

*Ahmad Riza Fauzi, Wakit Abdullah Rais, Prasetyo Adi Wisnu Wibowo – The Names of Asahan as Prayer Media in the Neloni Traditional Ceremony in Ponorogo Regency (Ethnolinguistics Study)*

**THE NAMES OF ASAHAN AS PRAYER MEDIA IN THE NELONI  
TRADITIONAL CEREMONY IN PONOROGO REGENCY  
(ETHNOLINGUISTIC STUDY)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia. Javanese society has a characteristic that is fond of carrying out traditions related to life, such as the life cycle tradition, namely the neloni tradition. The people in Ponorogo Regency are Javanese people who have lived through a long period and various problems related to their lives so that a cultural system is formed in their identity. The neloni tradition according to the Ponorogo community is a tradition to ask for safety and blessings when a pregnant woman is about three months old. In the neloni tradition, there are offerings or sharpening devices. Sharpening has various forms and names. The focus of this research examines the meaning of "name" or "term" asahan as a prayer medium in the Neloni traditional ceremony in Ponorogo Regency. Asahan can be in the form of offerings or food that is formed according to the purpose of holding the traditional ceremony. The method of collecting data is done using interviews and observations of the community who carry out the tradition and who understand the tradition in Ponorogo Regency. After analyzing the data, the results obtained are 17 names of asahan which have the meaning of a medium of prayer asking for safety, happiness, and performance.*

**Keywords:** Neloni, asahan, ethnolinguistic

## INTRODUCTION

Javanese society is the largest ethnic or ethnic group in Indonesia (Na'im, 2011). This certainly saves a lot of cultural elements such as religious systems or traditions in traditional ceremonies, art systems, language systems, community social order systems, knowledge systems, living equipment or technology, and livelihood systems (Koentjaraningrat, 2000). Javanese people in general like to carry out traditional ceremonies that have something to do with the supernatural, such as ceremonies about the human life cycle, commemorating the history of the origin of a place, to the realm of the economy or agriculture (Magnis-Suseno, 1984).

The people of Ponorogo are generally Muslim, of course in practice they carry out cultural traditions with Islamic nuances. Although in practice they still have the dimension of belief in ancestral spirits, guardian spirits, Jinn, and something that is considered to have power (Ekowati, 2015). This research is based on cultural elements, namely the religious system or traditional ceremonies and the language system. The people in Ponorogo Regency are Javanese people who have lived through a long period and various problems related to their lives so that a cultural system is formed in their identity. This is in accordance with the human problem which has a close relationship between the relationship with religion, nature, and the maker, that these elements are interrelated, inseparable, and have dynamic relationships (Sulaksono et al., 2021; van Deursen & van Dijk, 2019; Wijayanti, 2019). The focus of this research examines the meaning of "name" or "term" *asahan* as a prayer in the *neloni* traditional ceremony in Ponorogo Regency. *Asahan* according to the understanding of the people in Ponorogo is a set of equipment in a traditional ceremony. *Asahan* can be in the form of offerings or food that is formed according to the purpose of holding the traditional ceremony.

According to the Ponorogo people, the *neloni* ceremony is a tradition to commemorate the three or four months of pregnancy. This calculation is based on the Hijri calendar system or also sometimes call it the Javanese calendar system. Furthermore, the term *neloni* also comes from the word "*telu*" which means three

referring to the count of gestational age (Adriana, 2011). The purpose of holding this ceremony is broadly a prayer asking God for *si jabang bayi* (fetus in the womb) as well as for mothers who are pregnant so that they are blessed with safety, blessing, health, and smoothness until the baby is born into the world. The prayer is expressed in *asahan* which has a "name" or "term" in it which has its meaning for the people in Ponorogo.

In a cultural tradition carried out by the Javanese people who are widespread throughout Java and outside Java, they have similarities in carrying out their cultural traditions about pregnancy, but on the other hand, they must have differences. Both in the implementation process, linguistic terms, and also the meaning contained. Every cultural tradition that has a characteristic that grows and develops in a society certainly has its local wisdom values and must be preserved (Listi &, Irma Apriliyani Rahayu, 2019). Therefore, the researchers found a gap in this study, namely this study will discuss the meaning of the name *asahan* as a medium of prayer in the *neloni* tradition by the people in Ponorogo Regency with an ethnolinguistic approach as a product of local wisdom.

