

MASAMBO SINGING IN TUMARATAS DUA VILLAGE, WEST LANGOWAN SUB-DISTRICT, MINAHASA DISTRICT

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Abstract : This research aims to investigate the existence and continuity of *Masambo* singing in Tumaratas Dua Village. Qualitative research methods were applied by utilizing documentation, interview, and observation techniques. A musical approach, particularly through theories in ethnomusicology and music psychology, was used to analyze various aspects of *Masambo* Singing. The research findings include several things: first, *Masambo* singing functions as a form of community expression, conveying prayer requests, expressions of gratitude, and as a means of communication. Second, the existence of *Masambo* singing provides significant benefits in maintaining cultural continuity and strengthening community solidarity. Third, the lyrics in *Masambo* singing are constantly changing according to the needs of the community. Fourth, the times affect the continuity of *Masambo* singing. Fifth, *Masambo* singing contains social values such as honor, mutual cooperation, deliberation, and sacrifice. Sixth, changes in *Masambo* singing are influenced by social, religious, cultural, and economic factors.

Keywords : *Masambo Singing, Existence, Continuity.*

INTRODUCTION

Minahasa is one of the districts in North Sulawesi that still preserves its arts and culture. This is very evident in all community activities, where almost every event held by the Minahasa community is always colored with art. Art is part of culture and is a means used to express a sense of beauty from within the human soul. Minahasa is just like other regions that have different cultures, religious culture, behavior, and culture in art. Art, morality and religion, as well as behavior are essentially a unity that cannot be separated. Every nation, ethnic group, and even every human being has art. According to Koentjaraningrat, the element of art as one of the universal elements of culture can be found in all cultures in the world, both those living in remote rural communities and those living in large urban communities.

Minahasa is an area that has a number of cultures that can still be found today. Among these is the culture of mutual help/

mutual cooperation. Mutual assistance in working or cultivating agriculture in rotation is known as *mapalus*. *Mapalus* activities carried out by community groups vary, according to the needs and agreements of the *mapalus* group. *Mapalus* activities generally have the aim of helping each other in *mapalus* members, both helping in a happy atmosphere and in a sad atmosphere. Talking about *mapalus* is closely related to the way of life of the Minahasa ancestors in the past in their agricultural traditions. From the agricultural tradition with its agrarian society and culture, *Masambo* is known.

Masambo is a form of ethnic Minahasa art in the past that is related to the religious values and knowledge of the Minahasa people. Literally, the term *Masambo* means asking. The content of *Masambo* is a prayer of request to the Almighty to maintain, bless, give blessings, ask for fortune, and so on for matters related to agriculture, marriage, moving into a new house, birth, death and other activities

related to the life cycle. In addition, the content also contains advice or recommendations that must be considered as a guide to life. *Masambo* is called a song because people at that time had a habit of singing and people also often sang *Masambo* as an expression of their feelings. *Masambo* also has an important role for the people of Tumaratas village. It is customary for the community to use *Masambo* as entertainment in events and activities that take place in the community.

Based on the background that has been described, the author feels interested in conducting research on the existence and continuity of *Masambo* singing in Tumaratas Dua Village, West Langowan District, Minahasa Regency.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research was conducted in Tumaratas Dua Village, West Langowan District, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi. The selection of this location was based on the sustainability of the *Masambo* singing tradition in the local community. This research used a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach to explore *Masambo* singing in Tumaratas Dua Village, West Langowan District, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi. The qualitative method was chosen because it is more suitable for exploring the meaning, interpretation, and context in cultural phenomena such as *Masambo* singing.

Data collection was conducted through a literature study which involved collecting data from various literature sources, documents, books and articles relevant to *Masambo* singing. These sources will provide a strong knowledge base to support the research. Interviews are conducted involving direct interaction with informants who have knowledge and experience of *Masambo* singing. An interview guide will be created to ensure focus on the research topic. Finally, the researcher also conducts observations of *Masambo* singing.

