A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REBU IN KARONESE CULTURE

PAPER

BY

RUT HERWITA MARBUN
062202037

DIPLOMA III ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF LETTERS
UNIVERSITY OF SUMATERA UTARA
MEDAN
2009
Approved by

Supervisor,

Dra. Syahyar Hanum, DPFE
NIP. 130702287

Submitted to the Faculty of Letters University of Sumatera Utara, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for DIPLOMA (D-III) in English.

Approved by

Head of Diploma III English Study Program,

Dra. Syahyar Hanum, DPFE
NIP. 130702287

Approved by the Diploma III of English Study Program Faculty of Letters, University of Sumatera Utara

As A Paper for the Diploma (D-III) Examination
Accepted by the Board of Examination in partial fulfillment of the requirements for D-III Examination of the Diploma III of English Study Program, Faculty of Letters, University of Sumatera Utara.

The Examination is held on

Faculty of Letters, University of Sumatra Utara

Dean,

Dr. Syaifuddin, M.A, Ph.D
NIP. 13209831

Board of Examiner and Reader:

Examiner : Dra. Syahyar Hanum, DPFE
NIP. 130702287

Reader : Drs. Matius C.A Sembiring M.A
NIP. 130099226
AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

I am Rut Herwita Marbun, declare that I am the sole author of this paper. Except where reference is made in the text of this paper, this paper contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a paper by which I have qualified for or awarded another degree.

No other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the paper. This paper has not been submitted for the awarded of another degree in any tertiary education.

Signed : 

Date :
COPYRIGHT DECLARATION

Name : RUT HERWITA MARBUN
Title of Paper : A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REBU IN KARONESE CULTURE
Qualification : D- III / AHLI MADYA
Study Program : ENGLISH

I am willing that my paper should be available for reproduction at the discretion of the Librarian of the Diploma III English Study Program Faculty of Letters, University of Sumatera Utara on the understanding that user are made aware of their obligation under the law of the Republic of Indonesia.

Signed :

Date :

Rut Herwita Marbun : A Brief Description Of Rebu In Karonese Culture, 2009.
USU Repository © 2009
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks first to my Jesus Christ as my Lord, who has blessed me to do this paper until I was able to complete it. I praised You from my deepest heart more than everything in the world. And I also convey my thanked to:

1. **Drs. Syaifuddin, M.A, Ph.D** as the Dean of Faculty of Letters, University of Sumatera Utara, for his Guidance.
2. **Dra. Syahyar Hanum, DPFE** as the Head of Diploma III English Study Program. And as my **Supervisor**, who has given many valuable ideas in writing this paper.
3. **Drs. Matius C.A Sembiring M.A** as the reader of my paper.
4. For all the lecturers in Faculty of Letters, for their valuable knowledge, advice, and guidance, during my study in this Faculty.

Special thanks to my beloved parents, **H Marbun and E br. Sitinjak**, who always give me support and advise to finish this paper. To my oldest sister, **Indyra Bernadet Marbun** and my little sister **Hasiana Kristina Marbun**, and also **Bibi and Bapak Tengah**, for all your support to me, to accomplish this paper. I love you all.

At last, I realize that this simple paper is still far from being perfect. That’s why I welcome any constructive criticisms, and suggestions. I really hope this paper will be useful for the readers.

Medan, June, 2009

The writer,

Rut Herwita Marbun
Reg. No : 062202037
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

AUTHOR' DECLARATION

COPYRIGHT DECLARATION

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................... i

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ...................................................................................... ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS ....................................................................................... iii

1. INTRODUCTION
   Background of the Study ................................................................. 1
   Scope of the Study ................................................................. 2
   Purpose of the Study ................................................................. 2
   Significance of the Study ................................................................. 3
   Method of the Study ................................................................. 3

2. THE DESCRIPTION OF KARONESE SOCIETY
   The Historical of Karonese Region .................................................. 4
   The Population of Karo Regency .................................................. 7
   The Livelihood of Karo Society .................................................. 9
   The Kinship of Karo ................................................................. 11
   The Religion of Karo People .................................................. 14

3. THE DESCRIPTION OF REBU
   The Meaning of Rebu ................................................................. 19
   The Practice of Kinship ................................................................. 19
   Rebu and Kinship ................................................................. 24
   Rebu Today ................................................................. 26
4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions ................................................................. 28
Suggestions ................................................................. 29

REFERENCES
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Karo is one of the sort ethnics of Batakinese in North Sumatra, Indonesia. I have some reasons for choosing this topic. First, the publication about Rebu in Karonese culture has never published like in libraries, book stores, or in the mass media. The second, not all Karonese people understand about Rebu, in nowadays. Karonese has his unique tradition in their culture. Rebu in karo people is equal with the concept of taboo. Every member of society who is not doing Rebu in their culture is considered to be impolite in the Karonese custom.