## THEORY AND METHOD

A local culture (in this case the meaning of "name" in *asahan*) can be described as a reflection of a knowledge system (cognition system), a way of life, and an expressed view of the world and the universe (world view). through an object name *asahan* as a medium of communication to indirectly pray (Rais, 2017). So ethnolinguistic studies are considered appropriate to examine this problem. Linguists term ethnolinguistics or anthropological linguistics, an approach that pays attention to the relationship between language and cultural understanding (Foley, 1997) (Riana, 2009). The language in this study refers to "terms" or "names" of various kinds of *asahan* that exist in the *neloni* traditional ceremony, while culture here refers to the concept of meaning in terms of the cultural background of the Javanese people in Ponorogo Regency. The study between language and culture has a close relationship in terms of the function of understanding, meaning that the language spoken in a

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context of tradition implementation has its own meaning and function or purpose and is based on an understanding of the cultural framework that develops in a place (Adi Nugroho & Susilowati, 2021)

Many studies similar to this research have been carried out, especially those that examine the traditional rituals of *telonan* and *tingkeban* which are organized with sources of Islamic teachings, both the Qur'an and Hadith, using content analysis studies. The results of this study discuss the legal realm of the *telonan* and *tingkeban* traditions as religious-spiritual traditions of religious heritage or *Kejawen* beliefs that have been acculturated with Islam. (Adriana, 2011). Then another study discusses the meanings that exist in the *telonan* and *tingkeban* traditions. In this study, it can be concluded that there is an aesthetic value contained in the procession of changing clothes seven times, besides that it also contains elements of prayer and hope in the form of inner and outer happiness, the perfection of life, purity of heart, acknowledgment of the existence of a higher substance, and simplicity (Purwastuti, 1991).

This research is a qualitative descriptive study, which is a study that focuses on describing linguistic phenomena according to the context of the research object. In this case, the object of research is an ethnolinguistic study on the "name" of *asahan* as a prayer in the *neloni* tradition by the Javanese people of Ponorogo Regency. The technique of collecting data in this research is the observation technique. Researchers go directly to the field by interviewing sources or informants who understand and know about the *neloni* tradition in Ponorogo Regency. The technique used is a purposive sampling technique, a technique to determine the informants to be used as data sources, besides that it also uses snowball sampling, this is because researchers do not know all of these data sources. (Sutopo, 2006). Interviews were conducted with structured and unstructured interviews. Then to dig up data to be more productive, the snowball sampling method is also used.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, in this study, the researchers found the names of *asahan* as a prayer medium, totaling 17 (seventeen). Each of the names *asahan* has a meaning or meaning as a medium of prayer. The names of *asahan* are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Various names of *asahan* as a medium of prayer in the *neloni* tradition in Ponorogo Regency

Number	Name of <i>Asahan</i>	Number	Name of <i>Asahan</i>
1	<i>Jenang loro</i>	9	<i>Golong kalih</i>
2	<i>Rasulan</i>	10	<i>Buceng kuat</i>
3	<i>Mule luhur</i>	11	<i>Buceng meteng</i>
4	<i>Bucen semaya</i>	12	<i>Buceng kendhit</i>
5	<i>Papasan</i>	13	<i>Buceng gana</i>
6	<i>Golong sanga</i>	14	<i>Sego brok</i>
7	<i>Golong pitu</i>	15	<i>Brakahan</i>
8	<i>Golong gangsal</i>	16	<i>Rujak</i>
		17	<i>Takir plonthang</i>

The description of the names of *asahan* as a medium of prayer from the perspective of an ethnolinguistic approach is presented in the following description.

### A. *Jenang loro*

*Jenang* which can be called porridge is a food made from rice flour or glutinous rice cooked with water added with Javanese sugar. *Jenang* has a soft texture like mush. *Asahan jenang loro* consists of two different types of *jenang*, namely red and white. The red color of the *jenang* comes from Javanese sugar (sugar that comes from palm flowers), while the white *jenang* is without any mixture. According to the people in Ponorogo Regency, the red *jenang* has meaning and prayer as a personification of respecting God Almighty, while the white one has a meaning as a form of respect for a pregnant mother.

