

Symbolic Meaning of the Perak Api Tradition in the Mertak Tombok Village Community, Praya District, Central Lombok Regency

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the symbolic meaning of the perak api tradition in the community of Mertak Tombok Village, Praya District, Central Lombok Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The types of data used in this study are primary and secondary data with the research subjects being the community of Mertak Tombok Village, Praya District, Central Lombok Regency. The informants in this study were traditional leaders and anthropologists in Mertak Tombok Village, Praya District, Central Lombok Regency. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis in this study was carried out in several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of this study show that the symbolic meaning in the perak api tradition includes verbal symbols such as prayers of gratitude to Allah SWT and non-verbal symbols such as tools and materials, as well as the stages of implementation, namely rocking the baby over the smoke, the mother standing over the smoke or being covered, tying threads, massaging, holding the name, and presence.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian nation is rich in ethnic diversity, customs, races, religions, cultures, and groups in various forms (Nosar & Samdirgawijaya, 2023). Cultural diversity is the entirety of religion and social structures, encompassing the arts, beliefs, knowledge, and customs that exist within society and are then passed down from generation to generation. Indonesia fundamentally possesses diverse traditions, arts, thought patterns, and customary laws. Each region displays a distinct culture, with approximately 7,241 cultural works, making Indonesia renowned for its rich cultural diversity (Aisara et al., 2020). Culture is a common practice among people, encompassing arts, knowledge, morals, laws, customs, and traditions (Syakhrani & Kamil, 2022).

Culture, particularly tradition, holds significant significance for the communities that practice it. Traditions contain numerous symbolic meanings, each with a semiotic system of meaning related to the symbols that are meaningful to those who practice them (Hidayah, 2018). Symbols often have deeper or more abstract meanings than what is directly seen through the typical events within them (Sinta Dewi, 2022). This includes the tradition of the Sasak tribe on the island of Lombok, namely the Perak Api tradition.

The tradition of Perak Api is a tradition of the Sasak tribe that has been carried out for generations since ancient times (Hotimah et al., 2024). In the Perak Api tradition, it has two meanings, the first is the Perak Api tradition in begawe and the Perak Api tradition for naming babies, but the focus of this study is the tradition of naming babies. The Perak

Api tradition is a series of ceremonies in naming a child which is carried out after seven to nine days of age or the cutting of the umbilical cord led by a midwife in the Sasak tribe in Lombok (Nismulwiah et al., 2023). The Perak Api tradition contains symbols created and interpreted by humans as characteristics in the lives of people who are interesting to study and know which are located in one of the villages in Central Lombok Regency, namely in Mertak Tombok Village.

Based on the results of the initial interview on April 27 with Baiq Johariah, namely, when the procession of the silver fire family was very enthusiastic starting from the preparation of the tools and materials where each tool and material has a symbolic meaning, one of which is sembek to avoid disturbances from spirits, and every family who participated at the time of birth will also attend the procession of the silver fire where, when the stages of the silver fire procession are completed, they are required to wash themselves with water to avoid various diseases such as dizziness, back pain, and others. After completion, all the community and families enjoy the dishes that have been prepared as an expression of gratitude for the implementation of the silver fire procession.

Based on the description above, to further reveal this, this study requires systematic and in-depth research, designed in a structured manner, with the research title "Symbolic Meaning of the Perak Api Tradition in the Mertak Tombok Village Community, Praya District, Central Lombok Regency."

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach, namely understanding the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perceptions, and actions carried out or experienced as a whole, then described using words and language (Fathiha, 2022) using a case study method that explores a phenomenon Assyakurrohim et al. (2022) namely The symbolic meaning of the fire silver tradition in the Mertak Tombok Village community, Praya District, Central Lombok Regency.

The data types used were primary and secondary. Primary data was obtained directly from the community regarding the symbolic meaning of the Perak Api tradition in Mertak Tombok Village, Praya District, Central Lombok Regency. Secondary data consisted of books, the internet, and journal articles related to the symbolic meaning of the Perak Api tradition and documentation of the Perak Api ceremony.

