
AN ANALYSIS USED IN BELIS TRADITION IN ANAKALANG, MIDDLE SUMBA

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Abstract: Belis tradition is part culture in Sumba and a condition to marriage someone. Many kinds of symbols used on it. Belis tradition is not separated from culture. By of culture, Belis be an own culture that has different process and symbols. Because every culture have different process based on that place. Therefore, the researcher has been interested in studying this problem by formulating four researcher problems such as: how the process of Belis tradition, what are the symbols and symbols meaning used in Belis tradition process, what kinds of terms used in Belis tradition?. There are so many symbols and terms used in Belis tradition. The symbols used such as *sirih pinang*, *parang*, *gading*, *mamuli*, stallion, pig, *kombu cloth*, *rau nyau* (*janur*), *gong*, *kayu kaba* (white cloth), and *nibu pahori* (spear). Every symbols has the meaning itself such as stallion as symbol of masculine. *Sirih pinang* as symbol of welcoming, and etc. And the terms used in Belis tradition such as *year*, *layewa*, *ngaba wini*, *wunang*, *pahalaku hilu*, *kadehang*, *jedi*, *ahu papalu*, and *hangera*. After the researcher found and discussed the problems of terms and symbols used in Belis tradition, the researcher made a conclusion of the research finding and discussion. From the result of this research, it was obvious that in Belis tradition used some symbols. And every symbol has own meaning. the researcher really hopes that this researcher to complete this study to be perfect. In addition, the researcher really hopes that this research can help other researcher who wants to continue or conduct research in the same field of the study or discuss about language aspect that occur in the Belis tradition especially in Anakalang.

Key words: Symbols, and Belis Tradition

Introduction

Culture is a way of life that developed and shared by a group of people and passed down from generation to generation. Culture is made from many complex elements, including religious and political system, customs, languages, tools, clothing, buildings, and literary of work. A region has its own culture that reflects a behavior and their daily habits that hereditary will remain there and remain strong in certain areas. The culture contains the entire understanding of social values, social norms, knowledge and overall social structures, religious, and others, in addition all the intellectual and artistic expression that characterizes a society (*Andreas Eppink*).

According to Pickering (1981:69) "symbols is a way to sympling the complexities of though and experiences by hitting upon one thing as representative of many thing". The symbols may be used as a reminder, a signal, and a call to action. A symbol is also capable of compressing the emotional impact of an over-whelming experience into brief descriptive passage.

Belis tradition especially in Anakalang is the event to respect for women and marriage itself. Belis called dowry which apply to appreciate both sides, both the families of man and girl. According to Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), "Belis or dowry is a treasure that is given by the parties to the bride at the time of application". Belis is tradition of Sumba's people that

every scene in this tradition use traditional language.

Methods

The type of research conducted by the researcher is descriptive qualitative research. descriptive research is a study to explain the phenomena that exist in society, seeking causes and attempts to overcome the problems posed by the phenomenon. In this case, this study intends to identify and explain about Belis tradition in Middle Sumba especially in Anakalang.

To collect the accurate data, the researcher used some instruments, there are:

1. Interview

It is often characterized as an unstructured or in depth interview. In this research the writer makes interview directly with the informants to get the accurate data. Informants here are people who have known very well relation with the Sumba's culture. For example: Umbu Hia (is a man who is very interesting with Sumba tradition). The researcher makes interview minimum for 4 persons who have known very well with Belis tradition.

2. Observation

It is the collection of data by conducting direct observation of the object of research. At this part a researcher are becoming as the participant of the research is a passive participant of the processing of Belis tradition in wedding ceremony.

Observation in this study was intended to see firsthand how the state of culture in general, the pattern of customs that live in the community, how the process, how about the meaning of symbolism use in Belis. The results of observations such as understanding and evidence symbolism of Belis tradition, and the other results are graphics or photos.

3. Documentation

Researcher also uses documentary in order to collect the data. Documentation is research subject condition to obtain the data concerning with the research subject condition by using recorder to record all of the data. The documentation in this research such as photo, video and other valid documentation about Belis tradition.

FINDINGS

The following sections describe the processes of Belis tradition in Anakalang. The descriptions include before, during, and after the procession. The presented information was received from informants interviewed by the researcher. In addition, the researcher also found the information from the relevant sources such as books and the internet.