The purpose of *jenang loro* is made, as a form of prayer to the almighty so that all can be given salvation by the almighty God, congratulations to the mother who is

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pregnant, as well as the father of the prospective baby. The people of Ponorogo have hope that this salvation is given by God continuously until whenever. They also have the belief that it is all by the will and power of God.

*“Tujuane gene slamet kabeh, sing meteng ya slamet bojone ya slamet. Ning slamet sak teruse, kabeh kui maeng pakone gusti alah”*

‘The goal is to make sure that all of those who are pregnant is safe, and that their husbands are also safe. But safe forever, all of it by the power of the Lord God’

## B. *Rasulan*

*Rasulan* is an *asahan* that consists of a whole chicken cooked with *lodho* seasoning, a specialty of the Ponorogo people, then placed on a towering mound of rice that is accommodated with a basin or known as a *tumpeng*. The name *Rasulan* comes from the word "*Rasul*" in Indonesian, which means a person who receives God's revelation to be conveyed to humans (KBBI). According to the people in Ponorogo, the figure of the apostle is in question and is believed to be the Prophet Muhammad. He is a prophet and messenger for Muslims around the world. The addition of the suffix [-an] to the word "*rasulan*" indicates the meaning of the same or countrymen.

The meaning of the first "*rasulan*" is intended to honor the Prophet *Muhammad Rasulallah*, Prophet Muhammad the messenger of Allah who has provided a light for us (Muslims) in general throughout the world and especially for the Muslim community in Ponorogo who are carrying out the *neloni* tradition.

*“Rasulan kanggo ngurmati kanjeng mokamad nabi rasul, sing saged madhangi awake dewe”*

‘*Rasulan* to honor the Prophet Muhammad, who can light up all of us’

The meaning of "*madhangi*" or illuminating is an expression of gratitude and prayer because according to history, in ancient times before Islam came down, it was a dark era. The world is full of crime, slavery, to the absence of belief in God. After the presence of the Prophet Muhammad as a messenger from the god of the times, it

turned into light or the order of the entire socio-cultural system to religion. So that the people of Ponorogo termed the term "*padhang*" or "*madhangi*" bright or illuminating.

Then the nonverbal meaning of chicken is as a luxurious and delicious dish, so it is personified as a noble food, following the figure of the Apostle who has a noble character. When entertaining a person who has good honor in rank and degree, it will be served with the best types of food. The chicken was chosen because according to the people of Ponorogo, chicken meat is a luxurious dish and the most affordable of other meats.

The second meaning of the prophetic *asahan* is a prayer to ask for strength, smoothness, and safety during the birth process based on the blessing of the figure of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The figure of the Apostle Muhammad SAW is seen as a very noble human being for Muslims, especially the Ponorogo people who are carrying out the *neloni* tradition expecting and waiting for blessings from the Apostle Muhammad SAW for the continuity of the fetus being conceived, the mother who is pregnant and her father.

### C. *Mule luhur*

*Mule luhur* is a dish consisting of rice that is accommodated on a plate and then sprinkled with four pieces of *serundeng* (grated coconut roasted until brown). The word "*mule*" means respect while "*luhur*" means ancestor. The purpose of *asahan mule luhur* is as a prayer to ask God so that the ancestors or ancestors who have died are given forgiveness by God for all mistakes and sins during his life. This proves that families who are left behind or who are still alive when they have a need do not forget their ancestors who have died. Everything starts from the ancestors, without them it would not be possible to be where they are today.

*Mule luhur* is also a prayer to ask for good blessings. All the goodness possessed by the ancestors is expected to be transmitted to the generations who are still living in the world. This is also a message to future generations to always

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remember the good things that have been left by their ancestors so that they can be preserved and make the future better.

#### D. Buceng semaya

Asahan buceng semaya has a meaning as a sign that it is time to get pregnant. "*dugi semayane sing meteng utawa dadi nduwe bojo wis wayahe meteng*" it's time to get pregnant, or so already have a husband it's time to get pregnant

The *neloni* tradition is indeed a tradition that was first carried out to express gratitude to God because the mother was pregnant. Gestational age is about three months. The word "*buceng*" has the meaning of "*kenceng*" tight and strong, while "*semaya*" has the meaning of an agreement related to time or the time has come. The purpose of *buceng semaya* is a prayer to God for mothers who have arrived at the time of pregnancy, may they be given strength and health to carry the baby in the mother's stomach.