The collected data will be checked to ensure accuracy and authenticity. This checking process aims to ensure that the data used in the analysis is valid and relevant to the research problem. The data will be processed by understanding, evaluating and describing it. Data processing includes organizing data from various sources, interpreting the meaning, and summarizing information relevant to the research objectives. The results of data processing will be concluded and reported in the form of a thesis as a scientific paper. The conclusion will include the main findings, interpretation of the results, and implications of the research for the understanding of *Masambo* singing in Tumaratas Dua Village.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Masambo singing is an expression of prayer to the Almighty to always maintain and accompany human life. *Masambo* singing is also a form of gratitude to the Almighty for the blessings that can be received. Until now, *Masambo* singing in Tumaratas Dua village can still be found, despite the challenges of the times and developments that occur in society, with all its shortcomings.

The Existence of *Masambo* Singing in Tumaratas Dua Village

The existence of an art life is determined by the environmental conditions of the supporting community. The existence or life of an art can be determined by environmental conditions and the community supporting the art. The rise of an art is also determined by the local community who can provide enthusiasm and support to the artists, because art will not stand apart from society. If there is no support from the community, then the arts will not function. Support from the community can be seen by the response from the community when a *Masambo* performance is held.

The expression of requests through singing is known as *Masambo*, because it is taken from the word *sambo* which

means singing with the prefix *me* or *ma* which means doing. So *Masambo* means all the singing activities done by the community. *Masambo* singing has an important role in the life of the Tumaratas Dua community. *Masambo* singing is often used as a means of expressing the community either as an expression of gratitude, prayer requests, entertainment, even activities that involve many people.

History of *Masambo* Singing in Tumaratas Dua Village

Before Christianity entered Minahasa land, more precisely in Tumaratas village, the local community was referred to as *alifuru* people (people who do not know God). The concept of Minahasa belief, describing the figure of God for each person is different. It is usually based on each person's personal experience and each person has a different experience. AM. Hardjana in his book *The Experience of Christianity: The Authentic and the Inauthentic* says that the description of God is relative and depends on the source of knowledge about God itself, each person and the culture of the community.

Indirectly, people believe that there is something powerful over everything. People at that time did not recognize God, but they believed and believed that in this life, there is a supreme being, who deserves to be worshiped. That is why people often go to the mountains, because they assume that the powerful are in high places. Minahasan believers believe in one God who they understand as the owner of the supreme power. He is believed to be the creator, the origin of life, longevity, health, luck, happiness, wealth, the One who gives blessings, help and protection, but can also punish and express His anger to those who do not live in obedience.

A form of community prayer request to the powerful, expressed through *Masambo* songs. The community prays that the Almighty will continue to care for them, bless them, give them his blessing and so

on. *Masambo* is also sung as an expression of gratitude for all the blessings received.

Masambo singing is one of the arts in Tumaratas village and has been passed down from generation to generation, but until now it is not known exactly when this song existed. According to Harmen Longkutoy, *Masambo* singing has been around since the 1800s, and it is well known in the community, as it is almost always sung in any event or activity that takes place in Tumaratas village, be it cultural events, religious events, and other community activities.

Masambo singing is a song that is often sung in everyday life. Not only in certain events, but this song has also become part of the community's life, where if the community is gathered together in a place, they will also sing *Masambo* either as an expression of prayer or as entertainment. *Masambo* is also commonly sung during meetings and when welcoming guests, either officially or unofficially. Not only that, *Masambo* is also sung when going to visit someone's house, and if you need something, don't say it directly like telling a story, but say it by singing *Masambo*, so that the atmosphere feels lively.

Initially, *Masambo* was only sung by men because at that time people lived far apart, while women were not allowed to leave the house. This made a rule where women were not allowed to participate. Another thing that made women at that time unable to sing *Masambo* songs was the difference in degree or caste. Women were considered lower than men. At that time women were considered weak, so there was a rule that did not allow women to take part in singing *Masambo*. But over time, the low view of women began to fade. Women have begun to be considered equal to men, so there is no longer a difference in degree between men and women. This made Harmen Longkutoy, who is a traditional leader and preservationist of *Masambo* singing, invite women to start joining men when singing

Masambo. The presence of women who participate in singing *Masambo* makes the atmosphere feel different, because *Masambo* singing sounds more beautiful and can be felt and enjoyed more.