1. The Process of Belis Tradition

a. Ngidi Pamama (“*bawa sirih pinang*” or “bring of areca nut”)

Ngidi Pamama in Anakalang’s understanding is “*buka perasaan*” or in English is “open of heart”. In this step the man and his family comes the girl’s house, and they express their feeling in

front of their family. In general understanding, *Ngidi Pamama* as same as engaged. In this process, the man’s family brings one horse, one buffalo, two chopping knife (*parang*), and betel nut (*sirih pinang*) in the *Karera* (place of betel nut). All of those are Belis to the girl and her family as the first condition before they marriage. the girl’s family will reply with one traditional clothe (*Sarong*) and one *wawi* (pig) for man’s family. And that *wawi* will be slaughter in end of this process.

b. Pithak pamama (“*tutup sirih pinang*” or close of areca nut)

In this stage, the man came to the residence of the girl to carry at least one to five buffaloes and one stallion. Their intentions are to conduct important talks about the Belis that should be paid. The whole affair was conducted in indigenous languages and full of allusions, where false or erroneous speech translating intentions of others can be very detrimental to the parties themselves, it would require a person with expertise and special charisma to act as a spokesman or negotiator for each party. The intermediary is called *wunang*, and those who actually face to face talks indigenous and then to and fro consultation with the family. Girl’s family gathered in *Mbale katounga* (traditional house) while man family sit on the front porch with the *wunang*. Demand for Belis expressed symbolically through the *Kombu cloth* and *sarung* is placed on a betel nut and then presented in front *wunang*. A piece of cloth is equal to ten animals, so the two pieces means twenty tails and so

on. The negotiation process can take hours, even up to midnight, where the influences of big families often complicate decision-making. If an agreement is reached, the girl's clans give a pig then slaughtering it and eating together.

c. Dadang Nulang Lunung Tapu
(*Gulung Tikar dan angkat Bantal*)

Actually Dadang Nulang Lunung Tapu is the last process of Belis but after this process there are two processes more to make this tradition be complete. Dadang Nulang Lunung Tapu itself is pick a girl who will move to her husband's house, because in this step they are already be a husband wife in the eyes of indigenous, although they are not yet marriage according to religion and law. In this case, the man's family will bring more of animals and things than before processes. Because in this process is the last Belis for girl's family.

For this last step, the animals will bring between a noble man and ordinary man is different. For the noble man or top class they should bring more fifty animals such as horses, buffalos, and a cow. While for ordinary man or under class about five animals and for middle class about seventeen until eighteen animals. That's rule occur for girl's family also, where the girl will brings all of about household equipment and all of woman's necessary as a wife. Be sides bring all of that, the woman should bring "*gading*" (bracelet made by ivory) and *wawi* (pig). For a noble girl, she should give maximum eleven

hogs and used two set of "*gading*" or bracelet. While for middle class is six hog and one set *gading*, and the under classes is three hogs and not used *gading*. When the girl leave that house and follow her husband, she will accompany by someone such as her grandmother or sister, brother until in man's house. Besides that, long white cloth will unfold all the way during the process of Belis. In this process, man's mother will give "*mamuli/lolu amahu*" (traditional necklace in Sumba made by gold) After this process that girl endure the next tradition, there are:

a. Purung Tatana ("*Turun di tanah*" or down to the land)

That meaning is during three days the girl cannot step on land. So, she should still in house and bedroom during three days. Because of people in Anakalang still use *mbale kataunga* (traditional house). In this case, the first bride come she will welcome by the head of custom. And will sprinkled with the pure water. It is the tradition that was did by their ancestor, the purpose are for make the girl can accept in this house by their ancestors and as step for know about man's family.

b. Letti Mawu (*Injak Tanah*)

Letti Mawu itself is executed in order to make that girl can be free to go home to her parents. This tradition is done after *Purung Tatana* tradition. If this tradition has not been on the run then the girl cannot come or go back on her parents' house or in her village. In

this case, the man and woman will bring *Ndjara* (horse as transportation).

Usually the marriage ceremony will did if the economy condition of man repaired again. Because in Belis tradition itself is need more property to take a woman as a wife, moreover for a noble. The process of Belis tradition itself need more one month until one year. It is suspended of agreement reached by both of clans.

2. Kinds of Symbols Used in Belis Tradition in Anakalang, Middle Sumba

The following sections describe the kinds of symbols used in Belis tradition and their meanings. The presented information was collected from the documentation of the process and the interview from the informants to get the valid data.

Symbols that are used Belis tradition are:

- *Sirih Pinang* (betel Nut): Long time ago, Sumba people always gathered together in their family to eat *sirih pinang* as a habit to clean their teeth because there was no toothpaste at that time. It is like a unique tradition and still exists until now. This tradition brings a big effect to Sumba society especially in Anakalang. People in Sumba regency especially for the elders still like to eat *sirih pinang* every day. Now days in Sumba people used *sirih pinang* as the symbols of welcoming to guests who come. It is used as foods served to guests and ask about the purpose of them. *Sirih*

Pinang is famous presented in Sumba. In every house they will give this food to the guests.

