

Semiotic Study on *Tortor Hoda Hoda* on Sibandang Island

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ABSTRACT

This article is entitled Semiotic Analysis of *Tortor Hoda Hoda* on Sibandang Island. This research aims to describe the symbols in the *Tortor Hoda Hoda* movement, describe the function of the symbols in the *Tortor Hoda Hoda* movement, describe the value of the symbols in the *Tortor Hoda Hoda* movement. The theory used in analyzing data is the semiotic theory put forward by Charles Sanders Peirce. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. In this research, the results of 4 symbols for the *tortor hoda hoda* movement were found, including the *tortor* at first, *tortor somba*, *tortor manerser* and factoring. Furthermore, there are 4 symbol functions of the *tortor hoda hoda* movement, including the initial *tortor* function, the *somba tortor* function, the *manerser tortor* function, and the factoring function. The meaning contained in *tortor hoda hoda* is the meaning contained in the movements of *tortor* initially, *tortor somba*, *tortor manerser*, and factoring.

Keywords: *tortor hoda hoda*, Toba Batak ethnicity, semiotics.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Toba Batak ethnic group is part of the Batak tribe which is famous for its sophisticated culture and centuries-old traditions. The Toba Batak have a rich and unique culture, such as the *tortor* dance,

gondang sabangunan music, and beautiful carving and weaving arts.

The Batak tribe in North Sumatra, Indonesia, is the origin of the traditional dance known as *tortor*. The meaning and function of this dance has its own philosophy in people's lives. In Batak culture, *tortor* is an integral component of all traditional rituals, festivals and other important events. *Tortor* is a dance performed by a group of men and women. Dancers usually wear typical traditional clothing, such as *ulos* (traditional 2-woven cloth), scarves, and other traditional jewelry. They also use traditional musical instruments such as the *gondang* (percussion instrument), *suling*, and flute.

Tortor has energetic and dynamic movements. These movements involve hands, feet and facial expressions that depict the story or message to be conveyed. This dance is also often accompanied by singing and distinctive musical accompaniment. The meaning of *tortor* can vary depending on the context. This dance can be a means of honoring ancestors, expressing gratitude, or celebrating success in agriculture, hunting, or other traditional ceremonies. Apart from that, *tortor* can also be used as a medium of communication between humans and the spiritual world or as a means of entertainment at social events.

North Tapanuli Regency is also known for its arts and culture, one example is *Tortor Hoda Hoda* which is in North Tapanuli Regency, specifically *Tortor Hoda Hoda* is

on Sibandang Island. *Tortor hoda hoda* originates from Sibandang Island in North Sumatra, Indonesia. This dance is part of the Toba Batak culture who inhabit these 3 areas. *Tortor hoda hoda* is generally performed at traditional events, religious ceremonies, weddings, or other cultural events. Usually, *tortor* is performed by a group of male and female dancers, performing *tortor hoda hoda* using piggyback horses as props. They form a circle or semi-circle formation by holding each other's hands. Traditional musical instruments such as *gondang*, *taganing*, *gondang sabangunan*, and *sulim* are often used to accompany this dance.

Structuralists, referring to Ferdinand de Saussure (in Sitompul, 2021), see signs as a meeting between form (which is imaged in a person's cognition) and meaning (or content, namely what is understood by the human user of the sign). De Saussure uses the term signifier. In terms of the form of a sign, and signified (signified) in terms of its meaning. The theory used in this article is the semiotic theory proposed by Pierce. Pierce in Danesi (2012:37) states that symbols are representatives of objects, concepts, perspectives, and so on which are directed into becoming an object. Pierce's identification was carried out by stating that there are three signs that are used, namely: (1) icon, which is the relationship between a sign and its reference which is related to similarity. Icons are part of semiotics to signify a thing or situation in explaining and informing the subject of the object. In this case, signs always refer to a real thing such as objects, events, writing, language, actions, events and other forms of signs; (2) index, a sign that represents a reference through the technique of pointing to it or binding implicitly or explicitly through another reference Danesi (2012:38). In the index, we can make a connection between the sign as a signifier and its signified, which have the following characteristics: real, sequential, cause and effect and always hints at something. Three types of indexes are used, namely personal, temporal and

spatial indices; (3) symbol, is a sign that represents an object with approval or agreement in a detailed area. In the symbol, a relationship between the signifier and the signified is displayed. A sign that turns into a symbol by itself by adding cultural, situational and conditional characteristics. The meaning of a symbol is developed with social approval or various historical traditions (Danesi, 2012:38,44).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Sugiyono (2019:1) suggests that research methods are a scientific approach to collecting data that has certain benefits. The research method consists of six components, namely: basic method, research data location, research data source, research instrument, data collection method, and data analysis method. The method used in this article is a qualitative descriptive method to study the semiotic analysis of *Tortor Hoda Hoda*. In this analysis, it is necessary to collect data obtained by: (1) interviews with informants who are experts in *tortor hoda hoda*; (2) observations made at the research location; and (3) documentation in the form of pictures of the research object. The data analysis methods used in this article are: (1) collecting information through documentation and interviews; (2) combining information by considering important elements; (3) compiling and organizing the correlation model so that it can be understood easily; (4) draw initial conclusions that are not fixed and can change if there is strong data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Form, Function and Meaning of Movement in Tortor Hoda Hoda

