

THE ROLE OF UNCLE AND NEPHEW IN KABA MAGEK MANANDIN: A LITERARY SOCIOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This study delves into the intricate dynamics between the uncle (mamak) and nephew (kemenakan) relationship as portrayed in *Kaba Magek Manandin* by Sutan Pangaduan. The research employs a literary sociology framework to analyze these relationships within the context of Minangkabau's matrilineal society, where familial roles are deeply embedded in cultural and social values. The qualitative descriptive method is used to explore how these roles are depicted in the narrative and their significance in the preservation and transmission of cultural values across generations. The findings reveal a complex interplay between social expectations and individual actions, highlighting the tensions and conflicts that arise when traditional roles are challenged. This study contributes to a broader understanding of how literature reflects and shapes social norms, particularly in the context of matrilineal societies where the roles of uncles and nephews are critical in maintaining the cultural fabric.

Keywords: Uncle-nephew relationship, Minangkabau culture, *Kaba Magek Manandin*, literary sociology, social roles, matrilineal society.

Abstract

Penelitian ini menyelidiki dinamika rumit antara hubungan paman (mamak) dan keponakan (kemenakan) sebagaimana digambarkan dalam *Kaba Magek Manandin* karya Sutan Pangaduan. Penelitian ini menggunakan kerangka sosiologi sastra untuk menganalisis hubungan-hubungan ini dalam konteks masyarakat matrilineal Minangkabau, di mana peran keluarga tertanam kuat dalam nilai-nilai budaya dan sosial. Metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana peran-peran ini digambarkan dalam narasi dan signifikansinya dalam pelestarian dan transmisi nilai-nilai budaya lintas generasi. Temuan-temuan tersebut mengungkap interaksi yang kompleks antara harapan-harapan sosial dan tindakan-tindakan individu, yang menyoroti ketegangan dan konflik-konflik yang muncul ketika peran-peran tradisional ditantang. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang bagaimana sastra mencerminkan dan membentuk norma-norma sosial, khususnya dalam konteks masyarakat matrilineal di mana peran-peran paman dan keponakan sangat penting dalam menjaga jalinan budaya.

Kata kunci: Hubungan paman-keponakan, budaya Minangkabau, *Kaba Magek Manandin*, sosiologi sastra, peran-peran sosial, masyarakat matrilineal.

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature serves as a profound medium through which human experiences, emotions, and societal norms are expressed and preserved. In the context of Minangkabau culture, *Kaba*—a form of traditional oral literature—holds a significant place as a repository of cultural values, norms, and societal roles. The transition of *Kaba* from an oral tradition to a written form marks an essential evolution in the way these stories are consumed and preserved. Sutan Pangaduan's *Kaba Magek Manandin* is a quintessential example of this literary form, encapsulating the intricacies of Minangkabau's social structure, particularly the relationships between *mamak* (uncle) and *kemenakan* (nephew). Minangkabau culture is one of the few matrilineal societies in the world, where lineage, inheritance, and social responsibilities are passed down through the female line. Within this system, the *mamak*, typically the mother's brother, holds significant authority and responsibility over his sister's children. This relationship is not merely familial but is also deeply entrenched in the socio-cultural and moral fabric of Minangkabau society. The *mamak* is expected to guide, protect, and provide for his *kemenakan*, ensuring that they uphold the values and traditions of their lineage.

Kaba Magek Manandin provides a rich narrative that highlights the social and moral expectations placed upon the *mamak* and *kemenakan*. It offers insights into how these roles are navigated within the context of changing social dynamics and personal desires. The narrative's exploration of these themes makes it an ideal text for analyzing the interplay between literature and societal norms. Previous studies on Minangkabau literature have primarily focused on the narrative structures and thematic elements of *Kaba*. For example, Junus (1985) and Navis (1984) emphasized the role of *Kaba* in transmitting cultural values and educating the community, particularly through moral and ethical teachings embedded in the stories. These studies highlight the didactic nature of *Kaba* as a form of literature that not only entertains but also instructs. However, despite these contributions, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding the specific roles of *mamak* and *kemenakan* within these narratives. While the *mamak-kemenakan* relationship is acknowledged as a central theme in Minangkabau culture, its representation in literature, particularly in *Kaba Magek Manandin*, has not been extensively explored. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the *mamak-kemenakan* relationship as depicted in *Kaba Magek Manandin* and exploring the implications of these roles in preserving and transmitting cultural values.

