

Analysis of the Function Oral Literature of the Mekongga Community on Wundulako Village in Kolaka Regency



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ABSTRACT: Oral literature is one of the forms of culture in society. The existence of oral literature is very important in building a socio-cultural system because of its functions. Oral literature has become the object of study, but in particular studies on the function of Mekongga oral literature are still rarely carried out, especially the oral literature of the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to describe and explain the function of the oral literature of the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach with qualitative descriptive data analysis techniques. The results of this study found that the oral literature of the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village has functions such as: 1) as a cultural defense media, 2) as a media for preserving social solidarity, and 3) as a media for character education. The function of this oral literature is as a cultural expression in building the resilience of the socio-cultural system of the Mekongga community.

KEYWORDS: Function. Oral Literature, Mekongga

A. INTRODUCTION

Every society in this nation has their own characteristics as their regional identity. The culture that is formed and created is the collective work of the community in expressing thoughts, events and natural phenomena encountered. The knowledge of people about of their lives are implemented as a social action based on mutually agreed values. Robin M. Williams in Soelaeman (2010:36) stated that value was an element of conception which was not only a sensation, emotion, and need but value grows as an abstraction of an individual's experiences. Through this socio-cultural system, people can get to know each other and learn about culture so that an attitude of respect and mutual respect was born. Liliweri (2013: 41) explained that the social function was a function to teach and introduce cultural values in a society to other communities. In conveying the messages of life, it was not infrequently to use media that contain aesthetic elements, such as by creating oral literature. Hutomo (1991:70) stated that oral literature was a tool to enforce social norms, as a means of social control and as a media for children's education. Oral literature as a means of social control because through oral literature it showed its function which can make moral guidance and maintain behavior in society. Meanwhile, as a means of education because oral literature can be used as a tool for the community to learn both in attitude and in shaping character.

The community has cultural knowledge in the oral literature that they practice. This knowledge is a manifestation of local wisdom while interacting with nature and all events in the cultural and social environment. Sternberg (1993:317) explained that wisdom in principle is a very multidimensional aspect that grows from a balanced combination of cognitive, affective, and conative components. This combination appears various forms of life strategies from planning, decision making and even life advice. In another part, Keraf (2002: 289) said that local wisdom was all forms of knowledge, belief, understanding or insight as well as customs that encourage human behavior and attitudes in their environment. Oral literature as a cultural product of society contained life values that are passed down from generation to generation. Soekanto (2017: 200) stated that the norms in a society were formulated in order the relations in society can run as expected. According to Suantoko (2016) in his journal stated that in principle the function of oral literature was to form identity in order to build harmony in social life.

In the cultural life of the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency, they have a variety of oral literature, especially folklore. Oral literature is passed down from generation to generation as a means of reminder and advice in the community. Through folklore which always tells various events, natural phenomena, public relations, social messages to community members so that bonds of intimacy and unity are established in the midst of society. Oral literature has long been a part of the life of the Mekongga community. The perspective of society about oral literature provides an overview of behavior and attitudes in facing every challenge of the times. The stories contained in folklore are expressions of knowledge and past experiences of the

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Mekongga community in responding and dealing with their environment. As stated by Geertz in La Ode Taalami (2009: 58) stated that basically local knowledge was a set of rules and strategies owned by local communities to utilize all natural resources for their survival.

According to William R. Bascom (1965) and Alan Dundes (1965) in Sudikan (2014: 151) stated that oral and partly oral literature basically has four functions, namely: 1) as an entertainment medium, 2) as a media of validating cultural institutions and institutions, 3) as a media of educating children, and 4) as a media of coercion and a media of monitoring norms in society.

Danandajaja (1994:81) suggested that the function of oral literature includes five main things, namely: 1) as an educational tool in society, 2) as a tool to strengthen collective solidarity, 3) as a tool that allows a person to act towards others, 4) as a tool for protest against injustice, and 5) provide an opportunity for someone to escape from real life into a beautiful imaginary world. On the other hand, Alan Dundes in Sudikan (2014: 152) stated that there were several functions of folklore, namely, 1) helping children's education, 2) increasing the solidarity of a community group, 3) providing sanctions so that people behave well, 4) as a media of social criticism, 5) providing a pleasant escape from reality, 6) change a job from boring to fun. Based on the opinions of some experts above, regarding the function of oral literature, it can be found several functions of the oral literature of the Mekongga people, such as: 1) as a medium of cultural defense, 2) as a guardian of social solidarity, and 3) as a medium of education. Danandajaja (2002:4) stated that folklore was an old form of prose that developed orally which is used as an educational tool, solace, a form of social protest, even as a projection of desire.

