

# THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF *MARGONDANG* IN BATAK ANGKOLA WEDDING CEREMONY: SEMIOTICS APPROACH

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## ABSTRAK

The purpose of this research is to provide understanding to the readers and increase their knowledge about the *Margondang* process in Batak Angkola wedding, so that they can easily understand it. Researchers analysed using the theory of Sudaryanto (2015). The analysis in this study uses qualitative research methods. To support the analysis, researchers used books, journals and theses. Researchers obtained the data from videos and photos.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Like other tribes, the Batak Angkola people also view that wedding is something very sacred, so it needs to be enshrined in a sacred event as well. The sacred wedding ceremony by the Batak Angkola community is manifested in the form of *Margondang*, which is a ceremony to celebrate a wedding party or also called Horja Godang. The *Margondang* party for the Batak Angkola people is the biggest wedding ceremony, as well as a pride and honor for the Batak Angkola people.

In general, the parents of the Batak Angkola tribe aspire to be able to hold a *Margondang* party for their son's wedding. However, in line with the dynamics of the development of the situation and conditions, many Batak Angkola people migrated and settled in cities in search of work. Making the Batak Angkola people tend to be oriented towards practical and efficient things. With this mindset, many Batak Angkola people are no longer too obsessed with holding a *Margondang* party at their child's wedding.

From some of the descriptions above, the writer is called to write about the culture of the Batak Angkola sub-ethnic tribe with the title "The Process

Of *Margondang* In The Traditional Batak Angkola Wedding Ceremony: Semiotics Studies". With the reason and consideration that in every traditional wedding process of the Batak Angkola, there are many philosophical and moral values about the value of propriety and propriety which are very useful in living married life and in society.

Each tribe has a unique and interesting tradition to study. One of them is the *Margondang* custom in the traditional wedding ceremony of the Batak Angkola community. The *Margondang* tradition is a local tradition of the pre-Islamic Batak Angkola. In the *Margondang* tradition, the tor-tor dance is presented accompanied by traditional musical instruments. The implementation of this tradition is between one day and one night to three and three nights.

Community wedding customs which are carried out from generation to generation carry moral messages. The implementation of the *Margondang* tradition for the Batak Angkola people is a hope for the emergence of happiness and prosperity in living the ark of domestic life. Socially, it can raise the dignity of the family in the community. In this tradition, buffalo slaughter is also carried out as a

banquet menu for invited guests. Even in its presentation, *Margondang* is inserted with modern music.

The traditions of the Batak people have been studied by several experts. These studies can be classified as follows: First, the implementation of traditional ceremonies of the Batak Angkola community. According to Nixon Manurung (2015), the traditional ceremonies of the Batak people always use Gondang as a means of getting closer to the one and only God. Tati Diana's research states that the tor-tor dance is an important part of the *Margondang* event. Although people don't know the meaning and nature of the implementation of the *Margondang* tradition.

Second, the values of local wisdom in the implementation of traditional ceremonies of the Batak Angkola community. According to Nuriza Dora (2020), in carrying out traditional ceremonies, prayers are inserted as a form of request to the one and only God to be kept away from danger in carrying out life. According to Pohan, there are three basic values that are reflected in the implementation of the traditional ceremonies of the Batak Angkola community, among others: brotherhood, respect, and responsibility. Third, the implementation of traditional ceremonies of the Batak Angkola community is associated with Islamic law.

Every tradition must have moral values that are continuously transformed to the next generation. Although it is quite difficult to keep traditional values from changing with other values. According to Abbas Pulungan (2003), there are three factors that influence changes in traditional values: the development of religious activities, education, and modernization.

There are three stages in the *Margondang* process, namely: the initial stage, the implementation stage, and the final stage. At these stages there are also explanations such as *Manjagit* or *Haroroan Boru*, *Tahi Geleng-nggang*, *Tahi Ulu Tot*, *Tahi Sakahangi*, *Kahangi*, *Anak Boru*, *Banana Raut*, *Tahi Godang*, *Mandohoni*, *Panaek Gondang*, *Mangalo-Alo Mora*, *Maralokalok*, *Margalanggan*, *Tapian Raya Bangunan (Nacar)*, *Mangupa Pardomuan* and others.

