaning contained within the wedding ceremony can visualize well with a selection of songs and musical accompaniment of Gondang Batak.

Keywords: *Gondang Batak, Funeral Ceremonies, Existency, Ethnomusicology*

INTRODUCTION

Life and death always go hand in hand and are a natural process in human life. Life and death themselves have the same but different values. For example, when the person is born into the world everyone celebrates with happy cries. Whereas when we die everyone weeps with sad cries. Death does not discriminate people; healthy, sick, rich, poor, good, or evil. Everyone will die in the end. Death never see the place and location, death will come to all mankind in the world, including in Indonesia. Indonesia is a developing country with ethnic and cultural diversity. In responding to conditions of grief

such as death, the tribes in Indonesia have unique and different traditions and customs. One of them is the Batak tribe. The Batak tribe is one of the tribes who live and inhabit the island of North Sumatra, Indonesia. Broadly speaking, the Batak tribe is divided into 5, namely the Karo people, the Pak-Pak people, the Toba people, the Simalungun people, and the Angkola or Mandailing people (koentjaraningrat, 1990: 313).

The Batak tribe uses their local arts for all their sacred activities, including death or funerals. The Batak tribe has a unique tradition in death ceremonies, because in general, the Batak tribe welcomes the death

ceremony by holding parties and joys, which is often the opposite of other tribes in Indonesia.

Death in the Batak tribe itself is divided into several classifications, such as:

1. Deaths experienced while still in the womb (*mate di bortian*) for deaths experienced in the womb have not received customary treatment (buried immediately without a coffin).

2. Death when was still a baby (*mate poso-poso*), died when was still a child (*mate dakdanak*), died when was a teenager (*mate bulung*), and died when he/she was an adult but not yet married (*mate ponggol*), all of these deaths received customary treatment: the corpse was covered with a sheet of ulos (woven cloth typical of the Batak community) before being buried. Ulos covering the corpse's *mate-Poso Poso* come from parents, whereas for *dakdanak mate* and *mate bulung*, Ulos of bone (mother's brother) the person who died.

3. Already married but do not have children (*mate di paralang-alangan/mate punu*),

4. Already married and leaving the children in a very young age. (*mate mangkar*),

5. Already have adult children, some are even married, but not yet have grandchildren (*mate hatungganeon*),

6. Already have grandchildren, but there are still children who are not married (*mate sari matua*).

7. Have grandchildren but not necessarily from all of their children because there are some of their children are not yet married (*mate saur matua*).

8. Have grandchildren, and all of their children are married (*saur matua manibulu*).

In Batak society, the death of a person at an old age and had children, need an honorable funeral ritual because his position will be as a worshiped ancestor. It is found from the many findings of megalithic tombs with statues of ancestors as objects of worship (Soejono, 1984: 24). This is a sign that the person who died is indeed time (already old enough) to face God and this is greeted with happiness and joy. There must be sadness, but

considering that the death is due to a natural process (old age), the sadness won't last long. Supposing, debt in the world is no longer / keel. In Batak society, the parent's debt is to marry off their child. So, when someone's debt is paid off, it is only natural that he feels calm and relieved. In this study, the researcher focused on the procession of the *Saur Matua* death ceremony.

The Batak tribe is thick with culture, starting from the typical Batak carving that is often seen in traditional Batak house ornaments, then there is the ulos cloth which has become a brand that is closely attached to the Batak tribe community, the typical martial arts namely *mossak*, *tor-tor* dances to the music, namely *gondang*. *Gondang Batak* is the traditional music of the Batak tribe, which is almost always used in all traditional or customary activities of the Batak tribe. In the show, when the *gondang* has been beaten, the *panortor* (dancer) is immediately ready to enter the arena or field provided for *manortor* (dancing). There are several types and types of *gondang batak*, such as *gondang sabangunan*, *gondang hasapi*, and *gondang sambilan*. The three *gondang* are distinguished by their type and musical instrument. It can be concluded that the Batak tribe community goes hand in hand with customs, even in every life cycle of the Batak community, starting from the process of birth, marriage, and even death. *Gondang* itself means drum in the Batak language. Music *gondang* in its performance consist of *gondang*, *taganing*, *hasapi*, *ogung*, *sulim*, and *sarune*.

