

Social Change in Customary Funeral Ceremonies on Toba Batak Ethnicity in the City of Medan, Indonesia

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Abstract: Customary funeral ceremonies of Toba Batak ethnicity are a sacred activity and are a hereditary legacy that is done from generation to generation. This customary funeral ceremony has a distinction of ceremonial process based on the situation and place of the deceased person in his hometown. However, currently there are some changes in the implementation of traditional funeral ceremonies after Batak people move overseas or to big cities. Informants in this study are traditional leaders, religious figures, people who have conducted customary funeral ceremonies that are in the city of Medan. This study found that the implementation of the stages of the ceremony at the traditional ceremonies of death that occurred today experienced a development where the existing custom became more diverse. The existing customary rites have begun to change; these changes bring around a new habit. The occurrence of new habits is caused by various things, namely the influence of the teachings of the majority embraced by the Batak Toba community, the changes in space and time, and the actualization of status and power to achieve the purpose of life. Various strategies are done by the agent to achieve the purpose of life by changing the existing structure. The change of structure is seen in the change of procedure of repeatedly performing customary rite ceremonies, in which various customary rites of funeral are always produced and reproduced, so that they will still exist. Along with the various developments, the future implementation of customary funeral ceremonies will experience challenges, namely consumerism, materialism and decreased solidarity. But the challenge is not a barrier to keep performing traditional ceremonies.

Keywords: Funeral ceremony; Habitus; Batak Toba; Social change.

INTRODUCTION

For someone who comes from the Batak Toba community in Sumatra Province, Indonesia, someone who passed away will get special treatment summarized in a customary funeral ceremony. The ceremony is classified by age, wealth and social status of the deceased, and will experience a difference in the process of his death [1]. Death is divided into two major parts: death of a person who died as grief; and death is considered a joy. For those who died while still in the womb (*mate di bortian*) the fetus have not received customary treatment. If the deceased person is still a baby (*mate poso-poso*), or still a child (*mate dakdanak*), a teenager (*mate bulung*), or an adult but not married (*mate ponggol*), these entire deaths must be given customary treatment and the body will be covered with a cloth of *ulos* before being buried [2].

The customary ceremonies of death are laden with customary treatment if the deceased: a) have married but have no children (*mate di paralang-*

alangan / mate punu); b) have married and leaving behind their young children (*mate mangkar*); c) have an adult son or daughter, even the son/daughter has been married, but they have no grandchildren (*mate hatungganeon*); d) have grandchildren, but there are still unmarried children (*mate sari matua*); and e) has grandchildren from all of their sons and daughters (*mate saur matua*), this ceremony is the highest level [3]. There is still the highest death level above it, which is *mauli bulung*, this death occurs when all her children have married, and have given not only grandchildren, but already have great grandchild from sons and daughters.

In customary process of *sari matua*, *saur matua* and *mauli bulung*, Batak Toba people typically hold *gondang* (traditional music) to sing and dance, eat together and butchering animals, and drinking the traditional drink (*tuak*). Under these conditions, Batak people have a party for the person who passed away. The third level of death is considered equal to the ideal

death concept, which is death at an advanced age and no longer dependent on children [4]. Implementation of traditional funeral ceremonies in Batak Toba ethnicity has its own practices by origin or hometown (*bonapasogit* like the areas of; Samosir, Toba, Silindung and Humbang).

This often leads to differences of opinion between different parties from different hometowns where each party will continue to insist on carrying out a funeral procession based on their origin. In order to avoid a conflict in the implementation of funeral ceremony, the mourning family delegate the process of ceremonies to *dongan sahuta* (friends from the same hometown) to decide various ceremonial procession on the funeral practice. Implementation of various processions is conducted based on the habits that have been done in an area.

New habits that occur nowadays at the funeral ceremony are caused by the social conditions of urban communities that are so complex in many ways, so simplification efforts are made. Simplification is done in terms of content, form and time of implementation, this is done to save time and cost [5]. This simplification can be seen in the implementation of customary rituals in big cities, although the essence of custom is the same, but in its implementation there have been some changes compared to customary process in the hometown. This happens because situation in the city is different from the hometown, where city life is always based on efficiency with time and people think economically [6]. Such simplification leads to new habits that give rise to a shift in meaning at each stage of the series of funeral rites.

