



Social and Spiritual Meanings in the Cabur Bulung Tradition of Karo Ethnicity: An Anthropological Perspective

Cladeo Simangunsong¹, Natalia Permata Dora Ginting², Rindani Syahfitri³, Rinaldi Panjaitan⁴, Astrid Safitri⁵, Tomi Arianto⁶

Cladeosimangunsong@gmail.com

^{1,2,3,4,5,6} Universitas Negeri Medan

Keywords

Tradition, Marriage, Cabur Bulung

Abstract

This research aims to analyze the social and spiritual meanings in the Cabur Bulung tradition of the Karo Ethnicity, as well as to understand its role and function in the context of the social and spiritual life of the Karo community. Based on Geertz's (1973) cultural theory, which suggests the importance of symbols and meanings in the interpretation of a community's social life, this research adopts an anthropological approach with qualitative methods. Techniques used include observation, in-depth interviews, and literature studies to explore the meaning dimensions of the Cabur Bulung tradition. The results show that the Cabur Bulung tradition has two main dimensions, namely social and spiritual. Socially, this tradition functions as a means to strengthen relationships between community members, strengthen Karo ethnic identity, and demonstrate the value of solidarity and togetherness in social life. On the other hand, the spiritual dimension of this tradition reveals the Karo people's efforts to communicate with the spirits of ancestors, ask for healing blessings, and maintain balance with the universe. The symbols contained in the Cabur Bulung procession contain deep social and religious values, describing human relationships with the spiritual world and nature. This research provides an understanding of the Cabur Bulung tradition as an inseparable part of Karo ethnic culture, and reveals its role in shaping social structures, cultural identity and practices. The spirituality of the Karo people. Thus, this tradition is not only a ritual, but also a reflection of life that involves harmonious social and spiritual relationships between humans, communities and the spirit world.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Cabur Bulung tradition is a traditional medicine ceremony in Karo society that is performed in the form of a symbolic marriage. This ritual aims to cure children who often experience sickness by traditionally pairing them with children from certain families, usually from kalimbubu, who have an honorable position in the Karo kinship system (Bangun, 2016: 146-158). Historically, Cabur Bulung is rooted in the belief that chronic illnesses in children are caused by disharmony in social relationships or disconnection with a particular lineage. Therefore, through this symbolic marriage, it is

hoped that the child can avoid harm and obtain better health, and this ritual serves as a means to strengthen the relationship between the families involved.

Clifford Geertz (1973) provides a framework for deep understanding by viewing culture as a complex system of symbols, where every action and ritual contains hidden layers of meaning. Geertz also revealed that every element of culture contains social and spiritual meaning. With this approach, rituals such as Cabur Bulung are not only seen as a series of physical actions, but there are social and spiritual meanings contained within them. These meanings represent the values, beliefs and social structures that underlie the life of a social community.

There are some researches that gave much contribution developing ideas of this article. First researched by Marini (2022) that revealed that the practice of Cabur Bulung not only aims as a form of healing, but also has a strong social and cultural function through strengthening ties within the Merga Silima system. As part of the customary tradition, Cabur Bulung can strengthen social solidarity, create a deep sense of community and foster a sense of shared responsibility. This reflects the values that Karo people hold dear, such as mutual respect and help. In addition, Bangun's research (2016) revealed that the practice of Cabur Bulung is also meaningful as a form of healing ceremony. The Cabur Bulung tradition is considered to be able to heal small children who are often sickly. This spiritual meaning reflects the belief that supernatural powers have a close relationship with human physical health. Last researched by Arianto (2024) discussed about The ethnoecology of the Malay sacred myth through narratives of Kampung Tua Nongsa in Batam. This study examines the ethnoecology behind the sacred myths of Bumbum, Puak, and Batu Belah in Kampong Tua Nongsa, Batam, highlighting the deep connections between Malay folklore, local wisdom, and environmental values, while emphasizing the importance of ethical human-nature interactions in the face of migration and industrial development.

