

THE NENGGET TRADITION OF THE KARO ETHNIC: SEMIOTIC STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

Every ethnicity has various types of traditions that differ from one another. This shows that there are many different types of traditions that exist in Indonesia, especially in North Sumatra. As with one of the Karo ethnic traditions, the nengget tradition. The nengget tradition is a ceremony carried out in families who have been married for a long time but have not yet had children. This ceremony can also be performed on families who already have children but are all female or male. The purpose of this research is to describe the form, function, meaning, and the value contained in the nengget tradition of ethnic Karo. The benefits of this research can provide input for writers in increasing knowledge about the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnicity.

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1. Introduction

The Indonesian nation is a large nation that has a variety of languages and ethnicities. Ethnicity in Indonesia generally has its own characteristics and culture, including the Batak ethnic group in the North Sumatra region. Batak ethnicity consists of several ethnicities, namely Toba, Simalungun, Karo, Pak-Pak Dairi, Angkola / Mandailing. The five sub-ethnic Batak have almost the same language and culture. The Karo ethnic group is one of the Batak sub-ethnic groups which has had its own culture since long ago.

The Karo ethnic distribution area has different geographical locations, one of which is the Karo Gugung in Karo Regency. However, this geographical difference does not cause problems in the manner of implementing the culture because in general, the culture still has a very large element of similarity. Culture has a very broad scope, culture includes all human power and activities to cultivate and change nature. In accordance with what is stated by Prasetya in his book entitled Basic Cultural Studies (2004) that the meaning of culture is very broad, which includes the behavior and results of regular human behavior by the behavior that must be obtained by learning and everything is arranged in community life.

One form of culture is customs while ceremony is a tangible form of activity from customs related to all aspects of social, cultural, economic and so on. Every human action as a whole is called a culture in which there are elements of a universal culture consisting of seven cultural elements. One of the elements of universal culture is the religious system (belief system) which contains a system of ceremonies, both traditional and modern ceremonies. Human society is an attempt to fulfill its desire to communicate with supernatural powers because it contains symbols that contain serves as a means of communication with other creatures (Koentjaraningrat, 1981: 203-204).

Karo ethnic customs procedures are summarized in the culture and system known as sangkep sitelu which consists of Kalimbubu, namely the married daughter and all of her

fellow citizens, Senina / Sembuyak, namely siblings, Beru children, namely the male party who marries the daughter of the Kalimbubu party.

The Karo ethnic group knows various traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. One of them is the Nengget tradition, which is a ceremony performed by a group of relatives in order to seek offspring for married couples who have been married for a long time, but do not have children. Nengget can also be done to families who already have children but all of them are women, so that these families have sons and daughters. Nengget literally means to surprise or surprise people. As with the Batak ethnic group in general, for the Karo ethnic group, whose lineage is calculated through men, the presence of a boy is a family dream. In the past these conditions were very strict. This is understandable because sons are the successors of the clan.

The nengget tradition has been largely abandoned by the Karo ethnic group, but in rural areas the nengget ceremony is still often carried out. The younger generation of the Karo ethnic group no longer hold nengget ceremonies because they are affected by the changing times that are increasingly modern and broader thinking. Besides that, modern medicine is getting more advanced. Some of the Karo younger generations also no longer believe in this tradition, this is due to the beliefs they believe in, such as Christianity, Catholicism, Islam. The nengget tradition may disappear due to increasingly modern times, so through this paper the author documents the nengget tradition that this tradition was once practiced by the Karo ethnic group.

The author will examine the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnicity from a semiotic perspective, because the author feels interested in knowing the meaning of forms, functions, meanings, values, symbols that exist in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnicity.

2. Methods

2.1. Basic Method

The basic method used in this research is a qualitative method or approach. Maryaeni (2005: 1) explains that qualitative research methods are research procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words that are individual, the circumstances or symptoms of the group being observed. This method is used in order to collect and present factual and accurate data regarding the facts and characteristics of the regional population.

