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# PROCEEDING



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## ANALYSIS OF SYMBOLIC MEANING IN TRADITION NGAMPIRNE WETON IN JATIGUNUNG VILLAGE TULAKAN PACITAN DISTRICT

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### Abstract

The Ngampirne Weton tradition is a tradition of commemorating someone's birthday according to the Javanese calendar, which is still carried out in Jatigunung Village, Tulakan District, Pacitan. The purpose of this study is to find and explain more deeply the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myths in the food served in the Ngampirne Weton tradition in Jatigunung Village. The research method used is Roland Barthes' Semiotics analysis method with a qualitative approach. Collection of interview data with Jatigunung village leaders, and documentation. The results of the study show that in the Ngampirne Weton tradition in Jatigunung Village, the meanings are denotation, connotation, and myth. The food which is a symbol of this tradition is memetri, buceng, memule, punar sejodo, jenang abang, jenang sakwernine jenang, and toya sejodo.

**Keywords:** *Meaning, symbolic, Ngampirne Weton tradition*

### Introduction

Java is one of the tribes in Indonesia that is still thick with its culture and customs. Each culture has its own uniqueness, as is the case with culture in Java. Its uniqueness can be seen from the beliefs of the people, language, arts, and traditions. Culture is a system of values, symbols and behavior of human life in a form that is unique to society. A culture associated with a community tradition must have the values contained in the culture. As in Jatigunung Village, Javanese culture is still strong. One of the traditions that is still being carried out today is the Ngampirne Weton tradition. Even though times have become more modern, sophisticated, and have a rational mindset, this has not made the people who live in Jatigunung Village, Pacitan Regency, leave this Ngampirne Weton tradition. The Ngampirne Weton tradition includes the slametan tradition in Java. The slametan is performed for all purposes related to events that one wishes to commemorate, atone for, and consecrate with the aim of asking for safety, well-being, and happiness in life.

The Ngampirne Weton tradition is a tradition carried out to commemorate someone's birthday according to the Javanese calendar. In contrast to birthday celebrations which are held once a year, the Ngampirne Weton tradition can be carried out 9 to 10 times a year. This is because weton is calculated using the Javanese calendar whose calendar cycle lasts for 35 days or the Javanese call it selapan. The Javanese calendar only has 5 days, namely Pon, Wage, Kliwon, Legi and Pahing. For example, someone who was born on Wednesday, January 4 2023. If you look at it from the Javanese calendar, this person has weton Wednesday Kliwon. So the Ngampirne Weton slametan can be held on Wednesday Kliwon. The implementation of this wetonan has different characteristics from each region even though the value and purpose of this wetonan ceremony are the same, namely asking for safety. In salvation, there are many offerings that have meaning and are symbolic in various traditions intended to minimize various evils. Likewise in the Ngampirne Weton tradition, in this slametan tradition several foods are served. This food is not only to be enjoyed, but as a symbol or symbol that contains prayer. These offerings must be in harmony with the purpose and function of the slametan. The symbolic meaning is embodied in the shape, color, and ingredients of the food served. The

types and procedures for presentation have also been regulated in such a way according to agreed rules so that they are not arbitrary.

### **Semiotics**

Semiotics is a field of science or an analytical method used to study signs (Rahmawati, 2017: 66). Semiotics deals with everything that is considered as a sign. Hendriyanto (2013: 93) states that semiotics is a study related to the production, interpretation of signs, ways of working, and their benefits to human life. Meanwhile, according to Barthes (2006: 156-157), semiotics is a science related to form, because the study of marking is different and separate from the content of its meaning. In this case, semiotics is not something metaphysical, but one of the various sciences that is needed. In semiotic analysis which will determine meaning, Roland Barthes has more attention to the theory of two-stage meaning systems or two-stage signification (two orders of significance). The first signification stage is the relationship between signifier and signified in an external reality sign. Barthes calls it denotation, namely the most real meaning of signs. Connotation is the mention of the second stage of significance by Barthes, which interprets interaction when a sign meets the reality or emotions of the reader and the values of culture.

