

Character Education Values in Hajat Sasih Ceremony

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to describe the values of character education found in Hajat Sasih ceremony in Kampung Naga, Jawa Barat, Indonesia. The method used in this study is a qualitative method with a descriptive analytical approach. The data collected through observation, interviews, and literature study on the procession from its preparation (tatahar), implementation to closure. The results of the study show that the advancement of the world and the growth of increasingly modern technology have not had much influence on the lives of people in Kampung Naga. At Hajat Sasih ceremony the attributes of character education are found including being religious as shown on the purpose of the ceremony itself as an expression of gratitude to the God and ask for the protection, being discipline which shown on their obedience in performing the ceremony six times a year and follow the rules in its implementation, having patriotism, having reverence, building and maintaining friendship, sustaining the environment, developing social care, and showing responsibility. These characters can also be found among the people of Kampung Naga in their daily lives. As part of an attempt to retain culture and grow characters, parents reiterate the narratives to the younger communities.

Keywords: character education; Hajat Sasih; Kampung Naga; local wisdom; tradition.

INTRODUCTION

Education is certainly not a 'one-off' occurrence but it is about a series of events in which learning is intended (Javis, 2013). In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, it is stated that education is fundamentally a framework of cultural standards in a culture that has been happening for decades. It is a conscious and organized endeavor to build an environment of learning and learning process. Needless to say, education is a process that can be found in daily activities such as cooking, building houses, rituals and other ceremonial events. Therefore, educational method is not limited to space and time, nor limited to school buildings and timetable. Education is also responsible for behavioral improvements in all aspects of student life, including behavior in the socio-cultural sphere.

Character building has been an important agenda since the beginning of Indonesian independence (Hartono, 2018). Self-control, personality, wisdom, noble character and the life skills required by the individual as part of the society to develop the community and the country. Education plays an essential role in creating such person because educational process includes gaining knowledge and skills, learning about attitudes and values that are also beneficial to oneself and the local community. Indeed, character education needs to help learner to be a responsible citizen in building the nation. Miranti, et al. (2018) states that character education allows humans to see and interpret themselves in deciding to change and change others. Learners observe, reflect, compare and practice the society where they live. Therefore, the capability of the next generation will develop, enhance and

accomplish through the education process they experience.

A famous old African proverb says that it takes a village to raise a child which means that an entire people in the community must communicate and interact with children. However, the education of each community group is very diverse. It is influenced by their respective ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Culture is continually evolving and the educational pattern that takes place within each community group is known as ethnic or ethnopedagogic-based education, which includes people.

Indonesia, as an archipelago country, has diverse ethnic groups. One of the Indonesian ethnic groups that lives in West Java is Sundanese people. One of Sundanese group lives in traditional village called Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya. People in Kampung Naga only speak Sundanese language as their communication language in everyday lives and continue to uphold their ancestors' rituals from generation to generation known as the Hajat Sasih ceremony.

Various studies in Kampung Naga have been conducted including finding ways to empower Kampung Naga as a tourist attraction (Mudzakir, 2011), inventory of types and their conservation efforts (Astuti et al, 2016), the history and characteristics of the local wisdom of its people (Qodariah, 2013), identifying customs and the dynamics of its people (Ningrum, 2012). However, no studies in scrutinizing the character education in Kampung Naga specifically on their Hajat Sasih Ceremony. Therefore, this study conducted to fill in the gap and to conduct further studies on the local wisdom that the people in Kampung Naga have. Based on this background, the problems that arise in this study are what Hajat Sasih ceremony is and what character education values are found in the Hajat Sasih ceremony. Thus, the aim of this study is to describe the process of the Hajat Sasih ceremony and study the character education values in the Hajat Sasih Ceremony.

Kampung Naga located in Tasikmalaya district, West Java Indonesia. It is geographically located in a valley between two forests and rice fields. There are only 113 buildings in the village which includes the housing, mosque, granary, and a village meeting hall. The people live in stilt houses which have unified shapes made of bamboo and woods. The roof is made of palm leaves, palm fiber, or reeds. Each house faces north or to the south which extends west-east.

