

Erpangir Ku Lau Ritual and Kinship System of Karo Community

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ABSTRACT:- Erpangir Ku Lau is a ritual that has several functions, such as caring for people who are related to certain diseases, such as being disturbed by magical creature, giving gratitude for Dibaba (God) when just getting fortune, and many more. In Erpangir Ku Lau procession, one of the important part is gendang sarune (music). In the Karo community the term gendang has several meanings, one of them is music. The most famous and biggest musical ensemble in the Karo community is the Gendang Sarune ensemble. In the erpangir ku lau ritual presentation, the role of the Gendang Sarune, does not only function as a musical accompaniment, but also serves as a link between humans and the spiritual world.

Erpangir Ku Lau ritual process has several stages and involved by many people. Everyone will have their own name and work. This system is known by the people of Karo as sangkep nggелuh. Sangkep Nggелuh is a kinship system in the Karo community, which in there are Rakut Rakut, merga silima, tutur siwaluh, and perkade-kaden sepuluh dua tambah sada. The whole system was obtained by the Karo community since they were born.

This research is an attempt to find out the korelation between erpangir ku lau ritual and its part that activated the kinship system of the Karo community. To discuss this problem, the author formulate a discussion of theoretical, containing the relationship between logically arranged concepts and theories of several experts. This research is an ethnography research that unpack the korelation between erpangir ku lau ritual and the kinship system of the Karo community.

Keywords:- Gendang Sarune, Erpangir Ku Lau Ritual, Kinship System

I. INTRODUCTION

Karo people believe that they come from the kingdom named Haru. Regard to this, Abdullah (1994:22) in Malay history (*Sejarah Malaysia*), and Sinar (1991:7) in *The History Of Medan in the Olden Times* explained the existence of ARU/Haru/Haro Kingdom, which mentions *Tanah Karo* as a convenient place.

The Karo people have a local belief system and religion that have existed long time before the entry of major religions such as Islam, Catholicism, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. According to (Sarjani 2011) *Pemena* is one of the original religion of the Karo tribe which was formerly known as *Perbegu*. In 1946 it was replaced by traditional elders and Karo community leaders from *perbegu* to *pemena*. The name change was due to pressures exerted by the Dutch government along with missionaries from Europe to the people of Karo, by accusing followers of the *Perbegu* religion as worshiping evil demons.

Pemena religion very closely holds the philosophy of life of the Karo people, namely *sangkep nggелuh*¹. This is expressed in religious ceremonies and rituals, in which there is an expression of gratitude to *Dibaba Kaci-kaci* (God). This expression of gratitude was seen by European missionaries as a heresy of the way the Karo people worshiped trees, springs and large stones by giving offerings to *Dibaba* (God). This phenomenon becomes interesting and raises the question why are rituals which some people and missionaries consider heretical? does ritual practice have a certain role in social structure,? and why do some Karo people consider the ritual is important?

In the other hand, Humans in the Karo community belief was consist of (1) *Tendi* (soul), (2) *Begu* (spirit of the deceased), and (3) *Kula* (body). When someone dies, the tendons will disappear and the body will

¹*Sangkep nggелuh* is a system that organize the lives of Karo people. That contained by *Rakut Sitelu, Merga Silima, Tutur Siwaluh, Perkade-kaden Sepulu Dua Tambah Sada*.

be destroyed, but the steps will still be there. When *tendi* with me (someone) is a unified whole. When *tendi* is separated from me, someone will get sick. Treatment will be carried out by holding a tendon call, which is called the ritual of *raleng tendi* (calling the soul). If the tendon does not return, then what happens is death. For Karo people, it is a *tendi* (soul) that can be present anywhere, their power encompasses everything, and is considered the source of everything. This is in accordance with the beliefs of the Karo people who are very close to a form of belief or belief in *tendi*, namely a life of the soul whose existence is imagined to be the same as supernatural spirits (Tarigan, 1988: 83-84).