The data sources were taken from the research subjects and the research informants were determined using purposive sampling so that the selected subjects were 1) people who understand and often participate in the Perak Api tradition procession, 2) Mothers of babies who have just carried out the Perak Api tradition, 3) midwives in Mertak Tombok Village while the research informants were traditional figures and anthropologists. Then the data were collected by non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews and documentation. Then to test the validity of the data using source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation. Then analyzed interactively and continuously until complete therefore the data obtained reached saturation point by using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Symbolic Meaning in the Perak Api Tradition Procession

3.1.1 Verbal Symbols

This study found that the meaning of verbal symbols in the Perak Api tradition is found in prayers of zikir or thanksgiving for gratitude for Allah SWT. The meaning of verbal symbols is the direct delivery of messages through

conversation or writing, with language as the primary medium (Ginting et al., 2023). Similarly, the results of the study by Golontalo et al., (2023) that questions asked by the traditional assembly to prospective brides and grooms through the intermediary of the priest use figurative language. This is also supported by the results of the study by Handono, (2019) who found that figurative words are expressions of religious value that reflect the beauty of language.

3.1.2 Non-Verbal Symbol

This research found the meaning of non-verbal symbols in the silver fire tradition, namely

- 1) Bikan leaves, seneq leaves, chili bunches, tamarind leaves, galangal leaves, lime leaves, guava leaves, mango leaves and others should use 44 kinds of leaves because when giving birth there are damaged or severed nerves so that 44 kinds of leaves are used to treat damaged or severed nerves but can use what is available, 2) Rapusan water made from soaked rice, flowers to avoid illness and a fragrant or fragrant aroma, 3) hair oil from coconut milk and a mixture of turmeric to prevent headaches, 4) white and black threads have the meaning that it represents the attitude of humans sometimes angry sometimes happy, 5) Sembek is placed on the wall to avoid headaches and also to avoid being disturbed by spirits, 6) gifts as a form of gratitude to the buyer, 7) the baby is swung above the smoke so that it is not often shocked or surprised, 8) The mother of the baby stands above the smoke while being fanned to avoid illness and recover quickly from childbirth, 9) paired thread on the hand is known to make the child grow bigger, on the feet the child can walk faster, on the stomach so that it doesn't urinate too often, if the mother has a thread attached to the hand it makes the blood flow smooth, on the chest it makes breastfeeding smooth, on the stomach so that birth scars heal quickly, on the big toe the baby is not afraid to walk, 10) massaged so that the body feels better and healthier, 11) the baby's name is held in the hand so that the baby can choose his own name whichever he wants, 12)

People who were present at the birth used to rub water on the body to prevent dizziness, back pain, and so on. According to research by Musyaffa Izzul Haq & Chafit Ulya, (2023), non-verbal symbols in the Padusan tradition are seen in movements such as the siraman procession depicting respect, cultural procession, and self-purification. Therefore, the essence of non-verbal symbols is conveyed through an action or through objects to express it. Similarly, the results of Zubair's research (2023) that the meliuk-meliuk movement has a message that is a humble attitude. Also supported by Amalia's research (2019). In the Mantende Mamongo traditional ceremony, non-verbal symbols are divided into two types, namely traditional clothing of the Pamona tribe and equipment contained in the mamongo package in the form of betel nuts.

4. CONCLUSION

Symbolic meaning includes verbal symbols, namely praying dhikr or gratitude for gratitude to Allah SWT, while non-verbal symbols, such as the use of 44 types of leaves, to restore post-natal nerves but can use what is available, rice and flower soaking water for fragrance, hair oil from coconut milk, smoking the baby and mother for health and to prevent headaches, white and black thread symbolizes human nature, sembek for protection, gifts as a sign of gratitude, thread installation on the body of the baby and mother, massage for fast healing from birth scars, the baby's name is held so that he

chooses himself, and rubbing the body or body by the attendees to prevent disease.

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