The community's singing habits make *Masambo* songs very closely related to community life. This can be seen from every community activity, which almost always involves *Masambo* singing. For example, in the event of a new house. When building a house, as a form of gratitude for the completion of the construction of the house, a soloan (lamp installation) event will be held. The community enthusiastically helps each other in celebrating the event. After the soloan event takes place, the community will sing *Masambo* as an expression of gratitude for the completion of the construction of the house and the completion of the soloan event, and also ask the Almighty to protect and protect life even the new house will be occupied, and hope that the continuity of life to be lived must be in harmony and peace.

The culture of mapalus (helping/collaborating) is also very closely related to community life. The mapalus culture creates a close bond between communities. Communities jointly help each other in working on the fields. In this condition, the community usually sings *Masambo* together because they think it can reduce fatigue and fatigue while working. Likewise, during the harvest period, the community also works together, hoping that all the work done can be completed more quickly. When working to harvest the crops, the community often sings *Masambo* songs as a form of entertainment and as a form of expression of their gratitude for the harvest that can be obtained. The community makes several groups, then sings *Masambo* back and forth.

According to Ambrosius Makasar, from the habits of parents at home *Masambo* then developed its use in the

daily work activities of the community, especially when they are busy working in the garden. Motivated by the habit of working together and cooperating in doing gardening work, for example in opening new garden land or starting the planting season, people often work together accompanied by laughter and other entertainment to increase motivation and encourage each other. At this stage, *Masambo* became increasingly recognized and used as a folk song sung together while working in the garden.

From the results of interviews conducted with several communities, most of the people interviewed have the same motivation and hope to maintain and preserve this art, because they argue that *Masambo* singing is one of the identities of the Tumaratas Dua village community.

Function in Society

The function of *Masambo* singing in the community in Tumaratas Dua village is divided into several functions, namely as a means of entertainment, as a means of expression, as a social means, and as a means of communication.

1. Mean of entertainment.

Entertainment is one of the needs in people's lives. People in Tumaratas Dua village often sing *Masambo* songs to enliven the events that are being held. It makes the community feel happy as they reciprocally express gratitude and happiness and make them feel entertained.

2. Media of expression

A means of expression. Expression is a term that refers to something that shows how a person feels. In relation to expression, *Masambo* singing in Tumaratas Dua village serves to express or express the emotions or feelings felt by the community who will sing *Masambo*, as a form of expression of community feelings of gratitude, admiration, happiness and others.

3. Social tool

Masambo singing in its journey contributes a lot to social activities carried out in Tumaratas Dua village, such as during community service and mapalus.

4. Mean of communication

Masambo singing as a communication medium can be seen when *Masambo* singing is performed in an event or activity. *Masambo* is used as a medium of communication between one group and another, who sing *Masambo* back and forth. In this case, the function of *Masambo* singing can be seen as a medium of communication between people.

A type of art in society has use value and results that provide benefits to the community, more specifically in maintaining social continuity and uniting community solidarity. *Masambo* singing also influences the community in terms of uniting the differences that exist, both differences in social and economic status. Interactions between communities are closer, creating a sense of kinship and togetherness among the Tumaratas Dua community.

Presentation Form of *Masambo* Singing

Masambo singing in Tumaratas Dua village in its implementation does not refer to the score used such as: melody, rhythm, harmony, vocal concept and various other singing elements. This is because the process of inheritance is carried out from generation to generation, orally without records, and the level of formal education of the community.

In its presentation as a vocal art, *Masambo* songs are sung in a reciprocal and muted manner. Two groups will be formed, and in each group there is always a leader and a response party. The leading party consists of one person while the responding party is the other group of individuals who are present and who want to participate in singing *Masambo*. In a *Masambo* performance, there is no limit to the number of participants who can sing. Anyone who wants to be involved is welcome, and even those who are already

involved will force others not to join, because they feel that more participants are better and the atmosphere will be more lively.

When singing *Masambo*, the leader will start by saying the words '*Oh mangapetor*' which is the signal to start singing *Masambo*, and the response party will respond to the signal by saying '*Oy*' which shows that they are ready to start singing *Masambo*.