Karo people have a kinship system called *Rakut Sitelu*. *Rakut Sitelu* is a system that regulates positions in customs in the Karo community which is divided into three points, namely *Kalimbubu*, *Senina / Sembuyak*, and *Anak Beru*. The word *Rakut* means bond, *si* is a connecting word, while the word *telu* means three (Darwin Prints, 2006). So *Rakut Sitelu* are the three bonds that form a Karo social order system. This system makes Karo people bound and respect Karo people each other. The social order system originates from the *merga silima* system. The Karo people recognize grouping based on a kinship system called *merga*. *Merga* in Karo people consists of five *merga* and *beru* (clans) mothers, namely: *Karo-Karo*, *Sembiring*, *Tarigan*, *Ginting*, and *Perangin-angin*. The five *merga* and *beru* become the identity of the Karo community in social and cultural life. From this *merga* and *beru*, the Karo community ties relationships, determines their social position, whether as *Kalimbubu*, *Senina / Sembuyak* or *Anak Beru*. *Kalimbubu* is *Dibata ni idah* or God that is visible and must always be respected, because in the beliefs of the Karo people, *kalimbubu* becomes God's representative on earth and gives courage to someone, while *senina / sembuyak* is the host in a traditional ceremony or ritual, and the *Beru* child is the party that does all the work of *senina/sembuyak* in traditional ceremonies and rituals.

From this explanation, it appears that the kinship system named *Rakut Sitelu* is important components in the social structure of the Karo community. In many activities and discourses, the Karo community is always reminded of its position in the kinship system or customs implemented in daily life as well as in traditional Karo ceremonies and rituals, in relation to the *rakut sitelu* and *merga silima*. The implementation of a traditional ceremony and ritual such as the *erpangir ku lau* ritual, each individual or family becomes an event to find out and remind the position.

Erpangir Ku Lau ritual is an event that is believed as a process of self-cleaning. Self-cleaning is done because it is free from a danger, to get more fortune, and also to treat someone from the interference of evil spirits. The *Erpangir Ku Lau* ritual has several processions, one of which is the determination of the date and place of the ritual, after which the ritual needs and equipment are prepared. The ritual begins with the *ermang-mang* (vocal) of the shaman, and continues by playing the *gendang sarune* ensemble

Gendang can be simply interpreted as music. *Gendang Sarune* consists of five instruments, namely *sarune*, *gendang singisai*, *gendang singanaki*, *penganak*, and *gung*. Traditional musicians are called *sierjabaten*. According to one *guru sibaso*², stated that the ritual will not be separated from the existence of the *gendang* (music). This becomes interesting that *gendang sarune* is also important as a part of *Erpangir Ku Lau*.

In the context of the research to be carried out, the specific focus of the problem to be elaborated is to find out how the correlation between *Erpangir Ku Lau* ceremony and kinship system of the Karo community.

II. THEORY AND METHOD

a. Theory

Emile Durkheim's Functional Structural Theory in the book entitled "*The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*" stated that modern society is seen as an organic whole that has its own reality. The whole thing has a certain set of needs or functions that must be fulfilled by the members so even under normal circumstances, it will last. Durkheim revealed that society is a unit in which there are distinguished parts. The parts of the system have their respective functions which make the system balanced. These parts are interdependent with each other and are functional, so if something does not work it will damage the balance of the system. This thought became Durkheim's contribution to Parsons and Merton's theory of functional structurality.

Functionalism theory emphasizes the regularity that society is a social system consisting of parts or elements that are interrelated and united in balance. Changes that occur in one section will also bring changes to other parts, in other words the community is always in a state of gradual change while maintaining balance. Every event and every existing structure is functional for the social system. Likewise, all existing institutions are needed by the social system, even poverty and social imbalance. Society is seen from the dynamics in the

²In various religious traditions in Nusantara, there are similarities that to relate to the realm of Gods or supernatural beings, they need shamans as a medium who connect the human with the supernatural world. The Karo people refer to them as *Guru Sibaso*, in Malay culture they are called *bomoh*, in Javanese and Sundanese cultures they are called *dukun* or *mbah dukun*, and many other tribes in Indonesia call this medium.

balance. The basic assumption is that each structure in a social system is functional against the other. Conversely, if it is not functional, the structure will not exist or will disappear by itself. Durkheim also stated (2003), rite is a collective action by a group that gathers to live, maintain, or restore certain mental conditions in a group. Durkheim's thought about the function of the ritual is closely related to his concept of religion as a social institution needed to bind individuals into a single unit through the formation of a sacred system of beliefs, rites, and symbols. According his thought, religion binds individuals into various groups of people who are bound by one thing in common. Religion is an instrument of social solidarity that functions to integrate social systems. With this perspective, it can be assumed that conflict may occur due to the collapse of social solidarity, due to the lack of fostering mental condition through rituals.

