

The Character Values of The *Pati Ka* Offering Ritual at Kelimutu Lake

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at describing the character value of education through understanding the semiotic meaning of the offerings ritual *Pati Ka* in the Kelimutu Lake. This study used descriptive qualitative and ethnolinguistic approach. The research subject were two people namely *Mosalaki* (clan chief) who organized the *Pati Ka* ritual and a local villager. Data collection techniques which is done by observation, interview and documentation. The techniques used in analyzing the data was the techniques model by Miles and Huberman with 4 stages namely, data collection, the data reduction, data analysis, data display and drawing conclusion. The result showed that the presence of the value of education, religious character, honest, hard work, spirit of nationality, love of country, communicative, love peace, environmental care, social care and responsibility through understanding the semiotic meaning of the offerings *Pati Ka* in Kelimutu Lake. Understanding the semiotic meaning of the offerings ritual *Pati Ka* has two dimensions of interlocking character value of education that is contained in the offerings ritual *Pati Ka* and that the meaning of the offerings itself.

Keywords: character, meaning, pati ka, semiotics, value.

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INTRODUCTION

Culture is a manifestation of human thoughts, actions, or deeds. Culture can be interpreted as a series of activities carried out by humans as a form of creativity, taste, and human initiative that are useful for fulfilling human needs. Every culture that exists anywhere contains local wisdom that can be the foundation of the community to think and act (Rufaindah, 2018:169). Culture is closely related to tradition. Koentjaraningrat (in Endraswara, 2015:171) tradition is something that has been done for a long time and is part of the life of a community group, usually from the same country, culture, time or religion. Traditions can be adapted to meet changing needs in order to be accepted as part of an ancient tradition. Diverse cultures can add to the treasures of insight of other cultural owners, so that they can enrich the mindset that has been previously owned. Local culture is known for values that teach cooperation, community life, tolerance, mutual respect, and so on. These values are passed down from generation to generation through oral traditions, one of which is the *Pati Ka* ritual in Lake Kelimutu.

The *Pati Ka* ritual is a ritual to feed the deceased Lio ethnic ancestors which includes the stages of greeting, feeding, and dancing together. This ritual is carried out every year on August 14th by *Mosalaki* (customary elder) from 23 indigenous communities that support Kelimutu Lake. Each indigenous community is attended by a minimum of 20 *ana kalo fai walu* (indigenous community members). The *Pati Ka* ritual is carried out at Kelimutu Lake because the Lio ethnic community believes that Kelimutu Lake is the final resting place for the spirits of the ancestors. The *Pati Ka* ritual is also a form of expression of a request to God and the ancestors in order to give fertility to the planted seeds, obtain satisfactory harvests, and provide good health for the Lio ethnic community. The expression of the request is realized through the giving of offerings to the ancestors. Some of the names of these food and drink offerings have certain semiotic meanings. Character values will grow in children and the younger generation in general through understanding the semiotic meaning of the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings at Kelimutu Lake.

Pati Ka constitutes a ceremonial act of providing sustenance and nourishment to ancestral spirits at Kelimutu Lake. In addition to beseeching the ancestors for the restoration of the lake's pristine waters, as elucidated by Yohanes Don Bosco Watu, Chairman of the Kelimutu Indigenous Community Forum, the *Pati Ka* ritual serves as a protective measure against afflictions and plagues befalling Ende District. This sacred rite is conducted in reverence to the Lio tribe's deeply held belief that Kelimutu Lake represents the ultimate resting abode for departed souls, signifying the culmination of their earthly sojourn. Thus, the Lio tribe reveres Kelimutu Lake as the eternal sanctuary wherein all spirits find repose upon the cessation of their mortal existence.

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The ceremony is conducted by presenting special food offerings to the ancestral spirits believed to reside in the three lakes known as Tiwu Ata Mbuwu, Tiwu Nua Muri Koo Fai, and Tiwu Ata Polo. This ritual serves as a means of communication and maintaining a connection with the ancestors, the universe, and the Divine power. The community believes that the souls or spirits will come to Kelimutu Lake after passing away and reside in its craters for eternity.

