

Katoneng-Katoneng Cawir Metua: A Cultural Expression of Karo Society

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ABSTRAK

Katoneng-katoneng adalah nyanyian tradisional etnik Karo di Sumatera Utara yang diciptakan secara spontan menggunakan melodi tetap namun dengan teks baru sesuai situasi dan konteksnya (strophic logogenic). Nyanyian ini digunakan dalam berbagai aktivitas sosial budaya masyarakat Karo. Salah satunya ialah pada upacara cawir metua (kematian seseorang yang dipandang telah sesuai dengan cita-cita dan harapan masyarakat Karo). Penelitian ini mengkaji fungsi dan makna tekstual katoneng-katoneng sebagai ekspresi kultural masyarakat pemiliknya dengan menggunakan teori kesenian (seni pertunjukan), etnomusikologi, semiotika, dan antropologi. Pengumpulan data lapangan dilakukan melalui pengamatan langsung, wawancara, dan perekaman. Menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan informan kunci yaitu tokoh adat, sierjabaten (pemusik), perkolong-kolong (penyanyi katoneng-katoneng) dan masyarakat pemiliknya. Hasil yang diperoleh menunjukkan bahwa katoneng-katoneng adalah ungkapan tentang berbagai hal: pesan-pesan dan nasehat, do'a, harapan, cita-cita, keteladanan, keteguhan hidup, nilai-nilai kegotong-royongan, tujuan hidup di dunia, dan lainnya yang disampaikan oleh penyanyi profesional (perkolong-kolong) mewakili orang yang meninggal dan unsur-unsur kerabat sangkep nggeluh (rakut sitelu) dengan cara bernyanyi. Fungsi dan makna teks mengacu kepada cita-cita dan konsep-konsep budaya Karo.

Kata kunci: katoneng-katoneng, cawir metua, sierjabaten, perkolong-kolong, sangkep nggeluh (rakut sitelu)

ABSTRACT

Katoneng-katoneng is a traditional Karo ethnic song in North Sumatra composed spontaneously using repetitive melody with different lyrics, which depends on the context and situation (strophic logogenic). Being used in various social and cultural activities of Karo society, one of them is for the cawir metua ritual (the death of a person who considered to meet the ideals and expectances of Karo society). This research studies the textual meaning of katoneng-katoneng as the cultural expression of the owner society by using the performing art theory, ethnomusicology, semiotic, and anthropology. Field data is collected through observation, interviews, and recording. Qualitative method is applied by defining key informants, including traditional figures, sierjabaten (musicians), perkolong-kolong (katoneng-katoneng singers) and member of society. The result shows that katoneng-katoneng is a phrase of various things: messages and advices, prayers, hopes, ideals, exemplaries, life persistence, values of mutual cooperation, purpose of life in the world, and others delivered by professional singers of perkolong-kolong who represents the died person and the elements of relatives sangkep nggeluh (rakut sitelu) by singing. The function and meaning of the text refer to the ideals and concepts of Karo culture.

Keywords: katoneng-katoneng, cawir metua, sierjabaten, perkolong-kolong, sangkep nggeluh (rakut sitelu)

INTRODUCTION

The Karo ethnic is one of the native ethnic groups in North Sumatra, which divides its cultural sphere into two categories, namely Karo Gugung, in which the territory is on the Bukit Barisan plateau, and Karo Jahe [Ka.ro Ja.hê] in the lower land area (east coast) of North Sumatra.

The Karo society has an instrumental music called *gendang* and vocal music known as *ende-enden*. Amongst Karo's vocal music or songs, the most famous one is *katoneng-katoneng*.

Katoneng-katoneng [ka.to.nêng-ka.to.nêng] is a very distinctive singing with repetitive melody without a significant change through *rengget* (ornamentation) in certain parts. The verse or text is always spontaneously changed and created by the singer depends upon situations and social contexts (*strophic logogenic*). Functionally, the *katoneng-katoneng* is used in Karo for various socio-cultural activities; one of them is *cawir metua* ceremony.

Katoneng-katoneng can be sung by anyone, but not everyone is able to sing well in terms of to arouse feelings of listeners so that messages are strongly delivered. Therefore, it needs a certain person as a renderer of *katoneng-katoneng* called *perkolong-kolong*.

