

# TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND LOCAL DEMOCRACY IN KONAWE KINGDOM

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## ABSTRACT:

The Study of Traditional Institution of Konawe Kingdom in the past was intended to reflect a fair and wise traditional leadership system towards the practice of democratic government nowadays. This research used constructivism paradigm centered on ethnographical methodology aspect as a qualitative approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Spradley, 2007). Unit of analysis in this research was the social elites living in area of Konawe Regency Government. The effort of data collecting in the field was developed through observation, in-depth interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and documentary study towards the dynamics of traditional leadership describing local democracy that has ever been practiced or done in area of Konawe Kingdom Government.

The result of the research showed that the potret of traditional leadership in Konawe Kingdom appeared into five phases, i.e.: *Pre Osara* in the form of settlement units (*Okambo*) under the leadership system of *Toono Motuo*; *Pre Osara* in the form of small kingdoms that were spread in some sector areas; *Osara* in a big kingdom with Konawe as the central; *Osara* after the fall of Konawe Kingdom that ended under the leadership of *Lakidende*; and *Osara* in the independence period until post reformation currently. In the above mentioned development of *Osara* institution, it emerged a system of local democracy called *Siwolembatohuu* and *Opitudulubatu*, primarily in the period of *Tebawo* leadership giving the autonomy to the four governmental areas.

**Keywords: Culture, Traditional Leadership, and Local Democracy**

## INTRODUCTION

The system of Regional Head election constitutes an innovation that is regarded to have a number of excellences, if compared with the system offered by the centralistic model in version of the Statute Number 5/1974, or the model of representative democracy offered by the Statute Number 22/1999. Likewise, Direct Public Election System of Legislative and Executive reflect the rationalization of the Public Election System in local and national level. Nevertheless, the above mentioned system of the Public Election and Regional Public Election that is not based on the culture tends to be faced with a number of socio-cultural problems. As a result, it is not surprising that all of the Regional Public Elections in Southeast Sulawesi seems to be colored

with political upheaval in the form of vertical and horizontal with its various problems (Suaib *et al.*, 2008).

Empirically, in the process of implementation of direct Public Election and Regional Public Election, a variety of phenomena in the form of fake diploma giving, imbalance of Permanent Voter List, fictitious voter case, money politic act, and the decision of the court that is not in line with the law. Some of these factors are the ones that in turn become the main cause of the existence of vertical and horizontal conflict. Ironically, the above mentioned phenomenon and reality are considered still in line with the corridor of democracy, so that it keeps being considered to be rational, and even nothing wrong with such reality. It is no longer avoided and especially the unique conduct of the elites that are impressed to be “embarrassed to have the sense of embarrassment” (Piliang, 1998).

How urgent the cultural value that has ever been put into practice in the period of traditional leadership is and is even shown by the founding father in the period of independence upheaval, now it must be made to grow again. According to the findings of Almond and Verba (1984) some countries having immature political culture will support the stable democracy. On the contrary, the countries having the degree of the immature political culture do not support the stable democracy to be crystallized.

The political culture of Indonesia is still indeed the topic of an actual and problematic study, due to its parochial characteristic and depends on cultural focus of each region. Even though it could be insufficient in explaining the political deed of the society representatively, but is still required because many of certain socio political symptoms that is relevant to be studied from viewpoint of political culture. In this context, the urgency of Traditional Leadership and Local Democracy Potret study that is contained in it must begin being developed. Besides as the effort of value revitalization of traditional institution, it can also be made as the design source of the implementation of the Regional Public Election based on the culture in the future especially in area of Konawe Regency Government as the center of Konawe Kingdom in the past.

### **Traditional Leadership**

According to Tarimana (1989) that in the literature of Political Anthropology and Political Sociology, many scholars have studied the basis and system of leadership, politics, and government in the world for about the mid of the twentieth century. In the perspective of political anthropology, the existence of leadership can be seen from the context of generic, functionalist, typology, terminology, and structural approach, and finally uses dynamic approach. Meanwhile, in the perspective of political sociology, it employs geographic, demographic, technologic, institutional, and cultural approach.

The last approach emphasizing the culture in ideology and myth context and belief system can play an important role in political life. It is relevant with the thesis of Weber about *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930) as one of the conceptual variants of modernization centred on the cultural values. In this context, in accordance with Weber, religion greatly influences an individual's behavior (Budiman, 1995). This is also in keeping with the perspective of Ibnu Khaldun concerning *asabiyah* in rural community of Badui. In the effort of anticipating abundant *asabiyah*, so religion must function as the control, so that *asabiyah* is not against with the tenet of religion. More than that, the role of religion in the self of leader is

essential in building community, society, nation, and country (Baali dan Wardi, 2003; Khaldun, 2005).