All participants of the ritual will walk, accompanied by traditional music called I Lio Ende, towards the summit of Kelimutu, covering a distance of 700 meters. The men will wear specially woven sarongs (*luka*) and *don-destar* headpieces, and batik fabrics (*lesu*), as well as *ikat* weavings (*semba*) or scarves. Meanwhile, women will wear *ikat* woven sarongs (*lawo*) and traditional attire (*lambu*).

Mosalaki Pu'u leads the pinnacle of the ritual and commences with offering food to the ancestors at a designated location. The offerings include pork, red rice, betel leaves with betel nuts, and *moke* (a traditional cake). Mosalaki Pu'u places the offerings on a stone that serves as the *Mesbah* or altar for the ritual.

The *Pati Ka* procession begins with a collective prayer recited by the *mosalaki* (elders). The prayer is offered to seek blessings from God and the ancestors for the food and drinks that will be presented to the ancestors. The food is on serving plates and consists of red rice with *pusu ate babi* (pork liver and heart) as the main dish, accompanied by water and coffee as beverages. Each *mosalaki* carries a serving plate containing food for the ancestors. The ritual is accompanied by the recitation of prayers by a representative *mosalaki* and concludes with the *Gawi Sodha* dance performed by the *Mosalaki Pu'u*. The *mosalaki* commences the ritual by offering prayers to the ancestors. Afterward, they "feed" the spirits of the ancestors by placing red rice with pork on the spirit stone. They dance while circling the location of the altar for the offerings. After the procession is completed, traditional dances and songs from local art groups in the Lio Ende community are usually performed (Nabila, 2021, *Ritual Adat Pati Ka Memberi Makan dan Minum Kepada Leluhur di Danau Kelimutu*, retrieved from <https://www.mediantt.com/2021/08/05/ritual-pati-ka..>).

To realize the implementation of character education in the education sector, 18 values that form the nation's character have been set that are sourced from religion, five principles (*Pancasila*), culture, and national education goals (Kemendiknas, 2010:9). Furthermore, Mansur (2014: 6-7) explains in more detail the eighteen values of character education, namely (1) religious, (2) honest, (3) Tolerance, (4) discipline, (5) hard work, (6) creative, (7) independent, (8) democratic, (9) curiosity, (10) national spirit, (11) love for the homeland, (12) appreciate achievement, (13) communicative, (14) love peace, (15) likes to read, (16) cares about the environment, (17) cares about social, (18) responsibility.

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There are various functions of food names to signify complex belief systems, religions, rules, and ideologies of certain people or communities related to their culture (Noor, 2013: 29-40). Regarding to character education through understanding the meaning of the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings, it is considered urgent because along with the times, many young generations of the Lio ethnic group are starting to be less familiar with the names of these foods and are closer to the names of foods from foreign countries such as nuggets, pizza, kimchi, and tteokbokki, even though in general the meaning behind the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings is the precious treasure of the Lio culture. The Indonesian government wants to prevent the destruction of the nation due to the loss of character by issuing the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2018 concerning strengthening character education (PPK) in formal education unit. One that can be used in strengthening the nation's character in formal schools is through cultural diversity (Hartatik, et al, 2021:228).

Research on character values through understanding the meaning of the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings at Lake Kelimutu is a form of introduction and cultural inheritance to the younger generation and can be used as learning material for children's character building. The local cultural wealth contains values and views of life that are valuable for human survival, especially the younger generation.

Language and culture have a close relationship. Language serves as a tool to express thoughts, concepts, and cultural revealers. The same thing was stated by Mahadi and Jafari (2012: 230) that language and thought are an inseparable unit, likened to two sides of a coin, language on the one hand and thought on the other. An opinion regarding the relationship between language and culture was also conveyed by Chaer (2013: 4) who stated that in analyzing the meaning of a language, it can also be known about the cultural life of the wearer. Furthermore, Aji (in Rostanawa, 2018: 271) said that language can be a treasure for certain cultures.