Perkolong-kolong is a traditional Karo professional singer who serves those who need it. For this job, he gets some payments for his skills and professions.

Katoneng-katoneng is considered as a pattern (model) of Karo songs in general and is only well presented by *perkolong-kolong*. This means that someone who has technically mastered *katoneng-katoneng* singing will easily master other Karo traditional songs. For this reason, there are such criteria to be fulfilled by *perkolong-kolong* to be able to present *katoneng-katoneng* song properly:

- 1) Understand the language and literature of Karo.
- 2) Possess Karo vocabularies.

- 3) Have extensive knowledge of Karo customs.
- 4) Have high ability to memorize.
- 5) Comprehend Karo music well.
- 6) Have a good voice and able to produce *rengget* (ornamentation) perfectly.
- 7) Do not repeating the same poem at the same time.
- 8) Understand the *sarune* melody and able to adapt it to *katoneng-katoneng*.
- 9) Capable of presenting text using *anding-anding*.
- 10) Have good manners in accordance with Karo customs.

METHOD

The data in this article is obtained in two ways, namely literature study and observations. Field data collection is done through direct observation towards the running event of *cawir metua* death ceremonies, interviews, and recording. Qualitative method is applied by selecting key informants, namely traditional figures, *sierjabat* (musicians), *perkolong-kolong* (the singer of *katoneng-katoneng*), and the community member. The theory used is a multidisciplinary approach, which is a combination of art theory (performance art), ethnomusicology, semiotics, and anthropology.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Traditional Ceremony of Cawir Metua

In the Karo culture, *cawir metua* is considered as the most ideal form of death. Nevertheless, not every person could reach this stage of death. In this context, the level of Karo mortality is divided into three types: 1) *cawir metua* is someone who died at a very old age; 2) *tabah-tabah galuh*, namely the death of someone who has not yet reached an old age, but his children are already married (*sai utang*); 3) *mate nguda*, if someone dies at the early age.

The traditional death ceremony of *cawir metua* is generally called *kerja cawir metua*, *kerja nurun* or *kerja simate-mate*. This ceremony is the highest of all funerals in Karo society. A person can be called *cawir metua* if the late is already in a very old age, and has grandchildren from all his/her children. Such death is considered to be high and noble and becomes expectations of each Karo community.

The funeral is called *nurun*, which is accompanied by music (*gendang*), *katoneng-katoneng*, dance (*landek*) from descendants, relatives and all participants of the ceremony based on their respective positions and social functions.

The objective of the *kerja cawir metua* is as a tribute to the *kalimbubu* and to the late as well as a form of achievement and social prestige for their offspring. At this ceremony all the rights and obligations of the late will be paid to those who reserve the right receive it, especially to the *kalimbubu*.

The Course of Events

In Karo society, if a person dies, the first cultural activity is to bath the body, make a swivel on the forehead and cheek (yellow), on the big toe, and tie (*kalaki*). Then, *sangkep nggeluh* (*sitellu* shelves), especially *senina*, *kalimbubu*, and *anak beru* will be deliberated (*runggu*) concerning the implementation of traditional ceremonies, burial places, notices and invitations to the whole family, *patong kerja* (establishment of *baban simate*, foods and side dishes), *gendang* (music) and the use of *perkolong kolong*, the procedure and other technical aspects.

In general, activities related to *cawir metua* ceremonies are held for three days. On the first day, a family with the nearest *sitellu rakut* will soon hold *runggu* (a customary deliberation) to plan various customs preparation for the deceased. The materials include: (a) time, place, and day of burial, (b) invited relatives and community mem-



Picture 1: *Sierjabat*en play *gendang lima sendalane*n¹ (Photo: writer documentation, 2016)

bers, (c) ceremonial details, (d) ceremonial equipments to be used, (e) ceremonial leaders (*singerana*) and other officers, and (f) all related needs for the ceremony.

The activity on the second day is to notify or to explain an invitation to all relatives. Another activity is to prepare ceremonial equipments, including: traditional dress (*ose*) and supporting accessories, *utang adat* (some money), musical instruments, a coffin, foods, and a burial place. If the *sukut* belongs to a rich family, the *perkolong-kolong* is invited to complete the traditional music performance (*gendang*).

