

## TRANSFORMATION OF *DOL* MUSIC IN THE MUSICALITY OF *TABOT* RITUAL, BENGKULU CITY

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### ABSTRACT

Originally, *Dol* music was used as means of religious musicality to spread Moslem religion in Bengkulu. As time goes by, through the process of acculturation and assimilation, *Dol* music becomes a sacred musicality to accompany the ritual procession of *Tabot*, *Sipai* tribe (*Tabot* family) in Bengkulu city. Globalization and the interference of power bring the change complexity of *Dol* musicality as *Tabot* ritual music in the socio-culture of Bengkulu society. The aim of this research is to understand and explain the occurrence of *Dol* music transformation and its implication to the socio-cultural system in Bengkulu society. The approach implemented is cultural studies with qualitative analysis technique. It is applied critical and popular culture theories to uncover the focus of the problem in this study.

The result shows that *Dol* music undergoes musical transformation as *Tabot* ritual music into a secular and profane music, resulting in the expansion of function and form. Therefore, *Dol* music is legitimized into traditional music icon of Bengkulu, in a wider and freer scale, shifting the *Tabot*'s popularity and sacred rituals as the "Heritage of the World in The Trust" of Bengkulu's folk art culture. This has implications for all socio-cultural joints of the people in Bengkulu city, triggering a qualitative change in socio-cultural evolution to the form of divergence. It means that *Dol* music was originally a sacred/ religious music tradition, developed following the increasingly complex transformation as a mass culture in Bengkulu.

Keywords: *Transformation, Dol music, implication, globalization, power relations*

### INTRODUCTION

The transformation of *Dol* music as the sacred musicality of *Tabot* ritual into secular or profane music is a phenomenon that needs to be revealed. Basically, *Dol* sacral music is used as a musical media in some of stages of *Tabot* ritual procession performed on 1 to 10 *Muharram* year of *Hijriah* in Bengkulu city. The complex change of *Dol* musicality as the music of *Tabot* ritual makes it a new identity of performing arts with all its problems. Besides, the creativity of artists exploiting, exploring, and performing co-modified *Dol*'s music is freed to be expressed. On the other hand, this is supported by policy that issues the supporting rules of the activity that impersonate the preservation of traditional culture. It shows that the dynamics of globalization and power relations with all its practices have influenced the

transformation of *Dol* music with complex issues, both socially and musically, which apparently have implications for the socio-cultural system of the city and province of Bengkulu.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study applied qualitative method with cultural studies approach. Researcher conducted in-depth interview of community leaders, customary figures, *Tabot* families and *Dol* performers. Source of data was obtained from primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews guided by interview guidelines and developed during the interview. Secondary data is used as supporting data of the primary data.

The data obtained in this study apply purposive technique which is collaborated with snow ball technique based on certain criteria. The main instrument is the researcher himself and the supporting instruments are audio video recorder and block note. The techniques of collecting the data are observation, interview, and document study techniques. The data analysis techniques are data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The technique of presenting the analysis results is done by identifying, classifying, and connecting data units from the field.

## **DISCUSSION**

As *Tabot* ritual religious musicality, *Dol* music was initially used as means of spreading Moslem religion. Through the process of change, acculturation, and cultural assimilation, *Dol* became a ritual music instrument of *Tabot* family tradition in Bengkulu city. By tracking down the ideological roots of *Dol* music in the *Tabot* ritual in Bengkulu, it is believed that *Dol* music was originated from the immigrants of Madras-Bengali India and Punjab Pakistan. They were technicians and workers in Fort Marlborough fortress who were imported by the British East India Company (EIC) to Bengkulu in 1714. From the historical journey of *Tabot* ritual, *Dol* music was used as musical instrument of conveyor and to accompany several stages of the procession in the *Tabot* ritual.

The sacred role and function of *Dol* music in *Tabot* ritual procession, is a necessity of sacrality by playing the grip of the binding tradition. *Dol* music performance is in form of procession. Globalization brought *Dol*'s musical shift as traditional music in rituals, socially and musically. The effect of this change is due to co-modification, power relations, and popular cultural creativity by putting aside the meaning of sacredness.

Based on the above explanation, this research is focused on the problem occurring in the *Dol* music transformation and its implications in *Tabot* ritual musicality on socio-cultural system of Bengkulu city society.