III. METHOD

This study is ethnography research that use some of collecting data methods. In order to find information related to issues raised in research, there are several methods used to collect data, one of which is literature study. Although not much, there is some information obtained from the writings of the Karo ancestors who discussed the belief system of the Karo people. In addition, researchers will also conduct interviews with traditional Karo community leaders, especially about *pemena*, the religion concept and also the mythology that adopted by the Karo community.

In addition, the data of this study were also taken from direct observations as well as documentation of the implementation of the *erpangir ku lau* ritual from audio, video and photos. To provide a description of the ritual implementation, *Sierjabaten* was chosen as an informant to provide additional information through the interview process. In the interview process, several other informants chosen to provide additional information related to the system and structure of the Karo community were traditional leaders who had sufficient knowledge of the research topic.

IV. Result and Discussion

1. Kinship System of Karo Community

Every Karo person has *merga* (clan), in this case *merga* for men, while for women it is called *beru*. *Merga* and *Beru* are carried behind someone's name. *Merga* in the Karo community consists of five groups called *merga silima*. The *merga silima* are (1) *Karo-Karo*, (2) *Ginting*, (3) *Tarigan*, (4) *Sembiring*, and (5) *Perangin-angin*.

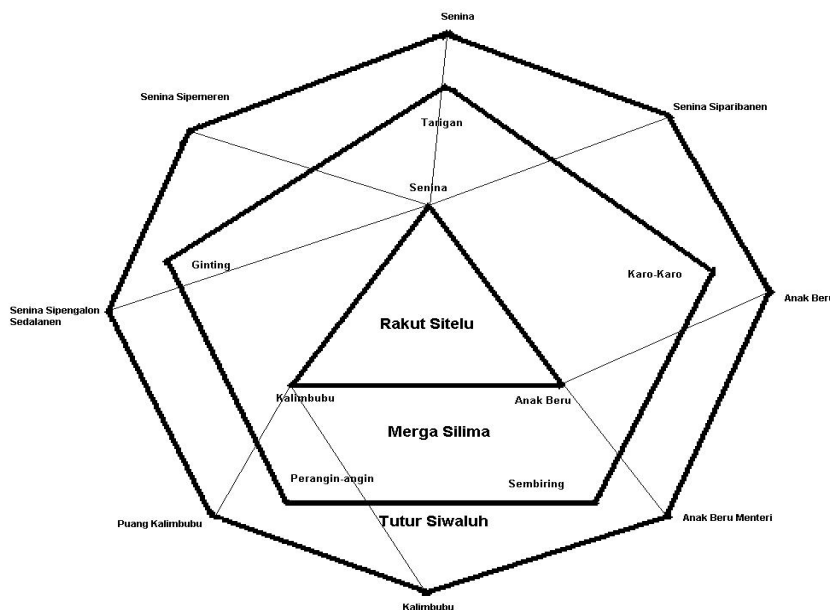
Merga and *Beru* will be obtained automatically from father *Merga*. Every Karo person will have *merga*. Father *Merga* becomes *merga* of his children, but there are also times when *merga* is given to someone who is legally endorsed. This is mostly done by Karo people who engage in inter-ethnic marriages or as an adat award, such as giving *merga/ beru* to Megawati Soekarno Putri which is *Perangin-Angin*.

For the Karo people, *merga* is very important in their lives as members of the community. *Merga* is useful for expressing identity and relationships in looking for kinship or bloodline relationships. In addition, the Karo people not only have *merga* and *beru*, but also inherit the *beru* from the biological mother substance is called *bere-bere*. So, every Karo person will have *merga* or *beru* and *bere-bere*. However, in the practice of daily life, the regime is never listed as self-identity. *Bere-bere* will be asked in acquaintance activities (*ertutur*) to get kinship.

Karo people who have the same *merga* and *beru* are considered brothers in the sense of having the same lineage. If it was a men, then they are called *ersenina*. Likewise, women who have the same *beru* will be called *ersenina* as well. However, between men and women who have the same *merga*, it is referred to as less so that it is forbidden to get married, because it is considered as a brother and sister.