The word "Naga" in the Bahasa Indonesia means 'dragon' and this often makes people think that Kampung Naga is connected to dragon. However, the word 'Naga' in Sundanese language has two meanings. First, it is related to the position of the village which is located in a valley which is called Gawir in the Sundanese language. The neighbouring villlages called the village Kampung-na gawir. Another explanation states that the word 'Naga' is an acronym for 'napak dina galur' which means uphold on the rules. It means all the inhabitants of Kampung Naga should always respect the norm, habits, or a long-standing tradition pioneered by their ancestors. They believe that if the norms, habits or the long-standing tradition are violated, it will cause mamala (calamity or something that is not desirable).

Furthermore, people in Kampung Naga do not use modern agricultural equipment without electricity and refuse any sort of external interference that does not conform to the values of their culture (Prawiro, 2015). However, they can communicate peacefully with neighbors and can provide information to each other. The people live in Kampung Naga are content with their traditional life.

A custom that has been imbedded on the core of every human and is difficult to break is called character. Character is a core element of human identity and is closely connected to morality or behavioral ethics. A state of character is a stable trait means that it endures over time, but remains a work in progress that can strengthen but

also weaken (Curren, 2017). A good character is associated with understanding the good, respecting the kindness, and behaving well (Ryan, 1999). Needless to say, that those are closely related. A person of good character is one who acts 'wholeheartedly', 'with sincerity', 'with courage', 'with love or generosity', and 'with full honesty'. People who do good behavior are formed on the power of habit.

Character education has a higher meaning than moral education, since it applies not only to right-wrong issues, but also how to instill habits of different positive attitudes in life, so that individuals have the awareness and willingness to demonstrate virtues in daily life (Mulyasa, 2012). According to Lickona (1991), there are seven reasons why character education is important because (1) it is the best way to ensure students have a good personality in life; (2) it is a way to improve academic achievement; (3) some students cannot form a strong character for themselves in other places; (4) it prepares students to respect other parties or people and be able to live in a diverse society; (5) it departs from the root of the problem related to social-moral problems, such as immodesty, dishonesty, violence, violations of sexual activity, and a low work (learning) ethic; (6) it is the best preparation for welcoming behavior in the workplace; and (7) it teaches cultural values as part of the work of civilization (Lickona, 1991).

The Indonesian Curriculum Center (2010) classifies the scope of character education into two aspects namely the inward aspect and the outward aspect. Inward or potential aspects include cognitive (thinking), affective, and psychomotor (sports) aspects. The external aspect is the human aspect in the sociocultural context in its interactions with other people which includes interactions within the family, school, and society.

The values developed in the culture and character education of Indonesian are specifically identified from four sources which are religion, Pancasila, culture, and

educational objectives. Indonesian society is a religious society; therefore, the life of individuals, communities and nations is always based on religious teachings. Indonesia is upheld on the ideals of national and state life called Pancasila; thus, it is fitting for Pancasila to be a source of meaning in life.

In Indonesian character education there are 18 traits that released by Ministry of Education which are:

- 1) Religious means obedience in performing one's belief, while developing tolerance towards others 'beliefs.
- 2) Honest; based on the effort to made one as a reliable and trustworthy personality.
- 3) Tolerant; character traits that appreciates differences in others' religious beliefs different from the person.
- 4) Discipline which means the trait describes one with excellent self-control and consistent behavior, including the person's reaction towards rules and regulation.
- 5) Hard-working which means shows a strong determination to produce and create something,
- 6) Creative in thinking and performing in order to come up with inventions and/or discovery.
- 7) Self-reliant which means shows one's self-sustaining ability to finish given tasks.
- 8) Democratic is a way of thinking, behaving and acting that is focused on knowing one's and the other's rights and responsibilities.
- 9) The constant learner is a character in which made one is always eager to learn and understand something.
- 10) Being broad -minded help ones become aware of the way they think and act are based on the benefits of others and the people of the country.
- 11) Embracing one's own national identity is more than a concept or philosophy, but the way of thinking and doing things

for the benefits of their country, the people, socio-cultural environment, economy, and politics.

