

## MINANGKABAU TRADITIONAL ART AS A NATION CHARACTER BUILDING

Iman Laili dan Eriza Nelfi  
Universitas Bung Hatta  
[imanlaili@yahoo.com](mailto:imanlaili@yahoo.com)

### Abstract

This paper is aimed at revealing the good values in Minangkabau traditional art of oral tradition. This oral tradition is tale and poetry; it has signature values as the legacy of our ancestors such as: mutual respect, religious, togetherness, compassion, forgive each other, never give up/working hard, always grateful, discipline, and deliberation.

**Keywords:** Minangkabau traditional art, oral tradition, Minangkabau

### A. INTRODUCTION

West Sumatra has many traditional arts. Some of them are in the form of oral traditions inherited orally from generation to generation. The oral tradition has distinctive meaning and related to the personality of the nation. According Roger Tol and Pudentia (1995: 12-16), oral tradition is the knowledge, customs, and habits prevailing in a society legally and delivered orally from generation to generation and has its own system (such as a variety of traditions, folklore, legend, customary laws, and treatment). Oral tradition has positive values that can be applied in social life.

The oral tradition often called as folklore, the part of culture inherited generally through speech (Dananjaya, 1986: 5). Oral tradition or folklore appears in the form of folk language, traditional expression, traditional question, rhymes and folk poetry, folk prose stories and folk songs (Dananjaya, 1986: 22).

Oral tradition can also be used as facilities to shape the characteristic of cultural tourism launched by several tourism stakeholders in West Sumatera (Elha, 2007; Manik, 2010). It can also be used as a tourism asset in this country that has religious customs and Islamic Shari'a (syarak).

The development of the tourism market which empowers various oral traditions, local arts, and local languages at the international level is also an opportunity to be used (Willebrand, 2009; Ueda, 2009; Yang, 2009; Padilla, et al, 2010; Lopez-Guzman, 2011). Therefore it is good to promote and maintain the art of oral traditions.

### B. DISCUSSION

This paper is focussed on studying the oral traditions of tale and poem in West Sumatra. This writing is based on the research funded by Dikti Grant in 2014. There are values of thoughts, hopes, prayers, advice, etc as the characteristic of Minangkabau culture. Those oral tradition and its values are the legacy of Minangkabau ancestor in West Sumatra.

#### 1. Tale

Tale in Indonesian Dictionary (1994) means the old literary stories, both historical and fictional romance story, which reads for solace, plant spirit, or simply to enliven the party. In Minangkabau the tale called *hikayaik*. One of *hikayaik* in West Sumatera, especially in Nagari Tengah Padang, Kecamatan Ulakan Tapakis, Kabupaten Padang Pariaman is *hikayaik Nabi Ibrahim* (tale of Ibrahim the prophet). This tale usually delivered in commemoration Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, *batagak batu*, and memorial one hundred days the death. This tale delivered by the elders called *urang siak*.

In the following excerpt can be seen the value of compassion to the elderly and unyielding contained in *hikayaik Nabi Ibrahim*.

*Bia nak dicari ibu dan bapak, katonyo pikiran dalam ati, yo dek junjungan Ibrahim, dari duduak taulah tagak, baru bajalan iyolah ngangak, lalu bajalan ma dalam hutan, gawang baulu ka ditampuah, tanah barayun nan dipijak, kadang-kadang batang batiti, basuo lurah dituruni, batamu bukik la didaki, tujuh bukik sambilan lurah*

'let mother and father be looked for, he thought, yes because Ibrahim the prophet, of sitting and standing, just walking and confused, then walk in the forest, the goal with the end will be reached, which stand on the swinging ground, sometimes passed the stems, met the valley descended, met hills have climbed, seven hills nine valley'

Quote above tells the tale of Prophet Ibrahim who struggle to find her parents were kidnapped in the forest by a despotic king. *Gawang baulu ka ditampuah, tanah barayun nan dipijak, kadang-kadang batang batiti, basuo lurah dituruni, batamu bukk la didaki, tujuh bukk sambilan lurah* are series of sentences used to express the severity of the trip and the struggle that must be taken in life. It illustrates that a nation must be willing to fight for the good and work hard for the future and never gives up.

## 2. Poem

In Indonesian Dictionary (1994) poem is a long verse which each stanza consists of four lines (rows) ending with the same sound. Some Minangkabau poems that will be discussed in this paper are *Mandu Paja* poem, *Manetek Anau* poem, and *Ratok Suayan* poem. Poem *Mandu Paja* comes from Jorong Kampuang Anau, Kanagarian Ladang Panjang, Kecamatan Tigo Nagari, Kabupaten Pasaman. This poem performed in traditional event *batunin mandi* or *mukayia paja*. This activity is a traditional event held for children at age one week. This poem was delivered by a person who works as *mandu paja*. Only the family of the person who mastered this poem. This poem has of gratitude and message of obedience to Allah. It can be seen in the following excerpt.