The strong and strong personification is related to something the mother brings, namely the fetus in the womb, lest there be a miscarriage of the fetus, so the prayer is said to be given great power by God. In addition to being physically strong, it is also hoped that the mother will also be given inner strength. In Javanese habits, mothers who have just become pregnant at a young age experience symptoms of "*nyidam*" which is wanting something or wanting to do something. Mentally strong has a meaning when it comes to "*nyidam*" the mother can control her emotions and desires for things that are less beneficial for her health and for the fetus she is carrying.

#### E. Papasan

Asahan papasan is a food or dish that is "*digenemi godhong gedhang*" wrapped in banana leaves. The word *papasan* comes from the word "*papas*" which means trim. The suffix [-an] in the word *papasan* means the same or countrymen. Therefore, the



meaning of the word *papasan* is something that is trimmed. In the context of asahan *papasan*, something that is trimmed is the body and soul of the pregnant mother.

“Papasan kui dipapas jiwa ragane sing meteng”  
 ‘*Papasan* is trimmed by a pregnant body and soul’

The meaning of a trimmed body and soul is that the whole body and soul of the pregnant mother are trimmed from all harm, disease, and anything detrimental to the pregnant mother. By trimming all the bad things, the big hope is that as long as the mother is carrying a fetus, it is avoided various diseases, bad luck, and anything that can be detrimental to the survival of the fetus.

#### F. *Golong sanga*

*Asahan golong* is made from rice which is shaped into nine semi-circles. The number nine refers to *Walisongo*, namely nine scholars who spread Islam in Java in ancient times. The people of Ponorogo who still adhere to the teachings of glorifying their ancestors, expect blessings from the goodness of their ancestors. Moreover, these ancestors are considered to have virtues and advantages. As a scholar who has spread Islam, the people of Ponorogo place them as ancestors who are very instrumental in Islamizing the Javanese people, especially in Ponorogo. In addition, *golong sanga* is also a symbol of reminder and message for the younger generation who attend the *neloni* tradition so that they do not forget the services of their ancestors.

The second hope, if the child conceived is born, can become a child who is obedient to his religion and god. Able to spread the teachings and values of Islam in the environment wherever he lives. Like *Walisongo* who has succeeded in preaching Islamic teachings throughout Java, or the hope of successors in the struggle for the spread of Islam such as *Walisongo*.

#### G. *Golong pitu*

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*Asahan golong pitu* is also made of white rice which is shaped into a semi-circle, but there are only seven of them. The number seven refers to the seven days, namely from the day of "Akad" or Sunday, until the day of "Setu" Saturday. *Asahan golong pitu* has a meaning as a prayer so that pregnant mothers, prospective fathers, and their families are given safety and health every day. Health is very important, so being healthy every day is the main thing that must be prioritized.

#### H. *Golong lima*

*Asahan golong lima* is no different from *golong sanga* and *golong pitu*, the only difference being that the number is only five. The number five refers to the number of market days (the days when traditional markets in Ponorogo operate), starting from *Legi*, *Pahing*, *Pon*, *Wage*, and *Kliwon* days. During these five days, the market in Ponorogo continues to operate alternately. The market as the economic center of the Ponorogo community is very important. Therefore, the people of Ponorogo in carrying out the *neloni* tradition also associate it with the "*pasaran*" day. Luck, blessing, and success in terms of the economy are very dependent on the market.

The people of Ponorogo through the *asahan golong lima* hope and pray that in seeking sustenance for families who are having a pregnant wife, they are given sufficient sustenance that is abundant, easy, and full of blessings during repeated visits.

#### I. *Golong loro*

*Golong loro* is also a grinder made of rice in a semi-circle, but there are only two of them. *Asahan golong loro* refers to the personification of day and night.

*"rina wengi, bengi turu ngen ayam, nek awan lek golek guna kaya utowo golek apa gen ayam"*

'day and night, sleep at night to be peaceful, during the day looking for work and a living to be peaceful'

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Day and night are two times that always go hand in hand. The purpose and hope through *golong loro* are that they (the family) will be given peace in their daily lives.