Social and spiritual meanings play a significant role in understanding human behavior and culture from an anthropological perspective. Social meanings refer to the shared beliefs, norms, and practices within a community that shape individuals' actions and interactions. These meanings help construct identities, foster social cohesion, and provide individuals with a sense of belonging. Spiritual meanings, on the other hand, relate to the deeper, transcendent aspects of human life that often connect individuals to a higher power or a sense of cosmic order. These meanings can be expressed through rituals, beliefs, and symbols that influence people's understanding of life, death, and the universe (Geertz, 1973). The integration of social and spiritual meanings provides insight into the way societies interpret their world and regulate social relationships.

From an anthropological perspective, social and spiritual meanings are not only intertwined but are also shaped by the environment, historical context, and cultural practices. Rituals, for instance, often serve as a bridge between the social and spiritual realms, connecting individuals with their community and their spiritual beliefs. In many societies, the performance of rituals reinforces collective identity and communal values while simultaneously providing a channel for individuals to express their spirituality (Turner, 1969). This dual function highlights the importance of both social cohesion and personal spiritual expression in shaping human culture. Anthropologists study these meanings to better understand how people make sense of their lives and navigate their social worlds, offering a holistic view of human existence (Douglas, 1966).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Geertz's theory, social and spiritual meanings in culture can be understood through symbols that exist in cultural practices that function as communication systems. Geertz argues that culture is a symbolic system that gives

meaning to social and spiritual actions performed by individuals in the community. Social meaning, according to Geertz, is created through the process of social interaction that forms norms and social structures in society, while spiritual meaning relates to how individuals and groups understand and connect themselves to a greater power, as reflected in certain rituals and beliefs (Geertz, 1973). A further explanation by Sullivan (2017) shows that cultural symbols play an important role in strengthening a group's social and spiritual identity. According to Smith (2019), these symbols not only reflect social values but also reinforce the human connection to the invisible dimension, which shapes the collective worldview. Thus, the social and spiritual meanings in cultural traditions play a dual role in nurturing social communities while connecting individuals to the divine dimension.

Clifford Geertz developed several important concepts in understanding the social and spiritual meanings in culture. The following are the four main concepts that are relevant in this study:

1. Culture as a Symbolic System

Clifford Geertz describes culture as a complex symbolic system, where each element of culture has a specific meaning that is constructed and shared by members of the community. These symbols can be in the form of language, rituals, or physical objects that are directly related to social and spiritual life in a society. In this context, Geertz argues that culture includes not only social behavior, but also how meaning is given to various activities carried out in daily life. According to Geertz, these symbols serve as communication tools that allow individuals to interact and convey the values believed in a community. As such, culture is not just a social phenomenon, but also a system that allows individuals and groups to articulate their spiritual experiences. For example, in religious ceremonies, symbols such as rituals, prayers, or sacred objects become a means of conveying spiritual messages that connect individuals to a greater power. (Geertz, 1973).

2. Interpreting Culture

Geertz emphasizes the importance of understanding culture by interpreting existing cultural symbols and practices. According to Geertz, culture is not just social behaviour, but also the way individuals and groups understand and give meaning to their lives, including spiritual aspects. Social meaning emerges through cultural practices that structure social life, while spiritual meaning is found in how society relates to metaphysical or divine concepts (Geertz, 1973). This interpretation process requires a contextual understanding of how individuals within the community give meaning to the symbols. For example, in a community that observes certain religious traditions, ritual symbols have a much deeper meaning for individuals, reflecting their connection to the spiritual dimension. Therefore, to understand the social and spiritual meanings in culture, we need to interpret these symbols within the social and historical context.