Djawanai (2009: 2) language is a sign system that is used as a tool to convey thoughts, concepts, and everyday human experiences. The position of language in various human activities is very important. Language can be used in all aspects of life, both in daily conversation and in certain rituals. Language is also used in the ritual of giving offerings to deceased ancestors in the Lio ethnic community. Previous research related to this research is conducted by Susilowati, et al (2021) entitled Character Values in Ngawi Batik Artwork as Content for Fine Arts Education in Elementary Schools. The difference from this research is in terms of the area and research subjects. Susilowati's research conducted in an analysis of character values in batik artworks typical of Ngawi Regency at the Elementary School (SD) level, while this study was to analyze character values through understanding the semiotic meaning of the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings at Kelimutu Lake.

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METHOD

The approach used in this research is an ethno linguistic approach and character education. The ethno linguistic approach is a branch of linguistics that studies language in relation to a particular culture. The benefit of the ethno linguistic approach for researchers according to Foley (2001:3-5) is to understand cultural phenomena through the language used by the community. The character education approach is an educational system that aims to instill certain character values in students, in which there are components of knowledge, awareness or willingness, as well as actions to carry out these values.

The source of the data for this research is Mr. Wora Ba'o, aged 72 years, he is a customary elder or *Mosalaki Pu'u Nua One* and Mr. Rangga Ba'o, aged 60 years, he is a community that inhabits one of the traditional houses buffering Kelimutu Lake. These two informants knew the name and meaning of the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings at Kelimutu Lake.

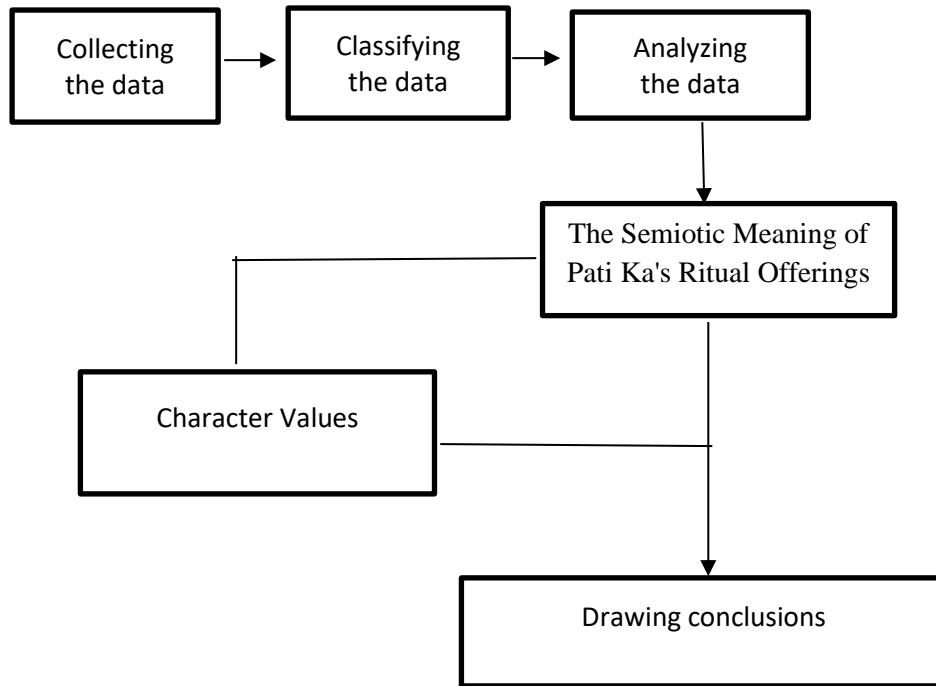
The data of this research were obtained by using the method of listening, interviews, and documentation (Mahsun, 2007:92-93). In other words, the ethnographic data collection was carried out using the observation-participation technique (Spradley, 2006:ix). The listening method is done by listening to the information conveyed by the informant regarding the names and meanings of the offerings in the *Pati Ka* ritual. The proficient method is carried out by researchers conducting conversations with informants which are from a list of questions that have been prepared (Mahsun, 2007: 95-96). Furthermore, Spradley (2006: ix) said that to achieve data completion, the list of questions prepared was open, meaning it could be further developed by researchers. Ethnographic questions were also prepared to collect ethnographic data complemented by photographs.

