

Si Gale-Gale Folklore in the Toba Batak Society: A Study of Continuity and Change

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Abstract

The Si Gale-Gale folklore contains exemplary values and education about the character of the Toba Batak king named Raja Rahat who is loved by the people who is fair and wise. The king had a son by the name of Raja Manggale who he loved very much and was the only child. King Manggale died on the battlefield, he heroically fought to defend his ancestral land from invaders. The death of King Manggale inflicted a deep wound on King Rahat. To entertain the king, a wooden statue was made as a representative of King Manggale, who magically can move like a dancing person, because it is believed that the spirit of King Manggale enters the statue with the help of the power of a shaman who is termed guru sibaso. This study aims to describe the continuity and change of this oral tradition in the Toba Batak people in North Sumatra. In order to know this folklore, a research was conducted using qualitative methods through field observations, interviews, documentation, and literature studies. As an oral culture and tradition, the legendary Si Gale-Gale folklore has been passed down from generation to generation throughout the Batak Toba generation which is full of values. It is not known when this tradition emerged, but the Toba Batak people believe that this oral tradition arose before the entry of religion into the Toba Batak area. It is known that the Si Gale-Gale folklore provides educational values and role models for the community about the love for the ancestral land and the important role of boys as the next generation according to the system adopted by the Toba Batak community. In its development, this folklore is not only a story that is passed down from generation to generation, but also becomes a cultural tourism offering and attraction for travelers who visit tourist enclaves in the North Sumatra area such as in the tourist area of Lake Toba, especially in the Tomok and Huta areas. Bolon Simanindo, Samosir Regency. In tourist attractions, The statue of Si Gale-Gale as a representation of King Manggale moves staccato or breaks and moves like a dancing person who is driven by a player (dalang) and is accompanied by typical Toba Batak music gondang sabangun.

Keywords

sigale-gale folklore; Toba Batak people; continuity; change



I. Introduction

Indonesia is a country that is rich in tribes so that it gives birth to many diverse traditions / customs. Tradition can be interpreted as inheritance or transmitted from the past to the present. In another sense, tradition is a behavior that is usually carried out by people in a certain social order in a hereditary way and has a system of ideas, concepts, thoughts, cultural values and norms. Such theories are widely written by W. Robertson Smith, J. Frazer, A. Van Gennep and R. Hertz who said that the origins of these beliefs arose because of an approach oriented towards rituals and religious ceremonies. (Faishal, M et al. 2019).

Tradition is something that is passed down from the heritage of the ancestors to the next generation in a relay descends performed by the indigenous communities that have become deeply entrenched the culture in life. Customs and traditions include the creation and work of human beings who have become convictions in regulating the social order of life. (Pane et al, 2020).

The Toba Batak tribe is one of the tribes that exists and develops in the province of North Sumatra. Toba Batak is an ethnic group whose population is high compared to seven other ethnic groups that are the main ethnic groups in North Sumatra apart from the Malay, Mandailing, Karo, Simalungun, Dairi, Angkola, and Nias tribes. According to history, it is believed that the Toba Batak tribe is a sub-tribe of Batak that flourished in North Sumatra, such as the Karo Batak, Simalungun Batak, Mandailing Batak, and Pak-pak Batak who flourished in the Dairi Regency area. The Toba Batak people migrate, and are considered to be natives of North Sumatra who, according to the myth, descended from the Pusuk Buhit mountain area (Bungaran Anthonius Simanjuntak, 2001: 2). This indigenous tribe from the North Sumatra region, also migrate and grow and develop in other areas in almost all parts of Indonesia, even outside the country. This is related to the habit of the Toba Batak people who like to wander which is termed *manobbang*.

The population of this tribe, which is full of customs and culture, geographically lives in several districts in North Sumatra. The people of the Toba Batak tribe mostly live in highland areas in the province of North Sumatra. It is known that the population of the Toba Batak community grows and develops in North Tapanuli Regency, Toba Samosir Regency, Humbang Haanglean Regency, and also many live in Samosir Regency. In contrast to other ethnic groups, such as the Malays, who live in coastal areas in the province of North Sumatra.

The Toba Batak ethnicity has a diverse culture, carried out from generation to generation from one generation to another. The culture becomes a tradition and is attached to an identity. The traditional culture starts from living habits such as birth, death, marriage, and other traditions in the social life of the Toba Batak people. Koentjaraningrat asserted that culture is an idea as a whole from the results of human mind and work, which in turn becomes a habit and a lesson for the work produced. Meanwhile, culture consists of various aspects of human life, including language, community groups, belief systems, religion, and the religious system itself (Koentjaraningrat, 1974: 12). Lawlwess also shared a similar opinion, that culture is a pattern of behavior and is believed to be a belief including through the dimension of symbols and it is lived and studied together. It is a rational, integrated, and jointly owned thing that is dynamic and adaptive for social interaction between those who become their communal existence. Included in this are the language used, communication, science and technology, economy, organization in social life, religion, and including in this case art which is an important part of human life (Saifuddin, 2015; 10). and jointly owned which is dynamic and adaptive for social interaction between them which becomes their communal existence. Included in this are the language used, communication, science and technology, economy, organization in social life, religion, and including in this case art which is an important part of human life (Saifuddin, 2015; 10).