In the Toba Batak community, especially on Sibandang Island, *tortor hoda hoda* is closely related to traditional ceremonies, ritual ceremonies and entertainment. *Tortor hoda hoda* has an important role in the life activities of the Toba Batak community which are related to spiritual life and also social relations. *Tortor* is carried out in various ritual activities and religious

ceremonies and can also be performed in traditional contexts. The *hoda hoda tortor* has several movements in it, namely the initial *tortor*, *somba tortor*, *manerser tortor*,

and *anjak*. The symbols on the *Tortor Hoda Hoda* movement have different shapes. Below we will explain the symbols found in the *Tortor Hoda Hoda* movement.

No.	Motion Symbol Shape	Motion Symbol Function
1.	<p><i>Tortor Mula Mula</i></p>  <p>The first part of the <i>tortor mula mula</i> to illustrate that every job has a beginning and it is hoped that the beginning will be good and in order to get a good start. In this section, use a medium level for the hands, namely the height of the hands in front of the chest. The direction the dancer faces in this section is facing left, right, and again facing the front. The energy used by dancers is light energy to make movements visible and cohesive. The tempo in this section is faster than the tempo in the other sections.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The <i>mula mula</i> movement functions as an opening signifying the start of a traditional ceremony or celebration. This movement is solemn and respectful, depicting readiness and opening space to convey goals and prayers. - In Batak culture, <i>tortor</i> is closely related to respect for ancestral spirits. The <i>mula mula</i> movement is often the opening of communication to the ancestors, as an initial form of conveying requests, prayers and gratitude.
2.	<p><i>Tortor Somba</i></p>  <p>The second part of the movement, namely <i>tortor somba</i>, depicts dancers worshiping the <i>desa na ualu</i> (eight cardinal directions) consisting of <i>utara</i> (north), <i>irisanna</i> (northeast), <i>purba</i> (east), <i>anggoni</i> (southeast), <i>dangsina</i> (south), <i>nariti</i> (west southwest), <i>pastima</i> (west), <i>manabia</i> (northwest) prayer movements to ask for permission and blessing from <i>Mula Jadi Nabolon</i> (the name for God), respecting the audience present, also respecting the ancestral spirits at the event location so that they are allowed to carry out that event. In this part of the level the level is high and low on the hands, with a medium tempo, not as fast as the <i>tortor</i> tempo at first with the dancer facing left, right and four corners. The power used is light power where the dancer's power is evenly distributed so that the dancer looks sleek and compact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Tortor somba</i> is often displayed at social events, such as traditional parties, weddings and other events. This shows that <i>tortor somba</i> has a social function as a means of strengthening ties of brotherhood and togetherness. - <i>Tortor somba</i> is often displayed in schools as a means of teaching Batak cultural values to the younger generation. This shows that <i>tortor somba</i> has an educational function as a means of preserving Batak culture.



<p>3.</p>	<p><i>Tortor Manerser</i></p>  <p><i>Manerser</i> movement is a movement found in the manerser tortor. Manser movements are movements that use the feet as the center of movement. This movement relies on the heels and soles of the feet to create a V shape to move the soles of the feet to support the body as the soles of the feet move around. This movement must adapt to the movement of the soles of the feet to ensure balance and the rhythm of the <i>gondang</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Tortor manerser</i> is a sacred dance and can only be performed at important traditional ceremonies, such as death ceremonies, wedding ceremonies and other traditional ceremonies. This dance functions as a ritual means to ask for safety, prosperity and protection from ancestral spirits. - <i>Tortor Manerser</i> also functions as an educational tool, especially to teach Batak cultural values to the younger generation. Through this dance, the younger generation can learn about Batak customs, history and culture.
<p>4.</p>	<p><i>Anjak</i></p>  <p>The fourth part of the movement is <i>anjak</i> and in this movement, the rider of the <i>hoda hoda</i> (horse-horse) performs the movement of factoring (jumping) which is also welcomed by the <i>parmossak</i> (people who practice Batak martial arts). Here, the <i>hoda hoda</i> rider performs a turning movement and also jumps as if the horse he is riding is performing an act followed by the <i>parmossak</i> performing silat movements while "clashing" <i>hoda hoda</i> to match the rhythm of <i>tortor hoda hoda</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The movement can be used as an expression of thoughts, feelings, or stories. Each movement may have a certain meaning related to the context of the story or theme presented in the <i>Tortor Hoda Hoda</i> performance. - Some moving movements may be designed to reflect strength and stability. This can describe courage, sustainability, or the close family spirit within Batak society.

