

# Oles Pardabaitak in Pakpak Ethnic: A Semiotics Study

Mei Elisabet Sirait<sup>1</sup>, Jekmen Sinulingga<sup>2</sup>, Asni Barus<sup>3</sup>, Warisman Sinaga<sup>4</sup>,  
Asriaty R Purba<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>Universitas Sumatera Utara, Indonesia.

Corresponding Author: Mei Elisabet Sirait

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## ABSTRACT

This article is entitled “Oles Pardabaitak in Pakpak Ethnic: A Semiotics Study”. This study aims to (1). describe the motifs contained in the function of the pardabaitak of the Pakpak Batak ethnic group. (2). describe the function of the motifs contained in the oles pardabaitak of the Pakpak Batak ethnic group. (3). describe the symbol value of the motifs contained in the Pakpak Batak ethnic pardabaitak oles. The theory used in analyzing the data is theory of semiotics put forward by Charles Sanders Peirce. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research with structured interview observation. Based on the results of research and discussion, the author found that there are 7 forms motif values of kelang pajonggir, gerga, epen buaya, gatip dabbal, sirat, rambu, sisi. In addition, there are 10 equipment pamapan, lili, pagabe, baliga, totar, pangihunan, hatolongan, patibohonan, sorha, panaitan. And the value of motif found in this study is the value of social solidarity, mutual cooperation, courtesy, harmony, discipline, welfare and gratitude.

**Keywords:** oles pardabaitak, sthnic batak pakpak, motif, semiotic.

## 1.INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that has a variety of cultures and ethnic groups. On each island there are various customs that characterize the place. North Sumatra has a variety of

ethnicities. One of these ethnicities is the Pakpak Batak which is spread across several districts or cities such as Dairi Regency, Pakpak Bharat Regency, Humbang Hasundutan Regency, Central Tapanuli (North Sumatra), and Aceh Singkil Regency and Subulussalam City (Aceh). Pakpak Batak ethnic culture is an important heritage to be preserved and maintained. In this culture there are important messages and guidelines for life, which are reflected in traditional symbols and cultural arts such as dance, singing, and customs symbols. As an ethnic group rich in culture and language, the Pakpak Batak ethnic group has its own characteristics in culture and language. Culture is a system formed from behavior, both physical and mental behavior.

This is closely related to the activities carried out by the community, where the dynamics of movement in a certain period will form a typical order or system in a community group. Koenjaraningrat (2015: 120) states that culture has three forms, namely: 1). As a complex of ideas, ideas, norms and so on., 2). As a complex of patterned activities of humans in society., 3). As objects of human work.

Batak ethnic life, especially Pakpak Batak, is inseparable from the use of oles, both in everyday life and in various traditional ceremonies. Oles have an important role in ceremonies, activities and rituals in the customs of the Pakpak Batak community. However, nowadays oles are also used as a livelihood because of the large number of

oles circulating in the market. Oles have a variety of shapes, motifs, sizes, ways of use and purposes of use. Oles pardabaitak is often the choice of clothing for adult women in various special occasions, such as weddings or traditional joyous events. The use of oles pardabaitak not only reflects elegance and beauty, but also implies pride in the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the Pakpak Batak ethnic group. Oles pardabaitak is used as a sarong wrapped around the waist. Its use is limited to the bottom of the knee, and does not reach up to the ankles.

In its traditional use, oles pardabaitak reflects elegance and modesty in dress. The specific length limitation illustrates the norms and rules in dress that are upheld in the community. Thus, oles pardabaitak is not only a functional element in clothing, but also carries meanings and values in the life and traditions of the Pakpak Batak ethnic group.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is located in Silalahi 1 Village, Silahisabungan District, Dairi Regency. The approach used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method that explores in depth. The research data was obtained through two main approaches, namely a literature review that included relevant books and previous research, and field data collection through interviews. Research instruments included writing

utensils, recording devices, and cameras to document visually.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Oles pardabaitak has a symbol of happiness, called a symbol of happiness because the colors, paintings and patterns give the impression that every parent is very happy to see their children and grandchildren living happily together. There are three colors in oles pardabaitak, namely white, black and blue. Below will be explained 7 forms, functions and motif values. In addition, there are 10 pamapan equipment, lili, pagabe, baliga, totar, pangihunan, hatolongan, patibohonan, sorha, panaitan. And the motif values found in this study are the value of social solidarity, gotong royong, politeness, harmony, discipline, preservation and cultural creativity, gender management, commitment, welfare and gratitude.

