

Analysis of *Heti Lapang* Tradition in Nangatobong Village, Sikka Regency

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ABSTRACT

Every village must have different traditions, cultures, customs or habits. These traditions are also local wealth owned by the nation, always to be maintained, preserved, and guarded so that these traditions do not become extinct. *Heti Lapang* is a tradition of getting rid of bad luck which is done after someone experiences bad things such as accidents or nightmares. *Heti Lapang* tradition is an important part of the *Nangatobong* community. This study aims to describe the process of the *Heti Lapang* tradition and find out the meaning contained in the process of the *Heti Lapang* tradition. The results indicate that the process of *Heti Lapang* has four processes, namely, *roni keleng* means getting rid of bad things in a person who experiences a disaster, *pati tali* means opening the way, *huler wair* means sprinkled with coconut water so that it can provide coolness and to free people from evil and the last is *tung goit* which means delivering bad things in the form of symbols or objects used during the *Heti Lapang* process. In each implementation, verses are spoken using traditional language by mentioning the name of the person who suffered a disaster or accident. The meaning contained in the process of the *Heti Lapang* Tradition ceremony is to bring safety to the community so that the same disaster does not happen again.

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Introduction

Culture formed from several communities is called tradition. Traditions are customs passed down from ancestors that are interrelated between the past and the present. Ref. [1] says that tradition is sometimes equated with the words *adat* in the view of the community understood as the same structure. In terms of tradition, it means that there is a connection between the past and the present. This illustrates that a legacy from the past still exists and functions today. The definition of tradition according to Ref. [2] seen from the aspect of material objects is material objects that show and remind us of their special connection with past lives.

According to Ref. [3], tradition has a function for society. Tradition is a hereditary policy. It places it in the consciousness, belief, norm, and values we now adhere to and in objects created in the past. Tradition also provides fragments of historical heritage that are viewed as valuable. Traditions include the bribe of ideas and materials that can be used in present action and to build a future based on past experiences. Tradition gives legitimacy to preconceived views, beliefs, and preconceived rules. All of these need a justification to tie a member together. One source of legitimacy exists in tradition. It is commonly said: "always like that" or "men always have such confidence," even at the paradoxical risk that certain actions are only performed because others did the same in the past or that certain beliefs are accepted simply because they have received them before. Tradition provides a convincing symbol of collective identity, strengthening the primordial loyalty to nations, communities, and groups. The prime example is the national tradition of songs, flags, emblems, mythology, and public rituals. National tradition has always been associated with history, using the past to preserve national unity.

Nowadays, some traditions still exist in traditional society, especially in villages. One of exist local traditions is *Heti Lapang* which exists at Nangatobong Village Sikka Society of East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. *Heti Lapang* tradition is commonly referred to as throwing bad luck where several disasters such as accidents and nightmares must be done by carrying out the tradition so that the same disaster does not happen again. It is not carried out by just anyone because there are certain languages or lyrics so, it must be done by certain people with their traditional greetings, namely *Tana Puan* or *Du'a Mo'an Watu Pitu*. *Tana Puan* or *Du'a Mo'an Watu Pitu* is a traditional leaders who usually lead traditional ceremonies. The *Heti Lapang* ceremony is highly believed by the people in the village. The *Heti Lapang* has been carried out for a long time by the people of the village.

For Nangatobotong society, the *Heti Lapang* tradition is very meaningful, and even today it is considered to affect safety. This tradition is also carried out to honor the heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation. Although this is now a modern era,

the people of Nangatobong village still carry out the *Heti Lapang* tradition because they believe this tradition brings safety to the community. *Heti Lapang* ceremony uses local language or lyrics that have meaning for people there. People still keep the process and the meaning of the *Heti Lapang* tradition. The use of local language or lyrics is meaningful in the *Heti Lapang* ceremony called semantic.

According to Ref. [4], semantics is used in the field of linguistics which studies the relationship between signs or symbols and the things they signify and are called meaning or meaning. This view then raises a direction that meaning will appear if the language user has previously had an experience, then the experience becomes the direction of a referent. Ref. [5] states that in semantics what is discussed is the relationship between words and the concept or meaning of the word, as well as objects or things referred to by that meaning that is outside the language. So, based on the above opinion, it can be concluded that semantics is the study of symbols or signs that express meaning.