- *Bada (animals)*: Long time ago in this place used animals as a sacrifice in every tradition n now day people of Sumba used it as the symbols of sacrifice for their ancestor. in this process the animals consist of a horse and a buffalo. As the symbol for the first Belis if the man want to marry with the girl. And the second process as the symbol for make agreement to take home of bride, and as the symbol for bride price and reply to girl's family because give their daughter for that man.
- *Parang (chopping knife)*: as the tool for make a new way/ new life. *Parang* is identical with man, so in this tradition *Parang* use by man to make a new life with his wife. In Sumba, every man's Sumba always has *parang*.
- *Kombu cloth* and *sarong*: is Sumba's traditional cloth the symbol of male gender and female gander. For the traditional clothes of man it is only ordinary clothes, it is not form of shirt,blouse,jacket or other clothing. Different by traditional cloth for man, traditional clothe for woman look like *sarong* with sumba motif or design. Other symbols of *Kombu Cloth* and *Sarong* is are for reply man's gift and receive the man's aim.
- *Wawi*: it means pig, as symbols of treaty. In other meaning, the

girl's family accepts the aim of man's family. When this step is done they will slaughter this pig as the symbol of the end of second process also. Almost the people in Sumba are Christian, so in every tradition they used pig for food in the end of tradition.

- *Rau Nyau (young coconut leaf)*: as the symbol for the expensive animals. Usually to decorate to animals who has expensive price. Rau nyau itself is identical by the big day, like ketupat tradition in java and other place. And rau nyau itself is very easy to get and decorate it.
- *Golden mamuli /Lolu Ammahu*: as the symbol of Rahim picture, women's reproductive ability, and for reply the merit and mother's milk.. This thing is jewelry in Sumba. It is the important thing in Sumba, because every tradition always used this thing but has different meaning. Many of Sumba's people do not know about the philosophy of *Mamuli* itself. They believe if this thing is created by their ancestors to respect the woman, because the shape of this thing like with Rahim.
- *Mbale katounga*: it is means traditional house in Sumba. As symbol of Marapu house or place of their spirit ancestor leaf. In Sumba, every traditional house is the sacral place. because their ancestor leaf in there and usually this house only

there in village not in city in Sumba.

- *Taguloka*: it means stallion. As the symbols of animal for the woman's uncle. Horse is the symbol of masculine, so in this case this horse used for animal that will give to uncle's woman. Because her uncle has important character in this tradition.
- *Nibu Pahori (spear)*: as the symbol for the man's brave and use for slaughter a pig and a dog in this end of process. Usually people of Sumba used this tool for salughtering animals. Different with java tradition, they slaughtering animals used knife and with the pity feel. But Sumba's people did not have a pity for that animals.
- *Gong*: as the symbol if the process is finish. The bride can out from her room and meet the man's family and follow the "*ahu papalu*". Gong is traditional music instrument in Sumba. in every tradition and dance tradtional they used Gong as a music. Because for Sumba's people the sound of Gong give the spirit for them.
- *Gading*: as the symbol for the social level of woman. If she is a noble, she will use 2 set of *gading*. But when she only a ordinary woman or from under class she not allow to used *gading*. For Sumba's people *gading* is jewelry for woman, because a long time ago *gading* is more easy to get than gold. But now, it is difficult to find

gading. So the price of gading is very expensive in Sumba.

- *Kayu kaba/kain putih (long white cloth)*: as the symbol if that all process was agree with custom and also to waive the bride leaf her village/house. In common understanding the white clothes is symbols of the purity, in this case according for Sumba's the woman is a symbol of the purity itself. So they use this clothe as symbols for a woman and for the process itself, because the process was run by custom. In this case, the clothe will outstretched among the way when the woman will move to the man's house. And she will accompany by one of her family like her grandmother, her uncle or her brother to go to man's house.
- *Ndjara*: it means horse, as the symbols of thanks to man's family. In this case, *Ndjara* given to man's family for woman's family because the man's clan want to accept the woman in their house.
- *A head of dog*: as the symbol if the girl was acceptable by the man's family. It is given by man's family to woman's clan who deliver her to man's house. And will bring to woman's house as the symbol is the woman was accepted kindly.
- Pure water: as symbol for acceptance the girl enters that house and be that family. in this case, pure water is symbol of their ancestor, so they hope if their ancestors can accept this

woman be their family and leave in that house.