Karo society has its regulations that are produced by their ancestors. Their relation system is patrilineal and matrilineal. They have three forms of relation such as Kalimbubu, Anak Beru and Senina / Sembuyak. Batak ethnic have relations system and philosophy of live that is called Dalihan Na Tolu.

There is some using of Rebu in Karonese culture, especially Rebu in a relationship. For example in this avoidance that is forbidden someone to speaking directly, touching the body part, sitting face to face, and sitting on a mat without someone sitting between them.

1.2 Scope of the Study

There are many things can be discussed about this theme. The scope of this paper is discussed about how far Karonese people apply their traditional culture especially about Rebu. Rebu is said as the statement of behavior that contains symbols about system
and culture value in family environment, especially in Karo society. Therefore, this paper developed and explained about Rebu meaning, and divided into four chapters. They are introduction, the description of Karonese social world, the description of Rebu in Karonese culture, and conclusions or suggestion.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This paper tends to establish the main goal after rebuilding more about the extinct tradition. The main goal is to describe the culture of Karo, especially about Rebu. There are some purposes of writing this paper:

- As a student, I want to fill up one of the requirements in order to get the Diploma III of English Study Program, Faculty of the Letters, University of Sumatra Utara.
- This paper can be an effective tool for digging up and learning the culture of using Rebu in Karonese relationship.
- This paper will be an inventory and Rebu document is as one source that saved our culture values from being extinct.

1.4 Significance of the Study

I as the writer intend to introduce the traditional culture of Karo as one of the ethnic group in Indonesia. I really hopes that this paper can improve the knowledge about Karonese culture especially Rebu for the other writers, who do the same study in the future. And finally, I hope this paper may be useful to increase the insight of the reader.
1.5 Method of the Study

In writing this paper, I use some methods like library researched, I collected the data from some Karonese’s book. Browse from internet, and do direct interview with some Karonese people for collecting the information which is needed in this paper. All these methods are really helpful in accomplishing this paper.
CHAPTER II

The Description of Karonese Society

2.1 The Historical of Karonese Region

Karo is one of the linguistically and culturally related people of North Sumatra interior. The others are Mandailing, Angkola, Toba, Simalungun, and Pak-pak. Generically, classed as Batak, a name that seems to have the initially used to distinguish pagan highlanders, from the Muslim Malays of the coastal lowlands. These clan based agrarian societies of the central Bukit Barisan mountain range are all characterized by a kinship based, social configuration ordered around patrilineal descent reckoning and preferential matrilateral cross cousin marriage. Local languages are more or less mutually unintelligible, and there are significant differences in custom and social organization among these groups.

The Batak Toba is located in Danau Toba border, Samosir island, Toba Upland Plain, Asahan, Silindung, Bagus and Sibolangit area, Chain of mountains Pahe, and Habinsaran. Batak Mandailing is located in Mandiling, Ulu, Pahatan, and Padang Lawas in the south part. Batak Angkola is located in Angkola and Sipirok, Sibolga and Batang Toru, and Padang Lawas in north part. Batak Simalungun is located in Simalungun area, and Batak Pak-pak is in Dairi. And the last is Batak Karo, is located in Karo pleatao, Langkat Hulu, Deli Hulu, Serdang Hulu, and Hulu.

Batak ethnic have custom and culture that are based on Dalihan Na tolu in their society. The custom and culture of Batak people have seven core values of culture that consists of relationship, religion, hope of having long life (hagabeon), honorary
(hamoraon), law (uhum), and habit (ugari), protection (pengayoman), and appreciation (marsisarian).

Batak habits have its own peculiarity, it is Horas word that is created from the life philosophy of Batak ethnic Dalihan Na Tolu (the most of three tungku). Which is divided in three parts, they are Hula-hula (clan relation from wife), Dongan Tubu (clan relation from father, grand father and son) and Boru (girl relations from father, sister, and her husband clan).

Animisme religions is the original religion of Batak ethnic, especially Batak Toba and Batak Karo religion is Kristen Protestan since there are churches such as Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) and Protestan Karo Batak Church (GBKP).

Karonese society have traditional house called Siwaluh Jabu. It is occupied by one big family that consists of four until eight Batak families. In the room, there is no partition. It looks like a hall. The room is distributed to each family based on their custom lines, to keep their taboo or avoidance relationship.