The existence of folklore is seen as having a positive function for the growth of the social life of the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency. Folklore as an oral cultural heritage of the Mekongga community is still passed down from generation to generation, not only must be maintained and preserved, but more than that, its meaning must be respected and applied in social life. The actualization of the function oral literature in Mekongga community is necessary to be studied in depth so that there is continuity with the current development of the times. Folklore is a collective work that is used for various social interests of the community.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach. Determination of informants in this study was done by means of a snow ball. Each informant is seen as having diverse knowledge about the function of the oral literature of the Mekongga so that the information from these informants can be used as comparison material with other information. The types of data are secondary data and primary data, while the data sources in this study were obtained from the words or expressions of the informants as well as from the contents of the folklore. Techniques of data collection are observation and interview techniques and also reading and note-taking techniques. Observation in qualitative research is direct observation and then recording events or situations (Maleong, 1989:137). Observations are conducted to find out directly the implementation of the function of oral literature in daily life in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency. On the other hand, Ratna (2010:231) stated that interviews were conducted as a strategy to create a familiar atmosphere with the informants in order to obtain relevant and adequate information according to the research topic. This study uses an open interview and in-depth interviews in order to obtain more detailed information about the function of oral literature. Then, the function of oral literature is combined with the content of folklore texts with reading and note-taking techniques to support the functions of oral literature that are applied in everyday life. The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono (2008:246) stated that basically qualitative analysis includes three stages, namely starting from data reduction, data display, drawing conclusions and verification

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Mekongga community in Wundulako Village has a variety of cultural creations are always practiced in every day. One of the most well-known and familiar in the community is oral literature in the form of folklore. This form of oral literature has long grown and developed in society and even it is used as a medium of communication in its environment. The existence of folklore in the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village is a social tool that contains messages from the past as a cognitive provision for the community in facing the challenges of the times. Folklore in cultural system of the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village has various functions, including as a cultural defense media, as a media for preserving social solidarity, and as a media for character education.

1. As a Cultural Defense Media

Every community has oral literature as a characteristic of its culture. With this cultural peculiarity, the member of the community groups who live in it, it can interact and communicate with each other, conveying messages or advice and even criticism. The culture provides opportunities for them to express their ideas and thoughts to grow and survive. These cultural values contain a number of values that are used as guidelines in organizing social life. The Mekongga community has always used oral literature as a medium to convey their culture. Through it, they collectively learn the values contained in it and then express it in every day.

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The Mekongga community believe that as time goes on, gradually changes in the social structure of society will also experience changes. The emergence of a shift in values and behavior is the concern of every member of the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village. The existence of oral literature gives hope to the Mekongga community to be able to maintain the quality of their social relations through the implementation of their cultural values. The people's habits in building social communication are depicted in oral literary stories that are always heard. The Mekongga people know the *konggaaha* folklore as a media to convey cultural messages.

In *Konggaaha* folklore, it is introduced to the society about a ritual of rejecting reinforcements in order to avoid calamity and disaster. The ritual ceremony is known as ritual of *Mosehe Wonua*. In *Konggaaha* folklore, it is told that after the giant eagle (*konggaaha*) was defeated by the people under the leadership of Larumbalangi, it turned out that the carcass of the giant eagle caused new difficulties, namely that its rotting flesh began to pollute the water and residential areas, so many were stricken with disease and even died. To overcome this, the ritual of *Mosehe Wonua* ceremony was held. Through the ritual, Wasasi and Larumbalangi said a prayer to *Sangia* until it rained and swept away all the dirt of the *Konggaaha* carcasses on the land of Mekongga.