3. Kinds of Terms used in Belis tradition in Anakalang, middle sumba

There are some popular terms used in Belis Tradition:

a. *Yera*

Yera it is called for girl's clan or in common exhaustive is called for girl's side such as girl's brother or uncle.

b. *Layewa*

Layewa is called for man's clan who will come to the girl's side (yera) for make agreement about Belis.

c. *Ngaba Wini*

In Anakalang, they call for man's parent is Ngaba Wini. It's usually use for the girl's clan when they want to call man's parents. The sense of that called for make the relation both of them more intimate.

d. *Wunang/Madidung Hilu*

Wunang is someone with expertise and special charisma for acting as spokesman or negotiator between families. And they are the truthfully having vis-à-vis to do custom talk between consult by family of man and woman.

e. *Pahalaku Hilu*

Pahalaku Hilu is called for people who there in the middle of meeting between the Wunang of man and Wunang of woman. This person will extend of asking from Wunang/Madidung Hilu itself. In this case, pahalaku hilu did not a mistake when he

extends of message from Wunang's man or Wunang's woman.

f. *Kadehang*

Kadehang is called for people who be a witness from Pahalaku Hilu. In this case, he only agrees what the Pahalaku Hilu says if the message extend by Pahalaku Hilu is right.

g. *Ahu papalu*

Ahu papalu in Indonesia language is "anjing yang di pukul", that meaning is animals that use for eating or slaughter in the end of process. In this case, Ahu Papalu is not only a dog but also a cow.

h. *Jedi*

Jedi is term used by kadehang. This meaning of *Jedi* itself is yes. In this case, kadehang always say "jedi" or yes, when the message which extends by pahalaku Hilu is correct.

i. *Hangera*

In Anakalang's meaning, Hangera is "kawin masuk". It's use when the man cannot comply with request from girl's family. So, the man will stay in girl's house and do everything of homework. In other meaning is the man will serve for girl's family and not allow to preventing of the command from girl's family.

dowry which apply to appreciate both sides, both the families of man and girl. Belis also have meaning for determining validity of marriage as a fee for the efforts of parents. But this is not barter. Therefore, belis is the beginning of a long kind of love both sides. Belis tradition is rich of symbol. It is an attractive event to participate.

There are some symbols that are used in Belis tradition in Anakalang reflection on tools, animals, actions, language, social life, and the means of livelihood of Sumba's society especially in Anakalang. The symbols are use like: **sirih pinang** (betel nut), it is symbols of welcoming. **Kombu clot**, it is symbols of man. **Sarong**, it is symbol of woman. **Parang**, it is symbols to make a new life. **Wawi** (pig), it is symbols of feminine usually raised by women. **karbau**, it is ymbols of belis itself. **Rau Nyau** (young coconut leaf), it is symbols for the expensive animals. **Golden mamuli /Lolu Ammahu**: as the symbol of Rahim picture, women's reproductive ability and women replacement which carried away by man's family. **Jara** (horse), it is ymbols of thanks and transportation. **Gong**, it is the symbols of welcoming, finished process and spirit. **Nibu Pahori** (spear): as the symbol for the man's brave. **Gading**: as the symbol for the social level of woman. **Kayu kaba/kain putih** (long white cloth): as the symbol if that all process was agree with custom

CONCLUSION

Belis tradition especially in Anakalang is the event to respect for women and marriage itself. Belis called

Terms use in Belis tradition, is **Yera** it's called for girl's clan. **Layewa** is called for man's clan. **Ngaba Wini** it's called for man's parents. **Wunang/**

Madidung Hilu is Someone with expertise and special charisma for acting as spokesman or negotiator between families. **Pahalaku Hilu** is called for people who there in the middle of meeting between the *Wunang* of man and *Wunang* of girl. **Kadehang** is called for people who be a witness from *Pahalaku Hilu*. **Ahu papalu**, it is animals that use for eating/slaughter in the end of process. **Jedi** is term used by *kadehang*. This meaning of *Jedi* itself is yes. **Hanger** is “*kawin masuk*”. It’s use when the man cannot comply with request from woman’s family.

Suggestion

The researcher considers that this study is a new research at University of Kanjuruhan Malang in the language field especially English Literature. The researcher suggests that it can give a description as information to the reader about the symbols used in Belis tradition in Anakalang, Middle Sumba.

The researcher suggests, that the reader who wants to analyze the Belis tradition can add their theory from other sources that are not only includes in this thesis but also from other references.

Then, the researcher hopes the students of Kanjuruhan University of Malang especially from Sumba and other place in East Indonesia are interested to study about Belis tradition especially in Anakalang about literary devices used in Belis tradition. Almost in other place of Sumba have same process and symbol but some different traditional languages and meanings.

For the people of Anakalang, should maintain a cultural custom which is positive because it is a nation's wealth that is priceless and a great work of our ancestors. All of that culture must be preservation, so Anakalang still be the place which has many culture that still have strong tradition. And should more blossom and create a new book about cultures in Anakalang itself.

This thesis also encourages the students of English Literature to study more about cross culture understanding. By study this analyzing this thesis, the researcher hopes the readers can take a good learning from this description of Belis tradition and the symbols used in this tradition, which can apply in the life society.

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