

## FROM ETHNIC GENEALOGICAL FOLKLORE TO THE POWER AND LEGITIMACY OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

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### ABSTRACT

*The folklore of the genealogical origin of an ethnicity is a very popular cultural treasure for the Gayo, Nias, and Batak Toba ethnic communities, especially those related to genealogy. The original characters of the ethnic community are depicted falling from a high place (heaven) to a low place (bumi). The events of the story characters coming down from the sky make the figure genetic, and the region has a very important power value in its supportive ethnic society. Folklore stories of the genealogical origins of these three ethnicities will be analysed through the meaning patterns that are the guidelines of life for the ethnic community. Given the folklore of the genealogical origins of the three ethnic groups, they are closely linked to the system of power in ethnic societies. The study aims to explore how meaning patterns are operated in order to safeguard, maintain, and stabilise the power of individuals as well as ethnic groups. As for the research methods used in this research, they use archaeological, anthropological, ethno-archaeological, and sociological approaches. The results achieved in the folklore study of ethnic genealogical origin depict the system of power in the cultures of the ethnic communities Batak Toba, Nias, and Gayo.*

**KEYWORDS** *folklore; genealogy; patterns of meaning; legitimacy of power*



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### INTRODUCTION

Folklore is one of the traditional verbal riches of society. Its development is more dynamic because its inheritance is done verbally. Folklore is spoken from mouth to mouth, from one generation to the next, so many different versions appear according to the group, interests, and time. Folklore is divided into three large groups based on its type: verbal folklore (also known as mental facts), part verbal, and not verbal (Brunvand, 2006). The functions of folklore among them are: as an educational tool; a tool for verifying cultural traditions; a collective mirroring tool; and as a supervisor to ensure that the norms of society are always observed (Georges & Jones, 1995). Folklore originated from the oral tradition of

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society, full of messages of value and morals to be conveyed in one generation to the next generation (Baiduri & Khairani, 2017). Folklore is also a form of cultural expression that represents the character of people's lives (Isman et al., 2022). Such characters make folklore grow rapidly and are widely known in society. Given that folklore is known by various groups of people, there are often parts that are adapted to the conditions of society. It means that a folklore is very easy to develop or undergo addition and reduction of illustrations, so to understand it requires studies that correspond to the conditions of society or values in the past. A folklore cannot be translated within the current sphere of thought, only revealing what was perceived to be important at the time (Endraswara, 2009), or even translating into a cultural background that does not correspond to the area of folklore culture in question.

Folklore of genealogical origin is a folklore that can be found in every ethnicity. It also shows early figures as ethnic ancestors. This makes the figure very important, not only in relation to religion but also to society (Herskovits, 2006). In the context of religion, the early ancestor figures are often depicted coming down from the sky or from a distant place that is no longer thought of as its place, so that the figure is special. The condition makes the figure meant to have a high social position in society, both in relation to its origin and its magical abilities as a future cycle of society. The existence of the initial location of the descent of the figure from the sky, or the beginning of the Hunian figure, becomes a place that has special value in society.

The Batak Toba community and the Nias community in the North Sumatra province have the story of the first ancestor (the Ancestor) descending from the sky and settling on a mountain or a certain place. In the ethnicity of Batak Toba depicted in its folklore, the early ancestors of the Batak King descended from the sky to the Peak of Pusuk Buhit (Simanjuntak, 2009). In the Nias ethnic community, it is mentioned that Hia, as the first ancestor, descended from the sky in the Boronadu region, Sifalago Gomo, Southern Nias. Similarly, the Gayo ethnicity that is on the high plateau of Aceh province has a rather varied genealogical origin story. The first story mentions that the first Gayo ethnic ancestors came from the east coast of Sumatra. The second story mentions that their ancestors came from the Batak ethnicity, and the third tale mentions the origin of the Rum State.

According to Geertz (1973), the existence of folklore in traditional ethnic societies is an attempt to communicate the meaning of a person in religious, cosmological, social, technological, economic, and other ways (Abdullah, 2006). Another view, Levi Strauss (1963), stated oral folklore has meaning and will be identified when its elements are combined with one another (Ahimsa-Putra, 2001). In oral folklore, one part is often preserved and the other part is hidden, given that every custom and belief in society has a specific function, namely to preserve the structure of the society concerned so that the structures of society become stable and sustainable (Danandjaja, 2002; Syam, 2007). In this regard, the folklore of Gayo, Nias, and Batak Toba ethnic genealogy can change according to the social conditions in a society. However, such folklore is believed to contain a certain meaning and is very important because it is related to the structures of traditional ethnic societies.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In order to understand the meaning of folklore with such varied interpretations, archaeological, anthropological, ethno-archaeological, and sociological research is carried out in the area of ethnic culture. Research using such various methods can give meaning to the folklore of genealogical origin according to the context. Archaeological research will provide an overview of the past conditions of the various artefacts left behind. Anthropological research provides an overview of the traditions that take place in ethnic societies; ethno-archaeological approaches will provide an outline of the relationship of

artefacts with traditions in ethnic societies; and sociological methods will give an outlook on the social aspects that can be identified in the existence of folklore. Thus, such methods and approaches will provide answers to various questions related to the existence of folklore and power in ethnic societies.

The influence of folklore of genealogical origin seems to be seen in the culture of ethnic societies, whether in relation to the social structure, the structure of social organisations, religion, or other social aspects. To understand the aspects of power in traditional societies in oral folklore, the ethnographic concept can also be used by describing certain parts of oral folklore (Endraswara, 2009) so that special aspects related to language can be dealt with. Or, in other words, focusing on specific aspects of a more general category (Schoepfle, 1987) to later compare with the archaeological, anthropological, and social data of its society. Expectedly, the comparison of ethical and ethical data accompanied by inductive-explanatory thinking can produce sufficient information to be used as a source of data in interpreting the system of power in the ethnic communities of Batak Toba, Nias, and Gayo.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Toba Batak Culture

In the concept of anthropology, the Batak ethnicity consists of subethnic Karo, Simalungun, Pakpak/Dairi, Toba, Angkola, and Mandailing. Sub-ethnic Batak Toba inhabits the parent area that includes the area on the banks of Lake Toba, the island of Samosir, the Toba Highlands, the area of Asahan, Silindung, the areas between Barus and Sibolga, and the mountain area of Pahae, all of which are in the province of North Sumatra. The number of sub-ethnic groups is the highest compared to other sub-ethnic groups. In the past, the Batak Toba society lived within the organisation and the norms of its own strikes that are often called *customary*, *patik*, and *uhum*. They live in one particular region and have a common goal. Sub-ethnic Toba Batak generally live in rural areas. Among the Batak Toba people, there is an understanding that it means to declare territorial unity in the countryside, including *Huta*, *Lumban*, and *Sosor*. A *huta* is usually a territorial unit inhabited by a family originating from a single clan. The *Lumban* is the land of the people who are inhabitants of the land. *Sosor* is a territory inhabited by citizens who are descendants of the founders of *Huta* (Simanjuntak, 2006).

