



PERSONIFICATION IN GELONG MARO AS ORAL LITERATURE TANA TORAJA COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

Gelong Maro is a poem that is one of the oral literature of the Tana Toraja community. Gelong Maro has two unique aspects, namely in terms of pronunciation or delivery. Gelong Maro is delivered in a more upbeat and rhythmic rhythm so that the speaker can interpret or feel the presence of the Gods when singing maro poetry. Furthermore, the uniqueness of the spiritual aspect is Gelong Maro which contains expressions, prayers, and hopes that are very meaningful. Where the dancers chant maro poetry that aims to refuse reinforcements and can be a means of healing for the dancer or people who experience disease. The highlight of Gelong Maro is possession. The purpose of this presentation is to describe the meaning of personification in Gelong Maro as the oral literature of the Tana Toraja community. To understand the extent of personification, a qualitative study was conducted. The data source for the study came from the Gelong Maro video recording spoken by Tominaa Ne'Lumba. The techniques used in collecting data are listening and interview techniques. The results showed that the meaning of personification in Gelong Maro is containing disclosures that attach human traits to inanimate objects and abstract ideas and include the joints of Toraja people's lives.

Introduction

Toraja oral literature is unique in terms of language, namely the use of a synonym known as the term *kada silopak* which means to pronounce the equation/synonym, for example *kada silopak* namely *tabe lako gayang ma'dandan, siman lako sarapaan, ma'paran-paran*. *Tabe* is synonymous or has similarities with *siman* which means respect. Furthermore, *kada sirenden* which means to say words that are not synonymous

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but in pairs, for example, *sirada sirenden* are *tabe gayang ma'dandan*, *siman rara ma'paran-paran*. *Gayang* and *Rara* have no similarities/synonyms but *Gayang* and *Rara* are paired, *Gayang* which means *kris* has a male symbol while *Rara* means a necklace symbolizing a woman.

In addition to this uniqueness, Toraja oral literature has rules relating to the procedures, and which rituals are appropriate to convey it. The main rituals for Torajans are grouped into two religious and cultural rites, the *Rambu Tuka'* (rites related to expressions of gratitude) and the *Rambu Solo'* (rites related to death). The two rites are also a grouping of Toraja oral literary works. Oral literature that can be used/displayed at the *Rambu Tuka'* ceremony 'one of which is *Gelong Maro*.

Gelong Maro has two aspects of uniqueness, namely in terms of pronunciation or delivery. *Gelong Maro* is delivered with a more upbeat rhythm and rhythmic jerking so that speakers can interpret or feel the presence of the Gods when chanting maro poetry. Furthermore, the uniqueness of the spiritual aspect is *Gelong Maro* which contains expressions, prayers, and hopes that are very meaningful. Where the dancers chant maro poetry that aims to refuse reinforcements and can be a means of healing for the dancer or people who experience disease. The highlight of *Gelong Maro* is possession.

Literary work as a representation of the feelings and conditions of the community owner has a variety of roles in every aspect of the community's life. The language used in literary works is arranged in beautiful words by using diction or choice of words and language or style of language. The figure of speech is a certain style of language by the intent of the writer or speaker to obtain beauty and can animate and enhance the effect or impression that gives rise to certain connotations. Impressions contained in a figure of speech due to the comparison of an object or other things more general.

The use of speech in literary works plays a major role in explaining ideas, thoughts, and feelings that the author wishes to convey to the reader or listener. The figure of speech in Indonesian is divided into four types, they are comparison figures of speech, contradiction, linkage, and repetition. Specifically, the comparison is distinguished from the metaphorical, metaphorical, personification, allegory, and antithesis. After examining this type of majors, one of the interesting figures of speech examined in *Gelong Maro* (Maro poems) is personification.

Tana Toraja Folklore

Regions in Indonesia have a variety of literature that is generally conveyed by word of mouth. Oral literature is static, repeating various expressions. Oral literature is a literary work that is circulating in the community or passed down in a verbal form. Furthermore, Fachruddin, et al (in Souisa Arnold 2013: 26) said oral literature is part of a culture that grows and develops during society and is passed down orally as common property. Based on this opinion, it can be concluded that oral literature is a form of literary work in the form of a narrative that was born and directed in a society.