One of the cultures or oral traditions (folklore) that is legendary for the Toba Batak people to this day is the Si Gale-Gale folklore. Apart from the story, Si Gale-Gale is a wooden statue, where its existence has a unique history. Behind the presence of this wooden statue, there is a heroic story about the death of King Rahat's son, King Manggale on the

battlefield in defending their ancestral land from invaders. The story of Si Gale-Gale is believed by the Toba Batak people from generation to generation to teach about how to struggle to defend the homeland and other life values. Apart from the Si Gale-Gale story, there are still many other types of folklore that developed in the Toba Batak community, such as folk tales that contain educational values, and philosophy about life which is the teaching of life for this tribe. An example is the folk tale Parhata Magang or arrogant speaker, which contains the nature of a human being who likes to talk arrogantly, arrogantly and arrogantly, to the point of teaching that arrogance and arrogance have made him wretched and imprisoned for his own behavior. The story about Disuruk Lote Hajuk Na and Pantun Hagoluan Tois Hamagoan is a form of folklore or other folklore that developed in the Toba Batak community. Meanwhile, the Si Gale-Gale folklore which is legendary for the Toba Batak people has its own uniqueness and still not many have researched it as a cultural identity. which contains the nature of a human being who likes to talk arrogantly, arrogantly and arrogantly, until he comes to the teaching that arrogance and arrogance have made him wretched and imprisoned for his own behavior. The story about Disuruk Lote Hajuk Na and Pantun Hagoluan Tois Hamagoan is a form of folklore or other folklore that developed in the Toba Batak community. Meanwhile, the Si Gale-Gale folklore which is legendary for the Toba Batak community has its own uniqueness and still not many have researched it as a cultural identity. which contains the nature of a human being who likes to talk arrogantly, arrogantly and arrogantly, until he comes to the teaching that arrogance and arrogance have made him wretched and imprisoned for his own behavior. The story about Disuruk Lote Hajuk Na and Pantun Hagoluan Tois Hamagoan is a form of folklore or other folklore that developed in the Toba Batak community. Meanwhile, the Si Gale-Gale folklore which is legendary for the Toba Batak people has its own uniqueness and still not many have researched it as a cultural identity. The story about Disuruk Lote Hajuk Na and Pantun Hagoluan Tois Hamagoan is a form of folklore or other folklore that developed in the Toba Batak community. Meanwhile, the Si Gale-Gale folklore which is legendary for the Toba Batak people has its own uniqueness and still not many have researched it as a cultural identity. The story about Disuruk Lote Hajuk Na and Pantun Hagoluan Tois Hamagoan is a form of folklore or other folklore that developed in the Toba Batak community. Meanwhile, the Si Gale-Gale folklore which is legendary for the Toba Batak people has its own uniqueness and still not many have researched it as a cultural identity. The story about Disuruk Lote Hajuk Na and Pantun Hagoluan Tois Hamagoan is a form of folklore or other folklore that developed in the Toba Batak community. Meanwhile, the Si Gale-Gale folklore which is legendary for the Toba Batak people has its own uniqueness and still not many have researched it as a cultural identity.

Historically, the Batak tribe belongs to the old ethnic group in the archipelago. However, there is no literature that explains exactly when the ancestors or ancestors of this tribe began to inhabit parts of Sumatra. As an old tribal group, the beliefs held by the Toba Batak people in the past were traditional beliefs before the entry of Christianity and Islam. Religious conceptions for the Toba Batak people believe that Ompu Mulajadi Na Bolonis the most high God, who created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them and believed in the spirits of the ancestors. However, the original belief or religion of this ethnicity gradually began to be abandoned by the Toba Batak people, after the entry of Christianity, as the dominant religion in this ethnicity as stated by Bungaran Antonius Simanjuntak that the majority of the Toba Batak people adhere to Christianity (Bungaran Antonius Simanjuntak, 2001, 2001, p. 178).

In everyday life, even though they adhere to Christianity, some residents, especially the elderly, sometimes mix up old habits that believe in ancestral spirits. This habit can be found in certain ceremonies in people's lives such as ceremonies mangokal holior a bone-digging ceremony. The ceremony of establishing a monument for respected figures in this tribe and the tomb of the ancestors as a tribute to the spirits of the ancestors. In today's young generation, many do not understand the customs of their predecessors and can only see the

old traditions from some of the habits that are still being carried out today. This is influenced by the times and technological advances which also affect life habits, including attitudes and ways of thinking.

In addition, there are also groups of people who adhere to the old beliefs, not Christianity or Islam, which are referred to as *ugamo malim* or *parmalim*. According to Sihombing, in the writings of Bungaran Antonius Simanjuntak, adherents of this religion still believe in supernatural powers and ghosts. He also worships the gods Ompu Mula Jadi Nabolon, Soripada, Batara Guru, Debata Asiasi, Balabulan, and includes worshiping the spirits of ancestors who have died. This community group is called the followers of the Parmalim religion or the religion of the King of Batak (Bungaran Antonius Simanjuntak, 2001: 178). In previous research, it is known that in the malim belief, God is the Debata Mula Jadi Na Bolon (God Almighty) as the creator of the universe, humans, and heaven and earth. There are many followers of the Parmalim religion in the Toba Samosir district, which numbers approximately 5000 families and some are in overseas areas (Martozet, 2018: 13).