The people of Batak Toba generally inhabit the island of Samosir. Therefore, the culture of Samosir is identical to that of Batak. In pre-colonial times, the word "Batak" was often associated with the Batak ethnic groups, whether it was Toba, Karo, Mandailing, Pakpak, or Angkola. At present, the name Batak is more connected to the Toba Batak community. This is because the people of Batak Toba often call themselves Batak, not Toba (Uli, 2009).

The ancient religion of the Batak Toba community is rooted in animism and dynamism. It is the prayer of the Lord (*Debata Mulajadi Nabolon*) and the praise of the ancestors. Functionally, *Debata Mulajadi Nabolon* also has other names, such as references to the Upper World, the Middle World, and the Lower World, which show the structure in its cosmological concept (Uli, 2009).

*Huta* is a group of houses consisting of several houses and surrounded by walls of land or stones on which bamboo trees are planted. The *huta* was built as the beginning of the settlement, the mother of the *huta*, which became the source of other *huta* citizens who stood later (*huta parserahan*), the development of the already existing *huta*, or a new *huta* called *sosor* or *pagaran* (Simanjuntak, 2006). Usually it has a four-square shape with rows of houses, and in front of it there is a padi roof, and in the back is a kitchen yard. Around

the *huta* are usually farmlands and plantations. The founder of the *huta* was the first to open the land and, at the same time, to have the land of the *huta* and his farmland.

### **Culture of Nias**

Nias is an island located on the west coast of Sumatra Island and is part of the province of North Sumatra. The system of social organisation in Nias society is divided into two parts: those related to the government and those relating to religious aspects. The aspects relating to the government are managed by the nobility group (*si'ulu*, *salawa*, and *si'ila*), while the aspects related to custom and religion are governed by the group (*silawa* and *ere*). *Si'ulu* is a reference to the nobles in the southern Nias, and *salawa* is a reference to the nobles in the northern Nias. *Si'ila* is a group of nobles whose structure is under *Si'ulu* and who have certain skills, while *Ere* is a reference for the ceremonial leaders (Wiradnyana, 2010). The system of social structures in Nias society is based on genealogy. However, the structure of *si'ila* and *ere* cannot apply the genealogical system, which means that the status of meaning can be obtained by ordinary society (*sato*) through a series of *owasa* ceremonies. The genealogical system in the social structure of *siulu* and *salawa* provides facilities for its offspring, compared with attempts to raise the social status of ordinary society (*sato*) to the level of *siila*. So this level of *siila* was obtained only through the ceremony of *owasa* by an ordinary group of people (Wiradnyana, 2010). Also, *er* is generally obtained genealogically, and there are also those that do not, so from ordinary society, *er* can be

The system of social organisation and the social structure of the Nias society were subsequently communicated in various ceremonies. It is considered important in the structural system of society for the stability of the conduct of society and the identity of the group. The smallest social organisation in Nias is called the *gana*; its members are the nuclear family and the group of the family and have functions related only to the ceremonial procession. A group of goats is called *nafolu*. As with *Gana*, *Nafolu* is also led by someone whose function is only related to customary ceremonies. A group of several *nafolu* called *banua*, which can be identified with the village with its leaders called *salawa* (in the north) and *siulu* (in the south). A group of people called the *ri* (country), led by the *Thoenöri*. The grouping of the organisation has a tendency to be part of one genealogy, as the group of the *banua* is called the *mado*, which is a group of one genealogy (Wiradnyana, 2010). So the traditional power of the Nias society binds only one genealogist.

The smallest family in Nias knows at least two terms: *Fanganbaton* in the northern region of Nias and *Gagambato* in the south. In Nias society, the most important element of relativity is the *sambun mohelo* group, or *sambua faono* (large family), which is a senior *batih* family along with the *batih* families of their sons who live together in one house and is an economic unity. These large families can be separated if their children's families can build their own new home with a native party. A larger group of relatives is a combination of several large families of one ancestor called *Mado*. *Mado* in Nias also has branches, as does *marga* in the Batak society (Wiradnyana, 2010).

### **Culture of Gayo**

The Gayo ethnic community occupies the high plateau of Bukit Barisan, which extends into the province of Aceh. Its cultural territory is centred in the Central Aceh District, the Bener Meriah District, the Gayo Lues District, and partly in the East Aceh District.

The Gayo community adheres to the patrilineal understanding, that is, in one house is usually inhabited by one family. If there is a new family they will build a house near the mother's house, so on until forming a village that is called *Belah*. The village leader is called the *reje* (raja). The concept of building a village like this is also found in the Batak

Toba community. *Belah* does not only refer to the relationship between neighbours but also to the area or place of residence in the same area.

Gayo's house is a stage-built structure built on four main pillars; the part of the house from top to floor tends to be bound or covered using a hammer or rotan. The part that requires a wide field can be covered with anyaman or bamboo or wood bars. Houses are typically straight from east to west, and stairs are typically placed towards houses from the east or north. Houses that are considered to be normally located are built with the orientation east-west, called *bujur*. The north-south orientation of the house is called *Lintang* (Wiradnyana, 2010). The house for the people of Gayo is also structured; the house of the *reje* and his family tends to have a rounded shape, while the houses for ordinary people tend to be dirty.

### **A Variety of Folklore**

#### ***Toba Batak Genealogical Folklore***

The oral folklore of the King Batak, believed to be the future genealogy of the Batak Toba community, revealed that the king Batak descended from the sky to the top of Mount Pusuk Buhit, and his descendants spread and lowered the people of Batak to the present. The concept of "genealogical" tarombo in Batak society is still applied to this day and plays an important role in the sustainability of its social system. Furthermore, such genealogical folklore contains several concepts, such as the concept of another nature or mystical nature, the place of the spirit in a high place, and the idea of the spiritual medium descending into human nature. The whole conception is based on the religious system, which includes the pattern of worship along with the placement of media worship (Wiradnyana et al., 2021).

