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Representation of *Lian Namang* Music In The Besi Pare Ritual With An Ecofeminist Approach

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Abstract: Music is a universal language that can penetrate space and time. However, traditional music requires semi-improvisation to adjust to environmental conditions. *Lian Namang's* music for the *Lamaholot* community is a traditional music that tells some of the life philosophies of the predecessor community. One type of *Lian Namang* music is used in the *Lamaholot* tradition to personify a feminine figure in the mythology of the goddess of rice. *Lian Namang's* musical lyrics in rice mythology require contextuality with the times. In connection with the phenomenology that occurs in the *Lamaholot* culture, that patriarchal culture becomes dominant in the domination of nature and women, it is necessary to hold contextual musical representations based on *Lian Namang's* music so that they can have a persuasive influence on the *Lamaholot* community in respecting women and nature as the womb of life. The results of the research are used as a medium to represent the ecofeminist movement, which aims to influence society in responding to patriarchal culture. Masculine representation is not only seen as a centre (androcentric) that dominates and uses a fragmented nature. The mukti trillia theory is one of the foundations that helps humans to continue to adapt their knowledge and skills to the times, so that the noble values of life are passed down from generation to generation.

Keywords: ecofeminism, multi trilla, lian namang, music, representation

1. INTRODUCTION

Music is a universal language that can transcend space and time. Music is the highest form of art as it can express something that cannot be conveyed through words. *Lian Namang* is a traditional custom performance of *Lamaholot* community in the village of Pledo. Its accompanying music is giring-giring music used during the dancer's ankle movements. The story contained in the form of songs and dances revolves around the tale of natural disasters. *Lian naman* is now not only performed during traditional ceremonies but also during national holidays, religious days, or even government visits. 'Besi Pare Tonu Wujo' is one of the folktales that has developed in the *Lamaholot* community, telling the origin story of rice. This story narrates the struggles and sacrifices of a girl named Tonu Wujo in overcoming famine. This catastrophe led them to work hard to create a new garden, using Tonu Wujo's life as a ritual medium. Her body and blood transformed into rice, corn, other staple crops, and plants. Since Tonu Wujo's death, the *Lamaholot* community is said to have been saved from disasters and has lived insufficiency to this day.

Women and nature are often associated with a term that revolves around their position in media, namely injustice (Hermes, 2007: 193). Gender injustice, such as discrimination and exploitation, contradicts the understanding that women and nature are consumptive objects for human life. Women and nature are not



merely viewed as subjects, but they also possess equal rights and responsibilities. The dominant patriarchal culture, prevalent in androcentric practices, has placed men at the centre of societal life within the *Lamaholot* culture. Warren (Arivia, 2006: 381-383) reveals that hierarchical, dualistic (binary), and oppressive thought processes are masculine patterns that weaken the safety of women and nature. This expression reinforces the phenomenon stemming from hierarchical and dualistic power concepts, giving full authority to masculine individuals as being superior to women. Women and nature are consistently depicted with nurturing qualities, and therefore, they deserve respect since both represent the womb that gives life to all creatures.

Ecofeminism, emerging as a problem-solving solution, connects ecological issues with women. Francoide d'Eaubonne introduced ecofeminism through her book '*Le Feminisme ou la Mort*' (Feminism or Death) first published in 1974 (Tong, 2006: 366).

In this research, the mythology of 'Besi Pare' (Goddess of Rice) is used with an ecofeminist conceptual approach. Ecofeminism can be understood as the belief in the inter-connectedness of women and the universe, particularly their shared vulnerability and injustice. A question arising from the 'Besi Pare' mythology is why a woman is sacrificed in the myth to provide life for other humans? Does this ideology relate to androcentric practices within the *Lamaholot* society? Within the 'Besi Pare' ritual, there are songs praising rice as a symbol of fertility and life-giver. The lyrics of *Lian Namang* express admiration and gratitude towards rice, while also conveying the sadness of women's sacrifices for a dignified life.