After preparation is completed, on the eve of the second day they hold a deliberation (*runggu*) involving wider kinship elements with members of the community, after dinner together.

After the *runggu*, *gendang erjaga-jaga* is played (it is intended to keep the family awake to look after the corpse). At this moment every person of relatives will dance (*ngelandek*) following their order and their position in the custom.

The third day is the peak of the ceremony, preceded by *ngukati* (breakfast together). Then, the corpse is moved from a house to the place of ceremony, namely *jambur*, *losd*, or village hall. *Kalimbubu* raises the head, the child of *beru* lifts the body and feet, while the *sukut* and other relatives participate in accompanying the procession of the corpse movement to *jambur*.

After the dead arrives at *jambur* and



Picture 2: custom deliberation (*runggu*)
(Photo: a family documentation,
Samion Kaban, 2016)



Picture 3: White Cloth (*dagangen*) is blanketed
on the dead
(Photo: writer documentation, 2016)

placed in a certain position, the *beru*'s child will call participants to assemble in *jambur*. It is began by the sound of *gendang* (music) by *sierjabatén* (a musician) as a sign that the ceremony is about to begin. While a drum keeps ringing, a son of *beru singerana* (host) asks the *sierjabatén* to play the *gendang rose* and the *gendang tudungen*.²

After it is completed, one of the family members will deliver a speech and read the dead's biography as the opening and notice to public, called *pengalo-ngalo*. Then, it is followed by a presentation of *gendang pengalo-ngalo* accompanying *perkolong-kolong* who sings *katoneng-katoneng* as a welcome greeting to relatives.

The next activity is the presentation of *gendang adat* to accompany the dances of *senina*, *kalimbubu*, and a son of *beru* parties. The *gendang adat* indicates that the customary event for the *sukut* (family of misfortune) has been carried out.

After the series of event above, the ceremony is followed by deliberation (*runggu*), specifically to discuss the repayment of traditional debts to *kalimbubu* called *pedalen maneh-maneh*. Then, *gendang perang-perang* is played following the dance of *Kalimbubu* together with *puang kalimbubu*. At that time, the *kalimbubu* brings *dagangen* (white cloth) from *landek* and covers the dead. This section is concluded by a presentation of *katoneng-katoneng* by singing texts of *pedah* (advice) to the *sukut*.

After the *kalimbubu ngelandek* (performing a traditional dance), the next event is given to the child of *beru* to *ngelandek* with the *anak beru menteri*. When they perform *ngelandek*, *anak beru* and *anak beru menteri* also bring white cloth (*dagangen*) from their *landek* to be blanketed on the dead. At this moment, *perkolong-kolong* plays his role to offer the verses with full of cultural values and Karo culture through the *katoneng-katoneng* song.

The culmination of this ceremony is the presentation of *gendang sirang-sirang* by *sierjabatén* to accompany *katoneng-katoneng* as a mark of separation and closing of the whole series of ceremonies. Further, the *sukut* and other close family member wipe water that has been mixed with a lime, to the surface of finger nails of the dead's legs, which means as a sign of separation. Finally, the corpse is taken to be buried.

Katoneng-Katoneng

Katoneng-katoneng [ka.to.nêng-ka.to.nêng] is the Karo's traditional song, which contains: advices, prayers, hopes, and so on. Derived from the word *toneng*, *katoneng-katoneng* means quiet or peaceful. In other words, *katoneng-katoneng* is a type of song that is expected to provide tranquility and peace for a grieving family. The text contains custom values, spanning norms and social systems, kinship, religious system, advice, prayer, and historical aspects. Therefore, *katoneng-*

katoneng can be considered as a traditional song functions as a medium of a social control to the Karo community.

Katoneng-katoneng is a topical song which is fairly complex and complicated, and can only be served well by *perkolong-kolong* (Karo's professional singer) specializing in that task. *Katoneng-katoneng* is usually displayed in a ceremony *cawir metua* (death), *mengket rumah mbaru* ceremony (entering a new house), *guro-guro aron* (annual work), as well as other custom events. Thus, the *katoneng-katoneng* is used widely in the Karo culture events.