### **Culture of Local Democracy**

The terminology of democracy culture in actuality is in keeping with the popular expression of Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of United States of America. He interpreted democracy as “*government is by the people, from the people, and for the people*”. This paradigm explains that the people’s political rights are the substance of the highest political authority no more on the hand of the king, aristocracy, and some oligarchic elites. This is in line with the concept of power that is offered by John Locke that the people are the ones who give the power to the ruler, the people give some of rights to protect their property rights through their social contract (Surbakti, 1990; Kristiadi, 1996; Suaib, *et al*, 2008).

More detailedly, Lipset (2007) defines democracy as the political system having institutional management about the substitution of the governmental officials, in collaboration with the social management allowing a majority of the citizens to participate in affecting the important decisions by means of electing opposition to occupy political positions. Meanwhile, according to Gaffar (2004) that political culture is no other than psychological orientation towards the social object, so that political system undergoes the process of internalization into cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation.

In relation with that, the effort of mapping the variables of political culture from the orientation of pragmatic and utopian values, from the forms of political cultures concerning the attitude towards the tradition and change of in open and closed attitude. In the light of militancy level, it can show a tolerant or hypocrite political attitude. Meanwhile, in terms of political role about the leadership pattern as the initiative motivator and creative freedom or one who demands needs, and from the attitude towards the mobility showed the devotee on the status quo or on mobility. Eventually, regarding with the decision, it seems to be economic or non economic-oriented (Nashir, 2000; Jenks, 2013).

It seems that political culture of Indonesia is the “mixed political culture” that is colored with the bigness of the parochial-subject political culture effect. The political culture with parochial-subject mentioned above has more harmony to grow with the perception of the society towards political object that bases his self on the output process from the ruler. In addition, the tendency of political culture of Indonesia describes the attitude of paternalism and patrimonial characteristic in the form of paternalism phenomenon.

### **RESEARCH PROBLEMS**

There are two things that become the focus and scope of problems in this research. Firstly, how is the description of traditional leadership dynamics that has ever been put into practice in area of Konawe Kingdom Leadership in the past?

Secondly, how are the form, model, and process of traditional leadership reflecting the cultural value of such a beautiful local democracy that has ever been practiced in the period of Konawe Kingdom in the past?

### **RESEARCH PARADIGM**

This research used constructivism paradigm and qualitative approach centered on ethnographic study to describe vision, perception, work ethic, and the conduct of local citizen

according to the subjectivity of his own culture (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Spradley, 2007; Peribadi, *et al.*, 2015).

### **The Actor as Research Setting**

Unit of analysis in this research was the social elites living in area of Konawe Kingdom Government both for them who are occupying the position in bureaucracy of Konawe Regency Government and as ex-official of executive, legislative, and jurisprudence and other local elites as the customary, religious, and local society figures.

### **Finding the Information of Field**

The research took place in area of Konawe Regency Government that is based on the consideration that Konawe Regency is the center of Konawe Kingdom in the past and for twice has held the Regional Public Election that always is colored by social conflict. In the effort of the result required, the process of data collecting in the field was developed through participatory observation, indepth interview, and focus group discussion, and documentary study.

### **Technique of Analysis**

Data that have been successful to be collected were analyzed qualitatively with political sociology and political anthropology approach. Interpretation of data was developed according to the sense in the expression of Max Weber, namely *verstehen* in the case of obtaining a valid discussion concerning the subjective meanings of social and rational actions (Johnson, 1986). Likewise, the record of conversation was analyzed ethno methodologically and model analysis of symbolic interactionism (Muhadjir, 2011).

## **RESULTS OF ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The leadership system of Tolaki ethnics has five categories, namely: (1) *Pre Osara* in the form of settlement units of *Okambo* under the system of leadership of *Toono Motuo*; (2) *Pre Osara* in the form of small kingdoms that are spread to some sector areas; (3) *Osara* in a big kingdom with Konawe as the central; (4) *Osara* after the fall of Konawe Kingdom that ends under the leadership of *Lakidende*; and (5) *Osara* in the period of independence until post reformation nowadays (Tarimana, 1993; Taridala, 2005; Peribadi, *et al.*, 2015).