3. Deep Play

The concept of 'deep play' is used by Geertz to describe situations where social and spiritual meanings overlap and reach very complex depths. In this context, Geertz describes how cultural practices, such as rituals or ceremonies, involve huge social stakes, which also contain deep spiritual elements. For example, in a tradition that involves betting or competition, both social and spiritual meanings play a role in shaping the larger values in people's lives..

4. Society as Text

Geertz argues that society can be seen as a text that can be read and interpreted. Every aspect of culture, from language to rituals, can be understood as part of a text that has a deeper meaning. People read and give meaning to cultural symbols according to their social and spiritual context. Social meaning includes the structure of relationships between individuals in society, while spiritual meaning is related to the way people perceive and interpret the transcendent world (Geertz, 1973).

Clifford Geertz's (1973) theory provides a strong basis for understanding how

cultural symbols create social and spiritual meaning, which enriches the individual's relationship with society as well as with the larger spiritual dimension. Concepts such as culture as a symbolic system, cultural interpretation, deep play, and society as text provide useful tools to analyse how these symbols function in society. Through this understanding, we can more deeply explore the meanings contained in cultural practices that connect individuals to their social and spiritual world.

3. METODE RESEARCH

This research uses qualitative methods. According to John W. Creswell (2014) in his book 'Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches' that qualitative research focuses on a deep understanding of a phenomenon through a holistic and contextual approach. In qualitative research, data is organised with narratives or texts that provide a description of the experiences of individuals or groups. Qualitative methods often use interviews and observation methods to collect data. Data collection was carried out in two ways, namely literature study (secondary data) to find theories and thoughts that are in accordance with the research, as well as field studies (primary data) through interviews with respondents related to the problems studied, such as Cabur Bulung marriage.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative approach, given the complex and varied nature of social phenomena. This research was conducted in Sumbul Village, STM Hilir Sub-district, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra. The main informants were Nia Sagita Barus (Informant 1), Ansi Tarigan (Informant 2) and Irna Renata Sembiring (Informant 3). They are the perpetrators of the Cabur Bulung tradition, who provided information related to the research topic. Data sources consist of primary data obtained through direct interviews, and secondary data that includes journals and books related to culture and customs.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Social Meaning of the Cabur Bulung Tradition in Building Karo Ethnic Community Solidarity

a. The Role of Cabur Bulung in Strengthening Social Ties Between Community Members

The meaning of the Cabur Bulung tradition is to honour the kalimbubu. In Karo ethnicity, kalimbubu is highly respected and valued as the one who gave the girl child. Marriage in Karo society is not only about uniting two individuals, namely the bride and groom, but also has a deeper social meaning, namely connecting the two extended families and ancestors of each party. This can be seen from the interview results of informants 1, 2 and 3 as in the following quotes:

Informan 1:

"Cabur Bulung ah melala Kel peran na, bagi anak dilaki si sangana sakit biasana ia di suruh cabur bulung. Bas dahin sie orangtua si dilaki ras si diberu ipejumpaken janah ercakup gelah ilakoken cabur bulung enda. Adi pihak si ilamar alokenna, maka ibere me bana kai sinisurakenna. Nca go dung cabur bulung e, emakana keluarga enda jadi lebih ersada me arihna.."

"Cabur Bulung ah has many roles, like a boy who is sick, usually he is asked to do cabur bulung. In this job, the parents of the boy and girl meet and talk to do this cabur bulung. If the party who proposes accepts, then what he wants is given."

Informan 2:

"Sedekah si kuakap, cabur bulung labo saja guna pepalem anak si sakit, tapi pe guna mpegegehi hubungan keluarga si sangana i cabur bulung."

"As far as I know, baptism is not only to heal sick children, but also to strengthen the bonds of friendship in the baptized family."

Informan 3:

"Kerna cabur bulung enda i bahan ibas dua keluarga si lit hubungan si ndeher ntah pe si ndauh, ija lit mungkin hubungan ei si la ndeher kedungenna banci reh ndeher na."

"Because Cabur Bulung is from two families who have close or distant relationships, where perhaps a relationship that is not close can eventually become closer."

