



## **FUNCTION AND MEANING OF GONDRANG SIPITU-PITU IN THE LAYUR MATUA CEREMONY IN THE SIMALUNGUN COMMUNITY IN HARANGGAOL HORISON DISTRICT**

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### **Abstract**

This article is entitled "The function and meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu in the layur matua ceremony in the Simalungun community in the Haranggaol Horison sub-district". The analysis is focused on (1) the function of Gondrang sipitu-pitu, (2) the meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu. The method used is qualitative method with data collection data through field research, interviews, audiovisual data recording. In this case, to describe the meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu, the author uses the theory Ferdinand De Saussure. to describe the function of Gondrang sipitu-pitu. Gondrang sipitu pitu used the theory of use and function of Alan P Merriam (1964: 223-226), plus the theory of functionalism from Malinowski. Research results The research results obtained show that conceptually for the Simalungun community if someone is in Simalungun society if someone is in the status of death layur matua where all his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren are married, then the person who died is perceived as having succeeded in the person is perceived to have succeeded in the life they left behind. left behind. At the layur matua traditional ceremony there are four types of Gondrang that are used in the ceremony. used in the layur matua ceremony, namely: (1) the first is rambung ramos which means having children and grandchildren, (2) Second, olop-olop which means saying yes, grateful to God, (3) third, panrahut which means to assent, (4) huda-huda which is intended to welcome the tondong to come to accompany dances by wearing topings and hornbill beaks.

**Key words:** *function, meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu, layur matua*

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## INTRODUCTION

Simalungun ritual ceremony in Haranggaol, Haranggaol Horison District, layur matua. Layur matua means someone who has died where all of his children (male and female) are married and have grandchildren, and his grandchildren are married and have children called 'nono' and 'nini' from the deceased. So the deceased person is considered to have succeeded in the life he left behind. In Simalungun society, a person can be said to be layur matua if all of his children (male and female) are still alive, and if any of his children (male and female) have died, then the deceased person cannot be said to be layur matua (interview with Damanik, February 2024).

Traditional ceremonies are one of the traditions of society that are considered to have values that are a necessity and a form of celebration. One of the traditional ceremonies in one tradition of the Simalungun community is the traditional death ceremony. Since seeing the death event in Haranggaol, Haranggaol Horison District, this has become interesting because, at the death event, a musical ensemble was presented. After further investigation, it turns out that the music presented is indeed traditional music that is specifically played for death ceremonies among the Simalungun ethnic group. The Simalungun ethnic group is one of the Batak groups whose Simalungun community is spread in Simalungun Regency. The Simalungun ethnic group is known as a religious ethnic group, and to this day they still maintain their ancestral customs. One of the customs that is maintained is the customary custom when someone dies, especially oppung (grandfather) and Inang na matua (grandmother), who already have nono and nini, using ritual musical accompaniment called gondrang sipitu-pitu. This sayur matua death ceremony is held because oppung (grandfather) and Inang na matua (grandmother) are free because their responsibilities in the world have been carried out well. The preparation process for the layurmatua ceremony begins with a bond of brotherhood, giving to each other on the basis of mutual agreement and decision.

In the discussion of layur matua, there is one special customary treatment where a rematch is carried out between the grandson of the deceased and the granddaughter of the deceased (granddaughter) as a binding of family ties between the descendants left

behind. However, this is only a symbol in the sense that it is not mandatory to marry. In the Simalungun community, music is a necessity that is used for ritual purposes, entertainment, and traditional ceremonies. At the layur matua Gondrang event, the Gondrang sipitu pitu is played, where Gondrang sipitu-pitu is generally used for various wedding and death ceremonies.

Gondrang sipitu-pitu is a very important element, namely 1) the varied melody of the sarunei; 2) the basic colotomic structure played on Ogung and Momongan; 3) the related rhythmic pattern varied by the rhythm cymbal played on the gondrang musical instrument (Manurung, Mamaria Febyoa, 2016). Furthermore, there are four types of Gondrang used in the layur matua ceremony, namely: (1) First is rambung ramos, which means having children and grandchildren; (2) second, olop-olop, which means saying yes and being grateful to God; (3) third, panrahut, which means amen, (4) Fourth, huda-huda, which is intended to welcome the tondong to accompany the dances by wearing toppings and hornbill beaks. However, in the layur matua ceremony to start the ceremony, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren first open the Gondrang, which means playing/hitting the Gondrang before the ceremony takes place. In relation to the relationship between Gondrang and death in the context of Simalungun culture, it is necessary to explain that there are 6 types of death in Simalungun society, namely: (1) matei manorus, (2) matei anakboru/grama, (3) matei matolpak, (4) matei matua, (5) matei sayur matua, and (6) matei layur matua. In the context of death ceremonies (especially layur matua), it is important to carry out socio-musical activities in the form of gondrang performances as an important requirement for the running of this traditional ceremony.