### **1. System of Traditional Leadership**

The system of *Osara* institution followed the system of governmental development that happened in Konawe Kingdom or after the founding of Mekongga Kingdom. Since the reign period of *Wekoila* Dynasty that took place for 25 generations until the King *Tebawo* ascended the throne to be the thirtieth King Konawe in 1621 AD, the composition of the apparatus of customary law of *Sara* called *Pare Wano Sara Wonua* has been formed in each village or *Okambo* under the coordination of the ruler of area customs called with *Pu'utobu*. One of the public figures that now become the Head of Legislative of South Konawe that is expanded from Konawe Regency stated that:

”Structure of traditional leadership and special rules that have become the guide since the beginning of the existence of *Onapo/Okambo*, *Otobu*, and *Wonua* in the past still keep

becoming the guide in Tolakinese society that have been put into practice from small kingdoms up to now. Although they underwent a little change in the period of Lakidende leadership, but not like in Buton Sultanate that has been affected by Islam leadership. It can be seen in current Customary Institution of Tolaki-Mekongga. It still remains like social organization in the past. But, the political elites from Tolakinese tribe as well as the political elites in general seem to begin disregarding the wisdoms of the above mentioned cultural values of *Kalosara*” (Irham Kalenggo was interviewed by the researcher on August 1, 2014).

In every village, there is a *Toono Motu'o* functioning as the Head of government at the village level and as the local customary functionary. In his position as the head of government at the village level is assisted by the apparatus: (1) a *Posudo* as the Vice of the Village Head; (2) a *Tolea* as the ambassador of marital affairs; (3) a *Pabitara* as the customary spokesman; (4) a *Mbuowai* as the health official; (5) a *Mbosehe* as the peacemaker; (6) a *Mbuoakoi* as the Muslim leader of belief; (7) an *Otadu* as the tactician and forecaster; and (8) a *Tamalaki* as the commander in battle.

The existence as the local customary ruler is only assisted by a *Pabitara* and *Tolea* and two until three local customary prestigious and respected elders as the members. In carrying out their daily duty primarily in the process of investigation, jurisdiction, and litigation of both every customary offense case or customary civil conflict that appear in the society, so a *Toono Motuo* and his apparatus are under the control and coordination of local area customary ruler (*Pu'utobu*).

The complete composition of the Customary Law institutional apparatus of *Sara Wonua* or *Osara* that has prevailed since the above mentioned *Wekoila* period up to now is still defended in every area of village and district in Konawe Regency, Kendari City, Kolaka Regency, South Konawe Regency, North Kolaka Regency, North Konawe Regency, and East Kolaka Regency. In every area of *Otobu* that now has the same level as district area, there is an area customary ruler called with *Pu'utobu* with the main duty as the head of local customary court that supervises: (1) a *Toonomotuo* as the Vice of court head; (2) a *Tolea* as the member judge in the court session of conflict cases/marital affairs; (3) a *Pabitara* as the member judge as one as the prosecutor as well as the lawyer in the court session of civil cases; and (4) two until three elders of local custom as the member judge.

The composition of *Sarawonua* customary institution apparatus mentioned above has the same prevailing for every village. It bears the meaning that if the case that will be finished happens in area of Village A, say, so the composition of its apparatus keeps being led by local *Pu'utobu*. Meanwhile, the its member apparatus are the customary apparatus at the village level in each village concerned. It is rather different from Kolake Regency because it has the same position and authority of *Toonomotuo* as *Pu'utobu* in Konawe. In this context, in accordance with one of the senior customary figures in Konawe Regency that:

”Even if in many villages in area of South Konawe Regency, Kolaka Regency, and North Kolaka Regency, a majority of the citizens have been the new comer citizens like the tribes of Bugis, Makassar, Java, Bali, and Lombok. But in the light of customary law, the above mentioned villages remain to become the area of customary law of Tolakinese people” (H. Abdul Latif Djuarna was interviewed on August 18, 2014).

According to the result of Workshop in the context of verification of Tolakinese customary law that was held in Kendari City for three days, so the customary functionaries of

*Pu'utobu*, *Tolea*, *Pabitara*, and the figures from all areas of Konawe, Kolaka, Kendari City, South Konawe, North Konawe, and North Kolaka, have been agreed to be established. This is intended in order that using *Kalo* with two sizes only will do, namely: (1) the size of 45 cm for the group of the Regent above and (2) the size of 40 cm for the group of the Regent below.