The data analysis technique uses an interactive model analysis technique by Miles and Huberman (2004). Analysis of research data includes several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. To examine the object of research, the following research steps were used: (1) collecting data on the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings in the form of photographs, (2) classifying the data into food, drink, and complementary groups, (3) analyzing the semiotic meaning of the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings, (4) describing the character values contained in the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings, and (5) drawing conclusions from the research as a whole. Furthermore, the research process diagram can be seen as follows.

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Diagram 1:
The Analysis Process of the Semiotic Meaning of the Pati Ka Ritual



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Kelimutu Lake is a lake located in the Kelimutu National Park area, precisely in Pemo Village, Kelimutu District, Ende Flores Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province. This lake consists of three lakes with different colors so this lake is also known as the Three-Colored Lake. It is located at an altitude of 1,639 meters above sea level, this tricolor lake presents a very beautiful natural panorama. The myth that is believed by local people is that Kelimutu Lake is the abode of the spirits of the dead. The black lake (*Tiwu Ata Bupu*) is believed to be the abode of the spirits of the elders, the red lake (*Tiwu Ata Polo*) is believed to be the abode of the spirits of people who during their life always did evil, the blue lake (*Tiwu Nuwa Muri Kofai*) is believed to be a place where the spirits of young people reside. Because of this belief, the Lio ethnic community around Kelimutu Lake performs the *Pati Ka* ritual or feeds the ancestors in the form of offerings. The *Pati Ka* ritual offerings at Kelimutu Lake include *Are Mera*, *Are Bara*, *Nake Wawi*, *Filu*, *Moke*, *Mota Nata*, and *Mbako*.

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1. Semiotic Meaning

The semiotic meaning in this discussion is obtained based on research techniques in the form of observation and documentation that have been carried out when conducting the research in Kelimutu Lake.

a. *Are Mera* (Brown Rice)

Picture 1:

Are mera (Brown Rice)



Source: Maria Marietta Bali Larasati

Are Mera (Brown Rice) is a natural brown rice cooked from brown rice (*oryza rufipogon*). The 'sign' in the form of the name *are mera* [are mEra] becomes a marker for the 'concept': (1) the character of the Lio people themselves. The brown color on the rice represents the character/character of the Lio people who are firm, brave, aggressive, strong, enthusiastic, self-confident, and courageous in defending the territory of the indigenous community, (2) the most basic food needs to survive in the Lio indigenous community. Linguistically, the lexeme *are mera* is formed from the words *are* 'rice' and *mera* 'red'. So, *are mera* means brown rice. The semiotic meaning of *are mera*/brown rice for *Pati Ka* ritual offerings is a request and hope to be given strength, courage, and self-confidence to defend oneself from any danger and protect customary rights from enemy attacks.

b. *Are Bara* (white rice)

Picture 2:

Are bara (white rice)



Source: Maria Marietta Bali Larasati

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Are Bara (White Rice) is a natural white rice cooked from white rice (*oryza sativa*). The 'sign' in the form of the name are bara [are bara] becomes a marker for the of 'concept': (1) *are bara*/white rice for the Lio people as a symbol of purity. The white color gives meaning to the character of the Lio people who are open, developed, and honest, (2) the color white is always associated with positive things, purity of soul, purity and kindness, attainment of heaven, salvation, brilliance, holy faith, humility, sincerity, protection, and perfection.

Linguistically, the lexeme *are bara* is formed from the words *are* 'rice' and *bara* 'white'. So, *are bara* means white rice. The semiotic meaning of *are bara*/white rice for *pati ka* ritual offerings is a request and hope to live in holiness, kindness in order to obtain life safety, and to receive protection from God and the ancestors.

c. *Nake Wawi* (Pork)

Picture 3:
Nake Wawi (Pork)



Source: Maria Marietta Bali Larasati

Nake Wawi (pork) is a piece of pork that has been cooked by boiling with salt without using other spices. The 'sign' in the form of the name *nake wawi* [nAke wawi] becomes a marker for the 'concept': (1) a symbol of one's economic wealth status, (2) social status in social life, and (3) the sacredness of a ritual that is carried out.