In general, the people of Ponorogo work during the day, although some work at night. They pray that during the day to be avoided all the problems of work that make life difficult and make life uncomfortable. Tranquility is a major key to success, success to safety. While at night is the time used for rest. Even when they take a break they also expect peace, to be avoided problems that still carry over from work during the day. Rest in peace without interruption with the hope that the next day they wake up to find a healthy and energetic body. Therefore, both day and night they wish for serenity.

#### J. *Buceng kuat*

The strong *buceng* has a meaning and definition that is not much different from the *buceng semaya*. *Buceng* which means tight and then the word strong is also in line with the meaning of "*kenceng*" tight, so the meaning and prayer of *asahan buceng* are asking God to be given extraordinary strength, namely in terms of doing everything. Strong in maintaining the prospective fetus, and prospective fathers are also given the power to provide for.

#### K. *Buceng meteng*

*Buceng meteng* is the eleventh grind. The shape of the *buceng meteng* is unique, apart from being a towering cone, the *buceng* is filled with boiled eggs. The meaning of "*buceng*" is strong or tight, while "*meteng*" means pregnant. *Buceng meteng* does have something in it, namely a boiled egg. It is personified like a mother who is pregnant in the belly. The personification of an egg is a seed or embryo of life, starting from an egg or egg cell, then being connected to the fetus of a human baby who also comes from a male and female egg cell.

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People in Ponorogo choose chicken eggs as a symbol of prayer as a form of the fetus or something the mother is carrying for no reason. The first reason is that in general, the people of Ponorogo raise chickens, which are the main livestock whose meat or eggs are taken as food, secondly, chicken eggs contain lots of nutrients and vitamins when consumed, so according to the shape of *asahan*, it consists of dishes served to guests. who follow the implementation of the neloni tradition in Ponorogo.

#### L. *Buceng kendhit*

*Asahan buceng kendhit* has almost the same shape as other *buceng*, the only difference is that the "*kendhit*" belt is wrapped around the *buceng*. The addition of "*kendhit*" or belt is intended to bind the baby's mother's stomach. *Buceng* which means tight and "*kendhit*" means a belt, both of which have a very close meaning, namely to strengthen the fetus in the mother's stomach.

The meaning and prayer of *asahan buceng kendhit* are precise as a message and direction to the mother who is pregnant. If later in the womb are old or nearing the time of delivery, do not use "*kendhit*" or belt

“lek wis meteng tuek aja dicentingi, gene longgar”  
 ‘If the gestational age is old, don't use a belt, so it's loose’

This is following the situation and condition of a very large stomach because the age of the baby in the womb is perfect. For health and safety reasons, it is not allowed to use a belt, but there is also a prayer from *buceng* which means tight, hopefully, at old age, the womb will still be given the strength to carry a large fetus wherever it goes.

#### M. *Buceng gana*

*Buceng gana* has a different shape from other *buceng*. *Buceng* which is usually conical in shape, *buceng gana* is shaped like an inverted bowl or like a *golong* but with a larger size. *Buceng gana* is made from rice with palm sugar filling. “*Buceng gana kui istilahe papasane wong meteng. Sing dipapas kuwi nepsu amarah, supiyah, mutmuinah,*

*aluwamah*" 'Buceng gana is the term for something that is trimmed for people who are pregnant. What is trimmed is the lust of *amarah*, *supiyah*, *mutmuinah*, and *aluwamah*'

The lust of *amarah* is the passion associated with the emotion of anger. It is hoped that the pregnant mother can control the emotions of anger. People who are pregnant as much as possible to avoid angry emotions, because they can have negative effects on their health. Then the second is lust *supiyah*, a passion related to the heart. The desire to be flattered or praised. For a woman who is pregnant, it is hoped that she can control this lust, and have hope that the future baby in the womb when she is born and grows up, does not have arrogant traits and wants to be praised.

The third is *mutmuinah* lust or lust related to the self-awareness of the creator. This lust is very positive, but the levels that must be used must also be balanced. If you surrender too much without making any effort, especially for the health of the baby in the womb, it can also lead to bad luck. For example, if there is a health problem in the womb, then immediately consult a doctor. Do not just surrender to God without any effort to seek treatment. The fourth is *aluwamah* or appetite. People who are pregnant in general get a hormone to want a certain food, or can be called a "nyidam". It is hoped that women who are pregnant can control this appetite because eating something that is not controlled can harm the health of the fetus.