Minawati (2010: 91) explained that kinship in the Karo community is called *perkade-kaden* and relatives are called *kade-kade*. The meaning of kinship in the Karo community is very broad. In this case, if abstracted from the Karo community, a kinship network will be spread over the whole Karo people, in the sense that every Karo person if his genealogy is sought, then kinship will be established.

In this regard, the importance of *merga* as self-identity besides knowing its origin. *Merga* is the basis of the kinship of the Karo people, but there are two important things that affect kinship, birth and marriage. These two relationships will cause blood relations. Based on blood relations, it can be seen how close kinship is in the community. At a glance, it is known that in drawing lineages in the Karo community it is done patrilineally. However, if examined more deeply, it can be understood the location of the Karo community in attracting their lineage. In this case, Bangun (1990: 18) states that the Karo community does not draw a patrilineal lineage, but parental (bilateral) by drawing a father and mother lineage at the same time.



Picture 1 Rakut Sitelu, Merga Silima, Tuter Siwaluh in Karo's Culture

Another important thing in the Karo community is from picture 1, sitelu raccoon. The meaning of the sitelu raccoon is the completeness of life for the Karo people. The completeness in question is a social institution contained in the Karo community consisting of three groups, namely (1) *Senina* (2) *Kalimbubu*, and (3) *Anak Beru*. *Senina* is a family of one line of *merga* or or main family. *Kalimbubu* can be defined as a family who gives a wife and children, a family that takes or receives a wife.

Tuter Siwaluh is a concept of kinship among the Karo people which consists of eight groups, namely (1) *puang kalimbubu*, (2) *kalimbubu*, (3) *sembuyak*, (4) *senina*, (5) *senina sipemerren*, (6) *senina sipengalon / sendalanan*, (3) *senina sipengalon / sendalanan*, (6) *senina sipengalon / sendalanan*, 7) *Anak Beru* (8) *Anak Beru Mentri*. In traditional ceremonies, said *siwaluh* is still divided again into groups that are more specifically in accordance with the requirements in the implementation of *adat*, namely as follows.

1. *Puang kalimbubu* is *kalimbubu* from *kalimbubu* from the mother and father.
2. *Kalimbubu* is a group that giving wives to certain families. *Kalimbubu* can be grouped again into two. First, *kalimbubu bena-bena* or *kalimbubu tua*, which is the group giving the wife to a certain group that is considered as the wife giving group from the family. For example *A merga Tarigan bere-bere Sembiring*, then *Sembiring* is *kalimbubu* the A. If the A has a child, then *Sembiring merga* is the *kalimbubu* for real / *kalimbubu tua* is *kalimbubu* from child A. So, *kalimbubu* is *beni-beni* / *kalimbubu tua* is *kalimbubu* from biological father. Second, *kalimbubu simada dareh*, which is derived from one's biological mother. *Kalimbubu simada dareh* is a person's biological mother. In this case it is called *kalimbubu simada dareh* because it is assumed that it is their blood that is found in nephew.
3. *Sembuyak*, literally means "one" and *sembuyak* means "womb". So, the meaning is people born from the same womb.
4. *Senina*, they are siblings because they have the same *merga* or submerga. *Senina ibas runggun adat*, that is, a brother who has been appointed in an *adat* meeting. Even though it may not be one *merga*, but usually it is still in one *merga* parent. For example *merga Purba* with *Barus* or *Ginting* Like with *Ginting Munte*.
5. *Senina sipemerren*, namely people whose mothers are siblings. This section is supported again by the *siparibanen*, that is, those who have a married wife. And then, someone becomes *ersenina* (siblings) because of marital relations alongside their wives.
6. *Senina sipengalon / sendalanan*, i.e. a relative because her child was taken to be the wife of the same in-law's child. For example, daughters A, B, C are taken to be the wives of X's children, then A, B, C become *kalimbubu X* and their children.
7. *Anak Beru* namely those who take wives from a certain family to be married. *Anak beru* can occur directly because they marry certain family women and indirectly through the intermediaries of others, such as the *anak beru minteri* and *anak beru singukuri*. *Anak beru* consists of two types are *anak beru tua* and *anak beru* in the family for generations. At least three generations have taken a wife from a certain family (*kalimbubu*). *Anak beru tua* is the main *anak beru* because without their presence in a traditional ceremony made by the *Kalimbubu*, the ceremony cannot begin. *Anak beru tua* also function as singers (as speakers) because of their function in traditional ceremonies as speakers and leaders in the *kalimbubu* family in customary

contexts. Secondly, *anak beru cekoh baka tutup*, that is the *anak beru* who can directly know everything in the *Kalimbubu* family. *Anak beru cekoh baka tutup* is the daughter of a family head. For example, if A has a sister, B, the child of B is a child who is an immoral child. In his daily calling, the child is also called *bere-bere mamana*.

