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# Presentation of *Ma'badong* Music in the Context of Social Action in Lembang Gandangbatu

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### **Abstract**

Ma'badong music is a music that is presented in the Ma'badong performance at the Rambu Solo' ritual or death ritual in Lembang Gandangbatu, Gandangbatu Sillanan District, Tana Toraja Regency as an expression and lamentation for someone who has died. This study uses qualitative research method with a sociological approach. The data analysis used to analyze the presentation of Ma'badong music in the context of social action consists of three stages, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The data collection techniques used were observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The results suggest that the presentation of Ma'badong music in Lembang Gandangbatu consists of four types of social action proposed by Max Weber, namely: objective rational action, value rational action, affective action, and traditional action. Pa'badong acts as an actor or music presenter of Ma'badong that tried to present their best performance through melodies, rhythms, and lyrics in Badong which are full of meaning and noble values upheld by the Toraja tribe. Meanwhile, individuals or groups of people who watch Ma'badong performance act as appreciators or audience. The presentation of Ma'badong music is not only seen as part of religious rituals and performing arts, but also as a form of social action that occurs in Tana Toraja community, especially in Lembang Gandangbatu.

Keywords: Social Action, Pa'badong, Ma'badong Music, Rambu Solo ', Tana Toraja

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### INTRODUCTION

*Ma'badong* performance is one of the arts in the Rambu Solo' ritual in Tana Toraja, especially in Lembang Gandangbatu. This performance is presented as a unity between sound art and dance which is only witnessed in the Rambu Solo' ritual or death ritual. Rappoport (2004) reveals that ritual music in Toraja is mostly presented in the form of choir vocal by exploring their vocal sounds in contrast and melismatically. In detail, in Ma'badong there is a badong or song of sorrow which consists of verses and it is combined with several movements holding hands to form a large circle. Supporting this statement, Murmahyati (2011); Haruddin (2013) states that *badong* is a type of literature or poetry that is sung by people at the place of grief, either as family or as guests.

Semuel Pulung as the leader of the Ma'badong music group said that the origin of the Ma'badong performance began with the "to manurung di langi" event, which was brought by deata and given to two humans, namely sambira badong and pondan padang. From these two people, Ma'badong developed throughout Toraja, from the North to the South, even to the border areas of Enrekang Regency. One of the differences and the uniqueness of the Badong Gandangbatu Sillanan is the verse quotation. The poetry in *badong* is allowed to quote verses in the Bible. The choice of syair or kadong badong is determined by the Pa'tolo' badong or the badong leader in one group, so that someone who becomes Pa'tolo' badong at least has the expertise and experience in leading Ma'badong. So, in the presentation of *Ma'badong*, the singers or Pa'badong follow the instructions or cues of a Pa'tolo 'badong.

The terms or conditions that exist before starting the presentation of *Ma'badong* are characterized by cutting the *tedong* (buffalo). After that was done, then the *Ma'badong* performance could begin. For the Lembang Gandangbatu area, the minimum number of *tedong* that must be sacrificed is five. The custom in the terms of the Gandangbatu

community is called Bua 'Gandangbatu or Ada' Tallu Kurinna. The results of the study conducted by Rapa 'and Gulo (2020) concluded that Bua' Gandangbatu is a habit carried out by the Gandangbatu community which is divided into three parts, namely: (1) To sipiak kurin, (2) To Sangkurin, and (3) To sipessailean/ to Sipakande. Previously, when the people of Gandangbatu still adhered to the Aluk To'dolo belief, the number of tedong sacrificed had to be five or more, and the number had to be odd. However, along with the times and the influence of Christianity, the number of buffalo sacrificed was only one or two. This is done as a form of cultural preservation, so that Ma'badong performance can remain. In addition to the large number of tedong sacrificed, the social position of "the dead" also influences the presentation of Ma'badong. It means that in the past Ma'badong was only served for the Ossoran (nobility).

The presentation of Ma'badong in the Rambu Solo' ritual allows guests to join the formation of the Pa'badong circle, to be jointly involved in Ma'badong. The duration of the Ma'badong performance is not limited, it means that there is no specific limit when the performace will finish. The duration of Ma'badong time is completely controlled by Pa'tolo 'badong. The time for the presentation of Ma'badong also does not have to be night, it can be in the morning or at noon, it depends on the agreement of the family who died. The presentation of Ma'badong music in Lembang Gandangbatu was analyzed by using the concept of social action developed by Max Weber. Ma'badong is not only seen as a religious ritual or art, but a form of social action that occurs in the Lembang Gandangbatu community.