Toraja oral literature as one of the products of the culture of the Toraja people, of course, consists of various types that are delivered based on the context and grouping. Following are the types of Toraja oral literature which are grouped based on three main functions, (1) oral literature relating to ceremonies and religion, including (a) signs of Toraja: Toraja oral literature displayed at the sign of tuka ceremony 'include: *singgi*, *gelong*, *pangngimbo*, *passomba tedong*, *manimbong*, *ma'dandan*, *ma'parapa*', *ma'bugi*', (b) *solo* signs: Toraja oral literature displayed at the *solo* sign ceremony' include: *badong*, *retteng*, *umbating*, *ma 'kakarun*, *ma'katia*, *ma; marakka*, *dondi*', *passailo*, (2) oral

literature relating to social interaction *Londe, karume, ponto bannang, passimba, paesepe, tingga', puama*, and (3) oral literature which relates to the relationship between humans and nature *passonde*.

Toraja oral literature as one of the products of culture has three main functions in its relation to the life of the Toraja people. According to CLPalimbong (in Souisa Arnold, 2013), the Toraja literary function is (1) oral literature expressing matters related to traditional ceremonies, divided into two aspects, namely the sign of tuka 'ceremony and the solo sign', (2) literature oral as a means of communication and social interaction, and (3) oral literature that expresses the life and lives of humans and their natural world which are not included in the first and second sections above.

The Toraja people do not have written or literary medium as information media but in the form of spoken language. Therefore through this spoken language Torajans interact, communicate, and realize cultural products. In general, the Toraja language is divided into two, namely (1) everyday Toraja language, namely the Toraja language which is used as a communication tool in daily life, and (2) the high Toraja language (*kada To Minaa*), which is the literary language used by Imam Aluk To Dolo (*To Minaa*) in various religious and cultural rites.

Gelong Maro and Its Functions

From the explanation of the data above, we can see several poetic quotations expressed in *Gelong Maro*. These poems contain expressions of joy. Gelong is a poem or expression of excitement at the *Rambu Tuka ceremony* (Kanan, 2011). This expression of excitement is expressed in words/sentences called *Gelong*. Ismail (in <http://kesustraan-torajablogspot.co.id>) said *gelong* is one form of Toraja oral literature spoken by a group of people in the form of a circle, *gelong* is a compliment and request to the gods who rule this life, which has provided all the necessities or needs of human life and guarantees human life.

Maro is the name of a rousing party ceremony, to cure a possessed person, by covering up blood on his body and then heating it with fire; *-datu = - sangullele*: a *maro* party conducted by all villagers to worship a delicate person who carries an infectious disease, so that the disease can be treated (Kanan, 2011). Another definition according to Ismail (in <http://kesustraan-torajablogspot.co.id>), *maro* is a kind of oral literature in the form of prose lyrics that are sung like tyranny, this literature is sung or chanted to treat people who are seriously ill and those who are considered to be disturbed by spirits (demons).

Based on the opinion above, it can be concluded that *Gelong Maro* is a poem that is sung that contains praise to the Gods in a crowded ceremony and is chanted continuously so that the singer of the poetry gets inspiration from the Gods. If *Gelong Maro* is chanted continuously, the singer will be possessed by the gods to cause the body of the singer or person to be injured by stabbing the body of the singer or person with a knife or sword (*bassi*) so that from these activities can experience unseen things. This is caused by the singer wants to ask something from the Gods. Through this possession, the singer can receive what is asked of the gods. The function of *Gelong Maro* is (1) as a complete traditional ceremony for signs of tuka 'which is a song of praise or worship to the Gods, (2) as a means of repelling disasters in the form of disease or disaster, (3) as a means of treatment for people who experience illness, (4) as a means of asking for protection from spirits (evil).