The above explanation describes that in Batak Toba society, there is a belief in another nature. In addition, they also believe that there are three levels of nature, which are the form of the arrangement of the cosmos of the first Batak Toba society: Upper Earth (*banua ginjang*), Middle Earth (*banua tonga*), and Underworld (*banua toru*) with its ruler. It is believed that God (*Mulajadi Na Bolon*) is the creator of the world and that He is the creator of all things. The Middle World is the home of man, and the Underground is the house of evil spirits (Loeb & Heine-Geldern, 1935; Nainggolan, 2012). This concept is then also defined in the form of land division, i.e., the existence of residential land, agricultural land, and forest land. The belief was then thrown into a smaller form, one of which is the indigenous house, with its architecture divided into three, which are symbols of the three natures.

In folklore, the presence of the King Batak on the top of Mount Pusuk Buhit among them is a reflection of the concept of land legitimacy. Whoever first opens the land shall have a privileged right over the land that he opens. The King Batak, who is considered to descend from the sky to the top of the mountain Pusuk Buhit, also makes the whole land belong to the King Batak. In his development, King Batak had two sons, Tatea Bulan and Isumbaon. Therefore, the mountain of Pusuk Buhit belonged to the two sons and their descendants. These two children formed the genealogy of Batak Toba and Batak Samosir (Wiradnyana et al., 2021). Belahan *Lontung*, which is a group of Borbor and a number of smaller marga, originated from the descendants of Guru *Tatea Bulan* and the subgroup of *Sumba*, which included the group of marga of King *Isumbaon* (Vergouwen, 2013). It depicts that land ownership for the Batak Toba community is communal after the individual opens the land. The genealogy of individuals who are entitled to open the land will be continued by their descendants, especially the boys and daughters, who are made the *marga raja* (main of the marga). The genealogist of the *Marga Raja* had the right to all the land opened by his predecessor. Within a certain period of time, with the increasing genealogical number of the *Marga Raja* tribe, the land had to be divided, and the longer it took, the



smaller the area of the land divided. In the traditional community of Batak Toba, the lands that are there are actually land that is also owned by the municipality. The division of land serves more as a right to use because the land also serves as an effort to support the continuity of the ceremony.

#### ***Nias Genetic Folklore***

There are several versions of the ancestor of the Nias people, but there are the main parts that have a common thing: the figure was first descended from the sky in Sifalago, Boronadu, and Gomo districts, and the figure named *Hia* was descended in the Southern Nias, that is, in Sifalago, Boronadu, and Gomo districts. Here is a quote from the oral folklore of the origins of the ancestors of Nias.

*“Tidak lama kemudian dari langit lahirlah Zagoro Zebua  
Dialah Hia yang diturunkan sebagai nenek moyang pertama  
Yang diturunkan oleh Sirao  
Ia diturunkan dengan tali emas di Boronadu, Sifalago Gomo  
Disertai dengan berbagai bibit tanaman, peralatan pertanian , berbagai ukuran  
Kemudian kumpulah sembilan nenek untuk membuat aturan adat”.*  
(Mendrofa 1981, 35 - 44; Sonjaya 2007,36-38).

In the Boronadu region, his oral folklore also mentions that the first figure to be brought down by Sirao in Sifalago, Boronadu, was Hia. In other folklore, it is mentioned that Ho is the ancestor of Hia, descended from Lahemo, and Hia has a brother named Gido.

Wiradnyana (2010) outlined the oral folklore related to the ancestors of the Nias people as follows: Hia, descended in the southern part of the island of Nias; Gozo, descending in the northern portion of the island of Nias; and Hulu, descendant in the central part of Island Nias. Other folklore mentions that: Hia descended in Boronadu, Gomo, and became the ancestors of Mado Telaumbanua, Gulo, Mendrofa, and others; Gozo descended on the western coast of the island of Nias, which is in Tuhemberua, and became an ancestor of the Mado Baeha; Daeli descended at Tolamaera and became the ancestry of Mato Gea, Daeli, Larosa, and others.

Other oral folklore mentions the division of the territory according to the *fondrako* (ceremonial procession among them related to the enforcement of customary law): Hia's territory is in the southern part of Nias; Gozo's territory is in Idanoi to the northern end of the Nias; Daeli's area in the southern part borders with the Hia territory to Idanoy Ndrawa; and Hulu's region is in Lolombuyuwu.

Faogoli (1939) mentioned that Sirao was the ancestor who was first descended in Nias, then followed by his descendants, Silogu, who lived in Mandrehe; his grandchild, Lari Sumola, was living in the Idanoi River Stream Region in Luaha Laraga and then in Tola Maera and became the future *Mado* (combination of the broad patrilineal family); and Zebua (clan of Zebua, Zai, Zega, etc.).

Other folklore mentions that Sirao is the beginning of the ancestors who descended from Nias. As for the descendants, they are as follows: Hia, descended in Boronadu, Gomo; Gozo, descended in the west of the island of Nias, that is, in Hilimaziaya, Tuhemberua; Daeli, descending in Tolamaera, the village of Onowaembo, Lolofitu Moi; and Hulu, descendant in Laehuwa, Alasa.

#### ***Ethnic Gayo Folklore***

Folklore mentions that the Gayo ethnic community was part of the Aceh community that migrated from the coast to the mountains (now part of the Gayo cultural district). The folklore also mentions that the Aceh coastal community is a society that does not want to embrace the Islamic religion, so they migrate to the mountains.

In addition, there is also the folklore Batak 27, stating that the Gayo people are ethnic Batak. Hurgronje (1996) explained that the Gayo society at that time entirely embraced Islam and was a faithful follower of the Aceh *Reje*. The presence of seven Batak men, led by Lebe Kader, from the Batak Land to Aceh through Alas and Tanoh Gayo with the aim of entering Islam and teaching. There are 20 others with the same purpose. In the course of the trip, in addition to bringing supplies for their own expenses and shopping, they also brought payments for their expenses home to their seven friends. Seeing as the supplies brought quite a lot, *Reje* Gayo is the *Reje Bukit* who ruled in the western part of Lake Lut Tawar, bringing him to play gambling. It turned out that *Reje Bukit* lost, and then *Reje Bukit* struck one of those Batak. The other 19 Batak rushed to Aceh to meet his friends and, at the same time, complained about the behaviour of *Reje Bukit* to the King of Aceh. The sultan gave them the courage to fight against the *Reje Bukit*. With the help of the Batak, who became the slave of the *Reje Bukit*, this *Reje Bukit* can be defeated. Then it was made an agreement that the *Reje Bukit* with his men would occupy the village of Kebayakan and the district of Kebayakan. At the same time, twenty-six Batak people who had defeated the *Reje Bukit* occupied the native village of Reje Cik, which is in the Bebesan Village, the Bebesan District, and the Central Aceh District (Wiradnyana et al., 2016).

