

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter attempts to discuss the values of *Selapanan* tradition based on *Petungan* and the reasons why the Javanese people in Kinibalu RW 02 Semarang still manage to perform the tradition. The discussion is divided into 4 parts: 1) the calculation of *petungan*, 2) the procession of *Selapanan* tradition, 3) the meals of *Selapanan*, and 4) the provision of *Selapanan* tradition.

4.1. The Calculation of *Petungan*

In this part, the writer describes the Javanese called *petungan*. The data used in this research is a combination of those derived from written scholarly researches and from interviews with some informants believed to have a good knowledge of the Javanese *petungan*. From the data collected during the interviews, the writer discusses the people's perceptions of *Selapanan* tradition based on *petungan*. *Selapanan* in fact has to be prepared according to the established Javanese philosophy. In this case, the writer took a deep look into *Selapanan* perception, value and belief. This topic is highly interesting to be examined because every action performed and every thing presented yield particular meanings.

Regarding the meaning of *Selapanan*, all three informants basically have similar perception. For them, when someone has a baby, there should be a celebration after the baby reaches 35 days of age. However, there are few in the

procession of *Selapanan*. What follows is the method of calculating the best day to hold *Selapanan*.

4.1.1. *Petungan Selapanan based on neptu*

According to Sahid and Kundharu, “the Javanese concept of *petungan* is the manifestation of a way of life, knowledge, and Javanese cosmology (*kejawen*) as a medium to become one with the universe” (2012, p. 1168). The Javanese people’s feelings and mindset to get closer to nature as the center of life and God the Creator as the source of life are the representation of *petungan*.

In practice, the *Selapanan* tradition should be carried out on the day of *neptu*, that is, when the baby is 35 days old after the birth. This calculation is based on the Javanese calendar. The Javanese people count the days in a matter of weeks by 7 days (Monday - Sunday) and the *Pasaran* by 5 days: *Pahing*, *Pon*, *Wage*, *Kliwon*, and *Legi*. The calculation of the *Selapanan* comes from the multiplication of 7 and 5 that equals 35 (days).

Table 1 : Names of Javanese Calendar and Numerical Values

Name of Day / Day in Javanese Calendar	Numerical Value	Name of <i>Pasaran</i>	Numerical Value
Monday / <i>Senen</i> [<i>sənən</i>]	4	<i>Legi</i>	5
Tuesday / <i>Selasa</i> [<i>səls</i>]	3	<i>Pahing</i>	9
Wednesday / <i>Rebo</i> [<i>rəbo</i>]	7	<i>Pon</i>	7
Thursday / <i>Kemis</i> [<i>kəmIs</i>]	8	<i>Wage</i>	4
Friday / <i>Jum'at</i> [<i>jum?at</i>]	6	<i>Kliwon</i>	8

Saturday / <i>Setu [satu]</i>	9		
Sunday / <i>Minggu [minggu]</i>	5		

Source: (Soemodidjojo, 1994) cited from (Widodo & Saddhono, 2012, p. 1169)

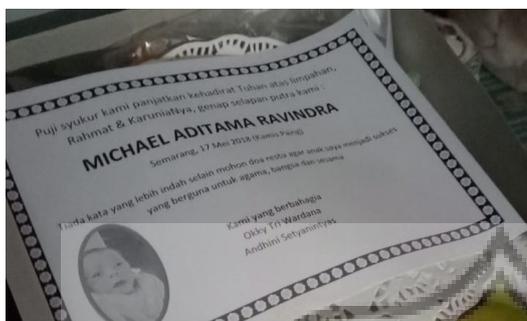


Figure 4.1 Gratitude paper that has been translated into Indonesian language (photo taken by Anggun, 2018)

From my observation of informant 3 (Mrs. Andhini) and her family, her baby was born on May 17th, 2018 on *Kamis Pahing*. The *Selapanan* was then held after 35 days. It means that the day for *Selapanan* was June 21st, 2018 on *Kamis Pahing*, too (Setyaningtyas, 2018). In calculating the *weton neptu*, by summing up the day and *pasaran*, it is found that the baby's *selapanan* is on Kamis (8), *Pahing* (9) and has the number value of $(8 + 9 =) 17$. Tabel 2 elaborates the value of *weton neptu* 17 as having the following characters:

Table 2 : A Person's Character Based on *weton neptu*

Value of Birth Date	Natural Character
7	Lazy, has no friend, bad at communicating.
8	Bad character, fond of quarrelling, and dangerous when angry.
9	Fond of moving, has a desire to destruct, resistant to magic spells.
10	Determined, kind, enjoys a good relationship with siblings, smiles easily.