Currently, the customary institution of *Sarano Tolaki* has been formed that now is called with the customary institution of Tolaki Konawe Mekongga. System of customary institution of *Sara Wonua* is planned to be perfected continuously according to the social development of Tolakinese customary law. Firstly, in every area of district (*Otobu*) keeps having a *Pu'utobu* that has a permanent living place in the Capital of district that may not be doubled by the Chief of Tolaki Mekongga customary institution at the district level. Every *Pu'utobu* is raised through the decree letter of the Head of customary institution of Konawe Tolaki Mekongga on the proposition of the customary institution of Tolaki Konawe Mekongga of district and is known by the head of local district by supervising all apparatus of *Sara Wonua* at the village level in its area, namely: (1) a *Toonomotuo* as the Vice of *Pu'utobu* in village concerned; (2) a *Tolea*; (3) a *Pabitara*; and (4) three until five elders of local customs as the members. Next, the customary apparatus of *Sara Wonua* at the village level is raised through the decree letter of the Head of customary institution of Tolaki Konawe Mekongga of district on the proposition of the Head of local village.

Secondly, at the regency level (*Wonua*) besides there is a Head of customary institution of Tolaki Konawe Mekongga (*Mokole/Sangia*), a *Tolea* and *Pabitara* are raised as well at the regency level and four until five persons to examine and decide all kinds of cases that cannot be accomplished through the decree letter of the Head of central customary institution of Tolaki Konawe Mekongga on the proposition of regency/city.

## 2. Traditional Leadership and Local Democracy Practice

It has been elaborated previously that the leadership system of Tolakinese tribe appears into five phases. In one of the above mentioned phase reflects a practice of the leadership of "local democracy" that is traditional according to social dynamics and cultural change in tribe and ethnic group of Tolaki/Mekongga. Although in accordance with the informants that are successful to be interviewed that the value and customs and traditions contained in the culture of the above mentioned *Kalosara* becomes a symbolic *universum* that is not obeyed enough anymore by the next generations.

The area of Konawe Kingdom power under the leadership of King *Wekoila* underwent the change into two kingdoms, namely Konawe and Mekongga Kingdom. This happened when the third descendant of Larumbalangi called with Lombo-Lombo succeeded in persuading some leaders of Tolakinese tribe in area of Wundulako that wanted to separate themselves from the center of Konawe Kingdom in Unaaha in the beginning of the Fifteenth Century AD. Although, initially the effort of the rebellion could be extinguished by King *Melamba* from Konawe, but was then continued again by his child named *Lamba-Lambasa* so that the condition seethed again.

Eventually, the above mentioned upheaval condition could be finished by Haluoleo by way of persuading King *Melamba* from Konawe to release the area from Wundulako to Tamboli to be the area of Mekongga Kingdom area. Meanwhile, the area of North Kolaka that is known with the *Patampanua* keeps being the area of Konawe Kingdom in the western part of *Latoma*. The condition of relationship between Konawe and Mekongga Kingdom as the consequence of

separation will be stable again after the King ascends to the throne and replaces his father, Lamba-Lambasa.

The King Bokeo *Teporambe* changed the tactic and strategy of approach from the approach in violence into the approach in family through the political marriage with the Princess of King Latoma called Wungabae. Owing to this marriage, so on the approval of Tebawo as the King Konawe at that time, so some areas of southern Konawe Kingdom were submitted by King Latoma (*Buburanda*) to his daughter Wungabae, and her husband, Teporambe as the gift of marriage that as one to mark the end of conflict between Konawe and Mekongga Kingdom. But, according to one of the senior customary figures that:

“it is necessary to be noted that although eventually at the end of Konawe Kingdom can release a part of its area to be the area of Mekongga Kingdom power, but the rule of the customs and customary law in area of Mekongga Kingdom also keeps being the rule of the customs and customary law of Tolaki (*OSARA*). Even, the structure of *Okambo* and *Otobu* remains to be the main reference in the process of implementing Konawe Kingdom in every king governs. Except, in the period of Lakidende leadership, it undergoes a little addition because at that time Islam started to enter Konawe and its vicinity” (H. Muslimin Su’ud was interviewed by the researcher on September 20, 2014).