Other folklore concerning the origins of Gayo's ethnic genealogy was found in Malay Arabic manuscripts that were redirected to Latin characters and published by the Department of Education and Culture, Jakarta (1979). The origins of the Gayo ethnic community in the story began with the arrival of a young man named Genali from Rum State to Buntul Linge (the District of Gayo). It is depicted that the Buntul Linge is surrounded by an open ocean, deserted. Genali's presence at that time was due to being stuck. The wooden wheel that he was riding while fishing in the open sea was dragged along with him by the attraction of the large fish that ate his pants. Genali's father and brother didn't know where Genali was going until he was stuck in the sea for months. Until one day, the ship's captain, sent by Genali, delivered a large ship of fish to the Sultan in the land of Rum. As for the belly of the big fish after splitting its stomach, it contained gold-intensities that were handed over to the Sultan in the Kingdom of Rum, who was no other than his own brother-in-law. The original fish shipment was full of mystery, and none of the great Roms understood what it meant. Except for Princess *Terus Mata*, the Sultan's princess herself, who understood the "message" of the message was a statement for herself. The short story of Princess *Terus Mata* is about her being taken to Buntul Linge and marrying Genali.

Genali was the first king of the Linge kingdom, having three sons, namely two men (Johan Syah and Johar Syah) and one woman (Merah Abuk Entan). When Genali died, he was replaced by his daughter, Merah Abuk Entan, who was supported by the Kejurun Mude. Apparently, Genali did not die, and Genali was known to be in Kutaraja and had a wife there and a son named Alisyah. At one time, Genali returned to Linge and re-led the kingdom when Genali died; then Alisyah replaced him in Linge; then the kingdom was handed over to Johar Syah; and then Alisyah went back to Aceh to become the first king in Kutaraja. Johan Syah less liked this condition, so he went to the Sibayak Linge Batak Land and never returned again (Victor, 2006).

## Discussion

### *Oral Folklore and Ethnic Batak Toba in the Traditional Power System*

In the folklore of Batak Toba, the whole ethnicity that exists in northern Sumatra is part of the Toba Batak. Even the Nias, Gayo, Alas, and Aceh ethnicities are also part of the Toba ethnicity, with an ancestral figure named Raja Batak. This character has two sons, who are the genealogical roots of Batak society. The Isumbaon genealogists became the

Batak Toba community group, and the Tatea Bulan genealogical group became the Samosir Batak group. Local folklore mentions that King Isumbaon was given the right to land around Pusuk Buhit by Huta Buhit, while Tatea Bulan was granted the rights to land in other parts of Mount Pusuk Buhit by the Sianjur Mula-Mula and Limbong. The property is a municipal property owned by *Bius* (an amalgamation of *huta* governing customs). The folklore depicts the power of the Raja Batak, who is the highest in genealogy (men) and also the most entitled to the land that exists around Mount Pusuk Buhit. The King is also depicted as a figure that descends from heaven, so religiously, it is considered a special figure and has a high position in relation to religion. While the existence of two groups based on genealogical links within the group is becoming closer, This resulted in groups that were later called Batak Toba and Batak Samosir. The existence of the group, the genealogical conceptions, and the dominant role of seniority bring their own problems to the group's existence, which is then formed (*dalihan natolu*), that is, the relationship of marriage between marriages, which determines the position of each marriage in social life (Simanjuntak, 2006). With this conception, the system of power becomes divided according to the conditions of religious and social processions.

To distinguish between local people and immigrant communities, the terms *halak hita* and not *halak hita* (our people and other people, or referring to the understanding of relatives and non-relatives) are known (Bruner & Ihromi, 2006). Themselves and from other ethnic groups, and used to change attitudes and behaviour so that life runs smoothly (Endraswara, 2009). Initially, this conception included knowledge as well as power that forced individuals to think and act based on the interests of their group. In their development, these social facts become their own entities through their generations, which will ultimately force the community to regulate behaviour in a social activity and become a guide for the lives of community members (Koentjaraningrat, 1987).

This condition does not guarantee the absence of conflicts, especially those related to customary land. This can happen considering the neglect of the *bius* system that regulates social laws, laws in agriculture, and others, including land tenure (Situmorang, 1993). These changes were also caused by the system of land ownership and the economy, which changed to become individual. The existence of power in community groups based on seniority aspects makes the community's perspective individualist. Changes in the structure and function of the community also cause changes in society.

#### ***Nias Ethnic Oral Folklore in Traditional Power Systems***

Archaeological data shows that in the range of 12,000 years before the present, there was a human group with the Australomelanesoid race who had the Hoabinh culture exploring the Togi Ndrawa Cave. This group of humans explored the cave until they entered the Second Millennium AD (Wiradnyana, 2010). At the end of this cave dwelling, it is known that the era was not much different from the arrival of the Mongoloid race with Austronesian culture, which is a supporter of oral folklore of Nias ethnic genealogical origins (Wiradnyana, 2010). The existence of the two races is contained in the oral folklore of *Bela* or *Ono Mbela*. It is explained in the folklore that there are groups of humans who live in trees as owners of animal clans; they are harassed by humans (*niha*) because they are considered lowly and not humans (Hämmerle, 2001). The contact between these human groups indicates that the migration group was the last to know of other groups that inhabited Nias Island earlier.

The folklore of this Mongoloid race group mentions that they came from the sky, descended in the Boronadu and Gomo areas, and descended to other areas in Nias. The descent of humans from the sky, apart from describing limited geographical knowledge, also has religious meaning. That the sky is the source of power, so that the people who come are the chosen people from the sky. The concept of heaven as a place that is noble,



honourable, and famous is a universal concept. This is used in an effort to legitimise various aspects that are owned by him. Another version of the folklore story about the origins of the ancestors of the Nias people depicts other characters who come by boat. The presence of this boat indicates that the boat transportation mode was also known to the Nias people. It can also be interpreted that the ancestors of the Nias ethnic group were familiar with shipping technology. The two figures who are considered the forerunners of the Nias people live in Boronadu, Gomo. Thus, the Boronadu-Gomo area is an area that is legitimised as the initial residence of the Nias people (Wiradnyana, 2010).

