

# Inculturation of Tradition Hamulak Music Fohorem Church

Filomena Soares Amaral<sup>1,\*</sup> Rita Milyartini<sup>1</sup> Diah Latifah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Indonesian Graduate School of Education Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia*

\*Corresponding author. Email: [fsoaresamaralrscj@gmail.com](mailto:fsoaresamaralrscj@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

Inculturation is an effort to make church rituals understandable and attractive to local cultures. The church strives to incorporate a community's values and culture to enrich the faith of the people, and its taste for worship. An example is the Fohorem church's allowing traditional Hamulak music for the ritual of taking holy water. The purpose of this article is to describe how traditional hamulak music is used in the Fohorem church and how the Fohorem church simultaneously conforms to the Catholic Church's liturgical music guidelines. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data collection technique is an online field interview. The results showed that Hamulak music in the church is a sign of the Church's openness to local values and culture, especially local musical art. The ritual and local traditions support each other and strengthen the faith and cultural taste of the Fohorem people. The singing of traditional hamulak music in the church helps the people in prayer and is inseparable from the guidelines for inculturating liturgical music.

**Keywords:** *Inculturation, Liturgy music, Hamulak music, Fohorem church.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Inculturation is an effort to bring the church and local cultures together. In the Catholic Church the term was popularized at the time of the Second Vatican Council. Inculturation is an efficient way of preaching the gospel because of its openness to elements of good and authentic culture. Inculturation allows the spirit of the gospel to explore and complement the culture that contains certain local values by integrating them the church's life. Thus, people can really live the gospel as something "familiar". Culture itself includes all forms of activities and results of human activities in relation to God, others and the world. According to Pope John Paul II in the Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* no 52: Inculturation "implies profound transformation of authentic values through the process of their integration into Christianity and the pervasiveness of Christianity into various cultures of mankind". Dom Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo [1] understood inculturation as two things that enrich each other. The church proclaims Christian teachings and values by enriching and sanctifying local cultural values and local cultural values enrich the faith of the people. The Document of the Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* art. 112 explains that the Church approves all forms of true art, which have

the characteristics of liturgical requirements and allow their use in the worship of God. Thus, inculturation is seen as a medium for people with a cultural identity, to accept the Christian faith which animates the life of a believer in the context of his/her concrete life. In other words, the Catholic church must open up and accept elements of local cultures as long as they are not in principle against the teachings of the Catholic religion.

The purpose of liturgical inculturation is to celebrate the liturgy in a manner and atmosphere that is in harmony with the cultural tastes of the people who worship. On the other hand, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 7 views the liturgy as the application of the priestly duties of Jesus Christ by the mystical body of Christ, namely the Head and its members. The content of the priesthood of Jesus Christ SC 5 (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) is the work of God's salvation carried out by Christ. Rom. Emanuel Martasudjita, Pr. "The liturgy is a celebration of the mystery of God's work of salvation in Christ, which is carried out by Jesus Christ, the High Priest, with His Church and the Holy Spirit [2]. The main purpose of the liturgy is for glorification (glorification of God) and sanctification (sanctification of human beings). So the music used in worship, must foster an atmosphere of worship that leads to the glorification of God and the sanctification of people. The music used in

worship is expected to help create an atmosphere of holiness, a conducive atmosphere of collective prayer [3]. This is stated in the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council [4] on Musicam Sacram, Instructions on music in the liturgy issued on March 5, 1967 art. 199 "it is hoped that pastors of souls, musicians and people will happily accept the rules of liturgical music and implement them, while combining their efforts to achieve the original intention of worship music, which is to "glorify God and sanctify the faithful".