The meaning of Personification Figure of Speech in *Gelong Maro*

The figure of speech is a way of expressing thoughts and feelings. Arts or language styles are used to enhance effects and explain ideas so that they can be understood, both by the reader and the listener. Language style shows the specificity of language and the soul and personality of the writer. The figure of speech is a way of expressing thoughts through language that typically shows the soul and personality of the writer (the language used). According to Tarigan (2009: 17), "Insuring or personification is a type of form that attaches human qualities to inanimate objects and abstract ideas." Keraf (2007: 140) explains that "Personification is a kind of figurative language that describes inanimate objects or things that are not compounded as if they have human characteristics." According to Siswasih and Ridwan (2010: 28), "Personification is a style of language that attaches human traits to inanimate goods and abstract ideas."

Qualitative research is used to assess the personification of personification in Glong Maro. The data in this study are primary. Primary data is data generated from primary sources (Mustari, 2010). Primary data is the main data, which is the data selected or obtained directly from the source without intermediaries (Siswantoro, 2012). Thus the primary data in this study are in the form of *Maro* poems or expressions that contain personification forms.

These data were obtained by listening and interview techniques. The listening technique used in this study was a capable, folding, free speech. The free conversation technique is that the researcher only acts as an observer of the use of language by his informants (Mahsun, 2009). Based on the description, the involved free listening technique can be used to listen to the meaning of personification majesty contained in *Gelong Maro*. Interviews are conversations with a specific purpose (Mahsun, 2009). Interviews were conducted to obtain information openly from sources regarding the meaning of the maro gelong. Interview technique is carried out to get supporting information, where the information obtained will be compared with data from research sources.

Data analysis was carried out by steps (a) identifying *Gelong Maro* (*Maro Poems*), (b) classifying *Gelong Maro* which contained personification forms, (c) analyzing and describing the meaning of personification forms in *Gelong Maro*, (d) describing research results, and (e) conclude. Based on these steps, several figures of speech of personification and their meanings in *Gelong Maro* are obtained as follows.

Dewata Umpalaku Bassi

1. *Oda-oda talaomo*
(Weapons, let's go)
Sudidi tatiangka'mo
(Sharp, let's lift our feet)

The data above is part of a fragment of the maro poem entitled "Dewata Umpalaku Bassi" and contains personification because it seems as if a sharp weapon (in this case is iron) has a life like a living creature. The meaning of the personification of majors in the fragment of the poem is iron which in this case is a machete and other sharp weapons believed to be one of the seven results of the creation of *Puang Matua* (the creator) in the sky. Ancestors of iron can at any time be called to be present in the mattere (self-injury).

Ancestors of iron are described as being able to be told to depart and step with the gods to attend the mattere ceremony. In the ritual the Toraja people believe that the

gods will possess the body of the dancer and the iron ancestral spirit will possess all kinds of sharp weapons that will be used to injure themselves in *matere* as part of the *maro* ceremony.

2. *Iko bassi balleako*
(You iron don't be mistaken)
Mataran tang tongan ako
(Don't make you sharp not right)

The data above is a fragment of *maro* poetry and contains personification because it is as if iron has human characteristics. The meaning of the personification of the piece of poetry is iron which is considered not good and can bring disaster to its owner (*balle* = wrong, *tang tongan* = incorrect). The belief of the people of Toraja iron which is used as sharp objects for daily work tools or as weapons of war must meet various requirements. The requirements in question are a good iron material, determination of a good day to forge iron, and the length of sharp weapons that should not be right on the joints of the hand.

In the *maro* iron/sharp weapons play an important role, because the iron which is believed to have been inhabited by iron ancestors will be a means to carve the body of the dancer who is possessed by the gods. When a possessed dancer's body pours blood, it is considered a blessing and becomes a means of treatment and protection against negative energy.

3. *Kupeosso'mo nene'mu*
(I mentioned the origins of your ancestors)
Kutuna'mo tododolomu
(I told you your predecessor)
To tau panglalanmu
(Your guide)

The data above is part of a fragment of the *maro* poem entitled "*Dewata Umpalaku Bassi*" and is a form of personification. Iron seems to have human-like characteristics, which have the family and ancestral. In the mythology and ancient beliefs of the Toraja people, Puang Matua or the Creator created humans and six other things in the sky. Iron ancestors are included. In *maro* or *matere* rituals (self-injury) a very close connection or bond is needed between the iron ancestors, the gods, and the dancers. Iron / sharp weapon which is considered good and the beach as a place where ancestors dwell will not make the media/dancers lose their lives even though injuring the body with the iron. This is needed so that the *maro* ritual can produce a positive aura as a manifestation of the existence of the gods and *Puang Matua* in human life and the natural surroundings.