From Clifford Geertz's perspective, the Cabur Bulung tradition can be understood as part of a larger symbolic system. According to Geertz, culture is a collection of symbols that give meaning to the social and spiritual actions of individuals within a community. In this context, Cabur Bulung becomes a symbol that connects individuals to wider social values and strengthens community solidarity. The social meaning embodied in this tradition creates a symbolic communication space that reinforces the collective identity of the Karo Ethnicity. Thus, the practice of Cabur Bulung serves not only to heal physically, but also to build and maintain harmonious social relations among community members..

b. Maintenance of Karo Ethnic Identity through Cabur Bulung

The maintenance of Karo Ethnic identity through the Cabur Bulung tradition plays an important role in maintaining and strengthening cultural values that have been passed down from generation to generation. This tradition not only functions as a symbolic ritual to cure illness, but also as a means to strengthen relationships between families and maintain kinship within the community. In practice, Cabur Bulung involves a meeting between families from the male and female sides, which allows for communication and mutual respect. As expressed by informants, the implementation of this tradition strengthens social ties and creates a sense of solidarity among community members. However, with the development of time, cabur bulung has begun to be abandoned. This is supported by the statements of informants 1 and 3.

Informan 1:

"Cabur bulung enda enjagai identitas suku karo tapi labo harus i lakoken. adi lit pemindon saja, labo harus."

"Cabur bulung does not protect the identity of the Karo tribe but it does not have to be done. If there is a request, it is not necessary."

Informan 3:

"Cabur Bulung terjadi Adi Lit kemau ena aja, jadi la Lit unsur untuk melestarikan entah enjaga identitas karo"

"Cabur Bulung occurs when there is a will, so there is no element of preserving or protecting Karo identity"

From the perspective of Clifford Geertz's theory, the Cabur Bulung tradition can be understood as a component of a larger symbolic system, in which social and spiritual meanings are intertwined in every cultural practice. Geertz emphasises that culture is a symbolic system that gives meaning to the social actions of individuals in society. In this context, although Cabur Bulung faces the challenges of modernisation, its social significance remains relevant in strengthening the collective identity of the Karo ethnic group.

c. The Function of Cabur Bulung as a Social Conflict Resolution Media

Aside from being part of the belief to cure illnesses, the Cabur Bulung marriage tradition also has another important purpose, namely to strengthen family relationships, especially between a mother and her Turang or Anak Beru and Kalimbubu. This tradition is a means to repair and strengthen kinship relations, especially if there have previously been problems or disputes between the two parties. By performing the Cabur Bulung marriage, it is hoped that the relationship between the two families can return to harmony and become closer. In addition, this tradition also reflects the noble values of the Karo people in maintaining solidarity and harmony between community members through meaningful cultural rituals. This is supported by the statements of informants 1 and 2.

Informan 1:

"Ya Adi untuk penyelesaien konflik, biasana la Lit sih... Tapi perban Lit na cabur bulung, banci jadi ngehalau konflik si banci Lit i masa depan."

"Yes, if for conflict resolution, usually there is no ... But because there is a leaf, it can prevent conflict that may exist in the future."

Informan 2:

"Kalau enggo lit sitik pe kerna si enda, keluargana sih. Tapi lit si deban si lit hubungenna ras perdagangan e, emaka lit si man bahanen kerna perjengilen e."."

"If you've broken up, bring them closer, the family. So from there can be more respect for each other, so away from conflict."