Karoland proper, the northernmost of the Batak homelands, stretches from the northern shore of Lake Toba through the Bukit Barisan mountain range to the southern border of Aceh. To the East, early Karo settlement extended through the piedmont (dusun) region into the coastal strip nominally controlled by the petty Malay sultanates of Deli, Serdang, and Langkat.

Geographically, Karo district is about 2,127 km in width with the amount of people is 271,128 soul in habitant / km and, consists of ten sub districts and 479 villages it is situated on 140-1.400 m above the sea level, and has wet tropical climate, rain fall is about 1.000 – 4.000 mm/year. Air temperature and the humidity is 82 % is 16C – 27C.
Based on the spread out nature and topography situation, Karo areas is divided into three morphologies, they are:

1. Lowland morphology in Lau Baleng area. It is located in west of Kuta Buluh area, where its high is 48 – 147 meters from above sea level. In there consists of small rivers and hill.

2. Highland morphology in Kabanjahe, its area is cover up Tiga Panah and Simpang Empat.

3. Mountain morphology in Sinabung and Sibayak mountain.

Karo district consists of ten sub districts: Kabanjahe, Simpang Empat, Payung, Barus Jahe, Tiga Panah, Tiga Binanga, Mandailing, Juhar, Munte and Kuta Buluh. Karo district is hills area known as agriculture area and recreation such as; Berastagi, Sikulikap waterfall, Sibayak mountain, Gundaling and Lau Debuk-debuk.

With an altitude of about 1,300 meters above sea level, the Karo plateau is cool and relatively dry. Two active volcanos, mount Sibayak and mount Sinabung are located on its borders. Although the soils of the rest of Batak highland are relatively poor, volcanic eruptions have produced an extremely fertile topsoil in the Karo region, the land is however, difficult to irrigate because of its permeability. Prior to the introduction of commercial agriculture in the early twentieth century dry, field rice was the principle crop throughout the region, with a small amount of wet rice grown seasonally along the river banks. Today the Karo highlands are one of Indonesian major vegetable and fruit producing regions.

In the early 1950s, after the conclusion of the Indonesian revolution, many highlands Karo began to migrate to the coastal lowlands in search of available farmland.
These migrants took over large portions of the formerly European owned tobacco estates on the outskirts of the city of Medan. Karo settlement was centered on the Padang Bulan was absorbed into metropole, and Karo who had move to the lowlands in search of new agricultural land found themselves, city dwellers.

2.2 The Population of Karo Regency

In this period, Karo ethnic has a custom that is good kept in uniformity that is called clan. Clan is family name which is from father descent line. In Karonese society, there are five clans such as Karo-karo, Ginting, Sembiring, Tarigan, and Perangin-angin. The fifth clans consists of some others clans, such as:

1. Karo-karo clan includes of Karo-karo Purba from Simalungun, karo-karo Sinulingga from Lingga, Karo-karo Sitepu from Sihotang, Karo-karo Barus from middle Tapanuli, and Karo-karo Manik from Buluh Duri.

2. Ginting clan includes of Pase from Pakpak, Toba, Simalungun, Munthe; from Tongging, Manik from Tongging, Sinisinga from Kampung Singa, Saragih from Simalungun, Sinisuka from Kalasan, Jawak from Simalungun and Tumanggor from Pakpak.

3. Sembiring clan includes of Sembiring Simanbiang like Sembiring Kembaren from Kuala Anyer, Sembiring Keloko from Pergendangen in Buah Raya and Limang, Sembiring Sinulaki from Silalahi, Sembiring Sinupayung from Juma Raya. Sembiring Singombak like Sembiring Brahmana, Sembiring Guru Kinayan, Sembiring Colia, Sembiring Muham, Sembiring Pandia, Sembiring
Keling, Sembiring Depari, Sembiring Bunua, Sembiring Milala, Sembiring Pelawi, Sembiring Sinukapur, and Sembiring Tekang.

4. **Tarigan** clan includes of Old Tarigan in Old Purba, Gondang from lingga, Jampung from Pergendangen, Gersang from Nagasaribu, Lingkas from Lingkas, Gana-gona from Batukarang, Tambak from Kebayaken, Paken from Sukanal, Pumba from Purba, Siber from Tuha, Silangit from Meria Mountain, Kerendam from Kuala, Tegur from Suka, Tambun from Rakut Besi and Sahing from Sinaman.