The need to examine the *mamak-kemenakan* relationship in literature is driven by the recognition that these roles are critical in maintaining the social structure of Minangkabau society. However, the literature often overlooks how these roles are depicted and the potential challenges they present. The narrative of *Kaba Magek Manandin* offers a unique lens through which to explore these dynamics, particularly as it reflects the tensions between tradition and modernity, individual desires, and social responsibilities. This

research addresses the gap by focusing on the literary portrayal of these roles and how they reflect broader societal norms. By doing so, it contributes to a deeper understanding of how literature serves as both a mirror and a shaper of social values.

Minangkabau's matrilineal system is unique in its emphasis on female lineage and the critical role of the *mamak*. This system shapes the social, economic, and cultural life of the community, making the relationship between *mamak* and *kemenakan* central to understanding the broader social structure. *Kaba Magek Manandin* captures this dynamic, offering a narrative that reflects the complexities of these roles and the challenges that arise in fulfilling them

2. METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, specifically using a descriptive analysis approach. Qualitative research is particularly suited to exploring complex social phenomena within their natural context, making it ideal for examining the intricate relationships depicted in *Kaba Magek Manandin*. The descriptive analysis approach allows for a detailed examination of the text, focusing on the depiction of the *mamak-kemenakan* relationship and its cultural significance. The choice of a qualitative approach is informed by the need to explore the nuanced and context-specific nature of the *mamak-kemenakan* relationship. This approach enables the researcher to delve deeply into the text, uncovering the layers of meaning that contribute to the understanding of these roles within Minangkabau society.

Data Collection

The primary data for this study consists of the text of *Kaba Magek Manandin* by Sutan Pangaduan. The text was analyzed in its entirety, with particular attention paid to passages that depict interactions between the *mamak* and *kemenakan*. Data collection involved a close reading of the text, with relevant passages identified and extracted for analysis. This close reading process was guided by specific themes related to the *mamak-kemenakan* relationship, such as authority, guidance, conflict, and social expectations. Each passage was carefully examined to identify how these themes were articulated in the narrative and how they contributed to the overall depiction of the roles.

Data Analysis

The analysis involved coding the extracted passages according to themes related to the *mamak-kemenakan* relationship. These themes were then analyzed within the framework of literary sociology, which considers the text not just as a literary artifact but as a reflection of the social and cultural context in which it was produced. The analysis focused on how the roles of *mamak* and *kemenakan* are depicted, the expectations placed on these roles, and the consequences when these expectations are not met. The use of literary sociology as a framework allowed for an exploration of how *Kaba Magek Manandin* reflects

the broader social norms of Minangkabau society. It also enabled the researcher to examine how the text critiques these norms, particularly in instances where the mamak or kemenakan fails to fulfill their expected roles.

3. DISCUSSION

Depiction of the Mamak-Kemenakan Relationship in *Kaba Magek Manandin*

The relationship between the mamak and kemenakan is central to the narrative of *Kaba Magek Manandin*. Throughout the text, the mamak is depicted as both a protector and a guide, responsible for the moral and social development of his kemenakan. However, the text also highlights the challenges that arise when the mamak fails to fulfill these responsibilities. One of the key themes that emerge from the analysis is the tension between traditional roles and individual actions. The mamak in *Kaba Magek Manandin* is often portrayed as being caught between his duty to uphold traditional values and the pressures of personal desires and external influences. This tension is particularly evident in scenes where the mamak's actions contradict the expectations of his role, leading to conflicts within the family and broader social ramifications. For example, in one scene, the mamak is depicted as failing to guide his kemenakan properly, resulting in the latter's involvement in activities that go against social norms. This failure is not merely a personal shortcoming but is presented as having broader implications for the family's honor and social standing. The narrative suggests that the mamak's inability to fulfill his role can lead to the erosion of social values and the breakdown of familial bonds.