In daily life, the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency, they believe that the presence of *Konggaaha* folklore provides reinforcement to always preserve their local culture. The ritual ceremony of *Mosehe Wonua* presented in the story confirms the existence of the cultural treasures of the Mekongga community. The existence ritual of *Mosehe Wonua* became part of the local wisdom of the Mekongga community which is still being maintained. The Mekongga oral literature informs today's society to always be vigilant and introspective in every changing times. In the past, it was said that there had been a disease outbreak so that through that event, the Mekongga community through the *Konggaaha* folklore could have knowledge of disasters and how to overcome them. The message of natural disaster mitigation in culture-based *konggaaha* folklore is a wealth of knowledge from the ancestors of the Mekongga community. With this section explain that oral literature in the form of *konggaaha* folklore has function as a media for cultural defense.

The remains of cultural values that exist on Mekongga oral literature in Wundulako Village are implemented in everyday life. Oral literature is used to express cultural identity as a community group that grows with culture as a reflection of its civilization. Cultural wisdom in oral literature is a guideline for supporting communities in building a social system. Larry A Samovar and Richard E. Porter in *La Ode Taalami* (2010: 97) state that culture is a collection of knowledge, experiences, beliefs, value systems, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, time choices, relationships, and material objects that are owned and maintain a group of people. In this context, it provides reinforcement that Mekongga oral literature is a dimension in people's lives that plays a role and functions as a means of cultural defense.

Mekongga oral literature is a cultural information tool that guides attitudes and behavior according to societal norms and ethics. The cultural behavior presented in the Mekongga oral literature informs the boundaries of being in the midst of society. In the folklore, *Sanggole Mbae*, for example, has the meaning that the act of boasting can cause havoc and harm to oneself, while patient behavior and character will bring goodness and salvation. In the folklore, *Sanggoleo Mbae*, the goddess of rice, tells the story of the lives of *Sanggoleo mbae's* brothers who have an arrogant and proud nature until one day they get a curse due to their arrogance. Then *Sanggoleo mbae* appeared as a patient character until at the end of his life, he changed his spirit into rice and even the ashes of his body turned into food crops for the community and provided benefits to the environment. The presence of oral literature is then used by the Mekongga community as a life experience, the importance of maintaining good relations with fellow human beings and always respecting and respecting others. The cultural values presented in oral literature are a form of expression of the knowledge of the Mekongga people in building their cultural and social identity.

2. As a media for Preservative of Social Solidarity

It has become a provision for a human being to always live side by side with other humans. In community life, someone does not only act as an individual creature but also acts as a social being. In this context, humans need other people to be able to fulfil the needs of life. Humans as social beings are a hope to survive as well as a solution to get out of anxiety. In the Mekongga oral literature, there are many stories that describe the strength of social relations in society. Mekongga oral literature can be found in the social solidarity relationship of the community which is used as an opportunity to face and solve problems. Humans in principle need each other and continue to socialize with each other. Someone will try to join other human groups to form groups in the context of his efforts to meet the needs and goals of life.

In the *konggaaha* folklore, it is presented that the fundamentals of a bond of community social solidarity are able to defeat the giant eagle which every time comes to threaten the peaceful life of the Unenapo community at that time before becoming Mekongga community. The togetherness and cohesiveness shown by the community in the spirit of *gotong royong* became social capital for them to get out of trouble in facing of the unrest caused by the presence of the *konggaaha*, it leads the community to against the ferocity of the eagle together. Finally, in a moment that was jointly planned in deliberation, the Larumbalangi command was able to successfully end the suffering caused by the *konggaaha*. The position of *konggaaha* oral literature serves as an inspiration for the Mekongga community that the relationship or social solidarity bond between community members needs to be applied in

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every day. The power of unity depicted in the *konggaaha* folklore is a sign of the importance of maintaining and fostering bonds of social solidarity

Soekanto (2017: 55) stated that the general form of social processes was social interaction because the main condition for the occurrence of social activities was caused by social interaction. In creating social order, it needs a sense of community solidarity so that concern arises between one member and another. Oral literature is a space for cultural expression of the community to foster bonds of unity and brotherhood in the midst of society. Through the meaning of the *konggaaha* folklore, it is gained knowledge about the virtues of social solidarity values for the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency. The existence of humans as social beings is proven in the community's mutual cooperation efforts against the ferocity of the *konggaaha*. Gotong royong (mutual cooperation) in the customs of the Mekongga community is an embodiment of the value of social solidarity that continues to be grown and developed in the community. The solidarity which is projected in oral literature is the dimension of socio-cultural for the Mekongga community that is practiced every time.