Weber explained that social action is an action that full of meaning and it is aimed at individuals or groups by expecting a response as a result of this influence (Ritzer 1992: 44). Furthermore, Weber (1947) explained the characteristics of social action, namely: (1) it contains subjective meanings according to actors; (2) it is thoughtful or subjective; (3) it

influenced by the situation, repeated, and approved secretly; (4) it is aimed to individuals or groups; and (5) pay attention to the actions of others. The five main characteristics of this social act are also presented in the presentation of *Ma'badong* music at Lembang Gandangbatu.

First. the meaning contained Ma'badong music is dominated by the meaning or value of solidarity and religious that is expressed in the melody, rhythm, badong poetry and circle formations formed by Pa'badong. Second, Ma'badong music is thoughtful, it can reveal the stories of the lives of those who have died, so that appreciators can reflect on the stories of the lives of the dead, as well as interpret and embody noble values into their lives. Third, the presentation of Ma'badong music is influenced by the situation and it is performed repeatedly. The more guests and spectators who join the Ma'badong circle formation, the more sorrow the atmosphere around the funeral home will be. Fourth, the presentation of Ma'badong music is aimed at individuals or groups, including: husbands, wives, children, grandchildren, siblings, and relatives of people who have died. Fifth, the presentation of Ma'badong music will always pay attention to the actions or responses of others.

In addition to having characteristics, Weber's concept of social action is also divided into four types, namely: (1) purposive rational action, namely action that is carefully calculated by the actor, in order to achieve the desired goal; (2) value rational action, namely actions carried out based on values held firmly by actors or the surrounding community; (3) affective action, namely actions based on the feelings and emotions of the actor; and (4) traditional action, namely repetitive action which then become hereditary habits (Turner 2012: 115-116).

The relevance of Max Weber's concept of social action with the presentation of *Ma'badong* music is the role of *Pa'badong* as an actor in carrying out meaningful actions aimed at any individual or group that exists or it is still following the *Rambu Solo*' ritual. *Pa'badong* tries

to present his best through melodies, rhythms, and lyrics in *badong* which are full of meaning and noble values that are upheld by the Toraja tribe. Individuals or groups act as appreciators or spectators who watch *Ma'badong* music performance around the residence or funeral home. Thus, *Pa'badong* action is defined as a form of social action, namely in the form of action against the audience. On the one hand, art activities are related to conveying ideas to a person or group (Effendy, 2003).

### **METHODS**

Researchers used qualitative research with a sociology approach in collecting data about the presentation of Ma'badong music in the context of social action. After that, researchers conducted an analysis of various data that had been collected and described it in word descriptions. Wijaya (2019: 11) says that the purpose of qualitative research is to describe a certain phenomenon according to the situation and conditions in the field. Ibrahim (2015: 49) explains that the approach is an action prepared in starting research so that it can help and facilitate researchers in carrying out the research process. The approach can also be adjusted based on a particular paradigm or discipline in studying the problems that exist in the object of research (Mahyudi, 2016: 207). Research on the presentation of Ma'badong music in the context of social action uses a sociology approach, as explained by Wadiyo (2008: 2), which explains that sociology is a discipline that focuses on the social processes and social interactions of a society. Based on this reason, art can be associated with various other institutions as a description of the community concerned (Soeriadiredja, 2016: 16).

Moleong (2007: 16) explains that there are seven characteristics in qualitative research, namely: (1) there is a natural background; (2) humans act as tools or instruments; (3) inductive data analysis; (4) descriptive: (5) process is more important than result; (6) there are limitations; and (7) having data validity.

The method used by researchers for research on the presentation of *Ma'badong* music in the context of social action is descriptive, because it does not use numbers, and describes the form of speech, writing, and observations.