This is necessary in relation to the existence of another group, namely the Togi Ndrawa Cave people, in the northern part of Nias Island. That the area of Nias Island (South Nias) is a territory that is legally owned by a group of people of the Mongoloid race who have an Austronesian culture. The ability to legitimise power over the territory of Nias Island is due to the fact that the Austronesian immigrants already have a culture that is far more advanced than the group that lives in Togi Ndrawa Cave. The people in the Togi Ndrawa Cave still live by gathering food (molluscs) and hunting, while the groups that migrated later were familiar with metal-making technology, farming, seafaring, astrology, and architecture. In this regard, folklore becomes very important in relation to efforts to legitimise rights over the territory of Nias Island. For this reason, in various ceremonial processions, oral folklore is always operationalized so that knowledge permeates the minds of the people and becomes a truth and power over territory, genealogy, and other aspects (Foucault, 1980, 2003; Ritzer, 2003).

The application of oral folklore in various ceremonial processions shows that oral folklore becomes a cultural value system that is used as the highest guideline for human action. Systems of human behaviour at a more concrete level, such as special rules, laws, and norms, are all guided by oral folklore as a system of cultural values (Koentjaraningrat, 1987). Therefore, community behaviour that is carried out repeatedly is the result of an element of coercion due to the existence of this oral folklore. This can happen because the oral folklore of Nias ethnic genealogical origins is a norm that is guided by a cultural value system. So that behaviour, apart from being a symbol, is also a subsystem of a cultural value system, or, in other words, a system consists of smaller systems or subsystems. Likewise, the subsystems also consist of even smaller systems, and so on down to the smallest system. The subsystems and their derivatives are interconnected with one another and can only be applied as a whole in one context. The differences between these oral folklores illustrate that the system builds new subsystems in an effort to become a unified system (Johnson, 1988).

In relation to the current Nias community groups, the oral folklore of their genealogical origins is part of a system of power that is applied to the Nias people. The description of the folklore includes the names of rulers and regions, which indicates the division of power over territory for certain figures. The division shows that there is already an organisation of power in the area. This division can be used as the beginning of the formation of social organisation in society, which then develops much more specifically. When linked to the new village formation system (*banua*) or other social organisation systems, it is clear that social organisation in Nias is patrilineal (power and inheritance are passed on to male offspring). So, the power that exists in the genealogical similarity and the initial village is the highest and most centralised power. Even though the new village has its own autonomy, it remains under the authority of the original village. The kinship system used in the creation of a new village is a form of strengthening existing or newly formed power through various surrounding rules as well as an attempt to strengthen the power itself (Wiradnyana, 2015).

Early figures and their descendants have a high social status in society and have special privileges when compared to people with lower social status. In terms of territory, Gomo, as a starting area and the area of origin of the Nias people, is a region that is highly respected. This is reflected in the views of the Nias people, who believe that if a person or group has ancestral origins in Gomo, they will be valued more than Nias people who are not from outside Gomo. In addition, the Gomo area can also be interpreted as an area that is genetically related to the original Nias people. Gomo is also part of the ruling genealogists. This means that people associated with the Gomo area will receive protection from their community groups.

In the development of the Nias people, oral folklore appeared, which showed that the Nias people had more than one ancestor (Victor, 2006). The existence of different characters in oral folklore is part of the development of the power system of some Nias people. The form is to say that their ancestors came from their own environment (Wiradnyana & Guillaud, 2007). This was caused by the construction of new dwellings with new figures who were the forerunners of the formation of villages and clans. This change is necessary due to internal and external factors in the new community structure so that organisational functions in the new society can be adapted to new conditions. In other words, changes in oral folklore among the Nias people are related to the development of the Nias people's ancestors, which occurred due to the existence of structures and functions in society (Wiradnyana, 2015). Apart from that, the development of Nias ancestral folklore cannot be separated from the existence of groups of people who have different cultures and races, including immigrant groups who speak Austronesian languages. So it is possible for a group that is an amalgamation of the two races to build its own system of power, or for a group of Austronesian-speaking immigrants who migrate to other parts of the world to build a new system of social organisation, followed by the creation of oral folklore.

In a traditional government structure, namely in *Banua*, *Mado*, or *Ori*, the leader of the organisation is always based on the social status they have, namely the highest social status, and this social status can also be passed on to their children, but not automatically; it is only obtained from the *Owasa* party (the party raises social status), which is modest compared to the initial party when his father did the *Owasa* party. Likewise, the social status of the next generation can also be easily obtained by simply holding a much simpler party. With the status that their offspring have, they can automatically replace their parents' position in managing the village and at the same time have rights over village land.

In relation to the system of power, it is clear that power is only owned by the male group, as well as various traditional processions, so the father's social status is the reference for the procession to be carried out. If observed in the development system of a village, for example, a new village being built must always obtain permission from the original village. These permits were paid in various forms, which implied that the new village was still under the authority of the old village. In the development of a new village, the main character is the person who owns the land and has the highest status in the new village. In principle, ordinary people can improve their social position in the village, but they only have to get approval from the new village head, and their social status will not be the same as the social status of the old village founder. It should also be remembered that at the time the new village was founded, most of the people brought in were still relatives, so support for the legitimacy of leadership and power was obtained more easily. If the new village head wants to increase his social status to a higher level than the existing one, he must obtain permission from the original village, and the position he will obtain will not be the same as that of the old village ruler (*Tuhenori*). In the village validation ceremony, an oral folklore of the genealogical origins of the Nias ethnicity will also be conveyed, which is

part of the procession itself. This means that the new village figures and residents are part of a certain genealogy, so the system of power based on genealogy will continue.

In particular, ceremonies related to power are *Owasa* ceremonies. Major ceremonies in relation to increasing social status in society. That a person's social status can be increased in accordance with the magnitude of the ceremony that has been carried out. Of course, the intended ceremony must obtain approval from the local authorities, and the number of ceremonies that may be carried out must still be determined by the ruler. The *Owasa* ceremony is also related to the founding of a new village, which is followed by the determination of nobility by the village founder at various stages of the party. In the end, the ceremony is completed by erecting a statue in front of the traditional house. Efforts to legitimise power for the nobles included the process, which always described the origins of kinship (genealogical) and was accompanied by curses and sanctions for the violators. The ceremonial procession was accompanied by sacrificial offerings, which functioned as an effort to gain magical powers from the power that was confirmed.