11	Generous, brave, smart, eager to steal if poor, trustworthy.
12	Accepts destiny, lucky, often loses things.
13	Talkative, peacefull, loves to be praised, high-tempered.
14	Work is not long-lasting, not rich, and shy.
15	Fond of giving orders, stubborn, enough to eat, a lot relatives, often fights.
16	Easy to forgive, fond of criticizing, his wish often comes true.
17	Failed ambitions, a quiet drifter, often treated badly by others.
18	Whiny, boastful when rich, likes being alone.

Source: (Soemodidjojo, 1994) cited from (Widodo & Saddhono, 2012, p. 1172)

Javanese people, especially the older generation, still believe that *neptu* and *pasaran* play important roles in determining a person's natural character. The characters of Mrs. Andhini's baby, based on his value of *weton neptu* 17, are: failed ambitions, a quiet drifter, and often treated badly by others. Based on *primbon*, those who have *weton neptu Kamis Pahing* are advisable to choose partners having *weton neptu* 7, 12, 17. The best potential partners of the baby are those born in *weton neptu Sabtu Kliwon, Selasa Wage, Kamis Pahing, Selasa Pahing, Minggu Pon, Senin Kliwon, Rabu Legi, and Kamis Wage* (Sugeng, 2013).

In an interview, Mrs. Lies and Mrs. Elisabeth suggest that *slametan* should be celebrated in a modest way. However, a big celebration is possible if the family of the baby is strong financially (Suharsono, 2018). They argue that the most important thing in this celebration is the prayer itself- "*sing penting dongane*"

(Sofianita, 2018). Nowadays, the ceremony varies, and it depends on the prayer of every religion. It is usually the elder people who organize *selapanan*.

4.1.2. The Meaning of the Odd Number Symbol in *Selapanan*

Usually the amount and type of meals in *slametan Selapanan* are in an odd numbers. Javanese philosophy believe that odd formation is good (Satwikasanti, 2012, p. 31). “We have to choose odds; the dishes of *slametan* should be consumed by at least seven people (*pitu*) from word *pitulungan*, which means help and 11 (*sewelas*) from word *kawelasan*, which means mercy, 17 (*pitulas*) from word *pitu* and *sewelas* which mean help and mercy” (Suharsono, 2018). Odd numbers are believed to be lucky ones. Thus, the Javanese people adhere to the tradition in order to obtain salvation and luck. Salvation and luck are the important values in Javanese culture.

4.2. The Procession of *Selapanan* Tradition

The goal of *Slametan selapanan* is basically to safeguard the new mother, the baby and all members of the family (Mimin, 2004, p. 49). The purpose of *selapanan* is to pray for the baby that she/he will grow as a good person in the future, that the baby’s safety is ensured, and the baby has a long life. The Javanese people in Kinibalu RW 02 believe that, in addition to preserving ancestors in *Selapanan* tradition, *Selapanan* brings moral and social values for life. Perceptions of *Selapanan* also vary depending on the knowledge of each individual. Two important actions in *Selapanan* are haircutting and baby’s finger nails cutting.

Selapanan tradition in Kinibalu, RW 02, Semarang is still implemented because people believe that this tradition is an ancestral heritage that must be passed down to the younger generation. The living should preserve this tradition in order to get blessing. Refusing to practice this tradition might result in bringing disasters in present life. Therefore, *Selapanan* is always held by Javanese people from generation to generation. *Selapanan* ceremony in Mrs. Andhini family aims to pray for well-being of the baby.

To celebrate *Selapanan*, the host usually invites neighbors and close relatives. Starting in the afternoon and before the hair and finger-nail cuttings, the host will prepare meals (*bancaan*) and distribute them to the relatives and children around the house. “With *bancaan*, the baby, i.e. the family, share happiness for those living around him” (Setyaningtyas, 2018). The required *bancaan* are *nasi tumpeng* with vegetables, *jenang merah putih*, *jajan pasar*, and boiled eggs. An offering (*sesaji intuk-intuk*) is placed near to the baby’s bed. *Intuk-intuk* is a small *tumpeng* wrapped with banana leaves, with red chili and onion at the top.