The shifting of various processions at the funeral ceremony can be seen in the process of *mambuka tujung* (opening mourning *ulos*) to the widow / widowed wife, where this procession is performed after the corpse is buried [7]. Similarly, in the procession *mangunkap hombang*, the traditional event where descendants of *hula-hula* ask for a few items of the search results from the dead [8]. Basically this event was done after the corpse was buried. But if the corpse is buried in the hometown, the procession of *mambuka tujung* and *mangunkap hombang* will be held at the funeral home (house of relatives residing in the hometown) after the customary event, before the corpse was taken to the burial ground.

The main purpose of life of the Batak Toba people is to achieve wealth (*hamoraon*), have a lot of descendants (*hagabeon*), and honor (*hasangapon*) [4]. Efforts to show the purpose of life can be seen in the determination of the level of death. At a customary funeral ceremony a deceased person can improve his social status by raising his death level, if he has fulfilled the three main life goals of the Batak Toba people. If a person dies at the level of death of the *mate*

hatungganeon then it can be raised to *mate sari matua* level. Similarly, at the level of the *sari matua*, the social status can be raised to *saur matua*. The existence of socio-economic considerations of the deceased and the condition of the unmarried children but has been independent in many respects, then based on the deliberation of the customary leaders in the event *tonggo raja* (large family meeting) raised the death level of the deceased. New habits in the implementation of traditional ceremonies of death on the ethnic Batak Toba become an interesting study, especially analyzing the critical occurrence of these new habits.

METHODS

The method used in this study is a qualitative method, to understand the phenomenon the subject of research is experiencing holistically, by describing it in words and languages, in a specific, natural context and by utilizing various natural methods [9]. Individual criteria to be key informants are customary figures (*parhata /parsinabul*) and religious figures (priests) who are administrators in social gatherings such as clan groups (husband's clan group: *dongan tubu* and clan club wife: *hula-hula*) and church (Sector / Wiyk). While the informant of perpetrators are determined along with the development of review and analysis of research results during the research took place ie family, Church officials and the younger generation who have ever held a customary ceremony of death in the city of Medan. This study was conducted in the District of Medan Helvetia with 2 Kelurahan of Cinta Damai and Kelurahan Tanjung Gusta. The selection of the two villages is due to the Batak Toba people who live in the area have been living on average for 30 years and have already conducted customary funeral ceremonies, so that has formed a new habitus. In this study there are 25 informants to be interviewed, where the informant is a customary figure and religious leaders and administrators of the assistance association (Sarikat Tolong Menolong/STM) in the two sub-districts.

Habitus of funeral ceremony on Toba Batak ethnicity

Adat or custom is a habitus, because custom is an act of human interaction, which is attached to itself because it is influenced by the habit that is done repeatedly and internalized to itself so that custom is no longer behavior / attitude that is outside the human self but a unity that cannot be separated, affect each other, and melt into human beings, so that humans are habitus-forming actors [10]. The process of habitus formation in the actors is done continuously by action, thinking, perceiving the social world that will lead the actor in the face of the fighting arena that is always faced.

Batak custom was developed in line with the migration of Batak people from the village of origin (*bona pinasa*) called Huta Sianjur Mula-Mula to *bona pasogit* (hometown) and then to *tano parsarahan* (overseas). The custom which was already formed in

bona pinasa has changed in such a way in the regions, the new *huta*, because of many factors [10]. Indigenous customs have become diversified in the various areas where ethnic Batak Toba settles, because of its diversity. Raja Patik Tampubolon gives three customary classifications, namely the core customs, *na taradat* custom and adat *na ni adathon* custom [11]. Along with the development of the times, this time also appears *na so* custom.

The emergence of this custom classification can be assessed through seven important elements of habitus [12, 13]. The first element is the product of

history, where the habitus is a long-lasting experience device and is obtained through repeated practice. Implementing the customary funeral ceremonies has become a system or device of longstanding disposition and is obtained through a habit that has been repeatedly performed. It is not known exactly when the customary ceremonies began. But it is clear that at first the habit of carrying out the traditional ceremony did not just happen. The formation of conduct of customary funeral ceremonies requires sustained effort and a process that is not short. Thus the customary ceremony of death has survived very long until now in various areas where Batak Toba ethnicity settles.