The people of South Nias, especially the people of Onohondro Village, legitimise that their ancestors came from Gomo, so the river that flows in the village area is called the Gomo River, and the leader of the *fome'ana* ceremony is called Boronadu. During this procession, Boronadu blesses the nobles and people who have made offerings to him. The existence of Boronadu as a priest is very important, especially in farming communities, considering that religious aspects are used to strengthen the legitimacy of political actions (Claessen & Soekadijo, 1987). This also implies that the Onohondro people legitimise traditional ceremonies, which can be considered the same as in Boronadu and Gomo as their places of origin. Apart from that, another sign of the owner of the territorial authority is the Boronadu community group, Gomo. Various sources in the aristocratic community stated that a large ceremony required a special priest and had to be brought in from Gomo. Likewise, many villages in the northern part of Nias Island also consider their ancestors to be from Gomo. This kind of interpretation is very important for the existence of the Gomo region as the forerunner of the Nias people, and at the same time it is used for political interests. In the Nias community, senior positions have an important role in relation to carrying out customs and, at the same time, receiving protection from the nobility in Gomo.

The efforts made by the people of Nias to strengthen their power can be observed in the folklore that has developed in the community. Folklore, which is always conveyed both in ritual events and on informal occasions, always emphasises the existence of Hia figures as one of the oldest ancestors of the Nias people, handed down by Lowalangi in Boronadu, Gomo. This expression conveys to the people of Nias that the Boronadu and Gomo areas are the oldest areas for Nias people to live. So that the forerunners of the Nias people started from that place and then spread to other areas. Efforts to legitimise Gomo as the origin of the Nias people are also shown by statements that other figures appeared after Hia took over the Gomo area. Based on the description of the people of Nias about the folklore of their ancestral lineage, there are many differences, so it is possible that this condition is used by some people as a basis for legalising the exercise of power.

As an illustration, for example, the people around the Tolamaera area, Onowaembo Village, and Lolofitu Moi believe that their area is the beginning of the decline of Daeli. This figure is one of the ancestors of the Nias people in the north. Based on the archaeological aspect, the monoliths and their remains, which are used as symbols of ancestral presence, have not shown any indication of significant antiquity in that area. This assumes that it is very important to create early figures and ancestors through oral folklore that can be used as an effort to unite the community with grouped and separated dwellings. This is also necessary in an effort to reduce the number of wars that occur in society. With blood relations, it is hoped that close social relations will also occur.

Furthermore, folklore is also used as a legality of kinship order for the community, such as for the Nias people who came from Gomo. As explained above, Gomo is the oldest region, and its characters are senior and, at the same time, believed to be descended from the sky (Lowalangi). Therefore, the ruler who comes from Gomo (genealogical Hia) indirectly gains legitimacy as a descendant of the most senior kinship order and, at the same time, as the possessor of higher power than other communities. Therefore, they can provide protection to the wider community.

In the above context, folklore is also used as a tool to legitimise the origin of descent for humans who descended from Lowalangi (the sky). The rules set by the Gomo aristocracy are considered a continuation of ancestral traditions originating from Lowalangi, which the community must follow. For this reason, folklore needs to be maintained so that society always submits to the rulers and social structures, ensuring the smooth running of power.

Organisational subsystems and social structures, accompanied by folklore and traditional ceremonies and rites, are used by the rulers as a basis for exercising and strengthening power over their territory and society. Thus, the concept of power or the system of social organisation in Nias society is formed from a series of norms that belong to that culture. These norms then form a certain cultural area and system of power. This power system operates within a framework that clearly highlights the territory and genealogy of a political unit or space inhabited by the Nias aristocratic community and their relatives.

#### ***Gayo Ethnic Oral Folklore in Traditional Power Systems***

The geographical area of the province of Aceh has an area of 58,376 km<sup>2</sup>, and a quarter, or approximately 27%, of the total area of Aceh is the Gayo ethnic cultural area. They settled in the highlands. The Gayo ethnic cultural area covers four districts, such as Central Aceh district, Bener Meriah district, South-east Aceh district, and Gayo Lues district. Various cultural elements in the Gayo community are still well preserved, so that as an ethnicity, they still have strong characteristics with elements of their ethnic culture. Research conducted by Snouck Hurgronje at the end of the 19th century in the Gayo cultural area shows that Gayo culture has cultural elements that are different from other ethnicities around it, so that as an ethnicity, Gayo is a separate ethnicity in the province of Aceh. Likewise with research on the 20th century conducted by Junus Melalatoa (1982), an anthropologist who came from the Gayo cultural area also wrote that various cultural elements of the Gayo community show differences from other ethnic communities around them. This condition was one of the reasons for the Gayo people to build the Aceh Leuser Antara Province (ALA), which is a division of the Aceh Province. It can also be said that ALA Province is a development of Central Aceh District, Bener Meriah Regency, Gayo Lues Regency, and Blang Kejeren City, all of which are in the core area of the Gayo Cultural Region. The rest are other regencies that are around the core district area, such as Aceh Tamiang Regency, part of which is a Gayo cultural area. Another reason is the unequal political concept between Gayo figures and Acehnese figures, who want a referendum for the people in Aceh Province. Apart from that, there are various treatments that are felt by the Gayo community and are considered a form of marginalisation by Acehnese figures and the people of Aceh. The marginalised treatment of the Gayo ethnic group by the Aceh ethnic group intensified when the Wali Nanggroe election took place, which did not accommodate the presence of other ethnic groups besides the Acehnese.

Based on the cultural area of the Gayo ethnicity, along with supporting cultural elements that are different from the Acehnese ethnicity, they receive treatment that is considered marginalising to the Gayo community. This prompted the Gayo ethnic group to form Aceh Leuser Antara Province. The supporting factors for them to realise this new

province were the results of archaeological research that had been conducted in Gayo, which confirmed that the Gayo ethnic identity had a completely different history from the Acehese ethnicity. Archaeological research related to Gayo ethnic identity is the main reference, in addition to the results of geochronological analysis (C14) and molecular biology (deoxyribonucleic acid), which strengthen Gayo ethnic identity as an entity that is different from other ethnicities in Aceh, so that the archaeological findings strengthen the desire of the Gayo people to form a Province Aceh Leuser Antara (ALA).

The use of archaeological research in an effort to support the desire of the Gayo people to form the Aceh Leuser Antara Province (ALA) is in line with Michel Foucault's level of thought regarding the archaeology of knowledge and the genealogy of power. According to Foucault, the two concepts are knowledge, genealogy, and power, where one is related to the other (Foucault, 1980; Ritzer, 2018).