The elements of semantics encompass several key components. Signs and symbols are fundamental to language, with signs forming the basis of semiotics—a theory that includes syntactic, pragmatic, and semantic aspects. Another crucial component is lexical meaning and referential relations. Lexical meaning represents the smallest unit in a language's meaning system, distinct from other units, and involves relationships between word meanings. A lexeme, which is an abstract concept, can appear in different forms within sentences but remains the same lexeme, even when inflected. These meanings can be categorized as either categorical—encompassing all words and inflections—or syncategorical, which involves groups of structural meanings that must be interpreted within a specific context. Referential relations focus on the connection between words and the real-world objects or concepts they denote, involving the relationship between the word (symbol), its meaning (concept or reference), and the referent, which forms an implied link. Finally, naming involves assigning language symbols to describe objects, concepts, processes, and more. This process can involve using existing vocabulary, modifying meanings, or creating new words or expressions.

Based on preview research conducted by Ref. [6] aiming to find out and describe the ritual process of the Lodong Me custom and its meaning. The results of this study are first, the Lodong Me ritual in Watumilok Village is a life cycle ritual that contains myths about messages and advice about one's life path, where birth is the beginning of human life so that his future life path needs to be prepared by parents and family by asking for blessings from ancestors, Second, the Lodong Me Ritual in Watumilok Village, is an appreciation of the Watumilok community's ritual communication in the form of a form of communication between them and their ancestors, and also nature. The symbols used are in the form of local language, Sikka

language, and also materials from nature, which have been agreed as symbols of belief in their culture. The Watumilok people interpret the Lodong, Me ritual as a form of close bond between humans and ancestors, with nature, and with God, the bond needs to be maintained in harmony in the cycle of human life so that common desires and goals can be achieved.

The second research conducted by Ref. [7] analyzes the function and meaning of the Tama Benu Kesa Lakang tradition for people in Sikka Regency. The results of this study indicate that the Tama Benu Kesa Lakang tradition is related to dowry (*belis*) in marriage. The amount of dowry is not the same, depending on the wishes of the female family which must be adjusted to the ability of the male family. The responsibility of the dowry is not only felt by the man but almost his entire family including parents, relatives, friends, neighbors, and other communities. The meaning of Tama Benu Kesa Lakang is a culture of cooperation or a system of cooperation between community members that functions to provide funds, goods, and animals for the engagement process until marriage. Another function of this tradition for the people of Sikka Regency is to help each other and become a place to strengthen brotherly relations. In conclusion, this tradition is carried out from generation to generation and has its function and meaning in social life.

Based on the phenomena and the data, the researcher is interested in conducting this research to describe the process of the *Heti Lapang* tradition ceremony and find out the meaning contained in the process of the *Heti Lapang* ceremony. This research gives benefits not only to exploring the *Heti Lapang* Tradition but also to open minded to younger generation now less obedient to traffic rules and often speeding on the highway so that accidents often occur that can claim lives. It feels that this traditional ceremony is very important to ensure the safety of families and local communities so that very dangerous disasters do not recur in the future. In other words, the younger generation can know the process and understand the meaning of the *Heti Lapang* tradition to be maintained and preserved so that it does not disappear.

Methods

This research uses qualitative research. According to Ref. [9], qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc. holistically, and using descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods. This research procedure will describe in detail the ritual process of the *Heti Lapang* tradition in Nangatobong Village and the meaning of the ritual process of the *Heti Lapang* tradition in Nangatobong Village.

The research location is in Nangatobong village, waigete sub-district. The research method just used interviews because, at the time of the research, this tradition did not coincide,

so the author used interviews. This research interviewed a traditional leader to find out the process and meaning behind the *Heti Lapang* tradition. The interview is an intentional conversation between two parties, the interviewer and the interviewee who answered the question. The data collection technique in this research is to provide a list of questions related to the process of the *Heti Lapang* Tradition from beginning to end, as questions about the meaning of the language used in the *Heti Lapang* tradition. Then, the researcher recorded and recorded the results of the interview. In this research, there are three analysis data such as data reduction, display data, and conclusion [9].