Figure 4.2 The red onion and red chilli on top of a *tumpeng*

(<http://ratihbuwono.blogspot.com>)



Figure 4.3 *Selapanan* situation (photo taken by Anggun, 2018)

According to Lies, when *Selapanan* is being carried out, verses of al-Quran known as seven surah i.e Surah Al Mulk, Ar Rohmah, Al Fatah, Kahfi Surah Maryam, Surah Yusuf, and Surat Waqiah are read (2018). Yet, in case of Mrs. Andhini family's *Selapanan*, they read bible, Mathew 1:1-16.18-23, instead. This because, they are Catholics (Setyaningtyas, 2018). It can be concluded that prayer in *Selapanan* is also varied based on the religion of the host. However, all share the common goal, that is, to pray for the safety of the baby.

4.2.1 Baby's First Haircut/ Hair Shave

The important step in *Selapanan* is praying together. After the prayer according to the family's religion, the first thing to do in *Selapanan* is haircutting or *parasan*. From my observation on Mrs. Andhini's family's *Selapanan* ceremony and interview with Mrs. Elisabeth, I know that the first haircut is carried out by the mother and father of the baby, and then continued by the elders (Sofianita, 2018). Cutting the baby's hair is an act of symbolizing the hope that

the baby will grow healthy in the future. The baby's hair should be cut or shaved completely clean. It is believed that the baby's original hair is already exposed to the amniotic fluid, so the baby hair must be shaved off. Another reason for shaving the baby is so that the hair can grow healthier and nicer in the future (Setyaningtyas, 2018). However, some people do not cut their baby's hair completely bald. The hairs are only trimmed for it is merely a symbolization. Shaving the baby's hair should be done carefully considering that baby's skull is still vulnerable to hard objects. In order to protect the baby from accidents, the baby is held in order to prevent its making unnecessary movements. The baby is usually made into a sleeping position. This makes it more comfortable for the baby and the person cutting the hair.



Figure 4.4 Baby haircut

(<http://www.sutrisno.co.vu>)

4.2.2 Cutting off Nails

Selapanan is an ancestral tradition and it is performed for the sake of the baby's well-beings. Mrs. Andhini's family members are enthusiastic about holding the *Selapanan* ceremony because they believe that *selapanan* is more than

sharing *bancaan*. The main reason to hold it is to ensure the safety of the baby in life and afterlife. “We believe that if we fail to perform *selapanan*, disasters will happen in our our family, especially those related to the baby” (2018). After the haircutting, the next step is nail-cutting. The nail cutting seems to have hygienic purposes.

4.3. The Meals of *Selapanan* Tradition

In Javanese tradition, a child birth's ceremony or *selapanan* is commemorated in three stages, namely: first, when the new child is born, there is a thanksgiving ceremony on the birth of the baby or commonly called *brokohan*. Second, on the fifth day after the birth or called *sepasaran*, a kind of ceremony to express the happy feeling to God is done by distributing *gudangan* to nearby neighbors. Third, the *selapanan* ceremony is held when the baby is 35 days old. Javanese people are always full of consideration in doing something. They always try to balance their behavior with nature, because they believe that with balance, their lives will run in harmony and dynamic.

The equipments that should be prepared in *slametan selapanan* is a supply of food materials to make *bancaan*. The compulsory menu are 1) *gudangan*, which can be either in the form of *nasi gurih* and *gudangan* or *nasi kuning*, 2) *godong pisang* 3) *apem* 4) *bubur merah*, *bubur putih*, 5) fruits and 6) *jajanan pasar*, which consists of *gethuk*, *wajik*, *ketan*, *dadar gulung* and *arem-arem*. The following is a description of each dish:

- 1) *Tumpeng* is a dish made of white rice or yellow rice with a various kind of vegetables and meat dish. If the rice is white it is call *nasi gurih*.