According to Bathes, connotation is synonymous with a way of thinking called "myth". Myth has a function to reveal or provide a truth for a dominant value in a certain period (Sobur, 2013: 711). Myths are stories that a culture uses to clarify or understand some aspect of reality or nature. For Barthes, myth is a way of a culture about something, a way to conceptualize or understand something. Barthes thought of myths as links in a chain of related concepts. In the study of semiotics, the object of study is not only limited to linguistic signs, but all objects that may not look like a sign. Tradition is basically a form of use value or function but does not look like a sign in general. Tradition is basically a culture, use value, ideology, or even a form of intercommunication group can be an object as a sign. This is caused by anthropological-philosophical issues about the status of signs in human life. To get meaning through the sign system of symbols in a tradition, symbolic awareness and imagination that is sensitive to the position of symbols is needed. The symbol is a symbol of something including language (Hendriyanto, 2013: 25).

Traditions have changed from time to time both on a large and small scale. Tradition is a culture that is considered good which is still carried out and passed down from generation to generation for generations in society whose existence is maintained and preserved (Aziz, 2020: 8). Tradition is not something that cannot be changed, it can be combined with a variety of human actions and taken up as a whole. Because humans make traditions, humans can also accept them. One tradition that is still being carried out today is the wetonan tradition. This tradition in various regions in Indonesia has its own designation and procedures. In Jatigunung Village, Tulakan District, Pacitan, the wetonan tradition is called Ngampirne Weton. The word "ngampirne" means inviting to stop by and "weton" means calculating the day of birth or the Javanese calendar. The Ngampirne Weton tradition is carried out on birthdays according to the Javanese calendar. In the Javanese tradition, Ngampirne Weton includes slametan or celebration activities. Slametan is a food alms ceremony and a joint prayer that aims to ask for safety and peace for the family members who organize it (Purwadi, 2005: 22).

Food in every Javanese traditional procession is a form of gratitude to the Creator as well as a symbol of the prayers that are said. The Javanese people believe that prayers delivered accompanied by offerings are a form of sincerity. Therefore, the food served in the Javanese tradition, one of which is Ngampirne Weton, cannot be arbitrary because the food contains meaning and prayer. The offerings must be in harmony with the purpose and function of the slametan. The content of this philosophy is manifested in the shape, color and ingredients of

the food served. The types and procedures for presentation have also been arranged in such a way according to agreed rules.

### Previous Research

Nurhayati, Sri. , (2022), the results of a study on the procession of meeting *manten*, it can be seen that men are the leaders in the household compared to women, and there is a myth according to public belief. After carrying out the wedding procession "*meeting manten*", this has household harmony, peace and harmony. Researchers conducted a research study in Pacitan Regency, after the Covid-19 pandemic. Hendriyanto A, et al, (2019)), a road show for the art of *Kethek Ogleng Pacitandi* at tourist attractions in Pacitan, to introduce Pacitan cultural arts as well as foster the creativity of artists and their supporting community. The cultural arts of *Kethek Ogleng Pacitan* contain local wisdom values (Hendriyanto A. et al., 2019); ecological intelligence in students (Hendriyanto A. et al., 2018); as well as Javanese philosophical values in *Kethek Ogleng* (Hendriyanto A. et al., 2018). This research has similarities with Pacitan's local culture but uses different studies. Based on the explanation previously described, the researcher is interested in carrying out research with the title "Analysis of Symbolic Meanings in the *Ngampirne Weton* Tradition in Jatigunung Village, Tulakan Pacitan District". Barthes.

### Method

The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach by describing the procession of *ngampirne weton*. The qualitative descriptive research method produces a data description in the form of written or spoken words about the characteristics of an individual, state or symptom that can be observed by Lexi Moleng 2020. This study uses Rolands Barthes' semiotic study, which studies and examines the nature of the existence of a sign. which examines the understanding of the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth. The location of the research was RT 02/RW 09, Plapar 2 Hamlet, Jatigunung Village, Tulakan District, Pacitan Regency. The research was carried out in January 2023. Data collection techniques used by researchers are using field techniques, by using the method of observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation is a technique of collecting data by observing what is being studied. An in-depth interview technique with community leaders or elders in Plapar 2 Hamlet who usually lead the prayer during the *Ngampirne Weton* procession. The technique of determining this informant is by purposive sampling technique, namely the researcher has determined a number of informants according to the objectives to be obtained. Documentation is a data collection technique by recording and retrieving documents such as photos needed in research.