Based on these observed phenomena, the author intends to examine the representation of *Lian Namang* music within 'Besi Pare' (Goddess of Rice) ritual as a form of critique against patriarchal culture. The 'Besi Pare' mythology in *Lamaholot* culture, philosophically, reveals the role of feminism in human life. The personification of feminism in the rice mythology signifies that both are sources of life. In addition to countering patriarchal culture, the representation of *Lian Namang* music is presented in a contextual form due to the 'Besi Pare' ritual being seen as rigid and irrelevant in an ever-evolving era. Therefore, this research also employs Mukti Trilila theory as its primary reference. Mukti Trilila theory was introduced by Prof. Dr. I Nyoman Sedana, MA, and others.

2. METHODS

The data in the work "Representations of *Lian Namang* Music in the Ironwood Pare Ritual through an Ecofeminist and Mukti Trilila Approach" is approached using qualitative-descriptive methods. Data can consist of phenomena, events, or incidents that will later be analyzed in the form of categories (Sarwono, 2007: 98). The purpose of qualitative research is to uncover the meaning behind the data to discover both empirical and logical empirical truths. The researcher observes the natural object by conducting field observations focused on *Lian Namang* music in the ironwood pare

ritual. Subsequently, data collection is carried out based on phenomenological principles, aiming to deeply understand the phenomena or occurrences being examined.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

"*Lamaholot* is the term for an ethnic group residing in East Flores Regency, NTT (East Nusa Tenggara). This ethnic group encompasses the communities of Larantuka, Solor Island, Adonara Island, and Lembata. *Lamaholot* is not a specific location, but rather an ethnic identity.

The etymology of *Lamaholot* originates from two words, '*Lama*' and '*Holot*.' In the *Lamaholot* language, '*Lama*' holds two meanings. Firstly, it signifies a village or a land of residence. Secondly, it refers to a plate or eating vessel. However, the *Lamaholot* tradition explains the term *Lamaholot* to newcomers or researchers as '*Lama*' in its first meaning, denoting a village or land of residence. '*Holot*' in the *Lamaholot* language means near, close, or intimate. '*Holo*' signifies unity, striving for agreement or harmony. Thus, this term signifies the name of harmonious coexistence. In a very old text, '*holo*' also tends to mean a human being or a land of residence (Kleden, 2008: 91).

Etimologically, *Lamaholot* can be understood as an ethnic group inhabiting neighboring or interconnected villages, characterized by various dialects such as Lembata, Solor, Adonara, and Larantuka (Kleden, 2008: 91). *Lamaholot* culture highly values the status and presence of women, or '*Ina*' in the local language. In *Lamaholot* tradition, women are regarded as bearers of life and humane energy that gathers (Muda, 2016: 83). This signifies that the role of women in *Lamaholot* tradition is crucial, involving childbirth, nurturing, life-giving, and providing peace and harmony within households. The *Lamaholot* ethnic group adheres to a patrilineal belief system, where men hold full rights and inheritances from their parents. Additionally, family names or clans are based on the father's side, aiming to explain the origin of each family and provide clarity on their roles or positions in customary rituals (Pampus, 2001: 183).

A mythology prevalent in the *Lamaholot* community regarding the origin of rice is '*Besi Pare*.' According to *Lamaholot* belief, an orphaned family of five siblings—four brothers and a sister named *Nogo Gunu Ema Hingi*—lived. The siblings are named *Koten*, *Kelen*, *Hurint*, and *Maran*. During a social-spiritual event, the *Lamaholot* community faced famine. *Nogo Gunu Ema Hingi* received a revelation in her dream that she should be sacrificed, her body buried in her brother's garden. This revelation was confirmed by her four brothers, and the garden where her body was buried yielded abundant rice, corn, and other crops. The *Lamaholot* community believes that rice and corn originated from

the woman's body, thus treating rice and corn as subjects in their tradition (Koten, 2015: 36).

In *Lamaholot* culture, women are seen as figures who bring life and fertility. Despite the crucial role of women in bearing the womb, they often receive unfair treatment due to the influence of patriarchal culture. Similarly, nature is frequently utilized solely to provide life to humans. The universe is a reality greater than humans themselves. The lack of respect for this principle has led to tremendous damage to the Earth, with the misconception that such destruction is a necessary price for human progress. Feminist and ecological movements mutually reinforce each other, aiming to build a perspective grounded in models that challenge patriarchal and dominating ideologies.