4. *Sipobiasaki' kita*
(We are used to each other)
Lele si sang kaleank
(Known as our counterpart)
Sisang kuli'-kuliranki
(As hard as our skin)

The data above is part of a fragment of the *maro* poem entitled "*Dewata Umpalaku Bassi*" and contains personification forms. Iron seems to have human-like properties, iron / sharp weapons that are considered to have been familiar or know each other with humans. Like two friends who have known each other for a long time and have a close

relationship with each other, and have known each other well. The iron inhabited by his ancestors and the humans who are possessed by the gods will play with each other. This is manifested in the *mattere* (self-injury) performed by dancers in the maro ritual. Even though they have shed a lot of blood or cut certain body parts, the dancer will not die and will recover soon if rubbed with tabang leaves (lenjuang leaves).

Mattere is a magical game between two creatures of *Puang Matua*, namely humans and iron masterminded by the gods as protectors. It is a way for Puang Matua and the gods to manifest his power in human life.

5. *Inang baina bassi*
(Indeed iron wife)
Inang ka'denna mataran
(It is a sharp heart idol)

The data above is a fragment of maro poetry that contains personification forms. Iron seems to have human-like properties. Iron / sharp weapons are considered to have been familiar with humans, sharp iron is likened to idol worshipers who can be used in *mattere*. Iron is like a wife who can understand the characteristics and temperament of humans as dancers in maro rituals. Iron seemed to be able to feel the sincerity of the dancers who craved the sharpness and presence of the iron as a symbol of the reunion of human ancestors and iron ancestors in the *mattere* (self-injury) or magical play masterminded by the gods as protectors.

6. *Inang tosiporainna*
(Indeed they like each other)
Sipomainda-indanna
(Price-appreciate each other)

The data above is a fragment of maro poetry that contains personification forms. Iron seems to have properties like humans. In *maro* or *mattere* rituals (self-injury) a very close connection or bond is needed between the iron ancestors, the gods and the dancers. Iron and the dancers already know each other and respect each other so that the iron / sharp weapon that is considered good and appropriate as a place of residence for their ancestors will not make the media / dancers lose their lives even though injuring the body with the iron. That happened because essentially human ancestors and iron ancestors and five other creations were an inseparable unity. Therefore, the intimacy of these two elements is very necessary so that the maro ritual can produce a positive aura as a manifestation of the existence and protection of the gods and *Puang Matua* in human life and the natural surroundings.

7. *La sipa'kadamo'bassi*
(I'll talk with iron)
La silindomo' mataran
(I will meet with a sharp face)
La siponglete'-letemo
(Will stay away)

The data above is a fragment of *maro* poetry containing personification. Iron/sharp weapon as if it has human nature. Iron ancestors and dancers have close ties, complement each other and have no difficulty in communicating, so that the maro ritual can be carried out properly. *Besi* 'iron' and the dancers complement each other and

communicate well like a brother. This is what makes the gods entrust iron and their ancestors as a medium used by dancers in *maro* rituals.

8. *Tasirere'-rere' lendong*
(Let's cut each other like cutting eels)
Tasi'pa'tallu masapi
(We cut each other like three large eels)
Tasiimpa' bale rante
(We behead each other like land fish)

The data above is part of a fragment of the *maro* poem entitled "*Dewata Umpalaku Bassi*" and contains personification forms. Iron is an inanimate object as if it has human characteristics. When the dancers have been possessed by the gods, the magical game begins to play. When iron spirits/sharp objects unite with the gods and human/dancer spirits, the dancers will slice, stab, injure, even cut limbs until they bleed.

The first part of the dancer's body to be injured is the forehead, then the hands, stomach, legs, and other limbs using a knife, machete, or spear. The dancers will stand up straight and blood will be poured from the injured body part, the shed blood will be a medicine for people suffering from the disease, and is considered to be a repellent reinforcement in the area.