Linguistically, the lexeme *nake wawi* is formed from the words *nake* 'meat' and *wawi* 'pork'. So, **nake wawi** means pork. The semiotic meaning of **nake wawi**/pork for *Pati Ka* ritual offerings is a wish and hope to live with an established economic wealth, a dignified social life, beneficial to others, and loved by many people, as well as being able to carry out sacred rituals to establish a harmonious relationship between Lio ethnic community with their ancestors (*embu mamo*).

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d. *Filu* (Cucur Cake)

Picture 4:
Filu (Cucur cake)



Source: Maria Marietta Bali Larasati

Filu (Cucur Cake) is a traditional cake made from rice flour, granulated sugar, brown sugar, a little alcohol, and cooking oil. The “sign” in the form of the name [*filu*] becomes a marker of the 'concept': (1) request and prayed to God and the ancestors, (2) attitude of surrender to the blessings given by God, (3) golden color symbolizes glory, splendor, and majesty which means good.

Linguistically, the lexeme *filu* is formed from the word *filu* 'cucur cake'. So, *filu* means cucur cake. The semiotic meaning of *filu*/cucur cake for ritual offerings of *Pati Ka* is the shape of the edge of *filu*/cucur like looking up, for the Lio people it is a symbol of asking for prayer and submission to God. It is with that philosophy that the Lio people choose cucur cake in the hope of getting blessings and guidance from the Almighty God and the ancestors.

e. *Moke* (Nira Wine)

Picture 5:
Moke (Nira Wine)



Source: Maria Marietta Bali Larasati

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Moke (Nira Wine) is a fermented drink of nira. The water from this nira is then distilled and stored in bamboo or wooden barrels. The 'sign' in the form of the name [*moke*] becomes a marker for the 'concept': (1) as a medium for opening rituals (2) a medium for establishing communication between humans, nature, God, and the ancestors (*embu mamo*).

Linguistically, the lexeme *moke* is formed from the word *moke* 'Nira Wine' is a fermented drink of nira'. So, *moke* means nira wine. The semiotic meaning of *moke* for the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings is that *moke* is a medium for establishing communication between humans and God and between humans and their ancestors. The request submitted will be granted in the form of good weather and no obstacles during the ritual. Communities who attend the *Pati Ka* ritual hope that God and the ancestors will witness the offerings and accept them.

f. ***Mota Nata* (Betel Nut)**

Picture 6:
Mota Nata (Betel Nut)



Source: Maria Marietta Bali Larasati

Mota Nata (Betel Nut) is a complement to offerings in the form of betel fruit (*mota*) and areca nut (*nata*). The custom in the Lio ethnic community is that the betel used is the fruit instead of the leaves as is commonly used in Javanese and other local customs. The 'sign' in the form of the name [*mOta nAta*] becomes a marker for the 'concept': (1) intimacy, kinship, a sense of friendship, maintaining good relations, (2) respect, courtesy, and appreciation, and (3) liaison between humans and their ancestors (*embu mamo*).

Linguistically, the lexeme *mota nata* is formed from the words *mota* 'betel' and *nata* 'pinang'. So, *mota nata* means betel nut. The semiotic meaning of *mota nata*/betel nut for the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings is (1) a medium to establish interaction between people of the same indigenous community, people of different indigenous communities, and between indigenous

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communities buffering Kelimutu Lake and people from outside (guests), (2) media to establish communication and appreciation of the presence of people in the ritual, (3) liaison media between the adat elders (*mosalaki*) who lead the rituals with the ancestors (*embu mamo*).

g. *Mbako* (Tobacco)

Picture 7:
Mbako (Tobacco)



Source: Maria Marietta Bali Larasati

Mbako is tobacco that is roughly chopped and wrapped in palm leaves that have been dried and shaved thin and then tied with palm leaves that have been made like rope. The 'sign' sign in the form of the name [mbAko] becomes a marker for the 'concept' of (1) communication between human beings, and (2) establishing a transcendental relationship.