Table 1. Symbols and Functions in Hoda Hoda's Tortor Movement

No.	Denotational Meaning	Connotation Meaning
<p>1.</p>	<p><i>Tortor Mula Mula</i> Movement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Movement of opening and closing the palms: Symbolizes a request to <i>Mulajadi Na Bolon</i> (Almighty God) to give blessings and protection. 2. The movement of raising your hands up: Symbolizes gratitude and respect for <i>Mulajadi Na Bolon</i>. 3. Head bowing movement: Symbolizes humility and obedience to <i>Mulajadi Na Bolon</i>. 4. Circular movement: Symbolizes the journey of human life which continues to circle and repeat itself. 5. Jumping movement: Symbolizes human spirit and vitality. 	<p>Starting position: Sitting cross-legged on a mat with hands on knees symbolizes readiness and respect.</p> <p>Hand movements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Swinging up and down symbolizes man's relationship with the Creator and the universe. 2. Opening and closing the palms symbolizes balance and harmony. 3. Patting your chest symbolizes courage and strength. <p>Foot movements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stomping your feet on the ground symbolizes gratitude and connection to your ancestors.

		2. Stepping forward and backward symbolizes the journey of human life.
	By denotation, <i>tortor</i> is a sacred dance that symbolizes the relationship between humans and <i>Mulajadi Na Bolon</i> . This dance is an expression of gratitude, respect and supplication to <i>Mulajadi Na Bolon</i> . <i>Tortor Mula Mula</i> is also an educational dance that teaches moral and cultural values to the young generation of Toba Batak.	In terms of connotation, <i>tortor</i> is not only a beautiful dance, but also contains cultural and philosophical values that have been passed down from generation to generation. This dance is an embodiment of the identity and spirituality of the Toba Batak people.
2.	<i>Tortor Somba</i> Movement: 1. Sitting position: Sit cross-legged on a mat with your knees bent and the soles of your feet together. This position symbolizes politeness and respect for elders or ancestors. 2. Hand movements: The right hand is raised upwards with the palm open facing forward, while the left hand is placed on the right thigh. This movement symbolizes gratitude and respect for God. 3. Leg movements: The right leg is swung back and forth slowly, while the left leg remains stationary. This movement symbolizes balance and harmony in life. 4. Head movement: The head is bent downwards as a sign of respect and obedience to the ancestors and Batak cultural values.	Movement: 1. Politeness and Respect: The movements in <i>tortor somba</i> are graceful and full of gentleness, symbolizing politeness and respect for elders, such as kings, traditional leaders, or honored guests. 2. Grace and Authority: The costumes worn by <i>tortor somba</i> dancers, which are usually brightly colored and sparkling, symbolize elegance and authority. 3. Unity and Integrity: <i>Tortor somba</i> is usually danced in groups, symbolizing the unity and integrity of the Toba Batak community. 4. Gratitude and Joy: <i>Tortor somba</i> is often displayed at Toba Batak traditional events, such as weddings, funerals and harvests, as an expression of gratitude and joy. 5. Balance and Harmony The balanced and harmonious movements in <i>tortor somba</i> symbolize balance and harmony in the lives of the Toba Batak people.
	By denotation, <i>tortor somba</i> is a dance that depicts gratitude, respect and obedience to God, ancestors and Batak cultural values. This dance also symbolizes balance, harmony and identity as a Batak person.	In terms of connotation, <i>tortor somba</i> is not only a beautiful and entertaining traditional dance, but also contains deep connotations about the life values of the Toba Batak people.
3.	<i>Tortor Manerser</i> Body Movement and Position: 1. Foot movements: Stomping your feet on the ground symbolizes strength and firmness. 2. Hand gestures: Swinging your hands up and down symbolizes enthusiasm and togetherness. 3. Body position: Standing straight symbolizes respect and appreciation.	Body Movement and Position: 1. Circular movement: Symbolizes the circular journey of human life with various obstacles and trials. 2. Hand position: The right hand above symbolizes prayer and hope for the happiness and well-being of the partner. The left hand below symbolizes gratitude for God's abundance of blessings and protection. 3. Footsteps: Symbolizes the couple's readiness to move forward together in married life.
	In denotation, the <i>tortor manerser</i> symbolizes respect for ancestors and elders, symbolizes prayer and supplication to God, and symbolizes the unity and integrity of the Batak community.	In terms of connotation, <i>tortor manerser</i> is not only a traditional dance, but also contains deep connotations about married life. This dance is a prayer of blessing, advice and hope for married couples so that they can live a happy, harmonious and prosperous married life.
4.	<i>Anjak</i> In terms of denotation, the <i>hoda hoda anjak</i> movement has various denotational meanings that describe various feelings and situations. These movements are accompanied by traditional Toba Batak music which adds to the liveliness of the atmosphere.	In terms of connotation, the <i>hoda hoda anjak</i> movement looks dynamic and energetic, but still emphasizes elegance and balance. This movement shows good body control and harmony between hand, leg and torso movements.

Table 2. Meaning of Hoda Hoda's Tortor Movement

4. CONCLUSION

Tortor Hoda Hoda is a dance from the Toba Batak ethnic group which has 4 movement symbols in it. Apart from that, there are functions contained in each *Tortor Hoda Hoda* movement. And there is also a meaning contained in the movement of *Tortor Hoda Hoda*.

Declaration by Authors

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