Results and Discussion

As we know, the *Heti Lapang* tradition is commonly referred to as throwing bad luck where several disasters such as accidents and nightmares must be done by carrying out the tradition, so that the same disaster does not happen again. This tradition has been around for a long time because it is a derivative tradition or inheritance from ancestors. Before starting the *Heti Lapang* tradition ceremony, people of Nangatobong prepared some objects as equipment are white rice (*Pare Hoban*), Hikon Leaf (*Hikon Roun*), Coins, Wood, Bogin Rope (*Tali Bogin*), Biro Rahan Leaf (*Biro Rahan Roun*), coconut, Huler leaf (*huler roun*), dog, tobacco, betel nut and eggs. By preparing all these objects, the ceremony will begin. The process of *Heti Lapang* tradition ceremony has four processes. The first process is *Roni Keleng*. *Roni Keleng* means getting rid of bad things in a person who has experienced a disaster. In this process, three stages use three ingredients that have been prepared, namely white rice (*pare hoban*), Hikon leaf (*hikon roun*), and coin. Using these materials, the elders also speak the same traditional language, only with a difference at the end of the sentence.

The second process is *Pati Tali* (Rope Cutting). *Pati Tali* means opening the way to enter the house. In this proses the traditional elder asks the family or the surrounding community about the incident that has befallen the victim. The third process is *Huler Wair*. *Huler Wair* means being sprinkled with coconut water so that it can provide coolness and free people from evil. In this process, the traditional leader sprinkles young coconut water on the victim using the leaves that have been provided. The fourth process is *Tung Goit* (offerings). *Tung Goit* means delivering bad things in the form of symbols or objects used during the *Heti Lapang* traditional ceremony process.

A. The process of the *Heti Lapang* tradition

1. *Roni Keleng*

Roni Keleng means getting rid of bad things in a person who has experienced a disaster. In this process, the leader or customary elder (*shaman*) prepares several objects as

symbols in carrying out the Roni Keleng ceremony process. The first object taken is a handful of pare hoban. While grasping *Pare Hoban*, the *shaman* says traditional language or poems such as "*Ina Nian Tana Wawa, Ama Lero Wulan Reta, nimu mipin kiring hemu blawong hagong goit na nimu bano watut du hidi lepeng ai du pok papak na topo ba au ata du'a kula moan babong mai kula le burat ganu wulan niat ganu lero, na au oni siko itor le'u tung leu rimu teri wawa lero lohor, e'ra rimun wawa lero meseng, au riwa leu nora niu bura wa wauk pake higi mitan heret meran, au blau ganu mate, au meang ganu potat, au roga le'u pare hoban na wawa lero lohor, e'ra wawa lero meseng*". The saying above means, O lord of the earth and sky, he had nightmares and bad luck, so he stumbled over rocks and wood, so they called me as the traditional leader to speak, speaking sincerely like a white cloud and bright like the sun, so I removed the bad luck and escorted him towards the sunset, I paid for it with white teeth, I was afraid like death, shame like loss, so I threw white rice towards the sunset. Then Pare Hoban was immediately thrown behind the victim. The second object taken is coins and the *shaman* asks the victim to spit on the coins three times then the *shaman* walks around the victim while saying verses such as "*Ina Nian Tana Wawa, Ama Lero Wulan Reta, nimu mipin kiring hemu blawong hagong goit na nimu bano watut du hidi lepeng ai du pok papak na topo ba au ata du'a kula moan babong mai kula le burat ganu wulan niat ganu lero, na au oni siko itor le'u tung leu rimu teri wawa lero lohor, e'ra rimun wawa lero meseng, au riwa leu nora niu bura wa wauk pake higi mitan heret meran, au blau ganu mate, au meang ganu potat*". The saying means, O lord of the earth and sky, he had nightmares and bad luck, so he stumbled over rocks and wood, so they called me as the traditional leader to speak, speaking sincerely like a white cloud and bright like the sun, so I removed the bad luck and escorted him towards the sunset, I paid for it with white teeth, I was afraid like death, shame like loss. The third object taken is three hikon leaves and each is taken one by one and then spit on while reciting the same verse as the second object.