From Clifford Geertz's theoretical perspective, social and spiritual meanings in culture can be understood through the symbols contained in cultural practices that act as communication systems. Geertz states that culture is a symbolic system that gives meaning to the social and spiritual actions of individuals in a community. In this context, Cabur Bulung functions as a symbol that connects individuals to social norms and strengthens the collective identity of Karo Ethnicity. The process of social interaction that takes place during the implementation of this tradition creates a stronger social structure and reduces the possibility of conflict. Thus, Cabur Bulung not only acts as a healing ritual, but also as an effective means of social conflict resolution, maintaining harmony and solidarity within the Karo community.

d. Influence of Cabur Bulung on Social Structure and Family Relationships

The meaning of the Cabur Bulung tradition in Karo ethnicity is as a sign of respect to kalimbubu, who is highly valued as the giver of daughters. In addition to serving as a belief to cure diseases, the Cabur Bulung marriage also aims to strengthen the relationship between a mother's family and her Turang, or Anak Beru and Kalimbubu. If there were previously problems or disputes between them, the implementation of this tradition is expected to strengthen the relationship between the two families. In addition, the Cabur Bulung marriage also aims to strengthen the spiritual bond between a mother and her Turang. Therefore, in this tradition, not only the relationship between the bride and groom is the focus, but also the importance of the relationship between the mother of the boy and the father of the girl. This can be seen from the interview results of informant 1:

Informan 1:

"Pengaruh na ena mpet Kel. Banci ikataken, ena emperkuat , empererat persaudaraan karna secara adat Kalak adi enggo sereh/mpau. Enggo i cabur bulungen, jadi si awalna hubungan kedua keluarga ei biasa aja jadi reh deher na."

"The influence is very strong. It can be said that this strengthens, strengthens the bonds of brotherhood because according to the customs of the Karo people, the

relationship between the two families has not been normal for a long time, so it is getting closer."

Informan 2:

"Jadi enda mulihken ku tujun, guna mpegegehi hubungan antara dua keluarga ras erbahan anak-anak sehat."

"So this goes back to the goal, to strengthen the relationship between the two families and make their children healthy."

From the perspective of Clifford Geertz's theory, the Cabur Bulung tradition can be viewed as part of a cultural symbolic system that weaves social and spiritual meaning through ritual. According to Geertz, culture is a 'web of meaning' constructed through symbols, where each cultural practice such as Cabur Bulung serves as a communication tool to articulate social and spiritual values within the community. Symbols in Cabur Bulung such as the honouring of kalimbubu (the giver of daughters) and inter-family interactions not only represent social norms, but also strengthen the collective identity of Karo Ethnicity through a harmonious kinship relationship structure.

2. Spiritual Dimension in the Cabur Bulung Tradition of Karo Ethnicity: Symbolism and Connectedness

a. Symbolism in Cabur Bulung as a Medium of Communication with the Spirits of the Ancestors

Marriage in Karo society is not only about uniting two individuals, namely the bride and groom, but also has a deeper social meaning, namely connecting the two extended families and their ancestors. In the context of Karo customary law, the implementation of cabur bulung marriage for minors has a different meaning. After the traditional procession is over, the child who has undergone the marriage will be returned to his or her parents and continue life as usual, where this tradition is carried out symbolically to honour the beliefs of the indigenous people. The cabur bulung ceremony also contains symbolic meanings that indicate the attachment of a person's spirit or soul in a kinship relationship, which is believed to cure illness. This spirit attachment is considered to be able to provide strength and health for the individuals involved. From the interview results, informant 1 stated that there was communication with the spirits of the ancestors. Informants 2 and 3, however, did not associate cabur bulung with ancestral spirits. This can be seen from the following statement.

Informan 1:

"Ei Lit sih, karna selanga cabur Bulung Lit ritual ketua ada man mindau restu Nini tudung.."

"This is because during the Bulung Lit ritual, the ritual leader is there to ask for blessings from Nini Tudung."

Informan 3:

"Tuhu menurut kiniteken, tapi labo lit si bage ngerana ras nini-nini ntah pe nini-nini si bage. Tapi lit memang nungkun kalak si pentar (dukun), emaka labo langsung arah keluarga nari si erkomunikasi ras roh-roh bagi dukun."