Gondrang presented in the layur matua ceremony has a unique use and function. Based on the research results obtained, the function of Gondrang (1) is to inform that the deceased is a person who has the highest degree of death in Simalungun society, which is the ideal of every person. (2) as a means to enliven the ceremony, because this ceremony, after being in the form of sadness, namely the death of someone in a state of layur matua, the following process is an expression of joy and pride for the family and all those present.

Based on the results of the author's research, the author obtained several functions of Gondrang in the Layur Matua ceremony as follows. (1) The function of Gondrang in the ceremony is to guide the integration of kinship related to a person's relationship to the ancestors; (2) the function of Gondrang as a validation of the death ceremony that the Simalungun people aspire to, "Perfect" death; (3) the function of Gondrang is a means of communicating a special cultural event that is the goal of life to the afterlife, namely the death of "layur matua"; (4) the function of Gondrang in the Layur Matua ceremony is as a means of entertainment, because the whole family is happy about the existence of death in the form of layur matua; (5) The function of Gondrang is a continuation of Simalungun culture.

Gondrang sipitu-pitu and the death ceremony in Simalungun culture, especially in Haranggaol Horison District, are very interesting to study. For that, it is necessary to briefly describe the form of layur matua and its function and meaning in the context of Simalungun culture. By using the discipline of art studies, in this study the author examines Gondrang sipitu-pitu in the context of the Layur Matua death ceremony. The two disciplines used in this paper are musicology to examine the function of Gondrang sipitu-pitu and anthropology to examine the death ceremony itself. In this previous discussion, no one has studied it up to the Layur Matua stage.

## METHODOLOGY

Regarding qualitative methods, Marshall and Rossman (1995) emphasised that qualitative research acts as an instrument. Therefore, researchers must participate in the lives of artists. In this regard, Hasan (1985:7) said that a method is a way or systematic work to understand the object that is the target of the relevant science. Research methods can be interpreted in several specific disciplines. According to Caplin (1989:301), a method is a systematic procedure that is included in an effort to investigate a fact/concept. The work process carried out in this study consists of the pre-field stage (pre-field), fieldwork stage, data analysis and report writing (Moleong, 2002:109). In addition, to support the

research method proposed by Moleong, the author also uses fieldwork and laboratory work. The results of these two disciplines are then combined into one final result. To obtain the data and information needed in this writing, the author uses a data collection method. In this case, two methods are used, namely using a written questionnaire and using interviews. To complete the data collection with the questionnaire and interviews. The working principles implemented in this study are broadly through reading literature, interviews, and observations, especially on the issues to be studied. Reading literature is to increase insight, solve problems, and help examine the main problems of the research. Interviews are to collect data, then analyse it, and deepen the analysis, especially aimed at the ceremony, function, and musical structure of the gondrang sipitu-pitu in the layur matua ceremony. Observations are carried out to obtain an overview of the main problems and the reality that occurs in the field.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Function Of Gondrang Sipitu-Pitu In Layur Matua Ceremony

Gondrang sipitu-pitu is a musical composition or repertoire with a melodic instrument played by the Simalungun sarune bolon. According to Bronislaw, the function is that all cultural activities are actually intended to satisfy a series of a number of instinctive desires of human beings that are related to their entire lives. In accordance with Malinowski's opinion, layur matua can survive in Simalungun culture.

If we discuss the function of music, then we are referring to the habits (the ways) of music that are used in society, as a common practice, or as part of the implementation of customs. The function of Gondrang sipitu-pitu, based on the theory of function offered by Merriam, is as follows.

- 1) To validate the traditional ceremony of Layur Matua.
- 2) As a means of prayer to God, so that the deceased is accepted by God as best as possible.
- 3) As an expression of emotions of joy and sadness, which is part of the emotion of joy because the corpse died in a very honourable manner,

namely Layur Matua, as well as an expression of sad emotions because those who are alive, especially the immediate family left behind, will be separated from the deceased.

- 4) As a means of entertainment, for all those involved in this death ceremony, both relatives and the community who attend this event.

## **2. Function Of Gondrang Sipitu-Pitu**

As explained regarding the function of Gondrang sipitu-pitu, the following are the functions of Gondrang sipitu-pitu obtained by the author through the field research process and also collecting related sources, guided by Merriam's theory.

### **a. To Validate The Layur Matua Ceremony**

The validation of the ceremonial institution means that the role of music in a ceremony is very important, namely, as important as the ceremony itself. Gondrang in the Layur Matua ceremony is part of the ceremony itself, which means it is one of the offerings that serves to accompany and play the entire Gondrang repertoire needed. Gondrang sipitu-pitu functions as a validation of the implementation of the ceremony; this can be seen when Gondrang sipitu-pitu is played as alu-alu (opening Gondrang) and Gondrang as a closing. Based on the research results obtained, the author can conclude that the Layur Matua ceremony cannot be carried out without Gondrang in its implementation.