- 12) Being able to appreciate or acknowledge a goal is thinking that helps one to succeed and reach out for better things ahead; not only for one's self but also for others.
- 13) Communicative becomes one's goal when the one shows an ability to cooperate with others.
- 14) Peace-loving is another trait that one should show in one's behavior rendering a peaceful and acceptable manner within a community.
- 15) Becoming a big reader means one can make time for oneself to read and share readings with others.
- 16) Having environmental awareness is a trait needed to preserve nature and prevent destructive behaviors toward nature and its environment. In addition to that, it is also an action when one wants to restore the damaged environment to its original being.
- 17) Having social awareness enables one to be willing to give help to others without having something in return.
- 18) Responsible is a trait one's needed to complete one's tasks and obligations; not only to one's self, but also to others, community, and the country.

METHOD

This research conducted using qualitative research methods with a descriptive study approach. Data collection techniques are conducted by observation at the village and interviews to the stakeholders. The data obtained are then identified, classified, and described based on the character education values found in the Hajat Sasih ceremony. The interviewees in this study are kuncén or caretaker, punduh adat, and active actors in the field when observing the progress of the Hajat Sasih ceremony. In addition, the data processing process is supported with the results of literature studies, such as journals and books related to research.

Interview activities were conducted in May and June 2019.

The interview guidelines used to collect data including the history, name, time, the purpose, the benefits, the process, the people involved, the place and the provisions that must be obeyed during the Hajat Sasih ceremony.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Hajat Sasih Ceremony

Tradition has many benefits in existence, particularly with regard to the transfer of local educational values to future generations. Tradition is a local concept and experience that is wise, full of wisdom, meaning and virtue that is owned and implemented by the community, understood as a tradition (Sibarani, 2012). Tradition, as a descriptive category, is often used to signify a set of beliefs, customs, teachings, values, practices, or procedures (or any combination of these) that is transmitted from generation to generation (Beckstein, 2017), tradition as customs, customary beliefs, and teachings is passed down by ancestors (Kamidjan, 2019).

Furthermore, tradition has many benefits in life, especially in relation to the passing of local educational values to future generations. Tradition is local ideas and knowledge that are wise, full of wisdom, good value and virtuous that are owned and implemented by the community as a tradition (Sibarani, 2012). Therefore, it is essential to inherit the tradition to the next generation in order to maintain and enhance the culture and the value of the tradition.

In Kampung Naga, the tradition is strongly upheld by all members of the community. Parents and elderly people pass the tradition down to their next generation through everyday activities. Parents tell the norms, habits and traditions from the ancestors daily in order to make the younger generation understand the tradition. One of the ceremonial traditions that the people in Kampung Naga have is the Hajat Sasih ceremony which has been going on for generations. These traditional

activities are a vehicle for building the character of the community. The ceremony contains local wisdom which signifies Kampung Naga's ethnic identity.

Hajat Sasih ceremony initially is a ceremony held to ask for blessings and protection from the Creator and to give thanks to the ancestors. However, since Islam entered Kampung Naga, the Hajat Sasih ceremony has shifted the meaning, it is now conducted as the religious celebrations to worship Allah and the custom is still conducted as a form of respect and appreciation for the ancestors. People in Kampung Naga know that it a direct order from their ancestor, Simbah Dalam Eyang Singaparna, who opened Kampung Naga.

The term for Hajat is based on the meaning of the Sundanese Dictionary comes from Arabic which means need or intention (Sacadibtara, 2008). Likewise, in the Sundanese Dictionary (Danadibrata, 2009), the word *hajat* also comes from Arabic which means obliged to give something to others (friends; relatives) in connection with the original intention. Whereas in the Sundanese English Dictionary (2003) the word *hajat* defines as ritual or ceremonial feast or ritual meal where a prayer of blessing. The Hajat Sasih ceremony in this study is a traditional ceremony that is performed in certain months with the aim of asking for blessings and salvation to God Almighty from generation to generation and also to remember the ancestors of the people of Kampung Naga; Simbah Dalam Eyang Singaparna.

The History of the Hajat Sasih Ceremony

The beginning history of the Hajat Sasih ceremony has not clearly been found. After the death of Sembah Dalem Eyang Singaparna, there has never any written data regarding the rules for carrying out the Hajat Sasih ritual. The provisions for the implementation of the Hajat Sasih ritual have been passed down verbally. It is said

that the origin of the Hajat Sasih ritual was written on palm leaves and documented in the form of a brass charter.