### Finding and Discussions

#### Ngampirne Weton Tradition Procession

The *Ngampirne Weton* procession is carried out by inviting close neighbors and serving food. After the invitees arrive, an elder or someone who is deemed capable will offer an intention and a prayer in Javanese containing a request for protection from God Almighty. After that, there will be a meal together. The *Ngampirne Weton* tradition has several positive messages, including increasing spiritual intelligence. by performing the *Ngampirne Weton slametan*, the community believes in the greatness and power of God Almighty. Teaching to share, someone who holds a *slametan* means that he has set aside some of his sustenance and distributed it to others in the form of food. Carrying out the *Ngampirne Weton slametan* can also strengthen friendship ties. Inviting neighbors and close relatives can foster an attitude of togetherness and kinship. Preservation can be carried out collaboratively between parties by

considering various factors including mental factors and objectivity (Hendriyanto A, Sutopo B, 2019). The values in the ngampirne weton tradition must be preserved because they have local wisdom values that must be passed on to future generations.

The tradition of ngampirke Weton, in principle, is the same as the local culture of Pacitan such as the Ruwat Badut Sinampurno ceremony in which it contains how humans relate to nature in order to prevent and control all disasters caused by nature, especially those related to disease outbreaks (Hendriyanto A. et al., 2019). The traditional Tetaken ceremony of gratitude as farmers and gardeners within 1 year (Hendriyanto A. et al., 2021); as well as the traditional marine cricket ceremony Genggong as a manifestation of gratitude for abundant marine products (Hendriyanto A. et al., 2020). Every *slametan* tradition by the Javanese people must have food or offerings served. These foods are believed to contain a certain meaning. In the Ngampirne Weton *slametan*, the meaning of each offering will be recited together with a prayer in Javanese “*Memetri sekawan gangsal pancer. Memule kakang kawah adi ari-ari. Punar sejodo njemukne malaikat, nabine, waline. Jenang sakwernine jenang, jenang gangsal werni inggih menika sageto ngayomi rina lan wengi. Sak aturan malih toya sejodo minangkani ingkang pethak saking bapa ingkang abrit saking biyung, pramila dimaknani toya sejodo sageto jenjem tentrem slamet wilunjeng saklami laminipun*”.

## The Meaning of Denotation, Connotation, and Myth in the Ngampirne Weton Tradition

### 1. *Memetri*

*Memetri* is white rice that is shaped like a cone or called *pancer* and surrounded by rice that is formed as a circle) totalling four pieces. In addition, vegetables are also given which are placed in small cups on the edge of a plate or tray. The connotative meaning of *Memetri* is shaped like a cone in the middle symbolizing oneself (person), then four rice which are shaped round to respect the house it is occupied, honouring the ancestors, and also as a symbol of asking for protection from the Almighty to be given safety and blessings. The results of the study from (Nurhayati, Sri. , 2022: 188) explain that the second stage, namely connotative meaning, relates to the interaction that occurs when a sign meets an emotional feeling from its readers and from its cultural values, consisting of the meaning of the subject and in subject. Connotation at the subjective level has a meaning whose presence is not realized. The mythical meaning of *Memetri* is that it can prevent disaster and distress as well as bad things, especially in a household.

### 2. *Buceng*

*Buceng* is white rice in the shape of a cone topped with *urap* or *krawon*. *Krawon* are vegetables that are boiled and mixed with seasoned grated young coconut. The connotative meaning of *Buceng* is as a symbol of guidance or help. *Buceng* is an acronym for the phrase "*nybuto sing kenceng*" which means to say God's name seriously. The use of white rice in *buceng* is a symbol of purity. So it can be concluded that *Buceng* has the meaning to always remember and ask for help from God Almighty with a pure heart. The *Urap* or *Krawon* that surrounds the *buceng* also means that in social life, humans must be able to mingle and be useful to other people, the environment, and their nation. The myth of the *Buceng* is that during the *Slametan* the *Buceng* must be torn down, even if you don't eat the *Buceng* it cannot be intact or still have a cone shape.

### 3. *Memule*

Figure 3, is the denotation meaning of *Memule* is rice that is shaped into a circle, although it is not perfect and only half a circle. *Memule* is different from *Buceng* because the tip is not sharp. In the Ngampirne Weton tradition, two *Memule* plates (a pair) are used with side dishes that surround the rice. The connotation meaning of *Memule* is as a prayer for the ancestors, the number of *Memule* two symbolizes prayer to male and female ancestors. The mythical meaning

of *Memule* means going home. People believe that by *Memule* the ancestors visit and pray for the person who is doing the *Slametan*.