"It's just according to belief, but there's no talking to ancestors or forefathers. But there are people who ask clever people (shamans), so the ones who communicate with the spirits are shamans, not directly from the family."

Symbolism in cabur bulung as a medium of communication with ancestral spirits is closely related to Clifford Geertz's theory of culture as a symbolic system. Geertz explains that cultural symbols, such as rituals in cabur bulung, function as

communication tools that connect individuals with social and spiritual meanings in the community. In the practice of cabur bulung, this symbolism is reflected through ceremonies that not only strengthen social relations between extended families, but are also believed to connect humans with spiritual dimensions, including the spirits of ancestors. Although there are different views among informants regarding the direct involvement of ancestral spirits, this practice still reflects how culture functions as a text that can be interpreted to understand the relationship between individuals, communities and the transcendent world as per Geertz's theory..

b. Spiritual Meaning of the Cabur Bulung Ritual as a Means of Obtaining Blessings and Protection

The meaning of the Cabur Bulung tradition is a form of respect for the kalimbubu, which is highly valued by the Karo ethnicity as the party that gives daughters. Karo people believe that kalimbubu serves as a conduit for blessings from a higher power, where the term 'kalimbubu di bata ni idah' describes the mother figure as a visible representation of God. They believe that through the prayers of the kalimbubu, health and blessings will be obtained. Thus, the implementation of this tradition is not only aimed at establishing a household, but is also carried out as an effort to cure children suffering from illness. This can be seen from the interview with informant 1

Informan 1:

"Biasana kenca iusir, pengantin dilaki ras keluarga besar erbahan ziarah ras mindo pasu-pasu gelah banci malem ras lanai sakit."

"Usually after the cabur bulungan is sprinkled, the bride and groom and their extended family make a pilgrimage and ask for blessings so that they can be healed and not get sick again."

The connection with Clifford Geertz's theory is evident here, where culture is understood as a symbolic system that gives meaning to social and spiritual actions. In this context, the Cabur Bulung ritual not only creates social connections between individuals and families, but also serves as a cultural text that can be interpreted to understand how the Karo people connect themselves to spiritual dimensions and divine forces. Geertz emphasises that symbols in culture, such as this ritual, create strong feelings and motivations, reinforcing people's belief in the spiritual forces present in their lives.

c. The Connection Between Humans and Nature in the Cabur Bulung Tradition as a Manifestation of Spirituality

Karo traditional marriage is considered a very sacred event, so its implementation must go through the consent and agreement of the two families of the bride and groom. One tradition that is still preserved in Karo society is the marriage of minors, known as Cabur Bulung. The purpose of the Cabur Bulung marriage is to cure illnesses and prevent bad things from happening based on premonitions received. The Cabur Bulung ceremony has a symbolic meaning that shows the attachment of a person's spirit or soul in a kinship relationship, which is believed to cure illness. This attachment of spirit or soul is considered capable of providing strength and health for the individuals involved. This can be seen from the results of informant 1's interview.

Informan 1:

"Hubungen e... banci saja tempa-tempa sepele man kalak si deban. Tapi situhuna hubungen e rembak kel. Sebab biasana kalak si enggo ibuat dagingna enggo sehat."

Lanai sakit, bagi dagingna enggo terjaga secara rohani mulai kin dagingna itangtangi."

"The relationship... may seem trivial to others. But actually the relationship is very close. Because usually those who have had their hair removed are healthy. They are no longer sick, it is as if their bodies are spiritually awake since they have had their hair removed."