However, in a social reality, the presence of *perkolong-kolong* especially in ceremonies is not a necessity. It depends on economic considerations; as to bring *perkolong-kolong* is costly. Besides the economic factor, another reason is a customary consideration, because bringing *perkolong-kolong* will involve large family member and relatives.

In its presentation, *perkolong-kolong* has freedom to put texts on the melody of *katoneng-katoneng*, which is already standardized based on his expertise. Despite having this freedom, the song of the *katoneng-katoneng* in general has been structured, consists of: (1) opening to introduce the position of *perkolong-kolong* in the ceremony, (2) content, namely the evocative messages from *katoneng-katoneng* according to the relatives he represents. This part is a very dramatic part as it is the core of the entire song of the *katoneng-katoneng*. In this part, a particular group of traditional community member (especially close relatives) can be broken to tears. *Perkolong-kolong* sometimes positions himself as a died person, as if being delivered advice to his descendants, family and other relatives, and (3) closing, contains an apology of *perkolong-kolong* to whom he represented and to whom the song is delivered to.



Picture 4: A boy and daughter in law of the late use traditional dress of Karo (Writer documentation, 2016)

Karo language used in the song of the *katoneng-katoneng* is *cakap lumat* (a polite language). The spoken words do not entirely contain the true meaning (denotative), but also the meaning of figurative language (connotative). In the *katoneng-katoneng* song, it is often used *majas* in the form of figurative language to refine its meaning.

In Karovocal music, ornaments (*rengget*) play an important role. The quality of presentation of Karo vocal music depends on several aspects, and *rengget* is the most prominent one. A good Karo singer must master the ornaments and put them in the right position to achieve the desired aesthetic aspect. For example, when he terminates the song phrase, or when it is used with the gong ringing simultaneously. The *perkolong-kolong* might not sure where an ornament used in a song. So, the ornaments are an intrinsic part of the song and its singer, but not apart from the melody itself.

Therefore, the creative process of *katoneng-katoneng* is based on two things, namely a melody and text. The text is created spontaneously depends upon the message content and melodies that tend to be repetitive. Thus, the song is included into the category of *strophic logogenic*. In this type of music, the relationship of the music (*gendang*) with language and literature become very important especially to customize any plot of texts and words on the melody played.



Picture 5: *Perkolong-kolong* (hold a microphone) among family members of the late who are *ngelandek* (dancing).
Writer documentation, 2016)

The Singer of *Katoneng-Katoneng*

Katoneng-katoneng can be performed by anyone. But not everyone who sings can evoke his/her audience's feelings through the message in the song. Therefore, it is necessary to have a singer with specific skills named *perkolong-kolong*.

In general, *perkolong-kolong* is a term (a predicate) given to an expert who is engaged in music and singing Karo traditions. Furthermore, *perkolong-kolong* is a professional singer and dancer of traditional Karo. This means that *perkolong-kolong* is an artist serves for those who need it. For this task he/she gets some payments for his/her skills and professions.

At the time of singing *katoneng-katoneng*, *perkolong-kolong* stands up while he dances along with deceased relatives or families or just singing in standing position. Dance moves are accustomed to the rhythm of *gendang* (music).

The gesture of dancing in singing *katoneng-katoneng* is a symbol and a reflection of respect and also it means *pemasu-masun* (a blessing). In the traditional ceremony of *cawir metua* is never found a *perkolong-kolong* who singing *katoneng-katoneng* in a sitting position. It proves that the elements of dance movements (*landek*) are very important in supporting *katoneng-katoneng*.

The Learning Process of *Perkolong-kolong*

The learning process to be *perkolong-kolong* can be started from listening directly to the song of *katoneng-katoneng* when the customary ceremonies are held. Besides, one can be *perkolong-kolong* when he is the descendant of Karo traditional music artist who has an interest and talent.

However, there is also a candidate for *perkolong-kolong* which only learn from his senior informally. He just follows performances in various situations and places. This method is called imitative that is mimicking *katoneng-katoneng* carried out by *perkolong-kolong* senior (oral tradition). *Perkolong-kolong* candidate tries hard, and at a certain moment, he asks the seniors and Karo music experts for guidance and correction.