#### 4. *Punar Sejodo*

*Punar Sejodo* is yellow rice (rice cooked with a mixture of coconut milk, salt, turmeric and bay leaves) in the amount of two cone-shaped pieces with side dishes surrounding them. The connotative meaning of *Punar Sejodo* is that yellow rice symbolizes prosperity, so by making yellow rice it is hoped that the people will get prosperity and prosperity. The mythical meaning of *Punar Sejodo* is about belief in *Allah SWT*, angels, prophets, and saints.

#### 5. *Jenang Abang*

*Jenang Abang* is *Jenang* which means porridge and *abang*, which means red. The denotation meaning of *Jenang Abang* is porridge made from rice flour, water, and palm sugar or brown sugar. The connotative meaning of *Jenang Abang* is that the red color symbolizes courage. This courage is associated with protecting people from things that are dangerous and to get security and safe. The mythical meaning of *Jenang Abang* is that people believe that *Jenang Abang* can ward off evil spirits that can spread disease or disaster.

#### 6. *Jenang Sawernine Jenang*

it is colorful porridge made from rice flour and water added with small pieces of banana leaf, turmeric and coffee. It consists of four colors of *jenang*, namely: 1) *White Jenang*, white rice flour porridge; 2) *Green Jenang*, symbolized by a piece of banana leaf; 3) *Yellow Jenang*, symbolized by pieces of turmeric; and 4) *Jenang Ireng*, symbolized by coffee grounds. The white porridge means that babies born are still pure and do not have sin. Green porridge means the hope of parents and people who are being treated. Yellow porridge means glory and prosperity. Black porridge has a meaning to remind that every human being will surely experience death and nothing is eternal in this world. Hendriyanto (2021), says that the human mind which is oriented towards the life of the world and the hereafter, is expected to be able to carry out orders, to the human locomotion to create something useful.

#### 7. *Toya Sejodo*

Figure 7, *Toya* means water and *Sejodo* means a pair. The denotation meaning of *Toya Sejodo* is one glass of coconut milk and one glass of broth (Javanese sugar water or brown sugar). The connotative meaning of *Toya Sejodo* is to symbolize that the formation of the human embryo is from the fusion of the seeds of love from both parents. Coconut milk is a symbol of a father's sperm and a symbol of a mother's ovum. In addition, *Toya Sejodo* has the meaning that children must always respect their parents and the good and bad of a child also depends on the role of the parents. The mantra in the Badut Sinampurno ceremony which is still preserved in the Ploso Village area, Pacitan contains elements of calm in dealing with problems, upholding noble customs, trustworthiness, surrender to God Almighty, and prioritizing justice. Finally, from the aspect of the dramatic element, the local wisdom that is revealed is consensus deliberation as the best way to solve problems and maintain harmony and preserve nature (Sutopo B., Hendriyanto A., 2019). The symbol in the *ngampirke weton* procession is very laden with the message that a child must obey his parents, especially a mother who gives birth.

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion, the researcher can conclude that the *Ngampirne Weton* tradition is a tradition carried out to commemorate someone's birthday according to the Javanese calendar. The implementation of this *wetonan* has different characteristics from each region even though the value and purpose of this *wetonan* ceremony are the same, namely asking for safety. In the *Ngampirne Weton* tradition there are several foods served. This food is not only to be enjoyed but as a symbol or symbol that contains a

certain meaning. This food offering must be in harmony with the purpose and function of the slametan. The meaning in each food is manifested in the shape, color, and even of the ingredients served. The types and procedures for presentation have also been regulated in such a way according to agreed rules so that they are not arbitrary. Various types of food are served, including *Memetri*, *Buceng*, *Memule*, *Punar Sejodo*, *Jenang Abang*, *Jenang Sakwernine Jenang*, and *Toya Sejodo*. Based on an analysis using Roland Barthes' Semiotics theory, food in the *Ngampirne Weton* tradition contains denotation, connotation, and mythical meanings. As Indonesian citizens and the nation's next generation, we should preserve every ancestral culture that has been passed down. One tradition that is still maintained and must be maintained is the *Ngampirne Weton* tradition found in Jatigunung Village, Pacitan. In this tradition, there are food dishes that contain symbolic meanings. Currently, there are still many young people who do not understand it, so it must be preserved before this tradition is completely lost due to modernization. In addition, the researcher hopes that research on symbolic meaning in the *Ngampirne Weton* tradition can become reference material for future researchers.

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