### **b. As A Means Of Prayer To God**

Based on the results of the research obtained, the Simalungun community believes that Gondrang sipitu-pitu is a sign of prosperity; if Gondrang is played, it is a sign of a request that those present at the Layur Matua ceremony receive prosperity. The Simalungun community considers Gondrang sipitu-pitu as one of the communications to God to be given a long life; thus, it can be concluded that Gondrang sipitu-pitu is also a prayer to God.

### **c. As An Expression Of Happy And Sad Emotions**

The Gondrang that is played has a meaning contained in it; in each Gondrang that is played, it has a meaning of joy because the deceased has succeeded in this worldly life, so everyone who attends this event feels

joy. On the other hand, Gondrang, which tells of sadness, can be seen further regarding the meanings of Gondrang played at the Layur Matua ceremony in the next chapter.

### **d. As A Means Of Entertainment**

Gondrang music as a means of entertainment is also found in Huda-huda activities held as part of funeral ceremonies. Gondrang music ensembles are performed to accompany the humorous Huda-huda (hornbill) dance and at least two masked dancers who are tasked with bringing the spirits to life and entertaining guests and visitors who arrive to pay their last respects. The most important Gondrang used in this situation, as previously stated, is Gondrang sipitu-pitu, although other appropriate Gondrang can also be performed to accompany the humorous dance. Finally, we can refer to music outside the Gondrang music tradition as a means of entertainment. Villagers, especially men, spend a lot of time singing and playing folk songs as a means of personal or group entertainment at night after work. Various musical instruments such as flutes, harmonicas, rebabs, gambangs, bamboo sarunei and other musical instruments are used to accompany songs or play interlude musical ornamentation. So one of the prominent functions of music among the Simalungun people is to entertain by listening and participating directly and as a prerequisite for dance events.

## **3. The Meaning Of Gondrang Sipitu-Pitu In The Layur Matua Ceremony**

Meaning is an inseparable part of semantics and is always attached to what we say. The definition of meaning itself is very diverse. Mansoer Pateda (2001:79) states that the term meaning is confusing words and terms. The meaning is always united in the utterance of words or sentences. According to Ullman (in Mansoer Pateda, 2001:82), meaning is the relationship between meaning and understanding. In this case Ferdinand de Saussure (in Abdul Chear, 1994:286) expresses the understanding of meaning as an understanding or concept that is owned or found in a linguistic sign.

In the Linguistic Dictionary, the understanding of meaning is described as 1. The speaker's intention; 2. The influence of the application of language in the use of

human or group human perception or behaviour; 3. relationship in the sense of equivalence or incompatibility between language or between utterances and all things that are indicated; and 4. how to use language symbols (Harimurti Kridalaksana, 2001:132). Bloomfield (in Abdul Wahab, 1995:40) states that meaning is a form of language that must be analysed within the limits of important elements of the situation in which the speaker utters it. Related to this, Aminuddin (1998:50) states that meaning is the relationship between language and external language agreed upon by language users so that they can understand each other. Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913): Semiotics, according to Saussure, is a study that discusses signs in social life and the laws that govern them. This suggests that signs are bound by the laws that exist in society. Saussure emphasises that signs have meaning because they are influenced by the role of language. Compared to other parts such as customs, religion and so on. Saussure divides his semiotic concept into 4 concepts. Namely, significant and signifie, langue and parole, synchronic and diachronic, and syntagmatic and paradigmatic. The first is significant and signified; signified or signifying are things that can be accepted by our minds, such as the original visual image of the object. Signified is the meaning that we think after we receive a sign. For example, we use a door as an object to be explained using 'signifiant' and 'signifie'. The significant part of the word 'door' is the component of the word 'door', namely P-I-N-T-U. While the signifier of the door is what our minds capture when we see the door. namely, a tool used to connect one room to another.

The second concept is part of language, which is divided into parole and langue. According to Saussure, langue is the knowledge possessed by society about a certain thing. 4 Langue can be interpreted as a system of signs or codes themselves. While for parole, it is an action carried out individually from the will and intelligence of thinking.

The third concept is synchronic and diachronic, which is a concept that studies language over a certain period of time. Synchronic in language is an explanation of certain conditions related to a period. While diachronic is an explanation of developments after something that happened in a certain

period. The fourth concept, syntagmatic and paradigmatic, is the relationship of elements of linguistics that contain the arrangement or series of words and sounds in a concept. Gondrang and tortor continue to be presented according to customary rules. Each type of Gondrang played by pargonsi has its own meaning. To analyse the meaning of the function of Gondrang sipitu-pitu in the layur matua ceremony in the culture of the Simalungun community, the author uses the theory of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), which is the first signifiant and signifie; signifiant or signified are things that can be accepted by our minds, such as the original visual image of the object. Signifie is the meaning that we think after we receive a sign.