Figure 4.5 The dish of *bancaan; gudangan* (Taken by Anggun, 2018)

Nasi gurih is made from white rice cook with coconut oil to compliment the *nasi gurih* a vegetables dish, which consist of a minimum of a mixture of beans sprouts, water spinach, long beans, cabbage, carrots, cucumber, a boiled eggs and green spinach that are mixed with spicy chilli coconut shred. With the vegetables there are also shredded boiled chicken, salted fish and prawn crackers. To garnish the *nasi gurih* which is shape like a mountain is a tier with has a purple onion and one big red chilli that is sliced into an odd number. So the *tumpeng* symbolizes a mountain with its plaintation and red magma with purplish stone at the top of the mountain. If it *nasi kuning* (yellow rice) is used as a *tumpeng* the vegetables are usually only *kemangi* (bayleaf) and *timun* (cucumber). As a suplement of the yellow rice there are *ayam goreng suwir* (fried chicken), *tahu goreng* (fried tofu), *kering tempe* (fried soya bean cake) and *telur dadar* (sliced omelette).



Figure 4.6 The dish of *tumpeng*

(www.vemale.com/resep-makanan/112729)

- 2) *Godong pisang* (banana leaf) is used to platter the *tumpeng*. In using the banana leaf as a plate for the dishes the banana leaf must be a young one. After it is dried under the sun, the leaf will be easy to shape by folding or cutting the leaves. The green leaf is used because it symbolizes fertility and growth.



Figure 4.7 *Godong pisang* (<http://bloqsqot.blogspot.com>)

- 3) *Apem* is a dish made of sticky rice which is cooked with coconut milk and mixed with white or brown sugar. With *apem* usually there is also a boiled banana or sweet potato cooked with coconut milk and brown sugar called *kolak*.



Figure 4.8 *Apem* (<http://ulyaaaaa.blogspot.com>)

- 4) The next items in in *selapanan* menu is *bubur merah* and *bubur putih* that is called *baro-baro* porridge. In making the porridge there should be a combination at least one cup of rice mixed with one cup of water boiled with a sprinkle of salt this mixture stirred until the rice became soft and watery. At this stage a quarter a cup of coconut milk is then added onto it. For red porridge the mixture is added with brown sugar. The red porridge is the symbol of mother, and white porridge is the symbol of father. That is why both colours of the porridge must be in the menu.



Figure 4.9 The dish of the *baro-baro* porridge
(Taken by Anggun, 2018)

- 5) The next dish to be put on the *selapanan slametan* are fruits. The kind of fruit that should be made available are those hanging from trees. In the informant 3 *selapanan* ceremony the fruits presented are (guava), *pisang* (banana), *apel* (apple), *salak* (snack fruit), *jeruk* (orange), *pepaya* (papaya).



Figure 4.10 Some food which grow hanging on trees

(Taken by Anggun, 2018)

- 6) *Kenduri (bancaan)* is a boxed rice filled with the above menu, the basic idea is so that is many near by neighbors are able to celebrate with happy family who has just celebrated with the son or daughter *selapanan*. Currently, *bancaan* is in a cardboard box because of modernisties practical characteristics. In the older days the box was made from *anyaman bambu* which are sliced very thinly. Nowadays with the decrease of bamboo plants the thin slice bamboo is not frequetnly found in the traditional market. So for convenience the cardboard box is used.



Figure 4.11 *Kenduri* or *bancaan* (Taken by Anggun, 2018)

7) *Jajan pasar* is a menu made of different kinds of traditional snacks snacks. The variety of *jajanan pasar* symbolizes the substance the baby in the future.



Figure 4.12 *jajan pasar* (cateringsemarang.com)

4.4 The Provision of *Selapanan* tradition

The *selapanan* ceremony require the provisions such as:

4.4.1. *Kembang telon*

Sofianita (2018) explains that *kembang telon* are flowers, which consist of white and red roses, jasmine, magnolia flower, and ylang flower). The red color on the roses symbolizes human that is created from the mother's red blood. the white color on magnolia symbolizes that humans come from white and clean water, which represents the father. Meanwhile, the ylang flower symbolizes the achievement, a child should be able to do in imitating the goodness an ancestor of the parents.



Figure 4.13 *kembang telon* (netralnews.com)

4.4.2. *Kemenyan* or incense

Kemenyan or incense is the media for sending prayers about the well being of the baby and its future. Simultaneously with the smoke rising up from burning the *kemenyan*, there is hope that the spirits will help and not disturb the baby (Suharsono, 2018).



Figure 4.14 *kemenyan* (benangmerahdasi.com)

Slametan selapanan is a ceremony that has social value. In implementing this ceremony, the parents of the baby has the opportunity to invite the neighbors and relatives to give supports to the 35 days old baby. This way the baby will help people that protect it from bad omens and experiences, so the baby can have a bright and safe future.