*Mangkolah si buyuang galisah dalam kandungan bundonyo  
Janji cukuik bilangan sampai  
Pucuk dicinto alhamdulillah  
Tacinto dek si buyuang nan salamaik*

'Then the boy was nervous in his mother's womb  
The promise enough, numbers too  
Shoots beloved thanks god (*Alhamdulillah*)  
Beloved (happy) because the boy who survived'

The last two lines express gratitude for the birth of a child described in the first two rows. *Alhamdulillah* word is a phrase that always used by a Muslim to expresses gratitude to Allah. It shows religious values of Minangkabau.

Beside expression of gratitude, the values of religious obedience of Minangkabau people for religious teachings are also contained in this poem, as shown in the following excerpt.

*Mancari amal dengan iman  
Iman tatap amalan bartambah-tambah  
Kapado Allah dan kapado Rasulullah*

Doing good deeds with faith  
Faith lasts, the good deeds develop  
Referred to God and the Messenger

Religious value expressed in above quotation is a picture of Minangkabau people who are faithful to the teachings of Islam in their lives.

Other parts of this poem have the value of compassions as follow:

<i>Ayunlah si buyuang barayun Barayun dalam buaian</i>	Swing the swinging boy swinging in the swing
<i>Lalaplah lalap si buyuang nangko Lalap aniang dalam kulimah</i>	sleep sleep this boy sleep silently in prayer
<i>Balinduang batabia jangek Batirai balangik-langik Dalam lingkuang kakbatullah</i>	screened shelter skin shaded-ceilinged within the Ka'bah

In above quotation, there are affection values through providing protection. The use of the words shelter (*balinduang*), covered (*batabia*), shaded (*batirai*), and ceilinged (*balangik-langik*) show strong intent to protect as the affective values of Minangkabau people to their children.

Manetek Anau is a poem from Nagari Halaban, Kecamatan Lareh Sago Halaban, Kabupaten Lima Puluh Kota. This poem previously presented at sap harvesting activities of palm trees. Before harvesting activities begin, at first someone recited this poem to induce the sap to come out more. The values in this poem can be seen in following quotation.

<i>Kok iyo kito kan bagurau</i>	if so we just joke
<i>Bagurau basamo godang</i>	just like joke with others

The values in above poem are solidarity in Minangkabau community. With the value, it would appear a sense of mutual understanding among people.

The following excerpt is a continuation of quotation above that illustrates the value of discipline in Minangkabau society.

*Mulo rang tuo nan manetek onou*  
*Aia niro untuak pambayia utang*

At first the parents who harvest palm  
Sap water for the payment of debt

Discipline value will demonstrate obedience to existing rules and regulations.

Religious values also illustrated in the poem *Manetek Anau* as the quote below.

<i>Mayang onou nan ka ditetek</i>	palm blossom to be harvested
<i>Ditetek badongkang-dongkang</i>	harvested like sound of croak
<i>Mintak aia niro saketek</i>	asked a little sap
<i>Untuak pambali kain sumbayang</i>	for buy prayer cloth

The last line emphasize religious values of Minangkabau society. They always try to prioritize Islamic teaching

*Ratok* is poems that delivered when someone dies. One of *ratok* in West Sumatra is *Ratok Suayan*. *Ratok Suayan* used to present at funeral ceremony when person's body from Nagari Suayan will be taken out of the house to be escorted to the cemetery.

However, this activity no longer exists. This *Ratok* now appears in sang. This *ratok* contained the values of Minangkabau cultural heritage, seen from the following quote.

<i>Rang gadang basa batua</i>	great person <i>basa batua</i>
<i>Rang tadanga elok baso</i>	person sound beautiful in language

The first two lines verse quotation above contains the value of mutual respect. *Rang gadang basa batua* is a phrase used to honor someone. *Elok baso* is an idiom to express a very wise person who has speech a good word.

Note the continuation of *Ratok Suayan* from the following excerpt which shows the value of togetherness.

*Banduang tangih ateh rumah*  
*Malapeh maik ka pusaro*  
*lah tibo maik tengah laman*  
*bajalan basamo-samo*

cried together at home  
let the corpse go to the tomb  
a corpse have arrived in the middle of the yard  
walking together

Value of togetherness which is reflected in quotation above shows a very strong unity that exists in Minangkabau society.

In the excerpt below *Ratok Suayan* revealed deliberations value adopted by the Minangkabau people.

<i>sadang sayang ayah tinggakan</i>	being in love father left
<i>jo sia badan ka baiyo</i>	with whom body will negotiate

Deliberation value in Minangkabau community as seen in quotation above also seen in Minangkabau proverb *bulek aia dek pambuluah, bulek kato dek mupakaik* "round the waters because of vessels, round the word because of agreement". It means, everything can be decided by deliberation.

The following four lines is the final part of the *Ratok Suayan* which expresses the value of mutual forgiveness.