Furthermore, all of these objects are carried out in the same way on the item that caused the disaster or accident such as a motorcycle or car while reciting the same verse so that the item can be used again so that the same incident does not happen again.

2. *Pati Tali*

Pati Tali means opening the way to enter the house. In this process the *shaman* asks the family or the surrounding community by saying traditional language or poetry in the form of questions such as "*riwung wai lau, ngasung du retat watu e pegur pekok, ai e bela bong, pora apa iwa ba?*" the saying means, O people around, the sound of a large stone is like an explosive and the wood has been divided, what happened? Then the victim's family

answers in traditional language such as “*e’la e motor*”, the saying means, falling off the motorcycle, then the *shaman* asks again in traditional language such as “*mate ko moret?*” the saying means, dead or alive, the family answers “*moret*” the saying means, live. The *shaman* asked again in traditional language “*Riwung le ngasung wawa, watu e pegur pekok, ai e bela bong, pora apa iwa ba?*”. The saying means, O people around, the sound of a large stone is like an explosive and the wood has been divided, what happened? The family replied in the traditional language “*e’la e motor*”. The saying means, falling off the motorcycle. Then the *shaman* asked again “*mate ko moret*”. The saying means, dead or alive. The family replied “*moret*”. The saying means, live. The traditional language was spoken twice.

After that the *shaman* cut the *Tali Bogin* by saying the traditional language “*Ina Nian Tana Wawa, Ama Lero Wulan Reta, nimu mipin kiring hemu blawong hagong goit na nimu bano watut du hidi lepeng ai du pok papak na topo ba au ata du’a kula moan babong mai kula le burat ganu wulan niat ganu lero, na au pati leu tali haot le karang, nimu gawi napun na boru pout, wolon e du lose lewak*”. The saying means, O lord of the earth and sky, he had nightmares and bad luck, so he stumbled over rocks and wood, so they called me as the traditional leader to speak, speaking sincerely like a white cloud and brightly like the sun so that I cut this rope so that he would walk straight through the river and through the hills.

3. *Huler Wair*

Huler Wair means being sprinkled with coconut water so that it can provide coolness and free people from evil. In this process the *shaman* takes a young coconut which was previously placed on one of the supporting poles by saying traditional language such as “*Ina Nian Tana Wawa, Ama Lero Wulan Reta au pati le ba tali haot le ba karang na nimu gawi naput naha boru pout, wolon naha lose lewak, nimu mai lema ba’a ewe kuwu nimun kuwu buluk, pang nimun pang padak na nimu deri blatan naha ganu wair bliran naha ganu bao, deri gete na gera gahar, gete naha godo gorak, gahar naha nadar tio*”, The saying means, O lord of the earth and sky, I have cut the rope, so that he may walk straight through the river and over the hills, arriving at the hut or house, a small and simple house, so that it lives like fresh water and is cool like a banyan, so that it can grow to maturity until old age, while splashing coconut water by saying, “*Blatan le nimu nora wair, blatan sai ganu wair, bliran sai ganu bao, blatan ganu wair, ganu wair wali napun linok wali klong klaok, bliran sai ganu bao blutuk ro wolon, bliran gata ala roun*”. The saying means, cold like water, cool like banyan, like water in the river, and banyan in the hills, cool to the roots of the hair. While inviting the victim into the house.

4. Tung Goit

Tung Goit means delivering bad things in the form of symbols or objects used during the *Heti Lapang* traditional ceremony process. In this process, a dog is also provided. The dog is cut starting from the nails, ears, mouth, and tail. Then it is placed together with the objects used in the process of the *Heti Lapang* tradition ceremony. The *shaman* takes the objects along the roadside following the direction of sunset and places them on a rock while saying in the traditional language “*Ina Nian Tana Wawa, Ama Lero Wulan Reta, na au oni siko itor le ba nora niu bura wauk pake higi mitan heret meran, na au blau ganu mate, au meang ganu potat*”. The saying means, O lord of earth and sky, I have removed all bad luck by paying for it with white teeth, I was afraid like death, shame like loss.