Based on the study of the folklore of the Gayo people above, it illustrates that there is a form of identity resistance packaged in narrative form. As happened to the Gayo ethnic community. According to the Gayo people, and after conducting archaeological research in the Gayo area, it was revealed that the identity of the Gayo people originally came from outside, both from the coastal area (Aceh) and from the Batak region. So far, knowledge of the identity of the Gayo people has revealed that the Raja on the coast is a Gayo person. This means that there is only a small group of people who are residents of Aceh Province. However, when the government system changed from a kingdom to a republic, the Gayo ethnic identity began to erode and be eroded by the Acehese ethnic power.

This is where the importance of studying folklore comes in: in an ethnic society that keeps ethnic history, legal aspects, territorial ownership, and other social systems, This legal aspect is often an important element in the social life of the ethnic community. The existence of legal aspects contained in folklore strengthens its important function. These legal norms are tools of social control, as stated by Friedmen (2009) that legal norms are social control, conflict resolution, distribution of justice, social engineering, and tools of rulers.

Efforts to legitimise the Gayo ethnic group were also carried out through folklore, which says that the coastal kings, namely the kings who ruled on the coast of Aceh, were Gayo people, and the King of Aceh and their descendants were descended from kings in the Kingdom of Linge. It can be seen that there is an effort to fight the legitimacy of ethnicity over coastal folklore. On the one hand, the Gayo people come from the coast, and on the other hand, the Acehese kings come from Gayo. For this reason, the existence of the Linge Kingdom continues to be conveyed on various occasions; even the location that is believed to be the location of the Linge Kingdom is still sacred. The Gayo people believe that the Linge Kingdom is the forerunner of the coastal kingdom, and this understanding is maintained in an effort to legitimise the Gayo ethnic identity, which states that it is the Gayo people who then rule over all the land in Aceh Province. Thus, the Gayo people should be more entitled to various leadership positions in government organisations in Nanggroe, Aceh, and Darusallam today.

In line with this, Batak 27 folklore was also raised, which also helped legitimise that some of the Gayo people were people from outside the Gayo ethnic group, namely from the Batak ethnic community (Batak Karo), who later became the Gayo ethnic group. This folklore seems to reveal that ethnic formation can come from anywhere but then merge into one identity, namely the Gayo ethnicity. Thus, it is implied that the Gayo people believe they come from a coastal community (Aceh) that later became the Gayo ethnicity, and to reduce this, the Batak 27 folklore was built. Batak 27 folklore has also been well preserved among the Gayo people until now. The folklore referred to is also used as a reference for the origins of the Gayo community groups, as the forerunners of the Adat Bukit group and



the Toa Adat group. Besides that, it is also often used in discussing the social organisation of the Gayo community, especially with regard to *belah*, which in turn refers to Batak folklore 27.

Folklore, which is the knowledge of traditional society, is knowledge that is believed and actually happened. Folklore is passed down from generation to generation so that it becomes knowledge from generation to generation. Efforts to legitimise folklore are carried out through the involvement of people, professional organisations, or government organisations. The person in question is a figure in society who is believed to have certain knowledge, so what he writes is believed to be the truth. Similarly, professional organisations that write or publish folklore to legitimise it.

Traditional Gayo people do not recognise written culture, so the various cultural aspects that exist are only in the form of folklore (*kekeberen*). As for folklore related to the genealogical origins of other ethnicities in the Gayo cultural area, it still has a very strong influence on society today. The folklore referred to includes Batak folklore 27. Hurgronje, in the book *Gayo Land and Its People* (1996, 34–37), describes that in the past there were seven (7) Batak people who travelled from Alas Land and Gayo Land to study Islam in Aceh, one of whom was named Lebe Kader. Not long after that, there were twenty (20) more people who followed. Rojo Buket, the ruler of one of the Gayo areas, invited the 20 people to gamble. In that gambling, Rojo Buket lost, got angry, and then beheaded one of the 20 newcomers. The other 19 people then fled to Aceh and met seven Batak people who had earlier gone to Aceh. With the approval of Sri Sultan, the seven Batak people then attacked Rojo Buket, and the Batak people then built a fort. On the rock of the Batak slaves, Rojo Buket was conquered. After losing, Rojo Buket and his men agreed to an agreement in which Rojo Buket and his men would live in Kebayakan and the Batak people would live in Bebesen.

From the names of the Batak people living in Bebesen, some of them show names in the Karo clan (Linggo, Munte, Cebero, Tebo, Melala) and Tebo itself is associated with the name Toba. So the Batak people referred to in the folklore are the Karo people and also the Toba Batak people. So it is the Karo people who are believed to have migrated to Gayo Land and not the Toba Batak people in the view of the Gayo people. On the contrary, there is a belief among the Gayo people that the Batak people come from Gayo Land (Hurgronje, 1996).

Initially, knowledge of Gayo ethnic identity referred to folklore, which among other things stated that the Gayo ethnic community was part of the Acehnese who migrated from the coast to the mountains which is now the Gayo cultural area. Some of the folklore also mentions that the people of coastal Aceh are people who do not want to embrace Islam, so they migrate to the mountains. This knowledge is the main discourse of the people in the province of Aceh. This results in different behavior by the Acehnese towards the Gayo ethnic community and this is felt by the Gayo ethnic community as marginal treatment. The forms of marginalization from the people of Aceh to the Gayo ethnicity can be of various kinds, including the attitude of the Acehnese people who demean Gayo people in government by only accommodating Acehnese culture and development gaps in the Gayo ethnic area (Wiradnyana et al., 2016).

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, after the results of various ethnographic and anthropological studies were disseminated, the Gayo ethnic community began to realize that there was an ethnic identity that was different from the Acehnese. This awareness raises self-confidence and strengthens Gayo ethnic identity in various forms such as highlighting ethnic symbols starting from cultural attractions (*didong, saman and women's art summits*) dressed in Gayo ethnicity. At present, folklore about the Linge Kingdom appears which explains that the Linge king was the forerunner of the kings who ruled in

coastal Aceh. Apart from that, the Batak 27 folklore also appeared, the contents of which stated that some of the Gayo ethnic group came from the Batak (Karo) ethnic group from North Sumatra Province. The two folklores are a form of resistance folklore of the Gayo ethnic community over the knowledge of identity that was previously understood. These two folklores provide a new understanding regarding Gayo ethnic identity as the forerunner of the Acehese ethnic elite and also some of the Gayo people originate from the Karo ethnicity in North Sumatra Province.