Existence can also be known by one word, namely existence. The most important concept of existence in human social life is his own state and also his own existence (Kartika, 2012: 15). Existence can be defined as something that considers human presence is not static; meaning that humans are always moving from possibility to reality. *Karls Jaspers* argues that existence always has a relationship with transcendence (things that are beyond human ability, existence is a philosophy that live up to and bring the truth, and human existence can be proven by the

way of thinking and acting. According to jaspers, everyone has a peculiar and unique way of being. That is what is called the existence of an individual. So that everyone who is able to determine his identity and is able to stand among the existence of others, they will get their true existence. Researchers raise the value of existence to determine the existence of the function of the Batak gondang music and its function in the society.

In studying the arts, particularly the art of traditional music, the appropriate field is ethnomusicology. In researching traditional music arts, there are six areas of investigation, namely; 1. Music material culture, 2. Song texts, 3. Music categories, 4. Music actors or players, 5. Music functions and uses, 6. Creative activities (Supanggah, 1995: 100). In the material culture of music includes the study of instruments ranging from the classification of the instrument, to the details in the instrument. The song text examines linguistics, the linguistic relationship with the sound of music, and the meaning expressed in the text. The music category examines the structure of the presentation form and the music formation. In the music game, it examines the background and goals of the music player in the world of traditional music. In the function and the use of music, it will examine the uses and functions of music in other cultural aspects such as religion, economy, social and so on. Music activity examines the effort of music with the aim of maintaining the presence and existence of art itself. Researchers studied Batak gondang music using ethnomusicology which later discussed Batak gondang music based on material music culture, song texts, music categories, music actors or players, music functions and uses, and creative activities.

In carrying out the funeral ceremony, the Batak tribe associates the funeral procession with the Batak gondang music. However, what is unique is the batak gondang music, the presentation will be different, depending on the type of death the ceremony is held. This became the reason for the researcher to take the title "The Existence of Batak

Gondang Music in a Death Ceremony in Purbatua, North Tapanuli as an Effort to Preserve Culture."

DISCUSSION

Material culture is one of the six aspects in ethnomusicology to study a regional art. Music material culture discusses the classification of musical instruments, and discusses how the music is played in its performances (Supanggah, 1995: 100). The form of presenting music as a material music culture includes presentation and classification arrangements, stage layouts, decorations, text and singing fashion, music and music categories.

In the presentation of the Batak gondang music in the death ceremony procession of the Batak Saur Matua tribe, the Sabanguna gondang music consists of taganing, hasapi, sulim, sarune, ogung. Taganing is included in the classification of membranophone instruments (membrane instruments), hasapi is classified as chordofone instruments (stringed instruments), sulim is classified as aerofone instruments (instruments with air), while ogung is included in idiofone instruments (instruments whose sound originates from the instrument itself).

The Stage

The stage or location is divided into two, namely the location for the death procession ceremony and the location for the Batak gondang musician. Traditionally, before the funeral procession is carried out a family held meeting (martonggo raja) where the aim of the Tonggo Raja or Ria Raja is to ask the bones and hula-hula to be willing to cover the ulos sapat on the body and give ulos to the family who is left behind and discuss preparation of *saur matua* ceremony. Relative parties consist of natolu diversion elements. For the Batak tribe, especially for the Batak tribe who live in the village, they use their own house as a funeral home. It is normal to perform traditional ceremonies or mangadati in in the house of the deceased. Meanwhile,

the location of the Batak gondang musician is held in the yard of the house.