2.3 **The Livelihood of Karo Society**

The livelihood in Karo districts in general are agriculture Karonese work as farmers and undertakers in a company, and recreation places. Besides that, Karo has mineral industry or constructions that can be livelihood sources, such as; Marble in Muara Sibongi sub district used as building material, Dolomit in Kuta Buluh is used as dung, to arrange soil Ph, and to make paint, plastic, paper and cement. Trace found in
Tiga Panah, Simpang Empat, Kabanjahe, Payung, and Munthe sub district is used to make cement, brick, concrete, and urug soil. Posphat in Lau Bulu village is used as dung. Leamping stone in Juhar sub district is used as building material. Kaulsit in Paya Mbeleng is used as whitening material and killing paint, glass, plastic, and lining paper. Phospat in Berastagi is used as building material and decoration stone. Sand and stone (Sirtu) in river stream are used as building material.

Most rural Karo are involved in mixed agricultural production, growing cash crops as well as rice for family consumption. Urban Karo fall roughly into three occupational groups. First are the petty entrepreneurs: traders and produce brokers, shopkeepers, and *toke motor* owners of commercial transport vehicles. The second group is composed of better educated Karo, who tend to gravitate to the professions: law, medicine, or education, rather than to business or office work. The third group, rather a residual category, I made up of young men who have neither the education to enter a profession nor the capital to go into entrepreneurial activity. They may work as bus drivers or conductors, but more frequently spend their time idling in coffee shops, or else enter the quasi underworld of the *preman* guards in the markets and bus station.

Aside from these young men, most urban Karo men and women are involved in some sort of economic activity. Small scale trade is mostly in women’s hands, and whatever economic endeavors they, or their husbands, engage in most women also maintain some farmland for growing the family’s rice.

Travel throughout the region is relatively easy. Buses regularly cover the short distance about a two hour trip between Medan and Kabanjahe, the district capital and market center of the Karo plateau. Main roads are paved and mostly well maintained.
Side roads often are not, however and especially in the rainy season some remote villages can only be reached on foot by buffalo cart, or by motorcycle. Upstream and downstream travel is constant: traders carrying goods to sell, students going to the village harvest dance or coming home to see their family, grandparents off to visit their children in the city, and city dwellers on their way to a ceremony in the highlands.

Although the 1908 opening of Medan – Kabanjahe highway facilitated the flow of goods and people between highlands and lowlands, Karo mobility is not altogether an effect of improved transport conditions. It was already well established, if less secure, before the coming of European planters to the Sumatra east coast in the mid nineteenth century. Traders and wandering gurus crossed the Sumatran interior; Young men sought to improve their fates through service among lowland Malays, and when peace prevailed regional marked served as meeting places for men and women from sometimes distance highlands villages.

Clan dispersal and the expansiveness of Karo kinship calculations spun webs of relatedness across the whole area of Karo settlement indeed beyond it through conventional equivalences between Karo clans and those of other Batak groups, as well as through clan affiliations attributed to lowland Malays on the basis of putative Karo descent. Marriage might move a young man and woman into a community of relative strangers; ceremonial participation followed the lines of distance marriage and prompted regular intercourse between communities so joined. It is thus not surprising that themes of travel predominate in the Karo laments (*bilang-bilang*), folktales, myths, and clan histories collected in the early years of the colonial rules; nor that while Toba Batak pop
songs today are all about education and mothers, and Karo songs still mostly about leaving home.

2.4 The Kinship of Karo

According to anthropologist Masri Singarimbun, who is himself Karo, “An understanding of the Karo system of social relations between kin and relatives by marriage is the necessary starting point for an understanding of most other aspects of Karo culture and society” (Singarimbun 1975). For Karo, virtually every social relationship, even a chance encounter between strangers at the market, is conducted according to the principles of kinship. Upon meeting, two previously unacquainted Karo will establish a kin relation to one another through the process of mutual interrogation known as ertutur. Each in turn asks for the other’s paternal (merga for men and beru for women) and maternal (bebere), clan and sub clan affiliations, home village, and in the case of a married woman, her husband’s clan. By tracing known, and often quite distant, relationship with agnatic and affinal kin, Karo can usually discover person.

Karo society is composed of five major exogamous patrilineal clans (merga), each segmented into a number of sub clans that are, in turn, divided into local lineages and lineage segments. Clan and sub clan are dispersed and do not act as corporate groups, and there is no order of rank among clan and sub clans. Nevertheless, clan mates are bound together by ties of equality and mutual support, and consider one another as classificatory senina (same sex sibling) or turang (opposite sex sibling). The rule of clan exogamy is strictly observed, since married between turangs (even if they are of different sub clan) is considered to be incestuous.
Links between individual men and between groups (family units and local lineage segments) are established and maintained through the giving and receiving of women in marriage. Marriage between *impal*, or matrilateral cross-cousins are a cultural ideal, but comprise only a small percentage of actual marriages. However, all marriages are treated as if they were between actual cross-cousin. Thus, for example, the terms *mama* and *mami* narrowly defined as mother’s brother’s wife, respectively are used by a man to refer to his wife’s parents, whether or not they are his relatives by birth.