Over time, the practice of transformation occurs on *Dol* musicality so that it changes into secular or profane as an entity which is previously a part of a religious and spiritualistic ritual. The influences of globalization and power relations on *Dol* music reach a complex development process in Bengkulu city. Globalization makes *Dol* music as a means of cultural industry serving popular cultural products under the guise of local wisdom. In addition, it provides creative opportunities for artists to explore and exploited *Dol* music into a medium of creativity in creating popular music. This is also supported by the interests of power relations for the purpose of imaging, capitalist, tourism, and formal an non formal education. In the observation of this research, globalization and power relations influence the occurrence of transformation, making *Dol* music packed into two forms; as sacred traditional music and as secular or profane music. Thus, *Dol*'s music becomes a product of two-faced art and culture but it makes *Dol* music as a new local identity (local genius). It means that the dominance of *Dol* music legitimized into traditional music icon of Bengkulu, shifting the popularity and the sacred ritual *Tabot* as "Heritage of The World in The Trust" art of Bengkulu people's folklore culture. This phenomenon stimulates the religious aesthetic change of *Dol* music towards the aesthetic socio-culture of Bengkulu society. In picture 1 and picture 2 below, there is difference between *Dol* music as a means of *Dharma Tabot Meradai* ritual procession and *Dol* music as a means of creativity in performing arts.



Picture 1 *Dol* music accompanying the *Dharma Tabot Meradai* ritual (sacred)  
Source: Documentation of BP 2013



Picture 2 *DoI* music as a performance (profane)  
Source: Documentation of BP 2016

The discussion of the basic elements of the implications of *DoI*'s musical change in the socio-cultural system (superstructure, structure, and infrastructure) as an analytical scheme in this section including; (1) the superstructure aspect of *DoI* music has a strong implication on the ideology of identity and religious values, causing some responses from religious and customary figures as well as *Tabot* families itself. This phenomenon turns *DoI* into secular or profane music prioritizing the ideology of goals and selling points as popular culture, the implication of the desacralization of *DoI* music.

(2) Structural aspects have implications for the occurrence of the social scale extension in which *DoI* music was originally possessed and is the responsibility of the *Tabot* family, but nowadays anyone can have it and perform it, musically and socially. This opens the possibility of interference of other individuals or the power of government and institutions, thus it makes the customary boundaries set in the *Tabot* family to be false and ambiguous. Practices of power relations and popular culture also have implications to *DoI* music material in education in Bengkulu city as a subject matter of local arts. The implication is, (a) the rampant performance of *DoI* music performed by the students at school, (b) the school and the related government make a container and accommodate the creativity in learning art or cultural art as means of inheritance and tourism, (c) materials of *DoI* music learning is more to a form which has been changed or modified than its traditional form, (d) the emergence of conflict between the school/ government and the parents/ guardians of the students on the curriculum policy related to the art performances policy, (e) the conflict between then school and the

government about giving help to schools in form of a set of *DoI* ensemble musical instrument that is not on target.

(3) Aspects of economic infrastructure make *DoI* music as a means of entertaining, tourism promotion, and main orientation is creativity as local identity to the world to produce financial selling power (welfare of life). The main implication on the economic infrastructure aspect is the development of tourism and social welfare in the socio-cultural community in Bengkulu.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

The transformation of *DoI* music in Bengkulu city is caused by globalization and power relations. The influence of globalization makes *DoI* music as a cultural industry media designed to produce commodity products worth the local wisdom. Related to this, the practice of power relations makes *DoI* music as a destination of tourism promotion and for purpose of imaging. Besides, the artists' creativity contributes to the dynamics of change by producing works of popular cultural products derived from *DoI* music. The phenomenon of this power practice does not only occur in tourism sector and the purpose of interest, but also in the field of education.

The influence of globalization and power relations on *DoI* music as a trigger for the implications on socio-cultural system, on: (1) aspects of ideological and religious superstructure, making the *DoI* music secular or profane as a new art identity and resulting in desacralization of the arts; (2) structural aspect, the occurrence of social scale expansion and application of *DoI* music material in regional arts curriculum in the dimension of formal education; (3) aspects of economic infrastructure, results in the development of tourism and social welfare of most people of Bengkulu city. This led to a qualitative change in the socio-cultural evolution that led to the form of divergence, when *DoI* which was originally a sacred/religious music tradition, growing increasingly complex as a medium of the importance for mass culture purposes and products.

Through this research, it is suggested that the government together with the *Tabot* figures, community and religious leaders, artists, and intellectuals should be able to have discussion together to formulate sustainable strategy program of *DoI* music as a more-organized sacred music as well as secular or profane music, so that it would not be false based on the ideology of local identity, and not too wild and free in its creativity development.

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