The creation and implementation of the *katoneng-katoneng* texts are done spontaneously and topically to be customized with its context. There are several stages in a creation and an implementation of the texts:

(1) The first stage: a *perkolong-kolong* needs to know the kind of ceremony he attends, the genealogy of the family as well as the family condition completed with its *sangkep nggeluh*. Such information is obtained both through the messenger and in invitation accepted.

(2) The second stage: a *perkolong-kolong* has to find out the condition of *sukut* and *sangkep nggeluh* at the execution in details. Because of this reason, the singers will immerse themselves with ceremony or obtaining information through master of ceremony (*singerana*) at *kerja*.

Even so, the creation and implementation of a real text is committed by *perkolong-kolong* spontaneously at the time of presenting the *katoneng-katoneng* in public. For this, one should have a good memory, ability and knowledge of the customs, as well as a qualified creativity and improvisation.

The Meaning of The Katoneng-Katoneng Song

The following is an analysis of the text of the *katoneng-katoneng* as a cultural expression of the Karo community in daily social activities. As an example, it is taken from the *Cawir Metua* ceremony of Njoreken br Ginting (+) the wife of Ray Tangsin Karo-karo Kaban (+) from the Pernantin village, Juhar, Karo Regency in July 2016. *Katoneng-katoneng* was sung by *perkolong-kolong*, Jenny Br. Sembiring.

The Meaning of The Pengalo-ngalo Sukut Text (a greeting from the family to all relatives)

Nande..nande Iting..enda enggo tampak kami kerina Karo mergana ndai, rikutken tenah permendu gancih sambarndu ei, ija wari sisekalienda ertenah kam nandangi sangkepta nggeluh, kata tenahndu e kata tenah la erpudun nande iting...

[Madame *beru* Ginting [the late], we, all of Karo-karo clan (*senina*) are currently present due to the invitation of your daughter-in-law who becomes your successor. Today you invite all relatives through the sudden invitation without planning]

In the tradition of Karo, when a family member dies, all of clan (*senina*) immediately gather to make a planning and preparation for ceremony of the dead. The presence of *senina* is at invitations and notifications (*tenah*) of the deceased children. However, even if the work is done by the children of the deceased, as a homage, it's never revealed in public, but rather addressed to the daughter-in-law (*permendu gancih sambarndu*). This is a tribute to show that the most grieving and concerned over the death is her daughter-in-law.

Bagem anakku turang nandena, teman bibina, wari sekaleda enggo me kam karina kutadingken, teran sorangku, maka belas-belas kena e me belas-belasku, alo-alo kerina bekasku pepulungken e, enggo malem kal ate tendingku anakku, berkat aku ndahi bapandu ndube, malem me ate tendingku, kudahi me seninandu...

[Today I leave you, you can not hear my voice again, so what they say is represent-

ing my saying, greet all relatives who I invited, to make my heart happy, my son. Now I will find your father [her husband dead formerly), not abysmal misses and excited my heart that later I can meet him].]

The above text indicates that the sons (*turang nandena*) and daughter-in-law (friend of *bibina*) who becomes a surrogate and bearers of responsibility that had been run by the dead. This is in accordance with the system and lineage of Karo society which are patrilineal (their old bloodlines father) who was succeeded to the sons.

Similarly, the death of *cawir metua* is the ideals and hopes of the Karo people. The death in the world, therefore, is only the movement of places and situations. For the dead, he/she also has the joy of meeting with the loved ones who had already died (*malem me ate tendingku, kudahi me seninandu*).

Ola morah-morah turang nandena, teman bibina. Ibas kami penggurundu enggeluh e lanai i rumah, kam me pepagi jadi bapa anakku, kena nge pagi jadi nande teman bibina, inganna pulung beru karo enterem e kutadingken anakku, sada peraraih sada perukuren kam pagi kerina kutadingken e.

[Don't be sad my son, my daughter-in-law, and you, my son, will become a successor of your father, you, my daughter-in-law, will become a surrogate of me, a gathering place of all my daughters. After my death, all of you should get along well and peaceful]

This text determines that all sons (*turang nandena*) become successors of their father and all daughter-in-law (*teman bibina*) are the surrogates of mother-in-law to carry out social rights and obligations of social custom. They, therefore, must become guardians for the dead's daughters. This shows that the daughters who have become part of other family after their marriage, and have no material rights in their father's family should be properly cared and treated, living in peace and harmony (*sada peraraih, sada perukuren*).