#### **4. The Meaning Of Gondrang Sipitu-Pitu**

As explained regarding the meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu, the following is the meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu obtained by the author through the field research process and also collecting related sources, guided by Ferdinand de Saussure's theory.

##### **a. Rambung Ramos**

Gondrang rambung ramos is Gondrang played at nuclear family events. At nuclear family events, the family is given the opportunity to dance and ask for the Gondrang they want to play. Gondrang rambung ramos has the meaning that the descendants left behind are already rambung ramos in the Simalungun language, which means they have many grandchildren, or what is called layur matua, and are given health by God.

##### **b. Olop-olop**

Gondrang Olop-olop is played when the nuclear family, tondong, or relatives who come to follow the course of the layur matua ceremony. This Gondrang is an expression of joy in affirming that the deceased is considered to have been perfect in living his life, seen from the descendants he left behind who are complete and healthy; the deceased has children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. This Gondrang Olop-olop has a meaning where all family members affirm or accept the deceased's departure to God Almighty.

### **c. Panrahut**

The Gondrang panrahut is played as the closing stage of the ceremony. This Gondrang is also usually requested of the pargual (musician) if the nuclear family or the tondong want the Gondrang to be played by dancing together. This Gondrang panrahut has a meaning as a unifier or strengthener of family ties while also confirming the deceased to be accepted by God Almighty.

### **d. Huda-huda**

The Gondrang huda-huda is used as a welcoming when the tondong comes and also accompanies the dances that are performed to welcome other family members who have just arrived. The meaning of Gondrang huda-huda is a symbol of giving respect to the tondong and family who participate in the layur matua ceremony.

## **CONCLUSION**

After going through the research stages conducted by the author, the conclusion is given to answer the main problem in this study, based on all the descriptions that have been described about the analysis of the function and meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu in the Layur Matua ceremony in the Simalungun community in the Haranggaol Horison sub-district. The conclusion to answer the formulation of the problem, also called the main problem that has been described in the previous chapter, the function of Gondrang sipitu-pitu and the meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu are as follows. As a means of prayer to God, the Simalungun community believes that Gondrang sipitu-pitu is a sign of prosperity; if Gondrang is played, it is a sign of a request that those present at the Layur Matua ceremony receive prosperity. The Simalungun community considers Gondrang sipitu-pitu as one of the communications to God to be given a long life; thus, it can be concluded that Gondrang sipitu-pitu is also a prayer to God. As an expression of happy and sad emotions, the Gondrang that is played has a meaning contained in it; in each Gondrang that is played, the meaning of joy is because the deceased has succeeded in this worldly life, so everyone who follows this event feels joy. As a means of entertainment, Gondrang music is also found in Huda-huda activities

which are held as part of the funeral ceremony.

The Gondrang music ensemble is performed accompanying the humorous Huda-huda dance (hornbill) and at least two masked dancers who are tasked with bringing the spirits to life and entertaining the guests and visitors who arrive to pay their last respects. The most important Gondrang used in this situation, as previously stated, is Gondrang sipitu-pitu, although other appropriate Gondrang can also be performed to accompany the humorous dance. Finally, we can refer to music outside the Gondrang music tradition as a means of entertainment.

The meaning of Gondrang sipitu-pitu, Gondrang rambung ramos is that Gondrang is played during a nuclear family event. During a nuclear family event, the family is given the opportunity to dance and ask for the Gondrang they want to play. Gondrang rambung ramos has the meaning that the descendants left behind are already rambung ramos in the Simalungun language, which means they have many grandchildren, or what is called layur matua, and are given health by God. Gondrang Olop-olop is played when the nuclear family, tondong, or relatives who come to follow the course of the layur matua ceremony. This Gondrang is an expression of joy in agreeing that the deceased is considered to have been perfect in living life, seen from the descendants left behind who are complete and healthy; the deceased has children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. Gondrang Olop-olop has the meaning that all family members agree or accept the deceased's departure to God Almighty. Gondrang panrahut is played as the closing of the stages in the ceremony. This Gondrang is also usually requested of the pargual (musician) if the core family or the tondong party wants Gondrang to be played by dancing together. This Gondrang panrahut has the meaning of uniting or strengthening family ties as well as confirming the deceased so that they are accepted by God Almighty. Gondrang huda-huda is used as a welcome when the tondong party arrives as well as accompanying the dances that are performed to welcome other family members who have just arrived. The meaning of Gondrang huda-huda has the meaning of a symbol of giving respect to the tondong and the family who participate in the layur matua ceremony.

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