II. Review of Literature

The Use of Gale-Gale Folklore in the Past

The teachings and rules in the life of the Toba Batak people generally refer to the customary rules that apply in the Toba Batak tradition. The rules apply in everyday life, such as in carrying out marriage ceremonies or *marhajabuan*, death ceremonies or *hamatean*, including in this case whether someone dies as *maulibulung*, *sari matua*, or *saur matua*. These death ceremonies all have their own rules, they are carried out and obeyed together as well as unifying social ties for the Toba Batak people. The Toba Batak people will be socially excluded in everyday life, if they violate the rules that have become the traditions of their ancestors from generation to generation. One example and custom that has become a rule and is obeyed by all Toba Batak people is the prohibition of marriage of one clan. There are still many other rules that are obeyed jointly by the community, and these rules become a life habit that is obeyed, both in writing, and through symbols and messages through stories.

Folklore as an oral story tends to have a moral message and sometimes contains educational value for a people who believe and obey it. It is not known explicitly when the oral story was created and passed in a relay from one generation to another. Like a paradoxical phenomenon, although sometimes the truth of the story is doubted, the community as the owner of folklore tends to justify and believe it. The Gale-gale is a form of oral story that is considered as a story that carries a moral message and role model between parents and children. In the Toba Batak society, in the lineage, boys have a very important role. He is the successor in continuing the family lineage in accordance with the system they adhere to, which is patrilineal. If a family does not have male offspring, then it is considered a less than perfect family. Therefore, the position of sons in the Toba Batak community has a very important role, especially the continuation of the family lineage in this people. Therefore, the story or folklore of Si Gale-Gale is believed to be related to this, and becomes important for the presence of boys.

III. Discussion

The Continuity and Change of Si Gale-Gale Folklore

It has been explained above that the folklore of Si Gale-Gale is an oral story in strengthening existence, as well as being an example for the Toba Batak generation to love their descendants and ancestral land. As a traditional story for the Toba Batak people, this folklore developed into an art object in the form of a statue. At first, the statue was a representation of Raja Rahat's son, as an effort to console the king over the death of his son, Raja Manggale. At this time the statue of Si Gale-Gale was deliberately made to be displayed in tourist offerings in the Samosir area. At the center of tourism, especially in the Tomok and Huta Bolon Simanindo areas, Samosir Regency. The statue of Si Gale-Gale is shown and accompanied by typical Toba Batak music.

The show or attraction of the Si Gale-Gale statue is crowded with tourists, especially domestic and foreign tourists. The uniqueness of the Si Gale-Gale sculpture show is in its motion that seems stiff, in the form of a broken motif or staccato, which is guided or moved by a player whose position is behind the statue. The presence of the player or mover of the Si Gale-Gale statue is covered by a black cloth behind the statue, so it seems that the statue moves on its own. The attractions of the Si Gale-Gale show are accompanied by the accompaniment of typical Toba Batak music, Gondang Sabangun. This show brings the audience's imagination space to a wider area about the history and existence of the Toba Batak people. The Si Gale-Gale folklore has become a popular story in the Samosir area, especially the Toba Batak people.

Artwork is a representation of the daily life of humans, both objects from nature, history, life stories and so on. Including in this case the story or folklore of Si Gale-Gale of the Toba Batak ethnicity, is often used as a representative creation idea for dance artists in creating. The Si Gale-Gale folklore is used as the theme of the dance, the movements of this statue also become the embryo of the development of motion in creating dance, which is called kinesthetic stimulation. So that the resulting new choreography gave birth to a unique form, making the story of Si Gale-Gale come alive. Si Gale-gale is not only a legendary story, but it is a form of performance that revives the existence of the Toba Batak people as cultural owners.





The Gale-Gale statue in Tomok Village, Samosir Regency, which is used as a tourist attraction. 2021 private documentation reconstruction One of the forms of choreography presented by the Angel Elkanaen studio at one of the cultural events in Samosir Regency in 2020. The basic idea of creation of this work departs from the legend of Si Gale-Gale in the Toba Batak community.

Documentation source: Indah Situmorang

IV. Conclusion

Based on its history, it is not known when folklore The Gale-galebegan to emerge and develop until now in the Toba Batak community. Because it is a folklore that has been passed down from generation to generation, it is believed that this folklore emerged from time immemorial as a heroic story for the ethnic Toba Batak generation. The Si Gale-Gale folklore is a story that has exemplary and educational values for the younger generation, about the character of a king in Batak land named Raja Rahat. Raja Rahat had a son named Rajamangale, and died in the battlefield in defending the Batak lands from invaders. This heroic story provides lessons and educational value for every young generation of Batak Toba to love their ancestral lands and traditions. Today, The Gale-Gale is not just a story,

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