Enterem anak dilaki enterem anak diberu, maka ersada arihndu ersada ukurdu kerina kutadingken, malemkal ate tendingku anakku sikelengkeleng kam kerina. Ngasup pagi ngerakut kini ersadan ras sangkep nggeluhta kerinana.

[All my son and daughter should become one heart one thought after I left, I am glad my children; all of you love one to another. You should strengthen the brotherhood with all relatives]

This text is a message explaining that beside the harmony and peace among relatives, also must maintain the relationship and friendship ties with all them (*ngerakut kini ersadan ras sangkep nggeluhta kerinana*).

La ketadingen kam kerina Anak Beru kami, Anak Beru Minteri, Anak Beru Sipemerren, Anak Beru Singukuri. Tatang kari layar-layar kami Kalimbubu ndu, ula juru ula kemalun Anak Beru kami.

[Similarly to all *anak beru kami, anak beru menter, anak beru sipemerren, anak beru singukuri* [the Group of relatives that sets up tasks and works in ceremony]. Support and implement all our progeams, so that all goes well and smoothly]

This text shows that the daughters and the rest of the group (*anak beru*) who are the main support as workers in charge of preparing everything in the ceremony, especially for foods and accommodation to make sure whether food supply is sufficient or not. This is the responsibility of *beru*.

Bage pe kam Sembuyak, Senina, Sipemerren, Siparibanen, Sipengalon, Sendalanan, Kam kap kerina teman kami arih ngarak-ngarak sangkep enggeluh e, tegu-tegu kami Karo mergana e gelah ngasup kami ndalanken simehulina, ibas kita pulung sada wari ngambur-ngambur iluh e sembuyak kami kerina.

[Likewise our *sembuyak, senina, sipemerren, siparibanen, sipengalon, sendalanan* [a group of relatives who hold rites]. All of you, our friends take care of our relatives; support us, in order to be able to run the customs smoothly. We gather on this day with tears in sorrow]

Good or bad and smoothness of the ceremony is inseparable from the role and responsibilities of wider relatives of the clan in conveying good suggestions (*tegu-tegu*).

Although only tied by bonds of the clan, in terms of sorrow they have the same feelings and responsibilities, the same suffers (*sada wari ngambur-ngambur iluh*).

Nandang sangkepta enggeluh karina, maka malem kari ate kami, Sada perarih sada perukuren kam kerina ngarak-ngarak dahine, Maka meciho kari perdalinen nande beru Ginting berkat ku Dibata, Kita pe meciho kerina perukurenta itadingken nande beru Ginting.

[To all relatives, we are very happy because all of you are one mind to carry out these custom activities, may the journey *ibu beru Ginting* towards God be smoothly, and all of us who are abandoned remain healthy and prosperous].

The text above is as an expression of sympathy to all relatives who attends and supports over the retreat of their mother to the Lord and prays for health and prosperity for the rest of the dead family.

Endam dage kata pengalo-ngalo bas kita landek ralo-alo. Malem ate tendi beru Ginting berkat njumpai padanna. Malemen pagi pusuhta kerina itadingken nande beru Ginting.

[Here's our foreword while we are dancing together, be happy the spirit and soul of *beru Ginting*, go to your proper place, and even more pleased our hearts and souls after you left]

This text proves that during the *katoneng-katoneng* are presented, all the family members who are involved in this section will listen and ponder to the messages while dancing (*landek ralo-alo*).

The Meaning of The Text of Katoneng-Katoneng Sukut

Enterem kami gancih sambarna tadingkenna tading i rumah. Maka ngaku nge kami sembuyak senina kami, maka ngaku nge kami gancih sambarna temanndu ari-arih. Ola kam pagi matah ajar ola matah kata nandang kami karinana. Gelah ngasup kami ngelebas-lebasisa ibas tadingken beru Ginting ei.

[After her leaving, we as her successor promise to all of you *sembuyak* and *senina*, will remain a friend in exchange ideas. Don't get tired to give learning and advice so that we are capable of doing the best to all of you]

The text above is a demeanor and statements from the children of the dead for

continuing the mandate of the dead during her lifetime to keep and take care of the relationship, brotherhood tie of *senina*, as well as being friends of discussion. It is emphasized again in the text below.