The Angkola tribe is known to have many traditional ceremonies. One of the traditional ceremonies of the Angkola tribe is the *Horja Godang Haroan Boru* ceremony. *Horja Godang Haroan Boru* when translated into Indonesian is a big party welcoming the bride. This ceremony is a wedding ceremony which is interpreted as welcoming the bride's arrival by the groom. Marriage in the Angkola community is not only a meeting of the bride and groom, it can also be interpreted as a liaison tie with all relatives.

*Margondang* Batak Angkola traditional party has become a tradition for the community, so the traditional party is very often carried out by the community, especially at the inauguration ceremony

of the wedding. The first *Margondang* party is *martahi*, then *makkobar* (conference), after that *Margondang* is accompanied by *tor-tors*, and after the *manortor* event is over, the bride and groom ride *nacar* or called *ditapian raya* building and finally the *mangupa* event.

Semiotics is a science or method of analysis to study signs. The signs here are the tools we use in trying to find a way in this world, in the midst of humans and with humans (Sobur, 2003). Peirce put forward the triangle meaning theory which consist of three main elements, namely sign, object, and interpretant. Signs according to Peirce consist of symbols (signs that arise from agreement), icons (signs that arise from physical representation), and indexes (signs that arise from cause-and-effect relationship).

The first *Margondang* tradition is *tor-tor*, which is a ceremonial dance presents to Gondang music. Although physically, the *tor-tor* is a dance, but the more meaning of the movements shows that the *tor-tor* is a medium of communication in which through the movements presented there is an interaction between the participants of the ceremony. Second, when the *tor-tor* dance is in progress, usually "ulos" is always used during *tor-tor*.

The moral values contained in *Margondang* are brotherhood, respect, and responsibility. These values continue to be transformed to the next generation in maintaining family harmony and the Batak Angkola people. This custom is a form of respect for invited guests and an expression of happiness for the wedding procession held. Although the implementation has undergone changes due to interactions with other cultures, education levels, and population mobilization.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research design used by the researcher is qualitative research methods. Data in this research is the form of process of the *Margondang* ceremony. Data collection techniques in this study used qualitative data collection techniques which included observation, interviews, documentation studies and literature studies. According to Danial and Warsiah (2007) revealed that literature study is a research technique carried out by researchers with research problems and objectives. The writer chooses a literature study technique from the results of a literature study, namely obtaining data by:

1. Read: The researcher reads books, journals, and articles about similar research and then after reading them, the authors analyse the journals/books/articles with the research that the authors analyse. How to analyse it, with the method of noting the important points. And the last one sums it up.
2. Identifying: At this point, the author conducts interviews with related parties who understand the analysis of the author's title. In addition to

interviews, the author also collects data in the form of books, journals, or articles that are still related to the author's analysis.

3. Analysing: The author analyses journals that are related/similar to the research that the author is doing. Before the *Margondang* ceremony takes place, there are several processes, such as *martahi*, *makkobar* (deliberation), then there is *Margondang* accompanied by the tor-tor dance and finally there is *mangupa*.
4. Concluding: The author concludes that the problem that occurs in the *Margondang* ceremony is how the customary process in the Batak Angkola *Margondang* wedding ceremony. And what is the meaning of the customary process. In addition, the problems that occur are also the moral values, such as what are the moral values in the customary process.
5. Document: The author collects a lot of photos and videos to know the process of *Margondang*.
6. Interview: The author interviewed people who understand the custom so as not to make mistakes in writing research.

According to Sudaryanto (2015) data analysis procedure consists of:

1. Data Collection Technique, without understanding the data collection techniques, researchers will have difficulty in obtaining data that meets the criteria. In this study, the data collection techniques used were listening techniques, note-taking techniques, and library research techniques. The writer collects data by reading and then listening after noting the important points from the literature study. Therefore, the author uses a data collection technique where the author must know what the *Margondang* process is in the Batak Angkola wedding custom. And must also know what moral values are contained in the *Margondang* process.
2. Data Analysis Technique is a process of processing data into new information. There are two types of data analysis techniques, qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques in research. The author uses qualitative data analysis techniques. Because the data does not use the dominant amount of data such as charts, tables, or other calculations. Because the author's research is not measured by parameters but in the form of an in-depth interpretation or understanding of the phenomenon/reality of a problem that is raised into research.