The choice of a qualitative approach in this study is based on two reasons. First, the problems studied in this study regarding the implementation of nengget on the Karo ethnic require a number of actual and contextual field data. Second, the choice of this approach is based on the relationship between the problems studied and a number of data. From the second reason, the writer concludes that this qualitative research is very suitable for use.

2.2. Research sites

A good research location is the location / object of research that is in accordance with the object of the problem and is an area of qualitative and quantitative information (Subagyo 1991: 35). The research location is in Bulanjahe Village, Barusjahe District, Karo Regency, North Sumatra Province. The reason the authors conducted research in this area were (1). the original inhabitants of the Karo tribe (2). this ceremony is still carried out by the community itself.

2.3. Research Instruments

Before the author conducts research, the author first prepares research instruments or tools. The instrument is a data collector used in research, it is assumed that it can be used to

answer research questions. As Sugiyono (1994: 84) said, a research instrument is a tool used to measure observed natural and social phenomena. In order for the data obtained to be accurate so that it is easy to process, this study requires the use of instruments as a tool to collect data. The instruments used in this study are Recording tool (tape recorder), Pens, Noteboo, List of questions (questionnaire).

2.4. Method of collecting data

The data collection method is a method of research in assessing data, both from literature reviews and field research.

The data collection methods in this study are as follows:

- a. Observation Technique
According to Bungin (2008: 108), the method of observation is a person's ability to use his observations through the work of one of the senses, namely the eye and is assisted by the other senses.
- b. Interview Techniques
According to Bungin (2001: 133), the interview method is the process of obtaining information for research purposes by means of face-to-face question and answer between the interviewer and the respondent or the person being interviewed. This method is carried out directly by interviewing informants in order to obtain more complete information about the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic using a tape recorder.
- c. Literature Engineering
According to Pohan in Prastowo (2012: 81) this activity (preparation of literature reviews) aims to collect scientific data and information, in the form of theories, methods, or approaches that have developed and have been documented in the form of books, journals, manuscripts, notes, recordings. history, documents, etc. in the library. This study was conducted with the aim of avoiding repetition, imitation and plagiarism.

2.5. Data analysis method

The data analysis method is a very important part of the research process, because with this analysis the existing data will be useful, especially in solving research problems and achieving the final objectives of the study (Subagyo, 1991: 104-105). The method used in this research is the qualitative method. Analyzing qualitative data can be said to be an activity that takes place continuously, not just sometime after the research is over. This work is an ongoing process, not a momentary activity.

In this data analysis method, the authors use the following steps:

- a. Describe the shape of the symbol
The symbol used in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group is described in the form of an image to support data clarity.
- b. Describe the meaning and function of symbols
The meaning of each symbol that has been obtained from the informant will be compared with the literal meaning of the sign. The shape and meaning of the symbols that have been described are followed by a description of the function of the symbols used in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group.

- c. Describe the symbol's value

A description of the values contained in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 The Implementation of the Traditional Ceremony of Nengget Ethnic Karo

a. Discussion

Before doing nengget, Kalimbubu will discuss with the new children to discuss everything that is needed.

1) Implementation Time Nengget

Time is something that is very concerned about, choosing the right time will make the objectives of implementation will be achieved. If the implementation is carried out without proper timing it will produce unfavorable results or even lead to meaningless results. Ethnicity Karo when doing a job will first find the right time. For example, if you want to enter a new house, not all days are allowed, but the right day that is believed to bring blessings is wari rice starch (starch rice day). Before implementing nengget, what was the initiating party Kalimbubu or the new children are looking for a good day according to Karo's calculations with the help of a shaman called guru simeteh wari si teluuluh, this person with the help of spirits can determine a good day. Basically in the implementation of nengget, the day is not the thing that determines the success or failure of the ceremony.

2) Cost

In implementing nengget, the costs will be borne by the party proposing nengget which is carried out, whether it is a child or a kalimbubu. While the people to be targeted do not take care of anything and they themselves do not know that the ceremony is aimed at them. The implementation of nengget is carried out simply so it does not require a lot of money. The invited guests were limited to close relatives.