Through marriage, asymmetrical relations are established between superior wife-giving groups (*kalimbubu*) and their subordinate wife-receivers (*anak beru*). The *kalimbubu* and *anak beru* relationship is marked not only by status differential, but also by numerous reciprocal rights and obligations between the two. The *anak beru* are expected to perform the necessary labor at rituals sponsored by their *kalimbubu*, to speak on their *kalimbubu*’s behalf in public negotiations, to offer advice and economic assistance when necessary, and to provide a variety of everyday services for the *kalimbubu*. Good health, prosperity, and especially procreative potential are dependent upon the continued benevolence and blessing of the *kalimbubu*, the “visible god” (*dibata niidah*) of their *anak beru*.

A well organized ritual is an indicator of kind group solidarity and a significant marker of social status. Kin relations are symbolically acted out in all aspects of ritual, from the group dances that open the ceremony and the seating arrangements that mark kin group roles and statuses, to the transfer of objects that serve as representations of the ties between kin. The presence of members of the various kin groups of the ritual’s sponsor is essential, and each group has a specific role to play in the ritual.
In practical terms, the most significant role is that of the *anak beru*, who perform all the necessary labor, cook, and serve the food, distribute gifts to the guests, and serve as a mediator in ritual negotiations. Without the labor provided by the *anak beru*, the sponsorship of a successful ritual is impossible. The *kalimbubu* (by birth and by marriage) of the sponsor must also attend the ritual to bestow their blessings and to legitimize the proceeding. The sponsor’s own family and clan mates should likewise be present of a sign of group solidarity. Should any of these kind groups not be represented, the sponsor may expect serious spiritual as well as social repercussions.

2.5 The Religion of Karo People

One of the effects of the colonial reorganization of Karo political live was a significant decline in collective religious activity. As in many small scale societies of island Southeast Asia, the domain of religion and politics in pre colonial Karoland were largely coterminous. Tutelary spirit and their shrines formed focal cites in the shifting network of a kin based best distributive politics.

Alliances are made and unmade through the ritual commemoration of specific events of personal or supernatural significance (births, deaths, village founding) cooperatively uniting living humans, their ancestors and the autochthonous spirits of the land. Colonial rules replace these supernatural underpinnings of local authority with bureaucratically maintained rust.

Before Christian and Islam teaching have an influence or spread in Karo’s area, Karo religion focused on the veneration of family and lineage spirits known as *begu* or more politely, as *nini*, grandparents. These remained attached by ties of duty and
affection to their living kin and, in sufficiently honored, protected their descendents from misfortune. Periodic offering rituals were held to ensure the continuing good will of the spirits, and in situations of crisis such as epidemic, drought, or war, or in cases of individual illness or adversity, special ceremonies were held to ask for the help of the spirits. Community and household ritual were led by a male guru formally trained in the healing and magical arts, or a female spirit medium (guru si baso), through whom the spirits made their wishes and requirements known.

Ritual practice was primarily directed toward social ends, focusing on the genealogical perpetuation of patrilineal descent groups within the network of asymmetrical relations established by such groups through marriage. The Spirits of a man’s immediate genealogical ancestor (begu jabu), both male and female, served as guardians of his household. The most important of the begu jabu was the begu sintua, the “household founder”, one of the husband’s deceased parents or if these were still alive, his grandparents.

Spirits of more remote ancestors played a lesser role and were rarely remembered and propitiated for a longer time. Foremost among the dibata were simate sada wari, those who died by violence or accident “in a single day”. These spirits, sometimes known as nini galuh (grandparent banana), were given a special shrine behind the house, a small fenced garden in which medicinal herbs, red hibiscus flowers (bunga-bunga), and a particular sort of banana tree (galuh si tabar) were planted. Aborted or miscarried fetuses, children who died before their teeth appeared (bicara guru), women who died in childbirth, and sometimes young girls who died before marriage (tungkup), were also included among the family dibata, as were the begus of
persons of special status, such as master craftsmen (pande), gurus, musicians, local rulers.