Worship music is music composed for the celebration of sacred worship, and in terms of its form has a certain sacred weight. For example, what are included in the types of worship music are: gregorian songs, sacred polyphony, with various forms, both ancient and modern, worship music for organs and other musical instruments that have been approved, and folk worship music, whether it's liturgical or just spiritual. The standards and rules of liturgical music are based on what the Church has inaugurated, namely that the true joy of a liturgy does not only depend on the beauty of the singing or the beauty of the ceremony, but also on its meaning. The celebration of worship that takes into account the integration of the liturgical celebration itself, and the application of each part of it. fits its identity. As explained above, the celebration of worship is for the glorification of God and the sanctification of the people. Liturgical music is ritual music, created specifically to serve liturgical celebrations. Liturgical music has a uniqueness that is determined by its integration with rituals [3]. Thus, it is clear that not all cultural music can be included in church worship if it reduces the nature and purpose of the ritual.

Hamulak music is traditional music in the form of prayers and praises used in the traditional ritual of taking holy water in the Fohorem tribe. This art was passed down by ancestors orally and is still alive today. In ancient times, hamulak music was only sung in traditional rituals of taking holy water. However, now hamulak music can also be sung in churches, namely the Fohorem church and especially at the Easter Vigil Mass at the ritual of blessing the holy water.

Since 2009, the Fohorem Church has been using hamulak music at the Easter Vigil Mass, sometimes called the Holy Saturday Mass, especially during the holy water procession. In the view of the researcher, this phenomenon is interesting to study, even though there has been no previous study. The gap in this research is related to the absence of previous research on music inculturation in the Fohorem Church. In practice, inculturation is applied in the church, but there is no academic research data yet. The lack of academic research creates a gap in "knowledge" data. Therefore, the researcher tried to use a qualitative descriptive method to find field data which could later be analyzed and described in order to make a conclusion.

The focus of this research is the description of hamulak music as a traditional song of prayer and praise sung in the church, especially during the holy water blessing ritual and explaining how the process and steps of hamulak music are sung in the church.

Based on the background described above, the researchers asked several main questions in this study as follows:

- What are the process and steps of singing hamulak?
- What are the people's feelings and thoughts about the Hamulak music?

## **2. METHODS**

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data generated are in the form of written or spoken words from participants and the behavior observed by the researcher. Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong [5] say that the qualitative method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written, oral and participant behavior that can be observed by a researcher and is holistic (intact). The reason the researcher uses the descriptive qualitative method is to understand deeply the inculturation of hamulak music in the Fohorem church which can ultimately produce an in-depth understanding as well. The data collected in this research method is in the form of stories from informants about experiences, knowledge of the tradition of hamulak music itself. So that the data obtained by this descriptive type of qualitative method will be described, namely how the hamulak music is used in the church and while also showing when this music is used for traditional rituals of taking holy water. The procedure in this study follows the opinion expressed by Stevick, Colaizzi and Keen Hasbiansyah, namely determining the phenomenon, compiling a list of questions, collecting data, analyzing data, describing it possibly and compiling reports.

The location of this research was carried out at the Fohorem Parish Church, Fohorem Village, Timor Leste taking into account that this village is one of the places where the Fohorem tribal community live, which seems to still adhere to local culture while being open to the church. Participants in this study consisted of 7 people. Three performers of hamulak art also act as traditional leaders in the village of Fohorem. The traditional leaders in question are those who are diligent in carrying out their duties as traditional leaders and most importantly they are well versed in the customs and traditions handed down by their ancestors. Senhor Miguel de Oliveira and Senhor Pedro are traditional leaders and performers of hamulak music. Senhor Carlos is a traditional leader who knows the history of hamulak music., These three people, consider it good

that the church approved the singing of hamulak music in the church. An atmosphere of worship is created, with the Hamulak text which contains an outpouring of prayer and praise to the Almighty.

Apart from the three traditional leaders, the researcher also interviewed 4 other people as informants. They are church activists and young people. The data obtained from these 4 people are in the form of expressions of their feelings, responses and views on the use of hamulak music in the church.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection is carried out online without direct observation. The methods and steps taken by the researcher in this interview are first; obtain consent of participants who are ready to become informants, second; make an interview schedule, third; decide which application to use for interviews such as via WhatsApp. This data was obtained through an in-depth interview.