Table-1: Classification of customs on Toba Batak ethnicity

Classification	Definition	Features	Implementation
Core custom	original custom exercised since the Batak ancestors' period	conservative, which does not change over time and is characterized by clear rules and meaning	determine the level of death, determine the media and tools to be used in traditional ceremonies, such as determining the meat of butchery on the type of custom which will be carried out whether pigs, oxen or buffalo, choose traditional instruments whether <i>gondang sabangunan</i> or <i>uning-uningan</i> .
<i>na taradat</i> custom	customs established by a particular village or region adapted to the local situation with a reference to the core custom	The signature of <i>na taradat</i> custom is pragmatism and flexibility	The application of <i>na taradat</i> custom can be seen in the determination of the level of death, where the death level of a person can be changed with the accuracy of all parties, in accordance with the request from <i>hasuhuton</i> (family of the deceased).
<i>na niadathon</i> custom	the newly emerging custom in modern times, which is a new habit	Through <i>na taradat</i> custom there is a shift in values and changes in temperament	Core customs used to be normative and sacred abstinence, such as ancestor worship or fellowship of the inhabitants of the heaven with humans. At this time, such customs have been excluded and oppressed by <i>na ni adaton</i> custom, for example, only Jesus Christ is the savior.
<i>na soadat</i> custom	customs that are not customary, because the governance of traditional ceremonies here no longer based on the structure and systematics commonly practiced by Toba Batak ethnicity.		The ceremony is just gathered in the form of receptions, both in marriage ceremonies, death and others. The structure of relatives of <i>dalihan na tolu</i> is no longer functional, as are the symbols and media used in traditional ceremonies such as <i>dengke</i> (fish), <i>boras</i> (rice), <i>ulos</i> , <i>Jambar</i> and others removed.

Source: Sitanggang, 2014

The second element is born out of a certain social condition and therefore becomes a structure that has been formed by the social conditions in which it is produced. Thus habitus is a structured structure. This can be seen during the execution of a customary ceremony of death on a deceased person, constituting the existence of structured structures. Toba Batak ethnicity becomes comfortable with structures that have been arranged like this. Comfort ensures the loss of a sense of anxiety about the perceived and negative behavior of other community groups or clan

communities performing customary funeral ceremonies. This structure has been arranged before the present generation exists and knows the execution of the customary funeral ceremonies, and the funeral customary ceremonies are also carried out by others. The third element is structural structure. This established experience also serves as a framework that gives birth and gives form to one's perceptions, representations, and actions and therefore becomes the constituent element. The custom of performing the customary funeral ceremonies determines the actions of

the next ceremony. The fourth element is that even if the habitus is born in certain social conditions, it can be transferred to other social conditions and is therefore immobile. The custom of carrying out customary funeral ceremonies can be done in different social contexts. There is no fundamental reason that prevents the habit of carrying out a series of death rituals performed in different places in different ways. The fifth element is precarious because it is not the result of reflection or rational consideration. When faced in the situation of a deceased person, the mourning family no longer needs to choose whether to carry out the traditional ceremony or not, the family must perform the traditional ceremony spontaneously. The sixth element is orderly and patterned, but not subject to certain rules. Implementing a series of customary funeral ceremonies by a grieving family, not only do it because of social sanctions, but also no longer expect praise from others. The seventh element is the habitus can be directed to the purpose and outcome of certain actions, but without any conscious intention to achieve these results and also without the mastery of a special skill to achieve them. The purpose of the customary ceremony is to bring fellow members of the Toba Batak ethnicity into mutual love (mutual love) among the elements of *dalihan na tolu* (the kinship system of Batak Toba tribe) and *ale-ale* (peers).

Changes at the Funeral Ceremony

The existence of a change in customary funeral ceremonies is a social practice as expressed by Giddens in structural theory. In structural theory that is the center of attention rather than structure, nor agency, but social practice [14]. Indeed one should not forget structures and agencies, even should understand in detail the structure and agency. Structure establishes human practice, but also is human practice that shapes and reproduces the structure. Changes of traditional

funeral ceremonies on ethnic Batak Toba can be seen as something dynamic and not linear. Such changes as a process of shifting or changing the structure / order in society, including a more innovative mindset, attitude, and social life to gain a more dignified life.