Harapan and Siahaan (1987) said that Karo society still performs worship or some ceremonies toward their agriculture such as;

1. Ngumbung is signal ceremony, in Buah Kuta.
2. Merdang is planting ceremony, in Kuta Buluh, Munthe and Lau Balang,
3. Nimpa Bunga Benih is plant of age 2-3 month ceremony in Payung Subdistrict.
4. Rani Page is a harvest ceremony.
5. Ngerik is a plant spring ceremony.
6. Merdang Merden is a condolence ceremony, in Payung.
7. Rebu-rebu is an avoidance ceremony, in Deli Serdang.
8. Ngerires is giving eat ceremony, in Langkat.
9. Ngameti is recognition ceremony, in Langkat.

In the middle of 1980s, approximately 47 percent of the population of the rural highlands was Christian this divided between the Karo Protestant Church, the GBKP and the smaller and less influential Roman Catholic Church. And 17 percent was Muslim. Most of the rest remained adherents of the old religion of spirit veneration, known among its followers who were themselves labeled perbegu, (ghost keepers) by disapproving Christians as Agama Pemena, the first or original religion. Data on the religious affiliation of Karo outside the highlands were not available at that time. However, this same pattern of religious pluralism appeared to hold true, although in the piedmont, where Malay influence has been stronger, there were more Karo Muslims,
and among urban Karo the numerical and cultural dominance of the GBKP was more pronounced.

Contemporary Karo religious practice is shaped by its political context, specifically by the concepts of religion and of tradition formulated by the Indonesian state in its current interpretation of the Pancasila, the five principle of Indonesian nationhood. Which is said that all Indonesian citizens, should be members of some officially sanctioned, monotheistic religion. This technically means that all Indonesian are free to belong to the religion of their choice, but the options as to what counts as a religion are somewhat limited: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, and with a bit of stretching of the concept of monotheism Hinduism and Buddhism.

Unlike other Indonesian societies were religious conversion has followed lines of kinship, patronage, or other group identity, or where communities have fissioned along religious lines, Karo villages and urban neighborhoods even families are resolutely mixed in their religious affiliations. Karo attribute the religious tolerance of their community to the continuing strength of adapt, which requires corporation among kin, whatever their faith.

In there segmentation of tradition into tradition, custom, and belief, Karo Christian have in the name of inclusiveness, effectively defined the pagan out of tradition and themselves at its heart. It belief is distinguished from tradition then, tradition rituals become, by definition, secular events. These means, that only those rituals which can be secularized are now a part of tradition. Wedding, funerals, and house openings are the key performances of the new universal tradition, while rites of spirit propitiation, séances for the souls of the dead, and spirit possession ceremonies, all
ritual expression of agama Pemena are no longer tradition rituals at all, but rather rituals of belief.

As it exists today, agama Pemena is essentially a privatized cult of healing and personal success centering on individual purification rites known as erpangir and on the kerja nini possession ceremonies. These are led by spirits mediums, usually women, whose skill and knowledge derive from the spirits guides (jinujung) with whom they have established permanent reciprocal relationship. Community based rites of spirit propitiation have almost entirely ceased to be performed. Even smaller family ceremonies which, like all Karo rituals, stress the participation of members of quite extended kin groups may be difficult to sponsor as a result of religious differences among kin. Discreetly indoors, small rituals continue and many family shrines are maintained, outside in public view they may provoke suspicions of sorcery.
CHAPTER III

The Description of Rebu

3.1 The Meaning of Rebu

Rebu is a Karonese term which means that certain people are not allowed to talk to other certain people. Karonese generally always have effort to maintain their custom value which begins to decline. In fact, Karonese considers about the meaning of Rebu is taboo. However now, there happens to be misunderstanding toward Karonese custom because of the change of environment and the development of education.

The environment is caused of the change of value in family life, especially toward the change of Rebu meaning in Karonese. In education, Rebu is not held anymore, because many Karonese have had higher education. Rebu is just done to make strong relation with their family.

The Practice of Kinship

Family is one social group that is marked by living in the same house, and by economy cooperation on the reproduction. One of family functions which acts are more active is education. It is reflected from their understanding about meaning and giving clan to their children based on father’s clan and mother’s merga or clan consists of some sub clan (Ginting, Karo-karo, Sembiring, Tarigan and Perangin-angin).

Generally, Karonese still look for the root of the relationship of their culture, in order to keep their relations. Karonese think if they know about their clan, they will be able to trace their original relationship. They will not only know, but also have to know
personally about each clan. Karonese are connected by uniformity that is called clan and based on their father descendant line (patrilineal). Clan group arranges the marriage of the family members with other clan. Relationship is an important element in Karonese life, because Karonese consider that all members of society who have clan is related. Therefore, by knowing clan someone’s position towards others is clear in terms of relationship. So, anyone can adapt himself, his position, status, and function, though he is not sure about his position.