The link between the current ecological destruction and the strong dominance over women resulting from androcentric practices and views is historically causal. Ecofeminist philosophers argue that the fundamental concept of dual domination over nature and women is rooted in a hierarchy of values. Achievements or advancements should not result in the destruction of other creatures. Every being is genetically related to others (Berry, 2013: 56).

The analysis of *Lian Namang* music within the philosophy of *Besi Pare* is examined through an ecofeminist lens and then analyzed as a contextual representation of the *Besi Pare* ritual. Some findings from this mythology include: Firstly, the *Lian Namang* activity is endangered, as the sacred ritual once practiced by *Lamaholot* ancestors is no longer observed by the current generation engaged in agricultural activities. The ritual started with clearing the land designated for planting and concluded with the planting of rice. Prior to planting, rice seedlings were placed in the field and sprinkled with the blood of animals like pigs or chickens as an expression of gratitude and a request for abundance. This ritual is no longer practiced due to the weak awareness among the *Lamaholot* people regarding the significance of traditions. Elders who performed sacrificial rituals and chanted mantras are rarely found due to their passing, and the younger generation lacks the awareness to carry on these functions.

Secondly, *Lian Namang* consists of verses praising rice composed by local poets and sung by specific individuals. *Lian Namang* singers, also known as *Opak Alat*, are individuals with special talents for singing *Lian Namang* verses. These verses, consisting of verses and refrains, are sung by *Opak Alat* during the verses and by all participants during the refrains of the planting process. The abundance of *Lian Namang* verses, adhering to the *a-b-a-b* rhyme scheme, can be memorized by *Opak Alat*. However, these *Opak Alat* individuals are scarcely found in the present-day *Lamaholot* community due to their age and passing."



Figure 1. Traditional Costume for Lian Namang Music Performance
(Source: field data)



Figure 2. Formasi Lian Namang
(Source: field data)

Lyric Lian Namang

Go maye kala inau re
Doe kala ina wara
Ure teti ratu goka
Goka lodo liku puke
Wara lali nidi gere
Gere dayo lolo
 Ago besi lali tobo duli
 Pele bare lali bawe
 Besi ina nogo gunu
 Pare ama ema hingi

Thirdly, the transition from rural to urban living patterns has a significant impact on the existence of local traditions. In the present era, the traditional farming and rain-fed agriculture lifestyle is being

abandoned by the *Lamaholot* community. Technological advancements and education have influenced individuals to develop skills in other fields for survival, such as becoming civil servants, entrepreneurs, and more.

Considering that *Lian Namang* is no longer relevant in line with the changing times, this study employs the analysis of the Mukti Trilila theory. This theory consists of three supporting concepts: first, *arsaning Pengarsa*, which involves a value-based application of theory into action; second, *Dibya Desa*, encompassing the time, place, and context in which an event occurs; third, *Guna-Gina*, referring to useful professional expertise. On a global scale, tradition is understood as a habitus containing noble values in the lives of previous generations. Therefore, as time progresses, traditions should remain open to change in order to uphold their intrinsic noble values while interpreting them in accordance with the evolving era. Different times, places, and contexts encourage each generation to apply and contextualize knowledge.

3.2 Discussion

The Complementarity of Music and Dance In its description, the complementary analysis of this work is carried out through interpretive and representative narrative. When *Lamaholot* sing together about the transforming girl, they truly feel sadness, anticipating the loss of their sister; they connect this mythical loss with real human loss (Rappoport, 2014). In the cultural interpretation of the ironwood figure for the characterization of the goddess of rice, she becomes a hero in overcoming the famine season. Thus, the narrative is built upon musical organization with a complexity of sounds to construct the ironwood figure, which is both feminist and believed to be a living "womb." Typically, accompanied by isochronous pulsations—foot stomping, with alternating singing. The singing is then taken up by two pairs of singers. The third participant is a soloist or secondary singer. In the group singer formation, there are seven singers. Rappoport (2011) refers to them as the narrator and embroiderer (*be'opakdan nukun be'opak*), two pairs of singers (*hodé' ana'*), and the second singer (*nukun belaha*). The main chanter (*opak*), consecrated by the community, recites the narration for over eight hours during the night.