The implementation of traditional ceremonies is heavily influenced by religion, it is seen in the role of traditional religion in influencing the mindset and acting of the people in traditional ceremonies. But now the role is replaced by the presence of modern religion that has replaced the traditional religion. In the event of death, traditional religion holds that one's death is caused by magical things, whereas modern religion teaches that one's life and death are in God's hands, where man has limited ability. This difference of view makes ethnic Batak Toba re-consider someone who will be placed on the classification of death, which does not have to meet all the requirements to be said *saur matua* or *mauli bulung*. In addition, some traditional ceremonies that undergo changes due to religious influence are *ulaon papurpur sapata* (ceremonies performed several months after the death ceremony to avoid the curse), *mangan indahan sipaet-paet* and *mangandung* (chanting laments in the context of death). Today many Batak people think Christianity less can be a solution in solving the problems that occur in the implementation of traditional ceremonies. Batak society thought that Batak custom law is much more complete than the teachings of Christianity. The belief in this customary law makes the Toba Batak community tends to use traditional cultural and belief in facing the struggles and challenges of life. Although Toba Batak ethnicity already has a religion but still found many customs in traditional beliefs that are used as a basis for acting and behaving in living everyday life despite contrary to Christianity.

Table-2: Changes at the Type or Meaning of Funeral Ceremonies on Toba Batak Ethnicity

No	Type of Funeral Ceremonies/Meanings	Past Time	Recent Time	Factor
1	<i>Ulaon papurpur sapata</i>	Existed	Changed to <i>ulaon mangido tangiang</i>	Religion
2	<i>Mangan indahan sipaet-paet</i>	Existed	Added with <i>mangapuli</i>	Religion
3	<i>Mangandung</i>	Existed	Becomes rare and turns into gospel	Religion
4	<i>Mangalotunglotungi/mangondasi</i>	Existed	Becomes rare and turns into family reunion	Religion
5	The procession of <i>Ulaon sadari</i>	Not existed	Existed	Space and time
6	The acquirement of <i>Boan</i>	According to rule	Family capabilities	Cultural item consumption drive
7	The giving of <i>aek sitio-tio</i> and <i>jambar</i>	Finished <i>hula-hula manortor</i>	During <i>hula-hula manortor</i>	Cultural item consumption drive
8	Gathering on dinner in every funeral ceremony	Deceased of grandparents	Every level of death	Cultural item consumption drive
9	Modern music replaces <i>gondang</i>	Deceased of grandparents	Every level of death	Cultural/religious item consumption drive
10	Changes in how to give and use <i>ulos</i>	According to rule	Allowed	Cultural item consumption drive
11	Shifting of <i>hagabeon</i> meaning	Not allowed	Allowed	Biological/religion investment strategy
12	The giving of clan name to a son-in-law from a different tribe	Allowed	Allowed	Biological investment strategy
13	The raise of death level	Not allowed	Allowed	Biological investment strategy
14	<i>Tor-tor</i> alongside money	Not existed	Becomes more frequent	Economical investment strategy
15	The giving of <i>daon sihol</i> on <i>mate makkar</i>	Not existed	Becomes more frequent	Economical investment strategy
16	The giving of <i>togu-togu ro</i>	Not existed	Becomes more frequent	Economical investment strategy
17	The change of <i>mangungkap hombang</i>	Not existed	Becomes more frequent	Economical investment strategy
18	<i>Panjouon</i> and <i>jambar</i> on <i>mate makkar</i>	Not existed	Becomes more frequent	Symbolical investment strategy
19	Implementation of <i>Mandungoi</i>	Existed	Becomes less frequent	Symbolical investment strategy
20	<i>Sanggul marata/sijagaron</i>	Existed	Becomes less frequent	Symbolical investment strategy
21	The giving of <i>ulos holong</i>	Existed	Becomes more frequent	Symbolical investment strategy
22	<i>Tambak</i> and <i>batu na pir</i>	Modest	Luxurious	Symbolical investment strategy
23	<i>Manuan ompu-ompu/ raja ni duhut-duhut</i>	Existed	Becomes less frequent	Symbolical investment strategy
24	Consolation event	Not existed	Exists	Symbolical investment strategy

Source: Research output, 2017

The practice of a funeral ceremony by a person or family group has implications for subsequent ceremonies performed by another person or family group. Batak Toba society belonging to the upper class will use excessive consumption to make a difference with the class below. While the lower classes try to

imitate the consumption of the class on it. The impulse to imitate, resulting in a downward flowing effect. The upper class becomes the determinant of consumption; the lower classes are trying to pursue upscale consumption. The battle of positions through consumption does not only occur in groups or classes