The data analysis stage involved data collection, data reduction, data presentation, verification/drawing conclusions. The data collected was obtained from online interviews Via WhatsApp. After the data is collected, the next step is data reduction. What the researcher does at this stage is the activity of summarizing, selecting the main things, focusing on the things that are considered important, and looking for themes and patterns. Likewise, the data that has been reduced is expected to provide a clearer picture and make it easier for researchers to carry out further data collection and search if needed. After the data is reduced, the next step is to present the data. The presentation of this data as a set of structured information that gives the possibility of drawing conclusions. Data presentation is used to further improve understanding of the case and as a reference for taking action based on understanding and analysis of data presentation. The next step is verification/drawing conclusions. Conclusions are the results of research that answer the research focus based on the results of data analysis. This conclusion is presented in the form of a descriptive research object based on the research study.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Fohorem villagers are located in the mountains of the eastern part of the East Island. Fohorem villagers are generally friendly, close to nature, and strong in their customs. One of their noble qualities is mutual trust in one another. Gentle manners greatly affect life together. In interacting with other people, the people in Fohorem village still adhere to the customs or traditions and laws that apply in their environment and they find it difficult to deviate from the conditions and laws that apply in their environment or village. The majority of the population is Catholic. Hamulak music is a traditional music originating from Timor, Suai Regency, Fohorem

Tribe. This music comes from ancestors and is passed down from generation to generation orally. According to Senhor Miguel de Oliveira, there is no information about who composed the Hamulak song and in what year the song was written. However, the information obtained is that Hamulak music was created by the ancestors and this song is a typical song of the ancestors.

Hamulak music is sung at the ritual of taking holy water on the mountain where the holy water is located. This ritual of taking holy water is only carried out at certain times. According to one of the chiefs of the Fohorem tribe, Senhor Carlos. one of the informants, during the time of their ancestors, the ritual of taking holy water was carried out once a year or during a long dry season, causing them to lack water for daily life. At such times, people go to the place where the holy water is located, namely on the mountain. The goal is to take holy water as well as to ask the owner of the water to rain blessings on everyone. This can be seen from the content of the Hamulak text which consists of elements of respect, welcome, praise and prayer requests to the Almighty.

Hamulak music poems are written in the native language of their ancestors. Below is the Hamulak music lyric accompanied by an Indonesian translation as follows:

*Oe Re Teki Eh Tekis Dei* (he's the magic one)

*Tour Eh Tur Dei*, (sitting on the throne)

*Oeh Tadu Eh Tan Dei*, (he appears for a reason)

*Mosu Eh Tan Dei* (also he came for that reason)

*Oe Ne'e E Leten Ba, Ne'e E A's Ba*

(he's the one up there, the throne)

*Ne'e Kolin ama, Ne'e E Leo Ruas*

(He came from above and will return there)

*Eh Kolin Ne, Ba Filak, Lao Eh Ba Fila*

(he came to visit, he walked here)

*E Nodi Eh Ibu Sae, E Nodi Eh Lia Tun*

(bringing my cry up, bringing a message to earth)

*Oe Ama Eh Maromak, Ina Eh Maromak*

(he is like a father and mother figure at the same time)

*Oh Didin Eh Sarak Hela, n* (protect and protect us)

*Eh Belit Eh Hitu Ba, Ri Te Hitu Ba* (you up there)

*Oe Hau Eh Mesa Koson, Oe Hau Eh Sei Nurak*

(I'm still young and small)

*Oeh Temi Eh La To'o, Ksu Eh La To'o*

(It's not worth mentioning your name, let alone asking)

*Oeh Kusu Tia Eh Kika Dei, Kusu Eh Kikar Dei*

(however, I keep begging and begging again)

*Oeh Ami Eh Raiklaran, Ami Eh Raik Tenan*

(we are earth people; we are people below)

*Oeh Ne'e Be Leten Ba, Ne'e Be A'as Ba*

(he on the throne, up there)

*Hodi Eh Tau Matan, Hodi Eh Fo Lian*

(help us, talk to us)

*Hodi Eh, Nodi Matak Malirin, Nadi Eh Matak Dato*

(bring living water, freshness and greenery)

*Nisik Eh Raiklaran, Baku Eh Raiklaran*

(water and splash this earth, touch this earth)