The research was conducted in the Lembang Gandangbatu area, Gandangbatu Sillanan District, Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The data collection techniques used include: observation, interviews, and documentation. The data validity technique used in this study was triangulation, namely: sources, methods, and theories. The source triangulation technique was chosen in order to achieve the criteria for the degree of trust, so that it could be understood by the reader and it could be proven by the collection of people who provided information during the study (Sumaryanto, 2007: 113). The qualitative data analysis for the presentation of Ma'badong music in the context of social action consists of three activity processes that occur simultaneously, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman in Sugivono, 2015: 330).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

# Presentation of *Ma'badong* Music in the Context of Social Action in Lembang Gandangbatu

Ma'badong is one of the rituals contained in all religious rituals in Tana Toraja which is usually called Rambu Solo'. The Toraja community knew Ma'badong as songs and dances that were presented during the day or night, to commemorate the story of the life of someone who has died. Ma'badong is served on the yard or open field around the house or Tongkonan. Ma'badong is one of the rituals contained in all religious rituals in Tana Toraja which is usually called Rambu Solo'. The implementation of the Ma'badong ritual is not arbitrary, or in other words, this ritual is only allowed for dead aristocrats or someone who has a certain social status. Ma'badong has been around for a long time by the Toraja community, since the incident "to manurung di langi" ". Until now, Ma'badong is still carried out in accordance with the customs and regulations.

Apart as a ritual, on the other hand *Ma'badong* is a unit of arts in Tana Toraja, namely music, dance, and literature. The presence of art also helps in reflecting on and living up to certain values. In this context, *Ma'badong* did not only reveal the life story of a person who has died, but also as a media for reflection and appreciation of values. Although the majority of Toraja community have embraced Christianity, *Ma'badong* is still carried out as a cultural heritage that has been given by the ancestors of the Toraja tribe and it must be preserved.

### **Purposive Rational Action**

Purposive rational action is a social action that has been thought and considered. These actions were taken to achieve rational goals which the actor will attempt to achieve. Widiyanti, Wadiyo, and Sunarto (2016) revealed that the Ar Rumi studio plays an actor in playing digital Madihin to achieve rational goals, namely economic goals and innovation or renewal goals. This is also in accordance with the context of Ma'badong music presentation. The purposive rational action performed by Pa'badong will be in accordance with the main objective of Ma'badong in the Rambu Solo' ritual, namely the worship of the spirits of the deceased. The worship is in the form of expressions, lamentations, social status, and stories of the lives of the dead, so that one day they can return and meet the gods and their ancestors in puya' or heaven.

In addition, *Pa'badong* consciously knew his ability and capacity to present *Ma'badong* music. Mastery and experience in singing *badong* syairs, performing *badong* movements, and having strong physical endurance are absolute requirements that must be possessed by *Pa'badong*. The quality and ability of *Pa'badong* were also a special consideration in keeping the atmosphere of *Ma'badong* performance alive, so that this habit had

become a tradition that had been preserved to this day. So, the capabilities and capacities possessed by *Pa'badong* greatly determined the achievement of the desired goals.

Along with the times and the existence of Christianity in Tana Toraja, the presentation of Ma'badong music also adapted both in terms of verse, stages or processions to the purpose of carrying out the Ma'badong ritual. This was because most of the Toraja community who used to embrace the teachings of Aluk To'dolo, converted to Christianity brought Gereformeerde Zendings Bond (GZB) from the Netherlands around 1906. The presentation of Ma'badong music was no longer considered part of the Aluk To'dolo belief, but as a cultural heritage that had been passed down from generation to generation, so that it will be maintained. Although, the meaning and purpose of Ma'badong changed, which was previously intended for spirits to return to the gods and ancestors, now the spirit of "the dead" is believed to return to heaven with Puang Matua or the Lord Jesus.

On the other hand, badong poetry and the procession of Ma'badong music presentation in Lembang Gandangbatu also changed. Badong poetry or kadong badong which was originally taken from Toraja oral literature, now specifically the Gandangbatu Sillanan subdistrict was allowed to take or quote verses from the Bible. In addition, the procession of Ma'badong music presentation also changed. In the implementation of Ma'badong, first the slaughter of the tedong or buffalo was carried out as a sign of the start of the Ma'badong performance. The number of tedong slaughtered was adjusted to the social strata of the deceased, or based on the family's agreement and ability to fulfill ritual needs. The level of the social strata of "the dead" could also be seen from the Tongkonan or traditional Toraja house which was decorated with carvings that indicated one's identity and power (Adams 1998: 329).

### **Value Rational Action**

Value rational action is an action that prioritized and considered values that are considered by the community to be true, good and fair based on religion, customs, and other sources of value. Cahyono (2006: 1) explains that art is not only about the form that is transmitted, but also includes the values and norms adopted by the community. The presentation of Ma'badong music was carried out in accordance with the values that exist in Tana Toraja, especially the community of Lembang Gandangbatu. There are various kinds of values contained both in the presentation of Ma'badong music to the Rambu Solo' ritual in general. However, there are two values that dominate the presentation of Ma'badong, namely religious values and solidarity values.