The *Masambo* song consists of two stanzas, and in the performance, the leader will start singing the lyrics of the first stanza and the response party will repeat the lyrics of the first stanza the same as sung by the leader. After finishing singing the lyrics of the first stanza, it will be followed by the lyrics of the second stanza and sung in the same way. Likewise, the other group will sing according to the lyrics that have been prepared and adapted to the activities or events that take place. So both groups will sing *Masambo* back and forth. In singing *Masambo*, it always starts with the word *E Royor*, which means "Pour or Pour Out". When people say the word *E Royor*, it means asking for blessings.

Factors causing Continuity/ Development and Change in *Masambo* Singing in Tumaratas Village

1. Social Factors

Social conditions greatly influence the development and changes in *Masambo* singing. It is undeniable that the arrival of the Portuguese and the Dutch had a huge impact on the social conditions of the community. As they mingled with the community, they began to introduce and also teach the culture and arts they had, so that the community also began to follow the culture of foreign nations. A very clear influence can be seen in the style of singing.

2. Religious Factors

The introduction of religious influences in Tumaratas village also affected the development of *Masambo*

singing. The teachings of Christianity were easily accepted by the people in Tumaratas village. When Johann Gotlieb Schwarz carried out his mission of spreading Christianity, Schwarz understood that the people in Langowan were very fond of music, both vocal music and instrumental music. Schwarz also began to influence the existing community by starting to teach spiritual music in the form of hymns. Schwarz set up a school and taught the community and even educated and taught children. Schwarz also studied the language and culture of the community. He also indoctrinated the community that what they often refer to as Empung, Amang Kasuruan, Opo Wananatas, and Kamang Wangko are all references to God. Schwarz began to embrace the community to give of themselves in worship and also brought the community's musical habits into worship. Music must really make a good contribution to the church, especially it must fulfill 2 (two) functions, namely: 1) Being a means of connecting the congregation with God, 2) as a means of proclaiming the good news (strengthening the faith of others). In this case, *Masambo* singing is one of the songs used in activities that contain religious elements.

3. Cultural Factors

In the context of music and culture, music is one of the elements that shape community culture. Music is also something that cannot be separated from the implementation of cultural activities in Tumaratas Dua Village. In the relationship between music and culture, it refers to the function and role of music towards the culture itself. *Masambo* singing is also often involved in events that take place in Tumaratas Dua village. It also shows that *Masambo* contributes to the preservation of the customs and culture of the community.

4. Economic Factors

Economic factors also have an impact on the existence and changes of *Masambo* singing. The economy of the people in

Tumaratas Dua village is gradually improving so that almost all people are able to fulfill their daily needs. As the economy began to improve, it also had an impact on *Masambo* singing performances. *Masambo* singing began to be less in demand by the community and the need for *Masambo* also began to decline due to the entry of modern musical instruments such as keyboards, bands and so on, as well as other supporting components such as loudspeakers and sound systems that brought a new atmosphere so that it was more favored by the community.

CONCLUSION

Masambo singing, an art form that dates back to the 19th century, has yet to be pinpointed. Nonetheless, it has permeated the community and become an integral part of various events and activities. In the beginning, *Masambo* was only sung by men as the view of the society at that time was that men had advantages in terms of *dejarat*. However, over time, this view began to change, and now women also participate in singing *Masambo*.

Masambo singing is not just an expression of art, but also a prayer to God to always protect and bless life. As an expression of gratitude, *Masambo* portrays gratitude to God for all His blessings and help. The role of *Masambo* is increasingly felt in the lives of the people of Tumaratas Dua village, manifested in its participation in various activities and events.

In the presentation of *Masambo*, there are two groups led by members of each group. The two groups reciprocate in singing *Masambo* with lyrics that have been prepared beforehand. Women's participation in singing *Masambo* is an example of social change in this culture, reflecting the dynamism and inclusivity that has developed over time.

The diversity of *Masambo*'s lyrics reflects its flexibility in adapting to various performance situations. Change in culture, as seen in *Masambo*, is inevitable and is

often influenced by advances in science and technology. Openness to outside cultural influences can also shape people's mindsets and behaviors, enriching and knitting back the richness of local culture.

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