...maka ula pagi teridah kerna nande beru Ginting lanai i rumah jadi penggurunta enggeluh

[...there will be no change in the future, although our life's teacher [nande beru Ginting, beru Ginting's mother] has left all of us]

...Maka ibas lanai gia ersumekah Ginting mergana. Babah beru Sembiring e nge babahna sui tap ngalo-ngalo kepulungendu.

[... Although no Ginting clan say any single word, but this beru Sembiring will be her successor]

The verse above proves that *beru Sembiring* (*perkolong-kolong*) who becomes representative of relatives to deliver the custom messages and advice.

The Meaning of The Text of Katoneng-Katoneng Kalimbubu

Nini Bulang Karo Mergana, nini beru Ginting, Enda reh bapanta Ginting mergana ndai. Ija ibas kam berkat ei nande Iting malemkal ate Ginting mergana, La kepe lupa Karo mergana ei nehken kekelengen man Kalimbubu. I taneh Munthe bagepe taneh Pernantin enda Ninibulang (kakek) Karo mergana, nini beru Ginting (nenek).

[this time our parents the Ginting clan are here. They are happy because your children, do not forget to deliver reverence to those who are in the village of Munthe and also in Pernantin Village]

This poem is an expression of the relatives of the late over the respect given to the *kalimbubu*, both originated from the late origin village (Munthe village) as well as those domiciled in the village where the late was dead (Pernantin Village).

Maka erpengarapen Ginting mergana ija ibas silakokendu turi-turin peradaten. Ola ngatakan kesirangen Karo mergana, tapi endalah pepagi jadi penggerakut. Gelah tetap pagi kekelengendu

nandangi kerina Ginting mergana, gelah malem pagi ate kami kerinana, sebab juah-juahen Karo mergana ras beru Karo kerina. Gelah malem ate kami Karo mergana, erdoang erdidong me kami nandangi anakndu sianak perana denga kerina, gelah keke pagi kerina mulihi beru Ginting Munthe ndai itengah-tengah jabundu.

[The clan of Ginting hopes, the implementation of this ceremony is not as a sign of separation, but the sign to the ties, so that compassion of the Karo-karo clan to the clan of Ginting remain sincere. We are joy because all of you are healthy and resilient. We hope that there will be a son of yours who remarry back girls the daughter of beru Ginting]

The treatment and respect received by parents and relatives of the dead during her lifetime and from the bereaved family at that time became a good appreciation (*erdoang erdidong*) for the Ginting family. This is proved through hopes that the family relationship is reconnected through marriage between descendants of the dead and the daughter of Ginting (*gelah keke morning kerina mulihi beru Ginting Munthe*).

Berkat aku Ginting mergana kudahi Karo mergana suruh-suruhendu silanai borek ndai. Malem kel ateku erbibi erbengkila, maka gancih sambar ku e. E me pagi man ajar-ajarendu, e me pagi si ngulih-ngyulih kam kutadingken, Nindu nande Iting.

[I, Ginting, go to meet Karo mergana, the son of your beru (who died). My happiness is in the relationship of *erbibierbengkila* (*kalimbubu* relationship with beru), therefore teach and lead them, because they are who taking care of you guys after I leave, that's your mother's advices]

In the tradition of Karo's belief, if the husband dies earlier than the wife, it was believed that the wife will meet her husband in afterlife. An expression of the joy of the dead towards her daughter-in-law delivered through the above text (*malem kel ateku erbibi erbengkila*). This is in accordance with the concept of Karo community that put a wife (*ndehara*), daughter-in-law (*teman bibi, permaen*) as a home of life for each family member.

The Meaning of The Text of Katoneng-Katoneng Puang Kalimbubu

Adi sekalenda labo lolo kudalani dalam simbelin e. Malem me ate tendingku ndahi Karo mergana ndube. Jumpa bibi ras bengkila, jumpa me aku er-nande erbapa, erturang ras ersenina. Maka kam pe kerina kutadingken siapul-apulen karinana.