Archaeological research conducted by the Medan Archaeological Centre from 2009 until now shows that various cultural elements found at the Mendale Loyang (cave) and Loyang Ujung Karang sites on the shores of Lake Lut Tawar are the roots of the culture of the Gayo ethnic community today. The results of the analysis of the bone samples explained that 4400–120 years ago, there were groups of humans who explored the two caves until the 2nd century AD, or 1870–170 years ago. The results of DNA analysis (*deoxyribonucleic acid*) carried out on samples of prehistoric human skeletons compared to blood samples from today's Gayo people show that there is a genetic similarity. This means that the ancestors of the Gayo people have lived in the Gayo cultural area since 4000 years ago (Wiradnyana, 2010). This means that in the concept of Gayo culture and other traditional cultural concepts in Indonesia, it has authority as a cultural area that belongs to the ethnic group itself and has the right to regulate this area.

Discourse about ethnic genealogical origins originating from the Gayo cultural area and having ruled over customary lands since prehistoric times is knowledge that results from scientific methods. Knowledge is a tool for self-awareness in efforts to establish oneself as a subject (Beilharz, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Given the scientific method with its rational order used to obtain that knowledge, the ethnicity knowledge referred to is the truth (Filsafat, 2009). With this truth, awareness of Gayo ethnic identity is getting stronger, and all behaviour for the benefit of forming the Aceh Leuser Antara Province is a truth. The forms of action taken in relation to the formation of the Aceh Leuser Antara Province (ALA) include the establishment of the Preparatory Organisation for the Formation of the Aceh Lauser Antara Province (KP3 ALA) and various activities in relation to the formation of the ALA Province. The activities carried out include raising funds, disseminating information in relation to strengthening identity in the form of print and electronic media, cultural attractions, seminars, exhibitions, and demonstrations.

All of the above activities were driven by the ALA KP3 group, whose activities were integrated and structured, namely in government, traditional, and student organisations. In the daily context, various discussions with ethnic identity discourse are presented in discussions on Facebook media. The results of archaeological research in relation to culture and ethnic identity are the basis on which the Gayo ethnic community distinguishes themselves from the Acehese.

In February–March 2022, the strengthening of identity will appear again with the theme of the Linge Heritage Exhibition, which will be held in Bener Meriah Regency, Aceh. The exhibition displays artefacts claimed to be relics of the Linge Kingdom. The exhibition was driven by the figure of ALA (Aceh Leuser Antara), who is also a former Regent of Bener Meriah Regency and is currently serving as the Indonesian Parliament for representatives of the Province of Aceh in Jakarta. The exhibition received rejection from various elements of society, especially gay youth groups. The artefacts on display are not considered valid as relics of the Linge Kingdom because scientific research has never been carried out. The youths demanded that there be no more claims of artefacts from the Linge Kingdom prior to proper research. The information conveyed on these artefacts is considered an attempt to deceive the public. Therefore, the activities and information presented create a conflict between the two parties. ALA figures then took issue with the

conflict on the grounds of defamation and reported this to the authorities (Bener Meriah Police). Until now, the legal process has been ongoing.

This problem clearly involves still using folklore as an effort to legitimise oneself. The existence of Raja Linge as the early King of Aceh in local folklore will have a positive impact on some people's efforts to legitimise genealogy, power legitimacy, and cultural legitimacy.

#### ***Folklore in Traditional Power***

The description of folklore above illustrates the function of folklore very clearly in relation to aspects of power. The power in question is identified in the genealogical aspect. This aspect illustrates that the highest genealogical quality comes from the sky, as reflected in the folklore of the Batak ethnic community and also the Nias ethnic community. Besides that, ethnic quality is also based on the genealogy of the ruling king, such as in the Gayo ethnic community. The King of Aceh came from Raja Linge or Gayo, so the quality of the individual or leader is also related to genealogy. It is also used in various exhibitions of items considered to be from the Linge Kingdom period, and in the end, the owner gains legitimacy in the genealogical aspects, power, and prestige within the Gayo ethnic group.

In other aspects, folklore is also related to ethnic identity, ethnic legality, and individual legality, which is reflected in the concept of *halak hita* and not *halak hita* in the Batak ethnic community. Or also in the context of coastal and inland folklore, Batak 27 identifies that ethnic and individual authenticity is part of social power within individuals and groups in relation to social relations that are carried out. Folklore is also related to power over land, as revealed in the three folklores. That the right to manage land is owned by the group that first arrived and explored the land, or also those related to the highest or most famous genealogical identity. With control over land, it is also related to control over its management, both traditional and modern (the establishment of provincial government).

The land of origin that was explored genealogically early also has an important value in ethnic communities. Boronadu, Gomo, and also Puncak Pusuk Buhit are considered by the Batak and Nias ethnic people as land that has strong religious content, so it is very important in relation to religious processions. All aspects of religion are related to the area; even in Nias society, ceremonial leaders who come from Gomo have a higher social structure than ceremonial leaders who come from other areas in Nias. Likewise with the Batak people, who consider the peak of Pusuk Buhit to be the most sacred area compared to other areas around Samosir Island.

Based on the description above, it can be said that folklore is very important in its function in ethnic communities, so it must be disseminated on various occasions, including in every ceremonial procession. This effort is a very strong form of legitimacy for delivering power. In line with this, folklore is also a means to limit or balance political activities with broader democratic goals and processes in ethnic communities and, at the same time, an extension of power (Ritzer & Smart, 2011). Arrangements in society are very important to be maintained in order to guarantee the continuity of broad groups; this effort also includes guaranteeing the existence of smaller or genealogical groups in the nuclear family. Folklore is also considered capable of providing a vehicle for the continuation of power and a tool for validating cultural institutions, as well as a coercive and supervisory tool so that community members always obey the norms (Danandjaja, 2002).

### **CONCLUSION**

Oral folklore related to genealogy is one of the most popular folklores in people's lives. This genealogical folklore is very closely related to the aspect of power. The aspects of power identified are related to power over land, group and individual genealogy, and patrilineal aspects. In an effort to sustain this system of power, oral folklore is always

operationalized on various occasions for social relations (Batak Toba ethnicity), in offline and online discussions related to the early rulers of the Aceh region (Gayo ethnicity), and is also always conveyed in every big ceremonial procession (Nias ethnicity). Therefore, oral folklore is always remembered by the people and becomes a key guide when carrying out life in their community. This means that the existence of oral folklore has a specific purpose for its supporting community. The genealogical folklore is part of the traditional power of the Batak, Nias, and Gayo ethnic communities. This power includes both traditional and contemporary forms of activity.

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