Musical Category

The music category is an area of ethnomusicology that discusses the formation of a musical art (Supanggah, 1995: 101). Form is a tangible form that can be grasped by the human senses. Form is closely related to the function of the human senses. Regarding the form of music, the human sense of hearing will be fully functional to enjoy the voice or sounds that have been composed. Not only the elements that are captured by the sense of hearing, in this case the sense of sight can also be spoiled by the presence of other supporting elements to perfect a form itself. According to its function Gondang Batak itself is a "tool" which has the function of having an intimate relationship with the Almighty. *Gondang* Batak itself is like an "organ" in a church, functioning non-statically, which means that the gondang batak does not have a definite structure and is influenced by the songs and events that are followed. For the presentation form category, gondang batak is included in the form of ensemble music presentation. An ensemble is a musical performance in which there is a combination of several instruments, whether similar or not. The ensemble is divided into two major sections, based on the size or number of players. Based on the instrument, the ensemble is divided into two, namely the ensemble of a kind and mixed ensemble. Similar ensembles are musical performances with similar or the same instruments. While the mixed ensemble is a musical performance with different instruments (Banoë, 2003: 27). Similarly, the gondang Batak, which is in the presentation of his music is often played together, and classified into categories ensemble mix for the presentation, gondang Batak consists of several kinds of instruments.

Musician

Musicians in the area of investigation in Ethnomusicology explain about the actors who play a full role in these arts. (Supanggah, 1995: 101). The Batak gondang

music group generally consists of 5 personnel (taganin, hasapi, sarune, ogung, and sulim). However, in the use of its services, the Batak gondang can be used in all formal events (customs and ceremonies) or non-formal (cultural festivals, etc). The Batak gondang music group which is studied is Batak gondang music group "Larisma".

Text and Song

Texts and songs discuss linguistics, the linguistic relationship with the sound of music, and the meanings expressed in the text. In the presentation of Batak gondang music in ancient times, the selection of songs was adjusted to the event and the party or party owner. So if there is a traditional wedding or customary funeral, the owner of the celebration or an ordinary ceremony party chooses a song that is in accordance with the situation or event held by him. but sometimes, the party owner also adjusts the song that the gondang music player will perform with a third party. Because the majority of Batak tribes are Christian, for example there is a traditional death ceremony, parties who hold parties often ask for appropriate song lists to be played by the Batak gondang musician by a third party, namely the Church, as well as to the parhata or host of the Fashion Show.

In the presentation of the Batak gondang music, the Batak gondang music player has a special costume. However, due to the advancing era, it causes a shift in fashion or fashion. However, for traditional ceremonies, such as funerals, the Batak gondang musician has costumes such as using a traditional headband, ulos cloth, and traditional cloth tied around the musician's waist. Usually it is also displayed without a top or shirt, but there have also been several incidents of wearing clothes. Usually black color.

Decoration

Just like other tribes when holding traditional ceremonies, there are certain decorations that are installed. Likewise with the Batak tribe. However, in the Batak tribal ceremony, no striking decorations are used, because it focuses more on the ceremonial

procession and presentation of the Batak gondang music.

The Function of Batak Gondang Music in Saur Matua Death Ceremony

Performing arts cannot be separated from people's lives, there are important functions for society. According to Soedarsono (2002: 123) performing arts have three primary functions: as a means of ritual, as a personal expression which is generally in the form of personal entertainment, and as an aesthetic presentation. According to Alan P. Merriam, there are ten (10) functions in an art that is: as a means of Recreation, which can be enjoyed both by its creation as well as by the audience; as a means of emotional disclosure; as a physical response; aesthetic appreciation; means of communication; legalization of social institutions and religious rituals; functions related to norms; as a means of symbolic offering; as a cultural continuity; and as community integration. According to Yuni (2017: 3), the function of art as well as performing arts is an interest that can be obtained from the performance. The function of the art of music in this study refers to the benefits of music for individuals, communities and the fulfillment of social needs.

In this study, it was found 6 (six) functions of music: as a function of communication; Function of Ratification of Religious Social and Ritual Institutions: recreation function; physical response function; the function of expressing emotions; and a function of cultural sustainability. The function of Gondang Batak music in a traditional Batak wedding that takes place in Surabaya is described as follows.