8. *Anak beru minteri*, namely *anak beru* from *anak beru*. The origin of the word *minteri* is from the word *pinteri* which means to straighten. *Anak beru minteri* has a broader meaning, such as a guide, supervise, assist the task of their *kalimbubu* on an obligation in a traditional ceremony. In this case there is also a child called *anak beru singukuri* that is a child of *anak beru minteri*. This *anak beru* has a duty to prepare the dishes in the context of traditional ceremonies. *Anak beru singukuri* are also fully responsible for the running of traditional ceremonies because of the relatively distant relationship so that they are placed in helping their *kalimbubu* as *anak beru minteri* (Minawati, 2010: 95).

Moreover, from *merga silima, rakut sitelu, tutur siwaluh* forming *perkade-kaden sepuluh dua tambah sada* namely; (1) *sembuyak*, (2) *senina*, (3) *senina sipemeran*, (4) *senina siparibanen*, (5) *senina sipengalon*, (6) *senina sendalanan*, (7) *kalimbubu*, (8) *puang kalimbubu*, (9) *puang ni puang*, (10) *anak beru*, (11) *anak beru minteri*, (12) *anak beru singukuri* and the last namely *teman meriah* or other person outside of family relations. The Karo community always upholds the kinship system in which there are *rakut sitelu, tutur siwaluh, perkade-kaden sepuluh dua tambah sada*. In this case the Karo community's concept is that as human beings it must be civilized and show that customary rules must be obeyed. In the Karo community's concept, those who do not practice adat are considered worse than non-religious people, even according to *Njenep Ginting* (traditional leader) Karo people who do not have the same religion as *rubia-rubia* (a type of supernatural beings outside of humans).

2. Erpangir Ku Lau Ritual

Lau sidebuk-debuk is one of the places to do *erpangir ku lau* ritual activities. Lau debuk-debuk comes from two words, namely Liao which means water and *debuk* which is a bubble that occurs in water. Thus, *Lau* debating means water bubbles that occur repeatedly. Lau debuk-debuk is the name of a place in the form of a pool filled with hot water with the smell of sulfur whose source of water is in the form of a spring, and is a stream from the crater of Mount Sibayak.

Administratively, the Lau Debuk-debuk has the status of a Nature Reserve based on the Decree of the Deli King on 30 December 1924. Then based on the Decree of the Minister of Agriculture no.320 / Kpts / Um / 5/1980 on May 9th 1980, the status of the Lau Debuk-debuk was transferred became a tourist park with an area of 7 hectares.

Tourism Park area is currently being encroached by the surrounding community, because it is located in the highlands which has active volcanoes making the land around the area prosperous and suitable for farming such as vegetables. Prosperity land finally makes some people have a livelihood as farmers, crops grown like cabbage, mustard greens, carrots, and others. Apart from farming, the main attraction of this area is the existence of a pool which is also a natural bathing place with hot springs that contain sulfur and is also the livelihood of some people in the place.

Around the Lau Debuk-debuk hot spring, we can find many places to place offerings and places of worship. Not far from the main hot springs, a well will be found as a place of worship. In addition there are also visitors who come and release the white chicken as a form of trust and intention because of a request or request that has been granted. While the water that is bubbling in the place of worship is often brought home by visitors who are believed to be used as medicine. Lau Debuk-debuk is one of the most visited places by the Karo people to communicate with the *jinujung* through the *erpangir ku lau* ritual.

Lau Debuk-Debuk is located in Daulu village, Merdeka district, Karo district. To reach this place, you can ride public transportation to Medan-Kabanjahe, but the bus does not reach the location of the ceremony only until the intersection of the village of Daulu and from there can walk about 500 meters, but if you have a private vehicle can go directly to the place of the ritual. The place of the ritual is about 75 kilometers from the center of Medan so that it can be reached within 2 hours. *Erpangir ku lau* is one of the ceremonies practiced by Karo people. In simple terms *erpangir* means shampooing to wash your head's hair with drainage water made by a *guru sibaso* and after that wash it again in a water stream such as a shower or river. *Erpangir ku lau* ritual was carried out on the day of the determination in the *guru simeteh wari telu puluh* (shamans who knew how to read good and bad things). After getting a "good" day, all the families or *sangkep* who are complaining will be invited to perform *erpangir ku lau* ritual.