In ancient times, the Toraja tribe believed that *Puang Matua* controlled life, both life on earth and life after death. *Puang Matua* has the power to provide happiness, calamity, healing, illness, sustenance, and others. The whole teachings and commands given by *Puang Matua* to humans are contained in the teachings of *Aluk To'dolo*.

Taufiq (2013) states that the warok ritual actors perform actions that are not against the norms or values in society. In the context of Ma'badong music, the teachings of Aluk To'dolo did not only regulate the relationship between humans and Puang Matua, but also regulated the relationship between humans and others. This can be seen in the Rambu Solo' ritual. Until now, the teachings and commands in Aluk To'dolo are no longer considered as beliefs, but as cultural heritage passed down from the ancestors of the Toraja tribe to their descendants. It was due to the entry of Christianity into the Tana Toraja area, so that the Aluk To'dolo belief began to be abandoned or it was gradually lost.

The presentation of *Ma'badong* music is full of the basic religious values. The death of someone who is loved by the family will cause deep sadness and sorrow. However, behind this sorrow there is hope and help that is given by

God to humans, so that the sorrow experienced is comforted. For this reason, the presentation of *Ma'badong* music was considered a media for expressing religious values, because the lyrics did not only tell the story of the life of "the dead", but contained the hope for those who have died and those who are still alive will remain in the protection and care of God.

On the other hand, the value of solidarity is considered as the value that underlies all relationships between an individual and another individual even a group or vice versa in a society. Every party involved in the Ma'badong performance indicated that they felt the sadness of the family. The value of solidarity did not look at status or family relationships, because both religion and customs upheld by the Tana Toraja community who taught to live helping each other. Pa'badong in the Ma'badong performance not only consist of people who were experienced in badong, but also people who shared the sadness experienced by the family of "the dead". The form of sadness is in the form of spontaneous reactions entering the Pa'badong circle formation, as well as singing and dancing to follow the cue from Pa'tolo badong. The value rational action occured in the presentation of Ma'badong music, involved the relationship between Pa'badong and the audience. Pa'badong as the main actor tried to act rational values to the audience through Ma'badong music performance. The value rational action performed by Pa'badong is to present Ma'badong music in accordance with the provisions of the customs and religions that exist the Lembang Gandangbatu community. It means that the presentation of Ma'badong music must be in accordance with the noble values held by the community. This is manifested in the badong poetry sung by Pa'badong to suit the life story of "the dead" or in other words the poem really tells the reality of his life when he was alive. After that, verses from the Bible were also inserted into badong poetry, so that every audience who watched Ma'badong music performance reflected all the goodness that God has done in human life, even in sorrow situations. Quoting Bible verses

combined with *badong* poetry is also a sign that "the dead" is a Christian.

### **Affective Action**

Affective action is a spontaneous action that is determined by the emotional condition or emotional feelings of the actor. In this context, the presentation of Ma'badong music was also influenced by the emotional condition of Pa'badong as an actor. In general, Ma'badong music performance have a sad theme, in accordance with the Rambu Solo' ritual that underlies it. This means that the Rambu Solo' ritual or death ritual is always in a state of sorrow or sadness, in contrast to the Rambu Tuka' ritual which is based on gratitude. For that, the atmosphere and feelings of sadness dominate Pa'badong's really emotional condition until the audience who watch the performance.

Muhlis and Norkholis (2016) reveal that the emotional attitude of the readers of the Mukhtasar al-Bukhari book affected the implementation and preservation of the tradition of reading the book. This emotional nature was also felt by *Pa'badong* as an actor in presenting *Ma'badong* music, by trying to manifest affective actions in the form of expressions or interpretations of the *badong* he sang. There are many forms of expression or interpretation done by *Pa'badong*, but generally consists of moving the limbs and making *badong* dynamics.

Meanwhile, the dynamics of the song were adjusted to the instructions or cues from *Pa'tolo' badong*. Gentle dynamics were applied when starting the song and ending the song in one sentence consisting of eight syllables. Hard dynamics were applied when entering the top of the song. These soft and hard dynamics merged with limb movements as spontaneous actions performed by *Pa'badong* in singing *badong* song. So, the movement of the limbs and the dynamics of the songs performed by *Pa'badong* are affective actions directed at the audience with the aim that the appreciators can feel the sadness experienced by the bereaved family. *Pa'badong's* expression of sadness was

not crying, shedding tears, or something else. It happened, because if *Pa'badong* cried or shed tears, the *Ma'badong* performance would be disturbed.