Linguistically, the lexeme *mbako* is formed from the word *mbako* 'Tobacco'. So, *Mbako* means 'Tobacco'. The semiotic meaning of *mbako* for *pati ka* ritual offerings is (1) a symbol of building communication between others and establishing a transcendental relationship with the ancestors, (2) *mbako* in the Lio people offerings experience a shift from rolling Tobacco to cigarettes but does not eliminate the meaning the symbol is to build social communication between humans and their ancestors.

2. The Character Values Contained in the *Pati Ka* Ritual Offerings

The character values contained in the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings were described based on the results of interviews with *mosalaki* (customary elders) and indigenous communities in the Kelimutu Lake area. The character values contained in the *Pati Ka* ritual offerings at Kelimutu Lake based on 18 characters that can be applied in learning are as follows.

- a) The value of love for the homeland shown in the offerings of *are mera* (brown rice). The color red means bold. Brave is a character of the Lio ethnic community in general. They love their customary land so much that they will unite against the enemy who wants to usurp their

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- customary land rights. The courage to defend this customary land shows the value of love for the homeland.
- b) The value of honesty is shown in the offerings of *are bara* (white rice). White color means holy and clean. Honest, a heart that is clean from prejudice, open, and speak frankly is the character of the Lio ethnic community. They live in honesty and kindness to get life safety and get protection from God and their ancestors. If they violate it there will be natural and customary sanctions.
 - c) The value of hard work is shown in the offerings of *nake wawi* (pork). Pork is a status symbol of economic wealth. For the Lio ethnic community, the status of economic wealth can only be achieved by hard work. By working hard they can live well, live a social life that is dignified and beneficial to many people.
 - d) Religious values are shown in the offerings of *filu* (cucur cake). The golden brown cake symbolizes the glory and majesty of God the Creator. For the Lio ethnic community, the shape of a round cake with the edge raised up becomes a symbol of people who are praying and surrendering to God. Their hope in God is endless. They live in trust in God for a harmonious and blessed life.
 - e) The communicative value is shown in the offering of *moke* (nira wine). Nira Wine is a fermented drink from the juice of the sap fruit which is sliced, tapped, and collected in bamboo reeds. For the Lio ethnic community, tuak is commonly used as offerings in traditional rituals. They believe that by giving offerings of palm wine, there will be transcendental communication between the *mosalaki* (customary elder), God, and the ancestors. Thus, the submitted application will be granted.
 - f) The creative value is shown in the offerings of *mota nata* (betel nut). Apart from being a symbol of brotherhood and respect, for the Lio ethnic community, offerings of betel nut can be used as an ingredient in traditional medicine. Betel nut is believed to strengthen teeth, heal wounds in the mouth, eliminate bad breath, and stop bleeding. From the offerings of betel nut, it is hoped that God and the ancestors will provide good health and be kept away from dangerous diseases in the Lio ethnic community.
 - g) The value of social care is shown in the offerings of *mbako* (tobacco). For the Lio ethnic community, tobaccos are usually used to open a conversation. They will invite other people to smoke tobacco together, after that communication will occur between them. In the *Pati Ka* ritual, tobacco offerings are used as a medium to establish transcendental communication between *mosalaki* (customary elders) and God and *embu mamo* (ancestors).

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CONCLUSION

The *Pati Ka* ritual at Kelimutu Lake Ende is a form of expression of the Lio ethnic community's request to the highest form and ancestors in order to give fertility to the planted seeds, obtain satisfactory harvests, and provide good health for the people. The expression of petition in the *Pati Ka* ritual is realized through the giving of offerings to ancestors. In the *Pati Ka* ritual, several names of food and drink offerings can be found, which have certain symbolic or semiotic meanings. Based on the results of the analysis, it is known that the names of the food and drink offerings in the *Pati Ka* ritual at Kelimutu Lake include 7 names, namely *Are Mera*, *Are Bara*, *Nake Wawi*, *Filu*, *Moke*, *Mota Nata*, and *Mbako* covering 3 categories, namely food, drink, and complementary. From understanding the semiotic meaning of the names of food and drink offerings in the *Pati Ka* ritual, the character values contained in it are reflected. These character values will be formed in children in line with the relationship that exists between the ancestors (*embu mamu*) and the Lio ethnic community who are still alive in order to be given safety, health, and welfare.

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