9. *Lendu' tamamoko bassi*
(Enter you into the iron)
Kumande lannako liu
(Eat inside)
Ma'kasolang-solanganko
(Destroy, destroy)

Data is a fragment of *maro* poetry that contains personification form, where iron seems to have human-like characteristics. *Dewata* as the highest leader in the *maro* ritual and has the power to govern the media/iron used in the *maro* ritual. Iron was given the trust of the gods to injure the dancers' bodies blindly. The iron will injure the dancers' bodies and allow them to bleed.

Umpasae Dewata

10. *Nasa'pekki bua uwe*
(scratched by rattan fruit)

The data is a fragment of *maro* poetry that contains personification, rattan as if it can hurt someone. This implies that rattan as a plant with thorns filled and growing thick in the forest, is a sign of the way for the gods to pass through the road. In poems' *maro* and *bugi uwe* (rattan) is a plant that is always a guide for spirits or gods who are believed to inhabit dense forests or large trees.

11. *Mellolok buntumo lembang*
(peaked mountains already boat)
Mentanetemo orongan
(hilly already swimmers)
Menlombokmo koli-koli
(already weakened boats)

The data is a fragment of *maro* poetry that contains personification. A boat that seems to have human nature that can climb the mountain. It describes the arrival of the

Dutch and the Bugis from the sea to the mountains (Toraja). The arrival of the Dutch and the Bugis using a boat (*lembang*) is a symbol of the arrival of evil spirits, misfortune, and misery. These two nations are disastrous for the people of Toraja because the Dutch and the Bugis want to colonize the Toraja region. Dutch and Bugis are words that are always spoken in *gelong Maro* dan *gelong bugi*'as a reminder of ancestral misery and as a gratitude for the power of *Puang Matua* and through always protecting and blessing his creation.

12. *Koli-koli sae bongi*
(the boats come late at night)
Orongan ratu malillin
(swimmer arrived)

The data is a fragment of maro poetry that contains personification. The boat seems to have a human nature, can travel and arrive or arrive at a place. The boat used by the Dutch and the Bugis is a symbol of a negative aura. It is said that during the colonial period, the Dutch and Bugis anchored at night in Palopo, after that they continued their journey to Toraja. The Dutch and the Bugis sailed at night so the people of Toraja would not see their arrival, so they could enter the Toraja area and bring negative impacts (colonize).

13. *Sae tumonggona uru*
(arrived greatness uru)
Umbalumbunna Sesean
(Sesean gathering)

The data is a fragment of maro poetry that contains personification. *Uru*/wood seems to have human nature, which is present and fill a place. Another media that symbolizes the presence and power of the gods in the maro ceremony is *uru*. *Uru* is one of the expensive and valuable types of wood, the dancers say *uru* wood in *maro* poetry, because *uru* is a flattery for presenting gods and can create positive energy for dancers and the local community, so that what is needed in the community can be fulfilled by the presence of gods.

14. *Tiumba'mo sape-sape*
(revealed to be passages/a kind of hat)
Dollokmo kundae pangka
(arise rank gloves)

The data is a fragment of maro poetry that contains personification. Hats and gloves as if to travel from a place and arrived at their destination. *Sape-sape* is the nickname of the Toraja for Dutch soldiers who use wide hats such as additional roofs on the porch of the house (*sape* = *papa* / *sape* roof). While the sarong (*kundae* "Toraja language", *kundrai* "Bugis language" both have the meaning "sarong") is a symbol of greatness for a nobleman. This poem fragment tells of the presence of Bugis people allied with Dutch troops who wanted to colonize the Tondok Lepongan Bulan area (Toraja). Therefore *Balanda*/Netherlands and *Bugi*'/*Bugis* are considered connotations of negative energy/disaster.

Conclusion

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that in the *maro gelong* contains personification forms that attach human qualities to something lifeless and abstract ideas. That something is implied through the connotation meaning in the poem, especially in the poetry of the gods of *umpalaku bassi* and *umpasae*.

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