### **Traditional Action**

Traditional actions are actions without planning carried out by actors according to traditions or habits that are often carried out by the community in order to be protected and preserved by future generations as part of cultural heritage. This preservation plays an important role in instilling moral and historical values of a tradition. The results of research conducted by Widiyanti, Wadiyo, and Sunarto (2016) show that traditional Madihin actions performed without reducing characteristics that have existed for a long time. Ma'badong tradition is maintained and carried out in accordance with the existing provisions. Although there are some things or conditions that have changed or even disappeared in this tradition, this ritual is still carried out.

For example, in the customs in Lembang Gandangbatu regarding the presentation of Ma'badong, it could be done when the number of *tedong* sacrificed is at least 5. However, at this time the number of tedong sacrificed before starting Ma'badong was no longer obliged to be 5, only 1 or 2 depending on the family's ability and capability. This was done considering the expensive price of tedong, ranging from 15-30 million rupiah, so not all families could afford it. On the other hand, the preservation of Ma'badong should be carried out and maintained, so that the number of tedong sacrificed did not become a burden, the important thing is that the Ma'badong ritual should not be lost in the Rambu Solo' ritual. In addition, Guntara, Fatchan, and Ruja (2016: 154-158) state that the Rambu Solo' ritual could be used as a source of character education learning.

Based on this reason, *Pa'badong* as the actor performed the performance in accordance with the traditions and habits of the Lembang Gandangbatu community. It means that *Ma'badong* was carried out based on the

agreement of the family "the dead" to hold the *Rambu Solo*' ritual according to the family's ability to fulfill ritual needs, customary provisions, and social status of "the dead". After that, *Pa'badong* carried out his duties and responsibilities in preparing everything needed for the *Ma'badong* performance.

The traditional actions performed by *Pa'badong* in *Ma'badong* performance were: (1) wearing black costumes; (2) forming a circle formation; and (3) singing *badong* poetry. The black costumes or clothes in the *Rambu Solo'* death ceremony were a tradition that had long been carried out by the Tana Toraja community when a family or relative dies. These black clothes or costumes were commonly found in death rituals as a sign that they were in sorrow condition. Black clothes or costumes did not only apply to *Pa'badong*, but all parties present.

On the other hand, the circle formation formed by *Pa'badong* is part of the traditional customs in *Ma'badong* performance. It means that the circle formation indicated that *Ma'badong* would be implemented. The circle formation consists of one large formation, which also included not only trained *Pa'badong*, but also audiences. The more people who came and joined in a circle formation, the bigger the circle would be. For this reason, the circle formation could also be divided into two groups, according to the number of *Pa'badong* and the area of land used in *Ma'badong* performance.

In addition, the syair sung in *Ma'badong* performance were part of the traditional acts presented by *Pa'badong*. The poetry or *kadong badong* looks like a poem, so that everyone who heard the verse does not necessarily immediately understand the meaning of the verse. The verses would represent the life "the dead", so that the audience would be aware and know the social strata, work, and services "the dead". So, *badong* syair would always differ depending on who died, or in other words, badong syair is determined by *Pa'tolo 'badong*.

Thus, the traditional actions performed by *Pa'badong* were aimed at the audience as appreciators in accordance with the traditions or customs that had long existed and were inherent in the Lembang Gandangbatu community. Any action taken by *Pa'badong* would always be monitored and responded by the audience, so that if there was an action that was wrong or not in accordance with the people's habits, then *Pa'badong* would get a bad response from the audience.

### **CONCLUSION**

Ma'badong music is the music used in Ma'badong performance in the Rambu Solo' ritual or death ritual in Lembang Gandangbatu, Gandangbatu Sillanan District, Tana Toraja Regency. The presentation of Ma'badong music is not only considered as part of ritual or art, but also as a form of social action in accordance with Max Weber's concept of social action. The social actions that occured in the presentation of Ma'badong music were in the form of: purposive rational action, value rational action, affective action, and traditional action. Pa'badong or Ma'badong music presenters acted as actors, while the audience acted as appreciators.

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