There are three kinds relationship in Karo societies they are Kalimbubu, Anak Beru, and Senina/Sembuyak. Each kinds of the relationship have its own meaning that will be explained clearly:

1. Kalimbubu

Kalimbubu is a group of family whose daughter marries with a man of a certain family or clan. Kalimbubu is divided into two groups, they are:

a. Kalimbubu Si Langsung Ku Sukut consist of five ranks;
   ♦ Kalimbubu Iperdemui is parents or brother and sister from someone’s wife or family or certain clan.
   ♦ Kalimbubu Si Made Dareh (Bere-bere) is parents (father) or mother’s sister and brother are relatives (Turang). In practice, the name of Kalimbubu Si Made Dareh has changed into five times based on the situation such as:
     a. Kalimbubu Si Ngalo Ulu Emas is if Bere-bere’s nephew is married.
     b. Kalimbubu Si Ngalo Bere-bere is if Bere-bere’s male married.
c. Kalimbubu Si Ngalo Maneh-maneh is if Anak Beru Dareh (Ipupus) dies old and all children have married.

d. Kalimbubu Si Ngalo Morah-morah is if Anak Beru Dareh dies young and has not got married yet.

e. Kalimbubu Si Ngalo Sapu Iluh is if Anak Beru Dareh dies young and has not got married yet.

♦ Kalimbubu Bapa (Binuang) is Kalimbubu from father side and in custom he/she becomes binuang.

♦ Kalimbubu Nini (Kampah) is Kalimbubu from grandfather.

♦ Kalimbubu Tua consists of three such as: Kalimbubu *Tua Jabu* is given to descendant hereditarily, Kalimbubu *Tua Kesain* is a group of persons from clan that appointed as Kalimbubu when established *kesain*. Kalimbubu *Tua Kuta* is a group of persons from clan that was appointed as Kalimbubu.

b. **Kalimbubu Erkelang (Intermediary) Ku Sukut** consists of:

♦ Puang Kalimbubu (Perkempuen) is Kalimbubu from Kalimbubu.

♦ Nu Puang (Soler) is Kalimbubu from Puang Kalimbubu.

♦ Kalimbubu Sepemer is Sepemer from uncle or Turang Sepemer from mother who has born a child.

2. **Anak Beru**

Anak Beru is a wife who got a child. It consists of two groups;

   1. **Direct Anak Beru** consists of five:
♦ Anak Beru Angkit (Ampu) is son in law (Kela) or husband from a child who is firstly married in a family.

♦ Anak Beru Darch is aunt’s child or a sister’s child (Turang) or child born from mother whose Beru is from the same clan (merga).

♦ Anak Beru Cekuh Baka is Anak Beru who has got married with someone from the certain clan two times successively.

♦ Anak Beru Cekuh Baka Tutup is certain person (family or clan) who has married a woman (Beru) from family or certain clan for three times.

♦ Anak Beru Tua, divided into three such as; Anak Beru Tua Jabu is a person or family who has married a woman (Beru) of a certain family for four times successively. Anak Beru Tua Kesain is Anak Beru who takes part in establishing Kesain. And Anak Beru Tua Kuta is Anak Beru who takes part in establishing Kuta (establishing a village).

2. **Anak Beru Erkelang (intermediary)** is Anak Beru who does not directly related with Sukut family, but intermediated by family or certain people.

3. **Senina / Sembuyak**

   Senina / Sembuyak is someone who has the same opinion in Karonese family. Senina / Sembuyak in Karo ethnic consist of two parts:

   1. **Si Langsung Ku Sukut**

      a. Sembuyak is people who have the same parents, grandparents or one Empung (sub clan).
b. Gamet or Senina Sikaku Ranan is people who have the same clan, but different sub clan.

2. *Si Erkelang Ku Sukut*

a. Sepemeran is people who have the same mother or their mother are sister.

b. Separibanen is people who have relation belongs their wives are sister.

c. Sepengalon is a relation by the marriage of a daughter with a man whose brother’s wife is from that clan or a daughter married with a man from the certain clan.

d. Sendalanen is a relation caused he becomes *mama* son in law or he married with his cousin (*Impal*).

On the other hand, Karonese at the moment can not do the role which has been fixed and has been managed by their ancestor. Example: a female make an intercourse with his mother in law, it has negative value toward Karonese custom. So, Karonese made the rules of custom that get top control relations in Karonese. Everyone who has married can be called with Kalimbubu, and Anak Beru. After marriage, the position of wife belongs to her husband patrilineal group. The position of kalimbubu is respected because it is considered as an advantage source.