<i>lah tibo badan di kuburan</i>	body already in the grave
<i>urang banyak mananamkan</i>	many people bury
<i>kok salah tolong maafkan</i>	if wrong please forgive
<i>itu nan utang kito basamo</i>	it's debt we shared

The quotation above shows humility of Minangkabau society that has a value of mutual forgiveness. Thereby, peace in the community will be created.

### C. MINANGKABAU TRADITIONAL ART RELEVANCE WITH NATIONAL CHARACTER BUILDERS

Based on data above it is clear that essentially oral tradition is not only part of the traditional arts, but also a cultural identity that sustains the authentic of local wisdom value in communities themselves. Identity aspects have impact on social psychodynamic and community culture itself, relates to social and individual character. It also affects social behaviour that is formed based on these characters. It means, if we want establish the identity and character of nationality, cultural identity within each society culture must be protected and preserved. The demise of social identity will lead degradation of community's character. Extinction of a local character also has a negative impact on national identity and national character. Therefore, one of the efforts to build education of nation character is preserve the local wisdom in oral tradition community. Native identity that contain in local knowledge is a mental defence in the face of dynamics of global change that are often destructive to the national culture.

In addition, cultural identity also needs to be maintained to protect the traces of society and culture history. The destruction of authentic culture identity in a society not only degrades the social character, but also degrades history of society itself. Society without identity and native culture character is society that has weak social psychology. They will not be able to withstand the cultural attack from other culture that is often not suitable with Indonesian culture. If Indonesia consists of communities without cultural social identity, this country would be a weak. Therefore, maintain and protect cultural heritage such as oral culture is importance to help education community character. Moreover, the oral tradition is culture that vulnerable, it easily lost if the speakers have died and not inherited to the offspring.

This is in line with the Grand Design National Character Education (2010) in which character education is a process of acculturation and empowering learners to have noble values and character behaviours are conducted through three educational canter, namely in family education, school education, and education in society. Meanwhile, according Narwanti (2011: 16), related to education in Indonesia, education character is the education of noble values sourced from Indonesian culture itself, in order to maintain personality of young generation. These cultural values strongly related to character education values such as the value of working hard and never give up, togetherness, tolerance, working together, affection, mutual tolerance in the midst of diversity, sense of community, and religious.

### D. CLOSING

Minangkabau traditional art in form of oral tradition is a cultural heritage that containing noble values held by society. The most prominent noble values that is found in the oral traditions of Minangkabau is a religious value. This is in line with Minangkabau philosophy of life that says: *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi kitabullah* custom, hold on Islamic shari'a, Islamic shari'a holds on Qur'aan. The understanding of oral tradition noble values as expressed in this paper will be done well if the oral tradition can be maintain and developed by various parties.

### REFERENCES

- Dananjaya, James. 1986. *Folklor Indonesia*. Jakarta: Pustaka Grafiti Pres.
- Elha, Shofwan Karim. 2007. Pembangunan Kepariwisata Sumatera Barat: Pengembangan Potensi Wisata Budaya. Makalah yang disampaikan pada "Annual Lecture dan Seminar Mengenang Tokoh Diplomasi Bung Hatta: Apresiasi Perjalanan 50 Tahun Hubungan Diplomatik RI-Malaysia", kerjasama Universitas Andalas dengan Deplu RI (Dit. Asia Timur & Pasifik dan Dit. Diplomasi Publik) dan KBRI Kuala Lumpur, di Padang, Kamis, 19 April 2007.
- Grand Design Pendidikan Karakter Bangsa Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional (2010)
- Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (1994)

- Lopez-Guzman, Tomas. 2011. The development of wine tourism in Spain. *International Journal of Wine Business Research*, 23 (4), 374-386
- Narwanti, Sri. 2011. Pendidikan Karakter: Pengintegrasian 18 Nilai Pembentuk Karakter dalam Mata Pelajaran. Yogyakarta: Familia.
- Padilla, Mark B. et.al. 2010. HIV/AIDS and Tourism in the Caribbean: An Ecological Systems Perspective. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100 (1): 70-77.
- Told, R. dan Pudentia. 1995. "Tradisi Lisan Nusantara: Oral Traditions from the Indonesian Archipelago, A Three Directional Approach" dalam *Warta ATL* (edisi perdana): I-01-Maret 1995, hlm. 12-16.
- Ueda, Naho. 2009. Chinese Americans in China: Ethnicity, Transnationalism, and Roots Tourism. *Disenasi* pada Texas A&M University.
- Willebrand, Tomas. 2009. Promoting hunting tourism in north Sweden: Opinions of local hunters. *Eur J Wildl Rest*, 55:209-2016.
- Yang, Mingyu. 2009. Tourism: An Alternative to Development? Reconsidering Farming, Tourism, and Conservation Incentives in Northwest Yunnan Mountain Communities. *Mountain Research and Development*, 29 (1): 75-81