### 1. The Shape of Motifs Found in Oles Pardabaitak

The motifs found in this Batak oles cloth are Kelang pajonggi, Gerga, epen buaya, gatip dabbal, sirat, rambu, sisi. The motif is not only inspired by the life journey of the Batak people, but also a reflection that illustrates the persistence and greatness of the Batak people. In their lives, hard work is deeply rooted, along with the values of honor that are upheld.



Oles Pardabaitak

The following is the form of the pardabaitak oles motif based on the results of research obtained at the research location, namely:



Motif *kelang  
pajonggir*

The kelang pajonggir motif is one of the motifs found on the pardabaitak polish. Kelang pajonggir, which means a type of gecko, plays an important role in maintaining natural harmony and bringing

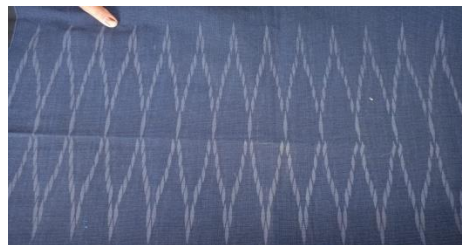
sustenance. The gecko motif is considered a protector and also a symbol of tendih (spirit) that will protect humans both physically and mentally.



Motif *gerga*

This motif depicts small crystals in the form of waves, reflecting that togetherness and family strength are the keys to overcoming challenges. The wavy crystal symbolizes the

resilience of relationships, facing the dynamics of life together. This motif is not only an aesthetic element, but also contains a philosophy of daily life.



Motif *epen buaya*

The epen buaya motif, resembling human teeth, is meticulously designed using white thread to form patterns like human teeth and the letter w. Through this art, it conveys a philosophical message about the importance

of gratitude and living life with happiness. The meaning in this motif creates an artistic experience that is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also stimulates reflection on the deep values of life.



Motif sirat

The sirat motif is manifested in this artwork through a horizontal arrangement of threads with the colors red, white, and black, which symbolizes courage, purity, and sorrow. The

implied philosophical message is that these three elements are a complementary part of life's journey.



Motif gatip dabbal

The dabbal gatip in this art features a dark blue straight line as a symbol of boundaries and protection for the Pakpak people from the threat of wild animals and enemies. The

straight lines create a sense of order and strength, reflecting wisdom in maintaining security and harmony in the neighborhood.



Motif rambu

The image at the end of the oles pardabaitak is called the sign. The rambu on oles pardabaitak consists of three colors: black, blue, and white, formed with many threads

that are then put together in one piece at a time so that they harden and form a line extending downward. this rambu motif remains bound to the fabric.



Motif sisi

The side motifs on the pardabaitak oles are located at the top and bottom. This motif has a black color with a width of 7 cm and a length of up to 2.5 meters. Thus, the side motif emphasizes the beauty and strength of the overall design of the pardabaitak oles.

## 2 The function of the motifs contained in the parts of Oles Pardabaitak

The functions of the motifs/symbols contained in Oles Pardabaitak are described as follows:

### 1) Kelang Pajonggir motif

The kelang pajonggir motif is not only important in the art of making oles, but also encourages the owner to maintain harmony with nature. As a profound symbol, this motif invites to maintain the balance of the ecosystem and a harmonious relationship with the environment. By keeping this motif, people are reminded of the importance of nature preservation and their role as protectors of a sustainable ecosystem. Moral messages about responsibility towards nature and the importance of maintaining harmony with nature are conveyed through this motif. Fungsi motif yang terdapat pada bagian-bagian Oles Pardabaitak

### 2) Motif gerga

The gerga motif is not only a symbol, but also a tool to ensure the owners come together and solve problems together. The goal is to strengthen relationships and create strong emotional bonds, allowing them to support each other in facing daily challenges. With the presence of this motif, the owners are more engaged and united in dealing with life, creating a harmonious and close-knit climate between them. The gerga motif also encourages collaboration and solidarity in the face of life's obstacles, becoming a symbol of togetherness and support within the community.