but also within each individual. Each shows the newness and difference in the object of consumption. Similarity and togetherness are avoided because the upper classes always choose new objects to differentiate their identity with the lower classes. In traditional funeral ceremonies *sari matua*, and *saur matua* the acquirement of *boan* (brought) buffalo (*horbo*), often forced. At the funeral ceremony *sari matua* because of the grieving family circumstances are considered affluent, the grieving family to acquire *boan horbo*, but for the ceremony *sari matua*, *horbo* is not be a necessity. Grieving families can take *lobu* (pork) or *lumbu sitio* (ox). The habit of giving *æk sitio-tio* and *jambar* to *hula-hula* is one of the actual behaviors of social class. In principle *æk sitio-tio* is water or *tuak* (traditional beverages), but now it is increasing with a variety of expensive drinks such as beer and soft drinks. The feeding behavior to the coming relative is also a lifestyle to the grieving family today. Food given in the form of rice box, even now the food provided is also varied and served buffet, so the mourners are free to choose. Gradually feeding these mourners becomes a habit, because it has started from one family, followed by another family. In addition to that, modern musical instruments have also been combined with traditional Batak musical instruments such as *taganing*, flute and *hasapi*. The mourners who come can judge the grieving family class through musical instruments. If only using keyboard, *taganing* and flute then the family is considered the category of middle to lower family society. Meanwhile, when accompanied by keyboard, *taganing*, flute, drums and blowing music such as saxophone even *gondang sabangunan* too then the bereaved family is considered the category of upper class society.

Biological investment strategy for Toba Batak ethnicity can be seen on *hagabeon* concept. *Hagabeon* is one of the goals of life that puts forward the total number of descendants and the complete sex. Where the family is blessed with many male and female descendants, long-lived and enjoy time with grandchildren. The biological investment strategy in customary ceremonies of death is seen in efforts to raise the level of death. Batak custom set the level of death of a person based on the situation and conditions experienced. However, since the level of death is a personification of *gabe*, raising the level of death is an attempt to show one's *hagabeon*. This strategy can also be seen in the clan ritual ceremony on the offspring of the foreign tribe. With the implementation of clan giving will increase the number of family / *gabe* that impact on increasing honor / *sangap*. When the daughter-in-law, the clans of the element of *hula-hula* ready to be his parents and when the son-in-law, the clans of the element *boru* ready to become parents.

The *hamoraon* actuating strategy in the customary funeral ceremonies are depicted in terms of *manghalindangkon na adong* (indicating available

things). The term *manghalindangkon na adong* tends to lead to showy behavior. Where the grieving core family will make a luxurious ceremony of funeral to be seen well established by the relatives who come at the ceremony of death. For the families, the principle of *manghalindangkon na adong* is not a problem, because they have the ability to finance party events. However, for families in this lower-middle-income economy it will be a problem. This strategy can be seen from several funeral ceremonies that is done which is *tor-tor* displayed side by side with money. Giving *sihol* leaves (gift-memento) on *mate makkar* in the form of material called *ulos na so buruk* like jewelry, buffalo, land or money. In addition, there is also giving *togu-togu ro* which is the transportation money given by *suhut* to *hula-hula* to go to the implementation of custom. This strategy can also be seen in *mangungkap hombang* which is a customary event where descendants of *hula-hula*, ask for a few items from the relic of the deceased. The requested property is not a heritage.

A symbolic investment strategy is an attempt to maintain or enhance social recognition. The inheritance of the surname became the main element of symbolic capital. Not only inherited names but also a form of dignity [16]. *Hasangapon* is an honor, someone is said to be honorable if he is rich (*mora*) and has many offspring (*gabe*), thus *hasangapon* is associated with *hamoraon* and *hagabeon*. Someone is said to be *sangap* when having authority (*sahala*), personality in the midst of society and supported by 2 main supporters namely *hamoraon* and *hagabeon*. This can be seen at the *panjouon* and *jambar* ceremony on *matte makkar*, *Mandungoi* implementation is the event asking *pinungka* (inheritance) by *boru suhut* when parents died already *saur matua* held by eldest *boru*. Then the *sanggul marata / sijagaron* ceremony, is a crown given to someone who died in a *gabe* state, lived long, rich and respected in the community. The giving of *Ulos Holong* is a manifestation of recognition of one's existence so that one is respected. In addition, *tambak* (mounds of grave) and *batu na pir* (building made of cement). This burial process will show the social status of a family. Burials with *batu na pir* are burials where in one particular building they will collect family members who have died. The show of consolation can also indicate *hasangapon* from someone where the implementation of this consolation event is also a benchmark of public recognition of the existence of a grieving family. The public will be of the view that the bereaved family has a wide range of associations because many of the mourners come and offer comfort.