Karo people who adhere to traditional beliefs called *pemena* perform *erpangir ku lau ritual* activities for a number of specific purposes, for example as follows: to thank *Dibata* (God), in this case *erpangir ku lau* is done as a form of thanks and gratitude to *Dibata* (God), who has given a certain grace. For example, get luck, avoid accidents, get abundant crops, recover from illness, and so forth. Avoid any catastrophe that might occur. In this

case the Karo people perform *erpangir ku lau* ceremony as an effort to avoid a disaster that will happen, it is usually already guessed through a hunch of a bad dream, or based on the statements and suggestions from *guru sibaso* (shaman).

Cure an illness. *Erpangir ku lau* held as an effort to treat a certain type of disease. For example, to treat a crazy person, or who was attacked by *begu* (evil spirits). Achieve specific purposes. Sometimes *erpangir ku lau* ritual was carried out as an effort to ask for something from *Dibata* (God). For example, in order to be able to match, get abundant harvest or good luck, get a good position, and so on. Request *begu Singarak-ngarak*. Someone who has *begu jabu* will be urated or cleaned of things that are not good, how to do *erpangir*.

Marriage, before conducting the marriage ceremony, is usually preceded by the ritual of *erpangir ku lau*. This is to request percentages (request permission) to all creatures so that the marriage can take place properly. To have someone become a *guru sibaso* (shaman). The process of becoming a teacher must also go through *erpangir*. Therefore someone will become a *guru sibaso* after being ordained or ordained by being *pangiri* by a teacher as well. *Singelengguri* routine. *Singelengguri* is a spirit or *begu* that is found in a person to be a strength of capital for someone. *Begu* contained in a person will ask to be *pangiri* at a certain time. One example of people who have *singelengguri* is *sterjabaten* (musicians) in the Karo community.

For the Karo people, *erpangir ku lau* ritual is not just a granting ceremony to cleanse the body, but as a way according to their belief to communicate with *begu* (spirit) through *the guru sibaso* through *tabas* (mantras). *Erpangir ku lau* ritual according to their weight can be grouped into three categories.

Pangir selamsam is a *Pangir* which is smaller in weight. This ritual is usually sufficient to be attended by the closest *sangkep* complaining, where the role of each family is important in the ritual, such as *kalimbubu*, *anak beru* and *sembuyak*, all must be present at the ritual. *Pangir sitengah* is the term for *erpangir ku lau* ritual with medium or middle weight, this ritual is one level above *pangir selamsam*. This ritual still has to involve *sangkep nggeluh*, the difference is that *sangkep nggeluh* is getting more complete. *Pangir sintua* (regal) is the greatest ritual. In *Pangir Sintua* also involves *sangkep nggeluh*, only the difference is that all of the distant both near and far *sangkep* must be present, this *pangir* must be accompanied by slaughtering animals in the form of cows, or pigs as dishes for shared food.

Erpangir ku lau ritual does have three groupings, but in general the implementation is almost the same. According to the shaman Amelia Br Surbakti, the grouping of *erpangir* is only based on those who want to perform the ritual. The fact of lack of funds is usually the reason for a family holding a *pangir selamsam* ritual, but if one wants to escape those who have wealth / high positions, he will do a *pangir sintua* (grand) because he has sufficient funds to conduct a great ritual.

V. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that within the scope of the Karo community, there is a kinship system known as *sangkep nggeluh* and inside the *sangkep nggeluh* there are several elements, namely *rakut sitelu*, *merga silima*, *tutur siwaluh*, and *perkade-kade sepulu dua tambah sada*. All of these elements are not very visible in the daily life of the Karo people. It just only be an identity to look for family relationship that would be known from their own name without knowing the real function on a cultural life. Furthermore, that kinship system will be active and function in a traditional ceremony or ritual such as the *erpangir ku lau ritual*. *Erpangir ku lau* ritual becomes one of the rituals that nurtures and activates the kinship system that exists in the Karo community.

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