The attitude of solidarity of the Mekongga community is formed in the oral literature of *konggaaha*. It is a bond that is formed based on the bond of sharing the same fate to solve the problems faced. At present, the Mekongga community has a mutual need for one another in the order of the values of togetherness and mutual cooperation. In the social system of life, they apply the principles of mutual cooperation, for example in agriculture or in marriage community celebration events and in death rituals. Collective awareness that exists in the midst of society is a feature of the social system implemented by the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency. In this condition, it is emphasized that oral literature is a media for preserving social solidarity of the community because by always listening to folklore, indirectly the meaning of the relationship of social solidarity continues to be conveyed.

3. As a Media for Character Education

Character education is the main thing needed in forming a dignified society. The Mekongga community realize that the formation of wise character requires an effective media of delivery in the midst of society. In actualizing ideas, opinions, and thoughts, knowledge and good character are needed so that benefits are obtained. In teaching the value of character education, the Mekongga community uses oral literature. Folklore is used as a medium of learning about the values of life. From an early age, children in the Mekongga family environment have been introduced to various kinds of human traits and characters through folklore. Folklore basically contains various kinds of events and characters that can be used as life lessons.

The community of Mekongga knew the *La Pau* folklore as a media for educating the values of honesty and the values of responsibility. In the *La Pau* folklore, it is stated that because of La Pau's dishonesty in admitting that he had taken the shawl of the angel *Anawaingguluri* who later married him, he would be sad at the end because in the end his lie was exposed and he was left by his wife and child. The incident made *La Pau* realize that his lies had ruined his family. The incident means that honesty is very important in building a relationship. A sense of trust is grown through honest behavior, both applied in actions and words. The story experienced by *La Pau* in the *La Pau* folklore is a life lesson about the importance of honesty. The Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency places honest behavior as a character education value that is instilled in the children's paradigm. The golden generation in the Mekongga community is taught about the nature of honesty in building social relationships.

In addition to the value of honesty that is taught, oral literature in the Mekongga community is also functioned to teach the value of responsibility. The story of *La Pau* who has realized his mistake makes him willing to make sacrifices by going to the land of heaven to find and pick up his wife and child. In the search process, La Pau was faced with various trials but cause of his sincerity in taking responsibility for his actions he was able to find his wife and child. The attitude of being willing to sacrifice for the truth is important for everyone to be able to form a responsible person. The character of *La Pau* describes the character who is responsible for the actions taken. That is oral literature in providing learning to the community that owns it. In the Mekongga community, oral literature is a field of knowledge where people enter the world of imagination which is full of value and meaning. Oral literature is a media for character education for the Mekongga community.

Mekongga oral literature also shows the values of patience. In the folklore of *Sanggoleo Mbae* displays the value of patience to support the cultivation of community character education. When *Sanggoleo Mbae* disguised herself as an old grandmother, she visited her relatives' house to ask for help, but she only received insults and was expelled. Responding to this condition, *Sanggoleo mbae* did not respond with anger but instead responded with a wise attitude, namely praying for the brothers to return to the path of truth. That's how the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village put patience in themselves to overcome the nature of anger and envy. Children in the Mekongga family are always reminded of the stories of the characters in folklore as an arena for character and virtue education. The courage and patience of the *Larumbalangi* character in the *Konggaaha* folklore, the patience of the *Sanggoleo Mbae* character in the *Sanggoleo Mbae* folklore, and the attitude of responsibility in the *La Pau* folklore. Oral literature has become a local learning media for the Mekongga community which serves as a media instilling character education value into society in general and children in particular.

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D. CONCLUSION

The Mekongga community has a variety of cultures, especially oral literature. The position of oral literature is functioned by the community in various interests and life goals. The importance of creating order and peace in the community made the Mekongga community in Wundulako Village, Kolaka Regency use oral literature as a field of social interaction. In daily life of the Mekongga community, oral literature is functioned as a cultural defense media, as a media for preserving social solidarity, and as a media for character education. The series of functions of oral literature are applied in the social system of society to build an advanced and civilized life structure of the Mekongga community. Oral literature in the form of stories is the local wisdom of the Mekongga community which is seen as containing cultural values that function as community control.

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