Based on this, the King of Tebawo Government then applied the pattern of autonomy leadership in four corners of governments called with *Siwolembatohuu* and *Opitudulubatu*. This was the giving of a part of powers (autonomy) to *Maranai* in Abuki, *Togala* in Lambuya, *Haribau* in Sampara and *Sorumba* in Ranoometo, but the top leader kept being centered in Konawe. Besides, in the center of kingdom, there was a customary law apparatus functioning as the Supreme Court nowadays. His task is to investigate, administer justice, and decide every case that cannot be finished by the apparatus of customary law institution of Sarawonua at the level of *Okambo*, *Otobu*, *Wonua* and at the level of *Siwolembatohuu* and *Opitudulubatu*. In this context, according to a son of in the first place of Konawe Kingdom was, and now is as the editor of the organizer of People in Southeast Sulawesi that:

”Democracy in Indonesia that is said that it is imported from Greece apparently since long has been in area of Konawe Kingdom Government, and even more amazingly because our nation has not yet been long to learn to actuate Regional Autonomy. But, it turned out that the system of local democracy has been put into practice in the period of Tebawo leadership. It shows that our cultural value not only contains conventional things, but also includes the pattern of modern democracy” (Agus Tohamba was interviewed by the researcher on September 20, 2014).

It was then continued in the period of King Lakidende reign, but the apparatus of customary institution of *Sara Wonua* at the level of *Okambo/Otobu* was held the addition of one position namely a *Sarea*, because in the above mentioned period, Islam religion has been accepted as the religion of Konawe Kingdom. Meanwhile, in the period of Laiwoi Kingdom, the composition of Customary Institution apparatus of *Sara Wonua* above did not undergo the change up to now either.

## CONCLUSIONS

Firstly, traditional leadership and practice of local democracy contained in a phase of *Osara* leadership in Konawe Kingdom describes the pattern of culture as meant by R.F. Benedict and collective awareness as intended by Durkheim. However, when Indonesian nation enters the independence world, so not only the system of traditional leadership with various practices of local democracy that ever grew and developed well in the past has undergone the degradation of culture evolutionarily and revolutionarily. However, almost all social aspects of local culture undergo the change along with the process of social dynamic and cultural change taking place intensively during the period of national development in a variety of social fields.

Secondly, the structure of traditional leadership at the level of *Onapo/Okambo*, *Otobu* and *Wonua* underlain by the culture of *Okalo/Kalosara/Osara*, up to now still keeps being the guide for the community of Tolaki/Mekongga/Marunene in holding their daily social life. Even though, empirically it shows that the internalization and application of the above mentioned cultural value seems to be more dominant in the form of ritualistic ceremony like the ceremony of wedding, birth, death, and customary figures inauguration.

Thirdly, such a spectacular traditional leadership that has ever been practiced in the period of Konawe Kingdom, apparently it not only reflects local democracy that currently is urgent enough to be developed, but also is so amazing because apparently the system of Regional Autonomy that has just been effective in Indonesia has been practiced in the period of King Tebawo reign when giving a part of his domains in *Maranai* in Abuki, *Togala* in Lambuya, *Haribau* in Sampara and *Sorumba* in Ranoometo, but the top leader remains to be centered in Konawe. Meanwhile, *Okalo/Kalosara/Osara* that become the source of inspiration and motivation for the community of Tolaki/Mekongga/Marunene in holding a variety of their activities at the level of *Okambo*, *Otobu*, *Wonua*, apparently are the solution of conflict that deserves to be exemplified.

## SUGGESTIONS

Firstly, the base of *Kalosara* culture must be reflected into a variety of political/governmental policies and other fields especially the importance to be synergized with specific rules in the process of holding the regional Public Election directly that lately has tended to be aberrant that can be seen from a variety of horizontal conflicts that become the trending issue.

Secondly, *Kalosara* should be adopted into educational curriculum based on local in Educational Office especially in mainland area of Southeast Sulawesi. This is important because the findings showed that the societal citizens in general and the last generation side in specific are the pearl contained in the above mentioned value of *Kalosara* seems to begin being forgot and even later happens the crisis of the person that can serve as *Pabitara* and *Tolea*.

Thirdly, specifically for the social organization and harmony institution should concentrate on one of the programs orienting in the effort of reconstruction and revitalization of the cultural value of *Kalosara*, so that the cultural value that is full of wisdom is not out of date or keeps adapting with the globalization era. This is very important because the institutions like the customary institution of Tolaki Konawe Mekongga seem to have the symptom of affiliating both directly and indirectly with the sensations having political nuances. At least, there is frequently “stowaway” that enters the above mentioned socio cultural value.



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