Communication Functions

This communication function is not just communication between players and spectators, but can be in the form of communication that is religious and belief, such as communication between the community and the spirits of the ancestors. This understanding is in line with the Batak

gondang function itself. For the people of Batak tribe, Batak gondang music functions as a medium to talk with the spirits of the ancestors. However, since the concept of religion influence the life of Batak people, Batak gondang music has changed its function as a medium of saying thank you to the Almighty God.

There are three types of Batak Gondang music at death ceremonies: *gondang mula-mula*; *gondang somba-somba*, and *gondang pasu-pasu*. These three gondang types have different values. *Gondang mula-mula* included in *gondang parsalahalaan* which means that gondang is played only for the purpose of prayer and silence. There were no tor-tor dances or singing and praise, only prayer activities, because of their sacred nature. *Gondang somba-somba* is a gondang which is believed to have the value of "water" which means flowing and is also a source of life. In *Gondang Somba-Somba*, manortor activities can be carried out. While *gondang pasu-pasu* is believed to have the value of "land" which is used to deliver families who have passed away to return to the Almighty God. Here, we can have tor-tor dance.

The Function of Social Institution and Religious Ritual Validation

The function of legalizing social institutions and religious rituals means that music contributes to social activities and worship.

Recreation Function

This recreation function has the meaning of music as a means of entertainment for the listener. Likewise, Larisma Batak Gondang Music Group, also uses music to entertain music lovers in various events, such as weddings, services, and even funerals

The Physical Response Function

The Physical Response Function means that music functions as an accompaniment to rhythmic activities. The rhythmic activities include dancing, gymnastics, dancing, and others.

The Function of Emotional Expression

This function means that music functions as a medium for someone to express their feelings or emotions. In other words, the player can express his feelings or emotions through music.

The Function of Cultural Continuity

This function means that the music also plays a role in the preservation in order to maintain continuity and stability culture. Gondang Batak music group Larisma also became evident that through music gondang Batak, also done as a form of introducing and maintaining the continuity of the culture to future generations.

The Meaning of Gondang Batak Music in the Death Ceremony of Saur Matua

In the implementation of the death ceremony of the saur matua, the Batak gondang music has more or less an important role in the ceremonial procession. The existence of the gondang batak in the funeral procession is placed in the following procession:

Grief Worship

In mourning services, Batak gondang music functions as an accompaniment to the song for the mourning service that is held. Batak music gondang is in charge of accompanying songs requested by worship leaders. This is interpreted as a form of grief accompanied by traditional music such as Batak gondang.

Mangulosi

Mangulosi is a traditional Batak procession, which is performed either at birth, marriage or death ceremonies. *Ulos* itself has its own function in each ceremony. Ulos at birth ceremonies signifies "warmth" which is expected to be given to babies born by their families. Ulos in a wedding ceremony means "binding" not only a married couple, but a large family from both sides, so that they can live in harmony, warmth and harmony. Meanwhile, in funeral ceremonies, ulos is symbolized as a symbol of separation from

the family for the deceased, as well as a reminder that their family will miss them. In the procession *mangulosi*, gondang Batak serves to accompany with gondang somba-somba, and gondang cheekbone and also accompany the dance *tor-tor*. Although there are no texts or songs, there are only musical accompaniments in the gondang somba-somba and gondang pasu-pasu, but they are celebrated with joy with the intention of delivering the parents who died feeling happy and congratulating that he has no debt in this world.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion that has been conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that there is a form, function, meaning, and creative efforts in maintaining the presence of Gondang Batak music. The musical form of the Gondang Batak was concluded as an ensemble by researchers due to the use of various musical instruments. Researchers also found 6 functions contained in Gondang Batak music. meaning contained within the wedding ceremony can visualize well with a selection of songs and musical accompaniment Gondang Batak and researchers also concluded that there is a creative efforts such as introducing gondang Batak music to the younger generation, practice it in a daily routine, in order to maintain the existence of Gondang Batak music.

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