Challenges and Sustainability Implementation of the Death Ceremony

Consumerism

According to Bourdieu [17] tastes of various cultural objects serve as class marks. People who have a lot of capital have different tastes with those with little

capital. Capital has an important role in consumption appetite. The implementation of traditional funeral ceremonies on Toba Batak ethnicity in Medan is influenced by the amount of capital (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic) owned by the perpetrators. Someone is doing something new and different from the Toba Batak ethnic in general to keep maintaining the honorable position he has held so far. He accumulates already owned capital (economic and social) and gains additional cultural capital. Thus the more capital owned the higher the consumption tastes are done. The act of luxury and festivity in performing customary funeral ceremonies with its own meaning, where the mourning family realize what is done is more than reasonable, but still do it to show social status or for the sake of prestige. Beyond has the same meaning as consumerism. Consumerism is done to follow the ethnic style of Toba Batak in Medan City. Objects consumed are not just a sign of usability, but more than utility that is to communicate certain meanings such as prestige and luxury marks.

Materialism

Success or failure of customary funeral ceremonies can be seen from the number of mourners who come and the relatives of *dalihan na tolu* involved. The more people who come and get involved the greater the material is spent, and the more luxurious the traditional ceremony is done the higher the image obtained by the perpetrators. This situation has implications for the nature of materialism, in which the nature of materialism is related to the competition that arises in customary ceremonies of death. Competition in Toba Batak ethnicity is called by *teal*. *Teal* is interpreted as very negative because it is done not based on ability and sincerity but compulsion and arrogance. In the implementation of the customary funeral ceremonies it is also filled with competition. This competition can occur between close relatives, relatives, and also between different clans. Competition occurs due to the betting of self-esteem, can be seen in the construction of the elemental monument also appears, the members who enter the group of monuments more to be owed for the sake of competition. Competition must be won one of them by way of arrogance. Through a customary funeral ceremony, the bereaved family makes signs, symbols, ideas, and values, which are used as interactions between individuals and society. Competition also arises in every behavior of giving money, such as the behavior of giving *togu-togu ro*, *mangolopi* at the time of *manortor*, *mambaoni/piso-piso ulos* (money as *ulos* replacement) and *mangungkap hombang*.

Declining Solidarity

The depth of interaction between families in the city is different from those in the village. Toba Batak ethnicity in Medan comes from various areas of origins, whereas in the city they have more family members. Thus, the family network in Medan is wider

than in the village of origin, but it must be admitted that the interaction in the network in the city of Medan is less frequent when compared to the village. Interaction often occurs in limited situations and the time is short enough. This is seen during the ceremony of death, the sense of kinship is reduced, which is caused by the complexity of various activities in modern life today. Even the Toba Batak ethnic community has rarely followed the clan's clan. In the village of Batak Toba community generally follow 2 clan of clan that is clan of father and mother. This limited time and energy makes the people of Medan also more rarely to follow the customary ceremony of death in full. The absence of a customary ceremony of death in full will undermine a person's role to engage in the ceremony, the diminishing role that causes low solidarity.

CONCLUSION

The occurrence of new habits can be seen in the execution of rites that are classified in the customary classification at the funeral ceremony. The occurrence of these new habits is caused by various things; First, the transition of Toba batak ethnicity religion from traditional religion to modern religion so that customary rites are transformed, combined and replaced from traditional rites to modern rites. Second, the influence of space and time where with the advances in the field of education, health and livelihoods make the Toba Batak ethnic changes in thinking and acting. Third, to achieve the purpose of living *hamoraon*, *hagabeon* and *hasangapon* Toba Batak ethnicity using domination strategy influenced by the amount of capital owned the economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital.

Along with the various changes that exist, the implementation of traditional ceremonies of death will face challenges. *Consumerism*. The dominant class behavior that their dominance wants to recognize makes them differentiate themselves from other classes through three consumption structures: food, culture and appearance, where the three structures have meaning in power relations. *Materialism*. The more people who come and get involved the greater the material is spent, and the more luxurious the traditional ceremony is done the higher the image obtained by the perpetrators. This situation has implications for the nature of materialism, in which the nature of materialism is related to the competition that arises in customary ceremonies of death. *The decline of solidarity*. This is strongly influenced by the busy life of urban society, where urban people prefer the daily activities such as work. This limited time and energy makes the people of Medan less likely to follow the customary ceremony of death in full. The absence of a customary ceremony of death in full will undermine a person's role to engage in the ceremony, the diminishing role that causes low solidarity.

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