#### N. *Sega brok*

*Sega brok* is an *asahan* made of rice seasoned with salt, coconut milk, and bay leaves. The taste is very tasty, also called *sega gurih*. The presentation of "sega" rice is only placed on a tray without being wrapped or arranged on a plate so that it reflects the shape of the rice that is large and wide. *Sega brok* has the meaning and purpose that with the symbol "brok" as it is or more it is hoped that the family when looking for sustenance gets blessings, namely by increasing goodness.

"Sega brok, leh nyambet gawe pengasilane supaya berkah, di pangan turah"

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'*sega brok*, when working, the income is so that it is a blessing, the remaining is consumed (no less)'

Something relatively small in quantity, but if it is given a blessing it will be enough for daily consumption. This is what is believed to be the meaning of a blessing. The symbol of rice is a symbol of sustenance, namely rice as the staple food of the people in Ponorogo.

#### O. *Brakahan*

The name "*brakahan*" has something to do with 'blessing' which comes from Arabic and means blessing, or added goodness. The form of *brakahan* is a variety of snacks typical of the Javanese people, or snacks that are usually sold in the market. Such as *gedhang*, *krecek*, *pupak*, *jumputan*, *jadah*, and *jenang*. These foods are symbols of prosperity. With such a large number and variety, it is hoped that the family when looking for sustenance gets something more, can buy or have something diverse. Moreover, to support the family, especially for the prospective baby who is being conceived and who will be born into the world.

#### P. *Rujak*

*Rujak* is *asahan* which consists of various kinds of fruit that are "*disawut*" or grated. Then all the grated fruit is mixed with a liquid gravy made from chili, sugar, tamarind, salt, and *kencur*. The taste of the salad is very fresh. but has a sweet and spicy texture. The *asahan rujak* prayer is a symbol of a mixture of various types of fruits, which is personified as a mixture of a sperm cell with an ovum cell. The mixing is also a symbol that when a marriage has taken place, it will occur between a man and a woman. and women can unite to have a husband and wife relationship.

#### Q. *Takir plonthang*

*Takir* is a name for a container made of banana leaves, has a shape like a rectangular bowl, with a needle as a lock. The *takir* is given a belt from young coconut leaves "*janur*". *Takir* means "*oyo sampek ditak anggone mikir, isaa karepe dhewe*" don't be

led to think, try to think independently. The people of Ponorogo have hope that when they reach adult age, they have hope to mature in thinking.

Then the function of "*janur*" young coconut leaves is the personification of "*nur*" in Arabic which means light. The people of Ponorogo have the belief that humans are created from the element of light from the Almighty (God) "*asal usule menungsa lak saka nur, asale nur niku saking sing kuwasa, sing kuwasa nyipta*" 'the origin of man is from light, the origin of light is from the almighty, the almighty creates'.

"*biting*" or lock that comes from the "*dom*" of sewing needles which has a purpose and a prayer so that humans in this world have sharpness in thinking and making decisions, besides that there is also hope to be strong in thinking not to give up easily when faced with a problem. "*Dome kuwi lincip ngen lantip pikire, tur nggih kuwat*" the needle is sharp so that it is sharp in thinking and also strong

## CONCLUSION

From the explanation of *asahan* as a prayer above, it can be concluded that all types of *asahan* have the meaning of great hope, namely the first to ask for salvation. The safety in question is aimed at the fetus in the womb, safety for the mother who is pregnant, and safety for the father who is the backbone of the family. Then the second is in the form of prayer and hope asking for good health for prospective babies who are still in the womb, and health for mothers who are pregnant. This is reflected in the grindstones called *jenang loro, rasulan, golong pitu, golong loro, buceng semaya, and buceng kendhit*

Then the second one asks for blessings. The blessing you want is in the form of blessings for the sustenance you have, as well as blessings when you work for sustenance. With the hope of blessing, even though the property owned is only a little, if the work occupied is considered only a trivial job, it is expected to fulfill and fulfill daily needs. This is stated in the type of *asahan rasulan, mule luhur, golong sanga, golong lima, sega brok, and brakahan*.

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