The *shaman* gives an offering of *bako wua ta'a* by saying the traditional language “*Ina Nian Tana Wawa, Ama Leron Wulan Reta, emai sai e bawo, mai ea sai wua ta'a, mai holo sai bako, wua ta'a tena mera wiwir, bako tena gahu ahang, na mai himo sai tion, te'ar sai belan, “na nimu mipin kiring hemu, blawong hagong goit, bano watut du hidi lepeng, ai du pok papak, na topo ba au ata du'a kula moan babong, mai kula ba bura ganu wulan niat ganu lero, na au oni siko itor le ba, na au mai riwa nora niu bura wauk pake higi mitan heret meran, au blau ganu mate, au meang ganu potat*”. *Ina Nian Tana Wawa Ama Lero Wulan Reta emai himo sai tion, te'ar sai belan, na ma tung le rimu teri wawa lero lohor, e'ra rimu wawa lero meseng, lero lohor, lohor biti nora leu, meseng nora leu, e na au ora ba rajo nora rebang, rajo au mora rebang ruan bewe sai na ma tung leu wawa lero loran, lohor wawa lero meseng, lohor biti leu nora mipin goit, blawong hawong goit, lero meseng, meseng nora leu, na deri nimu le, deri blatan naha ganu wair, bliran naha ganu bao, deri gete naha gera gahar, gahar naha nadar tio, gete naha godo gorak, naha da'a sai sape dudeng sape dading*. The saying means, O lord of the earth and sky, come here already, let's eat betel nut, let's smoke a cigarette already, betel nut to redden the lips, and smoking to warm the mouth, accept it with gratitude, he had a nightmare and bad luck, so he stumbled over rocks and wood, so they called me as a traditional leader to speak, speaking sincerely like a white cloud and bright like the sun, so I got rid of bad luck, I paid with white teeth, I was afraid like dead, shame like lost. O lord of the earth and sky, accept with gratitude, take them already, towards the sunset, I carry with Rajo and Rebang (dogs), rajo and rebang running towards the sunset carrying with them nightmares and bad luck, so that he (the victim) lives like fresh water and cool like a banyan, so that he can grow up to old age. Forever. The *shaman* stands while stomping his feet three times while saying “*Ina Nian Tana Wawa Ama Lero Wulan Reta, au siko le nora wain tai, eban nora liman miak, Ma Sai*”. The traditional *Heti Lapang* ceremony came to an end.

B. The Meaning of The Process *Heti Lapang* Tradition

According to Mrs. VRN (57 years old), the meaning of each poem expressed in each process of the *Heti Lapang* ceremony is the same, namely to keep away misfortune or calamity and ask for safety. According to Mr. PTR (50 years old), the meaning of the poem expressed in the process of the third *Heti Lapang* ceremony, namely Huler Wair, is coolness so that it can enter the house with a cool heart, full of peace and joy, it can also get protection with the support of worldly power to be free from worldly evil and bring people a better life, given abundance, sufficiency, health so that they can live safely and peacefully and get abundance. It can also free people from calamities or release any bad things brought from outside. According to Mr. GRG (60 years old), the meaning of the poem expressed in the process of the *Tung Goit* in the *Heti Lapang* ceremony is to want help and protection to avoid the calamities experienced by giving offerings that have been used in the process of the *Heti Lapang* ceremony.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn based on the discussion in this study is that the *Heti Lapang* tradition ceremony is usually called throwing bad luck where several disasters such as accidents and nightmares must be done by carrying out the tradition. This tradition is also carried out to honor hereditary heritage. The *Heti Lapang* tradition ceremony is not carried out by just anyone. For the Nangatobotong community, the *Heti Lapang* tradition is very meaningful because they believe this tradition brings safety to the community.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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