### 3) Motif epen buaya

The epen buaya motif serves as a reminder for the owner to maintain gratitude and awareness of blessings in life. Each pattern and thread is a symbol to appreciate all the blessings in life. This motif is not just a

decoration, but an indication of the importance of gratitude in living life. Through its presence, it conveys moral and cultural messages that inspire the owner and the next generation. Understanding the symbolism of the epen crocodile motif enriches our understanding of tradition and local wisdom.

### 4) Motif gatip dabbal

The gatip dabbal motif plays an important role as a reminder for the owner to remain vigilant and not easily trust strangers, to maintain security and caution. Its presence in the fabric reminds the owner of the importance of being careful, reinforcing the awareness of personal security. This motif is not only a decorative element, but also a strong reminder of the importance of caution in everyday life.

### 5) Motif sirat

The sirat motif is important as a reminder and symbol of appreciation for the richness of Batak culture, encouraging the maintenance of cultural heritage and awareness of cultural values. Through this motif, owners are reminded of the importance of preserving their cultural heritage and maintaining a connection with their cultural roots, providing a foundation for identity building. Sirat motifs have an important role in passing on cultural wealth to the next generation

### 6) Motif rambu

Rambu motifs are an important element in oles fabrics, adding visual charm and illustrating cultural subtlety through their patterns. In weaving, the rambu motif provides an interesting and profound dimension, signifying the cultural identity and beauty of the weaving art heritage. The cultural messages implicit in this motif reinforce the values of traditional art and respect for community identity.

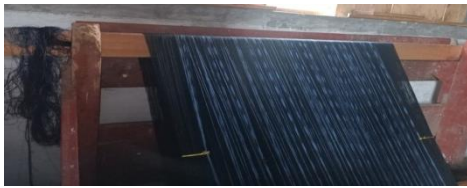
### 7) Sisi

This motif has a meaning as a symbol of the sadness or grief experienced by the Pakpak Batak. Therefore, this motif is bordered with the dabbal motif as a strong marker of respect and remembrance of events that hurt their hearts.

### 3.function of pardabaitak dab weaving equipment

#### a. Pamapan

Pamapan is a long-shaped parsabaitak weaving tool that serves to maintain the stability of the loom plate during the process of weaving cloth. Made from various materials such as wood, bamboo, and palm fronds, pamapan is usually round or cylindrical in shape, and is the main part of the loom that supports the loom plate to make it sturdy.



#### b. Lili

The lili or lidi is a pardabaitak dab weaving tool, which has a role in organizing the motifs on the cloth being woven. The lili is usually made from the trunk of the enau tree, which has been carefully processed to ensure strength and smoothness of the surface.



#### c. Pagabe

Pagabe is a pardabaitak dab weaving tool that has a central role as a thread clamp linked to the papaut which is responsible for keeping the thread



#### d. Baliga

Baliga is a pardabaitak weaving tool that serves to compact the woven threads.



#### e. Totar

Totar is one of the important tools in the pardabaitak oles weaving process, which has a crucial function to carry the weaving threads from the left side to the right, or vice versa, when weaving activities are carried out.



Totar

#### f. Pangihunan

Pangihunan is one of the tools used in the pardabaitak oles weaving process, which has the main function of separating or opening the threads horizontally so that they can be easily inserted into the woven frame.



Pangihunan

#### g. Hatolongan

Hatolongan is one of the tools used in the pardabaitak oles weaving process which has

a special function, namely to separate or open the threads.



Hatolungan

#### h. Patibohonan

Patibohonan is a tool used in the pardabaitak oles weaving process that has an important role in arranging the yarn motifs. The main function of the patibohonan is to provide accurate control in the arrangement of the yarn motifs before the weaving process begins.



#### i. Sorha

Sorha is one of the tools used in the pardabaitak oles weaving process that functions not only to tidy the threads, but also to move the threads into a small bamboo.