In the context of Clifford Geertz's theory, this ritual can be understood as a symbolic system that connects individuals to a higher power, in which kalimbubu acts as a channel of blessing. Data from interviews show that people believe that after undergoing these rituals, individuals will gain protection and health, which reflects the close relationship between humans, ancestral spirits, and nature. Geertz emphasized the importance of interpreting cultural symbols in understanding how societies build meaning in their lives; in this case, Cabur Bulung becomes a symbol of attachment that not only concerns social relationships, but also spirituality that connects humans with nature and transcendent forces.

c. The Role of the Broken Branch in Strengthening the Spiritual Harmony of the Karo Ethnic Community

The implementation of marriage creates kinship bonds that allow mutual help and support harmonious and peaceful relationships. The Cabur Bulung ceremony was held at the house of the girl who was one of the brides in the ritual. This tradition reflects the deep respect of the Karo people for kalimbubu, as the party who gives the daughter. Therefore, the male side, known as the *beru* child, is required to come to the kalimbubu house as a form of respect for them. And the social life of children who are pursued in the community is not limited by the bulung branch in question, their rights as children are not restricted, and when they are adults, their rights are not limited and when they are adults, they have the right to determine their own life partner. And any family must respect the decision so that there is no sense of compulsion or one of the parties being disadvantaged from the tradition. This can be seen from the results of interviews with informants 1, 2 and 3.

Informan 1:

"Erkiteken enggo cerai, keluarga e reh rembakna ras saling menghormati. Bagepe adi anak si cerai e enggo mbelin janah milih pasangan si deban, labo masalah."

"Because they have been cabur bulungan, so the family is closer and respects each other. Likewise, when the child who was cabur bulungan is an adult and chooses another partner, it is not a problem."

Informan 2:

"Tentu saja, duana keluarga si anakna enggo iperkosa pasti saling ngelindungi perasanna gelah ula lit konflik. Emaka tetap ia harmonis. Adi anak si anakna enggo iperkosa bulung e enggo mbelin janah atena erjabu ras kalak si deban, maka arus lebe ia erdalih i bas gundik bulung e nari."

"Of course, both families whose children are being cabur bulung will protect each other's feelings to avoid conflict. So it remains harmonious. If the child who was cabur bulung is grown up and wants to marry someone else, then they must first ask permission from the cabur bulung party."

Informan 3:

"Adi ngerana kerna cabur bulung, seri nge ras erjabu tapi menurut tradisi. Jadi lit dua keluarga si ersada. E me sabapna maka kalak si mbarenda lanai ngerana ras kade-kadena si ndauh, erkiteken anakna iculik, misalna... ia jadi ndeher mulihi."

Tapi kenca ia enggo mbelin, anak-anakna banci milih sada pasanganna e me si adu s si erjabu secara umum."

"If cabur bulung is like getting married, but according to tradition. So there are 2 families that are united. That's why those who no longer greet distant relatives, because their child is cabur bulung, for example... become close again. But when the child grows up, they can choose another partner, but if their partner is the one who

This is in line with Geertz's view that symbols in culture, such as Cabur Bulung, provide deep meaning and motivation to individuals and communities. This ritual serves not only to strengthen social bonds but also to maintain spiritual balance, create a feeling of mutual respect and maintain harmony among the families involved. Thus, Cabur Bulung plays an important role in building and maintaining spiritual harmony within the Karo ethnic community, in accordance with the principles described by Geertz regarding the relationship between symbols, meanings, and social structures.

5. CONCLUSION

The Cabur Bulung tradition is one of the cultural heritage of the Karo people which has an important meaning in social and spiritual aspects. From a social perspective, this tradition plays a role in strengthening relationships between community members, maintaining Karo ethnic identity, and instilling the value of togetherness and solidarity in community life. Meanwhile, from a spiritual point of view, Cabur Bulung reflects the belief of the Karo people in connecting with the spirits of their ancestors, praying for healing, and maintaining a balance with nature. The results of the study show that Cabur Bulung is not just a ritual of medicine, but also reflects the harmonious relationship between social and spiritual aspects in the Karo community. This tradition is full of symbolic values that connect humans with the community as well as the spiritual world. However, with the development of the times, this practice is becoming less and less common, so efforts are needed to preserve it so that it remains part of the cultural identity of the Karo people.

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