[On the day I drove my own path. Meet with both my parents in-laws (the late), and meet my late mother and father (late), and also meet my brother and sister (late). You don't need to be sad and keep loving and respectful]

From the text of *katoneng-katoneng* above, it can be seen that father-in-law, father and mother, and brothers and sisters of the dead have already died earlier. Death in this tradition concept is a way to bring together those who have died in a natural immortal, therefore it does not need to be mourned.

Ola ermorah-morah ibas keberkatenkue. Bagem rupana nindu nande Iting si pepulung kami. Si la ngasup ndube ngalo-ngalo kami kerina. Ema-ka bagem Ginting mergana, ija ibas berkatna beru Ginting e nadingken kita. Mejuah-juah kam kerina tadingkenna. Maka ngasup kam pagi negu-negu Karo mergana e ras beru Karo.

[Don't be sad, don't be cry. These are circumstances we receive, our mother said. Mergana Ginting, after our mother leaving, presumably all of you are healthy so that in future could lead and guide all of us]

The clan of Ginting as *kalimbubu* in the concept of Karo culture is like *dibata ni idah* (the visible form of God) as a giver of blessing, guidance for the children behave in *berunya* (in this case is the family of the late) in the world.

....Bagem nande Ginting cawir metua. Merkat gia kam sekalenda njumpai padanndu ola per-cian pertendinndu. Dagingndu e kari taruhkan kami mulih ku tanah. Maka pertendindu berkat ku rumah simbaru, rumah kesenangan. Kami pe juah-juahen kerina tadingkendu irumah.

Madam *beru* Ginting, eventhough you set out to live your destiny but your soul will still be with us. After your body is delivered to the grave back to the ground, and your spirit goes to a new place, a pleasant house, may we, the people you left, stay healthy).

That is the hope of the family, that only the body will be buried in the ground while

the spirit (*tendi*) will leave for a new place into a pleasant home. Therefore, the death in the status of *cawir metua* is a wish and an ideal for Karo people.

Thus, in general, theme and core of *katoneng-katoneng* are:

- a) messages and hopes of the dead to his offspring always to get along and help each other (*sada perarih, sada perukuren*).
- b) delegation and submission of social responsibility, customary obligations to be continued by their children and descendants.
- c) the sincerity of the whole family for the separation with death is simply a migration to afterlife to meet other relatives who had already died.
- d) messages and hopes that good relations with all relatives especially *Kalimbubu* should be maintained.
- e) advices from relatives to the late family.

CONCLUSION

Mate *cawir metua* is the death state in Karo society this is only given to people who died in old age, in which all children have married and have offspring. Traditional ceremony for this is called the *kerja cawir metua*, performed royally, invite all relatives (*sangkep nggeluh, rakut sitelu*) by presenting *gendang* (music) and *katoneng-katoneng* (customary singing) presented by *perkolong-kolong* (*katoneng-katoneng* singer) as medium of conveying noble sayings to the *sukut* (executor of ceremonies) the accompaniment of series of events.

The textual meanings contained in the *katoneng-katoneng* emphasize the advices, prayers, hopes, well-maintained kinship between *sangkep nggeluh* (*rakut sitelu*) and *sukut* (host), and gratefulness of the ceremony implementation, both in receiving and paying traditional debts to functional kinship elements who attending and participating in the ceremony.

In the presentation, *katoneng-katoneng* is singing using a language style (a figurative language), which is motivated by the concepts of Karo culture. The Karo language used is included into the subtle (*cakap lumat*) language, which is commonly used in customary activities.

The presentation of *katoneng-katoneng* prioritizes a spontaneously created cultural expression using repeated melodies. Thus, this kind of song can be categorized to *strofic logogenic* which means that the text is created by the singer (*perkolong-kolong*) spontaneously with a contextual situation in similar melody. Its melody and music strengthen and reinforce the meaning of the text.

End Note

¹The musical instruments of *gendang lima sendalanan* consists of: 1 piece of *sarune*, 1 piece of *singduk* shield (a parent), 1 piece drum (child), 1 piece *penganak* (small gong) and 1 *piecegung* (large gong). It is called five *sendalanan* because there are five pieces of musical instruments that play hand in hand together (*sendalanan*).

²*Gendang Rose* is used to accompany the dance (*landek*) of all members of the family, while the *gendang tudungen* is used to accompany the dancing singers *singuda-nguda* (the youth).

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