### 3. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### *Panaek Gondang*

According to the time specified in the previous *Tahi-tahi*, the *Panaek Gondang* event is held, which means to coconut milk/plain flour for gondang musical instruments and the personnel who will play them as a form of prayer for safety.

The *Panaek Gondang* event is the opening of the entire series of main events for the implementation of *Margondang* or *Horja Godang* that will be held. The *Panaek Gondang* event was attended by *Suhut*, *Kahanggi*, *Anak Boru*, *Pisang Raut* and witnessed by *Hatobangan Ni Huta*. The host party conveys the celebration of raising children and in-laws in *Horja Godang* while also submitting the implementation to the leader of the Gondang players called *Paronang-onang* or also called *NA PANDE* (people who know/master). Then answered by *Paronang-onang/na pande* then the event was closed by *Hatobangan Ni Huta*.

The moral value contained in *Panaek Gondang* event is *dipasahatma tu hamu napande sulalu harejoon* (leave it to the smarts to carry out our celebration). If you want a celebration to go well and be successful, then leave it to the experts.

#### *Mangalo-Alo Mora*

*Mangalo-Alo Mora* the meaning is to welcome the arrival of the *mora* speech group who have been invited with *pudun-pudun betel*. The welcoming process is as follows:

- 1) The group of *Mora* who came with gifts in the form of beautiful *Toppu Robu* (rice and various side dishes) and *Itak Godang* (traditional food such as separated from rice flour and palm sugar).
- 2) The group of *Mora* gathers called *Balakka Sitolutolu*, which is a place not far from the location of the host who has a celebration, then gives a sign/code so that their arrival is known.
- 3) After receiving the code for the arrival of *Mora's* entourage, the host group was welcomed, consisting of the speeches of *Suhut*, *Kahanggi*, *Anak Boru*, *Pisang Raut* and *Hatobangan Ni Huta* and their respective wives and young people. The accessories for welcoming the *Mora* group are gondang musical instruments, complete traditional clothes and betel.
- 4) After meeting at *Balakka Sitolutolu*, the host handed over betel and put on traditional clothes to *Mora's* group and then *Makkobar* (said adat) about the arrival of *Mora's* group to the *Horja Godang* event. Furthermore, *Mora's* group was paraded to the house of *Suhut Bolon*/the host accompanied by tor-tors and Gondang music. At the gate of the *Suhut Bolon* courtyard, *Mora's* group was greeted by *Suhut Bolon*, *Kahanggi*, and *Anak Boru*. Furthermore, *Mora's* group was invited to sit in the place prepared and the souvenirs brought by *Mora's* group were placed in the middle of the audience.
- 5) After the entire group of *Mora* sat down, the groom and bride came to greet the entire group of *Mora* who came.
- 6) The next event was the handing over and receiving of souvenirs from *Mora's* entourage to *Suhut*/host through *Makkobar* (saying adat), then the word adat was closed by *Hatobangan Ni Huta*.

- 7) The manortor welcoming *Mora* accompanied by Gondang music.
- 8) *Mora*'s entourage returned items of traditional clothing that were worn during the reception and then served food to *Mora*'s group who came at the same time eating together.

The moral value contained in *Mangaloalo mora* event is *hormat marmora elek maranak boru* (respect for the bride's family and love for the groom's family). Harmony in a large family will be built from proper and proper placement.

#### **Marhalokhalok**

*Marhalokhalok* is a trial of traditional kings in the afternoon after the *Mangalo-Alo Mora* event is finished. The trial of the customary kings that will be carried out not as a request for permission but rather a notification as well as respect and appreciation to the customary kings relating to *Horja Godang* which will be carried out by *Suhut Bolon*/who has a celebration. The implementation of *Marhalokhalok* is an absolute requirement in the Batak Angkola traditional wedding in carrying out the *Margondang* or *Horja Godang* event.