Time for Hajat Sasih Ceremony

The Hajat Sasih ceremony is performed six times a year. The first ceremony is on *Moharram* month 26th, 27th, 28th which is held to commemorate the Islamic New Year. The second is on *Mulud* month on the 12th, 13th 14th is held to commemorate the birth of the Great Prophet Muhammad, therefore it is also called *Mulidan*. Next, *Jumadil Ahir* month on the 16th, 17th 18th is held as a sign of the middle of the year. The fourth, is on Month of *Rewah* or *Sya'ban* on 14th, 15th, and 16th. A ceremony of *nisfu sya'ban* is carried out as a sign that the Ramadhan is coming and fasting will be held. The next is the month of as a sign of the middle of the year 1st, 2nd, and 3rd is performed to welcome the victory by celebrating *Eid*; and the last is *Hari Rayagung* or *Dzulhijah* on 10th, 11th, and 12th, the Eid al-Adha celebration is held.

The Purpose of Hajat Sasih Ceremony

The Hajat Sasih ceremony is held to express gratitude to God Almighty who has provided various kinds of pleasures. In this activity, prayers are offered asking Allah to give health, goodness, blessings, safety, and accomplishment of goals. In addition, the Hajat Sasih ceremony is also a means of:

- 1) Expressing respect for the ancestors who have contributed to instilling the traditional norms which until now have been carried out by the people of Kampung Naga.
- 2) Introducing the children and grandchildren so as not to forget the unique traditions of the local culture that have been initiated by their ancestors
- 3) Glorify the months of Islam, namely *Muharram*, *Mulud* (Rabiul Awal),

Jumadil Ahir (Jumadil Akhira), *Rewah* (Syaban), *Sawal* (Syawal), *Rayagung* (Zdulhijah).

Therefore, people in Kampung Naga consistently perform the Hajat Sasih ceremony during those months.

Participants in the Hajat Sasih Ceremony

In addition, people involved in the Hajat Sasih ritual ceremonies are the customary leader or *kuncén* and several other figures in the village. The customary leader leads a sacred event from beginning to end. In addition to the traditional leader, there is another figure known as *Sesepuh istri* or the elder wife. She is entitled as a *patunggon*. In addition, there are other figures who have special assignments, namely *lebé* and *punduh*. *Lebé* is a kind of *amil* who is in charge of solving matters related to religious affairs in the village. Meanwhile, the term *punduh* refers to the village leader who is trusted by the community.

The venue for the Hajat Sasih Ceremony

The Hajat Sasih ceremony is conducted in several specific places, namely the house of *kuncén*, Ciwulan River, the mosque, *leuweung* or forest, and *Bumi Ageung* or the great house. The leader's house is used as a place for preparation (*tatahar*) to discuss (*sawala*) the implementation of the procession where all participants are male. At the Ciwulan river the ceremony is started where the participants are required to bathe. The bathing process is not the regular bath; however, it is considered as full ablution or bath of purification which intends to cleanse the heart. Each participant performs ritual activities in a holy state. They are expected to have a healthy soul and avoid hatred. The activities during the joint bath are led by the *kuncén* and is conducted in the morning. All participants are not allowed to use soap but they must use *kapining* or *honjé* (torch ginger) which are

stirred in water and are known as *leuleueur* (lubricant).

The mosque which is located in the middle of the village is a holy place to pray in starting and ending the Hajat Sasih ceremony. After bathing and washing, the participants wear white clothes and a *totopong* (headband) to the mosque. It is in this holy place that the participants begin the Hajat Sasih ceremony by first saying a prayer to the Most Holy. Led by the customary leader, all participants merit to the Most Holy for forgiveness, express gratitude for all blessings received, and also ask for blessings and safety.

Leuweung or the forest is also used as a place for the Hajat Sasih ceremony procession. In Kampung Naga, there is a forbidden and protected forest named *leuweung larangan* or *leuweung tutupan*. It is also known as *leuweung titipan* or entrusted forest, which is a forest that is cultivated by the community to be planted and utilized for its products. The forest that is used as a place for the Hajat Sasih ceremony is called *leuweung larangan* (prohibited forest) or *leuweung tutupan*. In the forest there is a burial ground for their ancestors, one of which is Sembah Dalem Eyang Singaparana and two graves of his loyal guards. The inhabitants of the Kampung make it as a sacred forest. On a daily basis, not everyone can enter or touch the forest. Only the descendants of the *karuhun* (ancestors) are allowed to enter the forest. In addition, those who make pilgrimages must be male and have obtained permission from the *kuncén*, and both physically and spiritually clean. Therefore, the Hajat Sasih ceremony is started by bathing.