3) Tools in the Nengget Tradition

To carry out the nengget traditional ceremony, a number of equipment that has been prepared in advance is required. All the equipment that has been determined must be complete and nothing should be forgotten, if that happens then the implementation of nengget is considered imperfect. The equipment used is as follows Uis Ariteneng, Son of a rock, Uis Ship, Drum (not a must), Manuk sangkep, Lau simalem-malem, Tumba beru, Traditional clothes.

b. Implementation of Nengget

In the implementation of nengget, there are 3 groups of relatives involved, namely Kalimbubu, Beru Children, and Senina / Sembuyak. The kalimbubu party arranged all the preparations for the ceremony. Meanwhile, the senina / sembuyak acts as a companion for the kalimbubu and helps the kalimbubu if problems arise before and after the nengget ceremony is over. During the ceremony, the child plays an equally important role. They prepare all the preparations and equipment for the ceremony. Apart from the three groups of relatives, there is another group of relatives involved, namely my turku or rebu, where my turku is the one who will pour lau malem-malem to married couples who have not had children.

Rebu itself means abstinence, prohibition, prohibition or not justification of doing something according to Karo custom, for those who violate it is said to not know customs and is ridiculed by the community. The term rebupada of the Karo community can be divided into three parties, including:

- 1) Between mami (woman-in-law) and kela (son-in-law). In a narrow sense, mami is the mother of the wife, while kela is the husband of the daughter.
- 2) Between bengkila (male in-law) and game (daughter-in-law) bengkila in the narrow sense is the father of a woman's husband.
- 3) Between my tour and my tour.

3.2 Description of Form, Function, Meaning of Symbols in the Nengget Tradition of the Karo Ethnic.

Based on the research results found 4 (four) categories of distribution of symbols contained in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group. Among others are:

- a. Symbol of traditional equipment, which consists of 7 (seven) symbols of traditional equipment, namely uis ariteneng, stone lagan, uis ship / endawa, drums, tumba beru-beru, traditional clothes, and lau simalem-malem.
- b. The symbol of food, namely the manuk sangkep.
- c. Time symbol, which consists of 2 (two) symbols, namely the time of implementation and the good date of implementation (wari si mehuli).
- d. Status marking symbols, which consist of 4 (four), namely kalimbubu, senina / sembanyak, anak beru, and my turtle.

3.3 Description of the Value of the Nengget Tradition Symbol in the Karo ethnic group.

Value is something valuable, quality, shows quality, and is useful for humans. Something that is valuable means that something is valuable or useful. Based on the research results, it was found that:

- a. Value of Solidarity.
The value of solidarity is one of the kinds of values that underlie one's actions towards others regardless of the consequences that may arise on oneself, be it in the form of luck or misfortune. The value of solidarity is highly upheld by the Karo ethnic group. In the nengget tradition, the parties who participate do not see social class. They work together to make this nengget event a success.
- b. Religious Value
The nengget tradition is also often carried out to put knowledge (magical knowledge, of course, what is placed is good and positive) to people who will carry the magical knowledge given by their ancestors. In the context of the nengget tradition, to determine a good day, a shaman who is called guru simeteh wari si teluuluh is needed. This person with the help of the spirit can determine a good day. The Karo ethnic group also believes that by carrying out this tradition, what is expected of this husband and wife will be achieved soon.
- c. Family Values
Kinship values are relationships that are formed in a family which aims to instill a form of goodness that will become a means of unification in a family. For this reason, kinship values are very important in maintaining the harmony of a family. In the nengget tradition, family values are very visible. The participating parties really hope

that with the implementation of this ceremony, all relatives will unite to achieve a goal.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, several conclusions can be drawn that the symbols contained in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group are divided into four categories, namely: (1) traditional equipment symbols, (2) traditional food symbols, (3) time symbols, (4) status marking symbol. Each symbol used in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group contains good and hopeful hopes for a happy life. Each symbol has a relationship with the meaning agreed upon by the Karo people. Each symbol is interpreted and exemplified from the nature or behavior of the associated symbol. The symbol function used in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group has an inner and outer character. The values found in the nengget tradition of the Karo ethnic group also represent a good thing in its use.

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