Social and Cultural Significance of the Mamak-Kemenakan Relationship

The mamak-kemenakan relationship in Minangkabau culture is not just a familial bond but a key component of the social structure. The mamak is expected to be a moral compass, guiding his kemenakan in adhering to the values and norms of the community. This relationship is deeply embedded in the matrilineal system, where lineage and inheritance are passed down through the female line, but the mamak plays a crucial role in maintaining the family's honor and ensuring the continuation of cultural traditions. The narrative of *Kaba Magek Manandin* underscores the importance of this relationship by highlighting the consequences of failing to fulfill these roles. The mamak's authority is depicted as both a privilege and a burden, requiring him to balance his personal desires with his social responsibilities. When this balance is not maintained, the narrative suggests that the social order is at risk. For instance, the mamak's failure to provide adequate guidance to his kemenakan leads to a series of events that bring dishonor to the family. This dishonor is not only a personal tragedy but is also portrayed as a reflection of the broader societal implications of failing to uphold traditional roles. The narrative thus emphasizes the interconnectedness of individual actions and social norms, suggesting that the integrity of the social structure depends on the proper fulfillment of these roles.

Reflection of Societal Norms in *Kaba Magek Manandin*

Kaba Magek Manandin serves as a reflection of the societal norms and values of Minangkabau culture. The narrative illustrates the importance of the mamak-kemenakan relationship in upholding these norms, particularly in the context of a matrilineal society where the mamak's role is central to the family's social and moral fabric. The text also explores the consequences of deviating from these norms. When the mamak fails to fulfill his role, the social order is disrupted, leading to conflicts and tensions within the family and the community. These disruptions are depicted as having far-reaching consequences, affecting not only the individuals involved but also the broader social structure. This reflection of societal norms in *Kaba Magek Manandin* highlights the role of literature in preserving and transmitting cultural values. Through its depiction of the mamak-kemenakan relationship, the text reinforces the importance of these roles in maintaining social cohesion and cultural continuity in Minangkabau society.

Literary Sociology and the Mamak-Kemenakan Relationship

The application of literary sociology to the analysis of *Kaba Magek Manandin* provides valuable insights into how literature reflects and shapes social structures. By examining the mamak-kemenakan relationship through this lens, the study reveals the ways in which literature can both reinforce and critique societal norms. In *Kaba Magek Manandin*, the mamak-kemenakan relationship is portrayed with a high degree of realism, reflecting the complexities and challenges of this role in Minangkabau society. The text not only depicts the expectations placed on the mamak but also explores the consequences of failing to meet these expectations. This dual focus allows the narrative to serve as both a reflection of societal values and a critique of the ways in which these values can be undermined. The study also highlights the role of literature as a tool for social critique. By presenting the mamak-kemenakan relationship in a nuanced and complex manner, *Kaba Magek Manandin* challenges readers to consider the implications of these roles and the ways in which they can be both upheld and subverted.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has explored the depiction of the mamak-kemenakan relationship in *Kaba Magek Manandin* through the lens of literary sociology. The analysis has revealed the centrality of this relationship in Minangkabau culture and its significance in maintaining social and cultural norms. The study has also highlighted the challenges and tensions that arise when these roles are not fulfilled, providing a nuanced understanding of the complexities of familial relationships in a matrilineal society. The findings of this study have important implications for our understanding of Minangkabau culture and literature. By examining the mamak-kemenakan relationship in *Kaba Magek Manandin*, this study has contributed to a broader understanding of the role of literature in reflecting and shaping

social norms. It has also provided new insights into the ways in which familial roles are depicted in Minangkabau literature, highlighting the importance of these roles in preserving cultural values.

5. REFERENCES

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