#### j. Panaitan

Panaitan is a tool used in the process of weaving pardabaitak oles that has a special

function, namely to pull the thread into the patibohonan.



### 4. The motif value found in Oles Pardabaitak

#### 1. The value of the symbol of solidarity

Social solidarity is an attitude that shows solidarity and concern for the welfare of others. The open crocodile motif as a reminder for the owner to remain grateful in all situations, shows the existence of elements in society that provide support and care for the happiness and welfare of others. It signifies the importance of reminding and encouraging each other, creating an environment of care and solidarity. In every society the presence of symbols such as the crocodile open strengthens social bonds and fosters empathy and is essential for building an empowered and harmonious community.

#### 2. The value of the gotong royong symbol

Gotong royong is a form of cooperation carried out by the community voluntarily and selflessly to achieve a common goal. The crocodile open, with its very important role as a reminder, not only helps its owner to remain grateful in all situations, but also symbolizes cooperation and mutual support to achieve positive goals. It reflects the spirit of gotong royong where individuals or entities help and support each other for the common good.

#### 3. The symbolic value of politeness

Courtesy is an attitude that exudes good and civilized character. The use of gerga motifs as a means to strengthen the relationship between the owner reflects a sincere desire and mutual respect, support, and

cooperation in facing various challenges that arise in everyday life.

#### 4.The symbolic value of harmony

Harmony is a concept that includes peace and harmony which is full of deep meaning. The role of the motifgerga as a means of ensuring that the owners embrace each other and are able to solve problems together. Showing the importance of harmony in established social relationships this action reflects the spirit of peaceful and harmonious coexistence, where individuals support each other and cooperate in overcoming the challenges faced.

#### 5.Value of discipline symbol

Discipline is an attitude of obedience and compliance with rules or norms that apply in various lives. The dabbal motif as a reminder for the owner not to easily trust unknown people, this action is a cautious step aimed at maintaining the owner's personal safety and comfort from potential traps or crimes that may occur.

#### 6.The symbolic value of cultural preservation and creativity

Cultural preservation is an important effort in preserving and maintaining the nation's cultural heritage. Through the sirat motif, it can be seen that the community not only views cultural heritage as something that must be preserved, but also as a source of inspiration and continuity of values that form their collective identity.

#### 7.The symbolic value of gender management

The symbolic value of gender management is a concerted effort towards a just and equitable society for all individuals, regardless of gender. It illustrates a commitment to creating an environment that values and strengthens the roles and contributions of women and men in social and economic development. Kelang pajonggir: a symbol of the role that nature plays in creating balance and harmony. Kelang pajonggir here represents the

presence of nature that influences human behavior in caring for the environment.

#### 8.Value of commitment symbol

Commitment is an attitude that signifies determination and willingness to be unwavering in the face of something. Through the use of sirat motifs in their oles, the owner indirectly affirms his commitment to maintaining Batak cultural identity and passing it on proudly to the next generation.

#### 9.Symbolic value of welfare

Welfare is a condition or state of a person or group feeling happiness health security and having the ability to fulfill the needs of life. The kelang pajonggir motif helps the owner and his descendants to support each other and follow in each other's footsteps, thus a firm commitment to maintaining good relationships between family members and ensuring mutual prosperity.

#### 10.Value symbol of gratitude

Gratitude is a form of appreciation and recognition for all the blessings that have been given by God Almighty. Through the symbol of kelang pajonggir, they not only stay together, but also support and follow each other closely.

## 4.CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study it can be concluded that in oles pardabaitak 7 forms of motifs and their functions include kelang pajonggir, gerga, epen crocodile, gatip dabbal, sirat, rambu, sisi. In addition, there are 10 pamapan utensils, lili, pagabe, baliga, totar, pangihunan, hatolongan, patibohonan, sorha, panaitan. This research also reveals important values which are the value of solidarity and mutual cooperation, courtesy and harmony, the value of discipline, the value of preservation and cultural creativity, the value of gender management, the value of commitment, the value of welfare and gratitude.



**Declaration by Authors**

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