*Oh Lia Eh Murak Mean, Lia Eh Murak Dato*

(his word is like gold, his word is like a beauty)

*Oe Mrs. Eh Dato Oan, Lia Eh Dato Oan*

(his mouth is good; his word is our food)

The lyrics of the song above may only be sung by a soloist who has been specially trained and selected. Before the holy water is taken, a soloist sings the song Hamulak as a sign of respect, gratitude and asks the owner of the water to give permission to take holy water. After reciting the hamulak music, the traditional leader approached the well to draw water with gratitude and respect. Then the water is poured into a vessel or water barrel made of bamboo.

Hamulak music will also be sung again after the holy water is delivered to the traditional house as a sign that the water that has been drawn from the spring will now be used for life. So right in front of the traditional house three people stand to welcome the arrival of the holy water. One of them was standing in the middle, reciting hamulak music. While he recitates the hamulak music, the people present in an atmosphere of silence and prayer listen to the melodious chanting of the hamulak music without the accompaniment of instruments.

In ancient times, hamulak music was only sung at the ritual of taking holy water. However, now hamulak music is also sung in the church. In 2010 a priest on

duty at the Fohorem church named Kris Dodok, cmf. poke with the traditional elders of Fohorem so that the holy water to be blessed at the Easter Vigil Mass can be taken from the mountain. Likewise, the hamulak music would be sung during the procession taking holy water to the altar. Finally, there was an agreement between the church and the traditional elders to do this.

The process of taking holy water follows the traditional ritual. Some people as messengers went to the mountains to fetch water. Before the water is taken, a soloist sings the song Hamulak. Each stanza is sung without any instrumental accompaniment. Arriving at the church, holy water is placed in front of the church. Then the people process into the church line up at the front entrance. Three people welcome holy water and one of them, who stands in the middle, recites hamulak music. Hamulak music is recited once again as a sign of gratitude and prayer. Therefore, every hamulak musical verse sung by a single vocalist must be as beautiful and melodious as possible, following the original rhythmic and melodic patterns handed down by the ancestors.

The art of traditional music is accepted by the church as long as it does not conflict with the rules of liturgical music. The inculturation of hamulak music is a good thing that so far has been implemented by the Fohorem church community, enriching and adding to the taste of the people in worship.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The inculturation of hamulak music at the Fohorem Church is a simple step for the church to pay attention to and promote traditional musical arts in Fohorem. The values expressed in hamulak musical poetry are accepted as good things that help the faith and the worship atmosphere of the people. The application of hamulak music is considered not contrary to liturgical music guidelines but as a positive contribution. The process and steps of using hamulak music for this traditional ritual of taking holy water on the mountain are the same as those used for the ritual of blessing holy water in the church. The church and local culture support each other. The good impact on the growth of the people's faith as well as maintaining the identity of the local community in the church is revealed through the inclusion of hamulak music in the church. Hamulak music verse is close and familiar to the people of Fohorem. Churches and local traditions support each other and strengthen faith and cultural tastes. The recitation of traditional hamulak music in the church helps the people in prayer and is inseparable from the guidelines for inculturating liturgical music and the local cultural context.

**REFERENCES**

- [1] X.C.F. Belo, "Inkulturasun (Inculturação). Lisboa, 22 de julho de 2020. A Voz de, Voice of East Timor, Matadalan Ba Sosiadade Livre" (online), retrieved from <https://stlnews.co/featured/inkulturasun-inculturacao/>
- [2] E. Martasudjita, *Introduction to the Liturgy: Meaning, History, and Liturgical Theology*. Canisius: Yogyakarta, 2007.
- [3] S.H. Suryanugraha, *Singing the Liturgy Singing the Mass*. Yogyakarta; PT. Canisius, 2015.
- [4] Vatican Council II documents, *Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution Concerning the Sacred Liturgy)*. Translated by R. Hardawiryana, SJ. Jakarta: Dep. Documentation of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference, 1990.
- [5] L. Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methods*. Bandung: Youth Rosda-karya, 2002.