#### **Margalanggung**

*Margalanggung* is a *manortor* implementation event accompanied by poems from *Paronang-onang/Na Pande* and accompanied by *Gondang* musical instruments. The implementation of *Margalanggung* has general rules.

The moral value contained in the *margalanggung* event is *galanggung on digoar silang sae suada mara* (this *galanggung* is named the remover of all wounds and troubles). All those present can enjoy the fun in the arena that has been prepared but must maintain etiquette, ethics and manners.

#### **Departure event to Tapian Raya Bangunan**

The definition of Tapian Raya or in other words *nacar* is a building typical of the traditional mahligai of Batak Angkola culture, has seven or nine steps and the roof is from *Abit Godang* (ulos typical of Angkola Batak), decorated in such a way with yellow leaves, banyan leaves, studio plants (pimpin plant stems) and then on the sides left and right of the stairs going up, sitabar banana trees (kepok bananas) are planted. Tapian Raya Bangunan was built by the king's son and *Namora*.

The moral values contained is *madung diyupkon masa doli-doli dohot bujing-bujing, manat ma nian in napotpot, jimat di dalam nalandit dungi jolo sisikma anso ditindis* (already washed away by being single, so take it slow if you walk in the bush, be careful when walking on the road smooth then understand first a problem and then work on it or understand the meaning first then give an answer. After getting wedding, you should be wiser in maintaining your steps, attitudes and words).



#### **Mangupa Pardomuan Event**

*Mangupa* has the meaning of offering various traditional foods to the bride and groom, while *Pardomuan* means the union between the bride and groom in the wedding bond, the unification of the groom's family and the bride's family in traditional ties, the unification of all elements of customs/relatives/other general society. To jointly support and participate in the implementation of the *Margondang* or *Horja Godang* party that has been held.

The moral values contained in *Mangupa Pardomuan* event is *hamu madung dipatobang adat, oban ma goar natobang nadung dilehen dohot ditabalkon* (you have been elders through greatness custom, bring the name of the title that has been given and tabulated by the king of custom). The wedding of the bride and groom has been celebrated through a traditional ceremony of greatness, so be *amanta soripada* (husband/father who deserves respect) and become *inanta soripada* (wife/mother who deserves to be glorified).

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

From this paper the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Whereas the process of the *Margondang* or Horja Godang ceremony in the Batak Angkola wedding custom goes through the initial stages, namely the *Manjagit/Haroroan Boru* event, the preparation stage is the *Tahi Geleng-geleng* event, *Tahi Ulu Tot*, *Tahi Sakahanggi* and *Tahi Godang*, the implementation stage is *Panaek Gondang*, *Mangaloalo Mora*, *Marhalokhalok*, *Margalanggar*, the departure of *Tapien Raya Bangunan (Nacar)* and *Mangupa Pardomuan*, and the final stage is a meal together with traditional kings who are served directly by the bride and groom and hand over souvenirs in the form of grilled buffalo meat to the traditional kings who going home. If one of the traditional events in this stage is not carried out, it cannot be called *Margondang* or Horja Godang.
2. Each of the traditional events carried out contains moral values as described in each traditional event in chapter four. Which, if understood, is very beneficial for personal life, household life and social life.

The suggestions to be put forward by this writing are as follows:

1. To complete what has been described in this paper, the author hopes that there will be writers who will conduct more in-depth searches and research on *Margondang* or Horja Godang in the Batak Angkola wedding customs.
2. There needs to be a kind of cultural studio as a place for cadre and training of Batak Angkola customs so that in the future there will still be a replacement generation for *Paronang-onang* or called *Na Pande* and Gondang music players, unlike today where *Paronang-onang/Na Pande* and Gondang musical instrument players very limited and even then learning is only self-taught and hereditary.
3. It is hoped that the government in North Sumatra or other parties will make an agenda for the performance of the cultural customs of the North Sumatra region, as a generator of love and pride in their respective regional cultural customs.

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