3.3 Rebu and Kinship

Rebu is forbidden, not suitable, and prohibition to speak toward someone directly and if they want to do communication, they ask someone or use something as intermediary. In other words, if they want to say something,

Rebu in Karonese relationship divided into three, such as:
1. **Rebu between Mami (mother in law) and Kela (son in law).**

Mami is used to call bride’s mother by bride groom, and Kela is to call bridge’s father by bride groom. Based on that meaning, there are four things which are forbidden to do;

a. Rebu or Taboo to speak directly without the third person as an intermediary.

   Between Mami and Kela it is forbidden to speak directly so they must use the third person as an intermediary to deliver message.

b. Rebu to touch part of the body.

   Between Mami and Kela, it is forbidden to touch part of the body. They can be regarded that they do not know custom and it is embarrassing, because he touches his Mami (mother in law). If it is in critical situation, like in serious ill. Kela can touch Mami with saying sentabi (sorry).

c. Rebu to sit face to face.

   Between Mami and Kela it is forbidden to sit face to face. Kela must bow his head and looks down if he meets or speaks with his mami.

d. Rebu to sit on one mat together.

   Between Mami and Kela, it is forbidden to sit on one mat together without the presence of someone who sits between them as an intermediary.

2. **Rebu between Bengkila (father in law) and Permain (woman in law).**

Bengkila is used to call the bride groom’s father by a bridge and Permain is used to call a bridge by father in law. Rebu between Bengkila and Permain is same like Rebu between Mami and Kela;

1. Rebu to speak directly without the third person as an intermediary;

2. Rebu to touch parts of the body;
3. Rebu to sit face to face;

4. Rebu to sit on one mat without someone sitting between them.

3. **Rebu between Turangku.**

The *Turangku*’s word has two meaning depend on the kinds of gender. If the gender is male, so *Turangku* means the wife of brother but if the gender is female, so *Turangku* means the husband of sister. It is clear that Karonese who are *Turangku* have the same or different clan (*merga*). Rebu between *Turangku* is same with Rebu between *Mami* and *Kela*, and Rebu between *Bengkila* and *Permain*.

1. Rebu to speak directly without the presence of the third person as intermediary

2. Rebu to touch part of the body

3. Rebu to sit face to face

4. Rebu to sit on one mat without someone sitting between them.

**Rebu Today**

Since there is a tendency that Rebu culture and tradition is beginning to die, more researches should be done. Through researches authentic culture and tradition can be written and preserved. By doing that, the old culture and tradition of Karo people, especially about Rebu can still be learnt by the next generation.

Karonese generally always have effort to maintain their custom value which begins to decline. In fact, Karonese considers about the meaning of Rebu is taboo. If we look at the mythos value, this Rebu is made to protect someone from the condition that is not wanted. This case is still believed, because at that time Karonese still professed pagan religion *perbegu* or believe in the spirit of their ancestor.
Rebu from the education value, in Karonese relationship is identical with income, someone’s position and their social status. But education in here means to give a lesson toward their children to study properly about conduct, and ethnic found in avoidance relationship or taboo.

If we studied carefully about Rebu in nowadays, we can see that until now, Karonese people still use Rebu as the tradition in their custom. But some Karonese who live in the city, are beginning to forget that particular tradition. As a result sometimes there happen a confused between people who still practice Rebu in this modern age.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusions

From all the analysis it can be concluded that Karonese people have very interesting culture and tradition. Rebu as one of Karonese culture and tradition has existed as long as the informant can remember and of course they inherited that particular tradition from the previous generations.

Based on the statement above, there are conclusions about the meaning of Rebu in Karonese relationship:

1. In Karonese relationship, there are three kinds of Rebu; Rebu between Mami and Kela, Rebu between Bengkila and Permain, and Rebu between Turangku.

2. Rebu between Mami and Kila, Bengkila and Permain, and Rebu between Turangku, have some avoidance which is can not do between each of them.

Whether it is true or not, Karonese people have a logical history background for that culture. According to the informant, they are not allowed to talk directly, to touch parts of the body, to sit face to face, and sit on one mat without someone sitting between them.
4.2 Suggestions

After analyzing the meaning of Rebu in Karonese relationship the writer proposes some suggestions such as:

♦ Karonese people especially the young generation should preserve their culture value especially the avoidance relationship (Rebu).

♦ Karonese people supposed to do this avoidance relationship in their daily life.

♦ The readers who are interested in Karonese custom can do further research on this subject.

Thus, the writer hopes that this paper becomes a guide writing to enrich a new insight for the people especially for Karonese society.
REFERENCES