They are initially introduced by their embroiderer, starting with a single melodic line. As the embroiderer (*nukun opak*) echoes the last words, they are then joined by the narrator as a vocal layer that evolves. In the lyrics of a chant, consisting of a hundred lines, the storyteller (singing in *adeklamasi recto tono syllables*) is interrupted by a musical sequence with vocal duets – four singers paired up to 'take lines' (*hodé' ana'*), the last lines of the storyteller. This musical sequence contrasts with earlier myths: within it, the dancers shout enthusiastically, infusing energy into the dance.

In the vocal duets, each singer is responsible for a distinct voice (*hodé'* or *nukun*; first or second voice) facing each other. The second pair of singers repeats what the first pair has sung. The

musical phrasing's contrast with the storyteller's monotonous melody. The words of the duet are often improvised by the singers themselves and are not essential to the narrative. *Hodé' ana'* is just a variation, development; the chant of opak and nukun is the absolute essence, following the two duets (*hodé' ana'*), possibly followed by the soloist's turn (called *nukun belaha* as 'long second voice' or *nukun ana* as 'second line voice')—long because this part is often longer than the main storyteller's utterance. Semi-improvisational, related to actual village situations or experiences, or perhaps dependent on the singer's current mood. While equally important to the myths, this evokes deep emotional responses. As the soloist (*nukun belaha*) concludes, the embroiderer (*nukun be' opak*) reintroduces the storyteller's voice (*opak*). The organization of the song is based on the musical task assignment marked with specificity; naturally, the storyteller will pause first, followed by *hodé' ana'*. Generally, it stops when people become bored, as this performance continues throughout the night.

For vocal arrangement, singing requires mastery of storytelling and/or vocal techniques. The polyphonic always consists of two voices overlapping – the narrator and the embroiderer – in the polyphonic technique of the *hodé' ana'* duet, except in the opening and closing session (called *goken*), at the very beginning and end of the narration, the dancers do not sing along during the narrated song. As an introduction and closure, the dancers meet the soloist with a loud "i ho!" chant. Throughout the dance, their contribution is rhythmic through the beat of ankle bells, marking the rhythm. The musical form highlights the importance of the age-ranking principle (for storytelling rights) and the exclusivity of cycles, role rotations, and hierarchy. The strict arrangement of the song is analogized with a tight clan organization, ranking between seniors and juniors, landlords, and others, alternating sacrificial roles for collective efficiency. This dance cycle follows the singing from night to dawn. The tight arrangement of the song is analogized as a strict clan organization, ranking between seniors and juniors, landlords, and others, exchanging sacrificial roles for collective efficiency.



Figure 3. *Liang Namang Notation Vocal*
(Source: field data)

"*Lian Namang*" is the most commonly used name for the agrarian Timorese community in the song of the dance. The narrative is structured with a repertoire of music, dance, and sound rhythms, which are characteristic of the performance of a grand work. Each repertoire has variations in steps, structure, and melodic-rhythmic configurations (lines, circles, half circles) that commonly form a centripetal line. Thus, the pentatonic melody of "*Lian Namang*" is presented in instrumental form and dominated by interpretations and explorations by the composer. This music employs ethnic musical instruments (drums, flutes, and giring-giring), combined with semi-improvisational additional instruments such as piano, guitar, bass, and drums. The rhythm of "*Lian Namang*" is collaborated with vocals that describe a feminine figure in a situation of suffering leading to success. This is explored through pelog and slendro tones that indicate both feminine and masculine note movements. This music is reinterpreted into contemporary music that is relevant and easily understood by anyone, anywhere. All of this needs to be done to document this ritual language and cultural storytelling, through recording, publishing, translation, and interpretation.

4. CONCLUSION

Ecofeminism as a solution to the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature should be continually advocated in human life. Women and nature are subjects that possess rights and responsibilities that deserve respect. Both are nurturing and life-giving beings. The outcomes of research are utilized as a means to represent the ecofeminist movement, which aims to influence society in responding to patriarchal culture. Masculine representation is not only viewed as a dominating and fragmented center (andocentric) that exploits and uses nature. The theory of mukti trilila is one of the foundations that assists humans in continuously aligning their knowledge and skills with the progression of time, so that the noble values of life are passed down through generations.

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