The procession of the participants then made a pilgrimage to the grave of their ancestors. Pilgrims are required to wear all white clothes. The tools that are brought are the broom sticks, used to clean the tombs.

All activities while at the grave should follow the instruction from the *kuncén*. After making pilgrimages to their ancestral graves, they also clean the village.

Furthermore, Bumi Ageung is also one of the places used in the Hajat Sasih ceremony procession. From Bumi Ageung, *kuncén* leads the participants to the sacred grave followed by the community dressed in white robes while carrying a broom stick that have been prepared beforehand. After the procession, it is continued to the *murak tumpeng* or eating tumpeng rice has been collected from local residents. This activity is carried out as a sign of gratitude to Allah who has provided blessings and various pleasures both physically and mentally. Therefore, the ceremony is used as a moment for the people in Kampung Naga to share with each other, one of which by having *murak tumpeng* and other side dishes.

Provisions for the Hajat Sasih Ceremony

Moreover, there are several provisions that must be obeyed during the Hajat Sasih ceremony as follows:

- 1) People outside community is prohibited from watching the pilgrimage and cleaning the cemetery.
- 2) Cleaning the tomb/grave is only done by men.
- 3) Women prepare the food which will be served after the ceremony.
- 4) When doing the bathing ceremony, the participants only use a cloth covering the genitals.
- 5) During the ceremony, the participants have to wear special clothes (white robes with long sleeves without buttons, sarongs, and wear a headband made of batik cloth). They are not allowed to wear sandals during the ceremony.
- 6) The participants should pray at the mosque before making a pilgrimage to the graves of their ancestors.

Character Education Values at the Hajat Sasih Ceremony

The Hajat Sasih ceremony has been conducted at Kampung Naga from generation to generation shown to have inherited the values of character education. The characters that stand out in Hajat Sasih ceremony include religious, discipline, patriotism, reverence, friendship, environmental care, social care, and responsibility.

Religious character is depicted in almost all ceremonies, including bathing in the Ciwulan river to purify oneself both physically and spiritually before starting the ceremony. They pray in the mosque and they believe the mosque as a holy place to say a prayer to God Almighty to start the ceremony. The religious character is also shown in the process of reciting prayer during the pilgrimage to the grave as one of the prayers for the deceased's parents and ancestors, located in Astana Gede. This is also performed to remind themselves that one day the participants will perish. In addition, the ceremony glorifies Muslim holidays, namely the Month of *Muharram*, *Mulud*, *Jumadil Ahir*, *Rewah* or *Sya'ban*, *Syawal*, and *Rayagung* or *Dzulhijah*. These months have deep meaning for the people in Kampung Naga as religious people. Therefore, the Hajat Sasih ceremony is always carried out and should not be missed, as it shows obedience in carrying out the teachings of the religion that people adhere to.

The discipline character is also seen in several other activities such as the obedience of wearing traditional white clothes, respecting the certain sacred places, women in charge of preparing food that will be served after the activity ceremony, using the designated place during the ceremony, determining the day for the ceremony and what is important

obeying the series of the ceremony. It must be in an orderly manner and comply with various applicable rules and regulations including beginning and ending the ceremony with prayer.

The patriotism and environmental care characters can be seen when people do voluntary work to clean the area around the village, starting from the yard, places of worship, around the Bumi Ageung area, leuweung prohibitions area, and other public facilities. It shows that people love the area where they live. They have a philosophy "*pindah cai pindah tampian*" which means when in Rome, do as the Romans. Also, "*Sabanda Sariksa*" which means to love and protect public property is a collective obligation.

The people of Kampung Naga always perform the Hajat Sasih ceremony six times a year at any specified time. It shows attitudes and actions to respect the success of others or reverence character. Maintaining the customs and norms prevailing in the area proves to be able to sustain the achievements of their ancestors, because not all ethnic communities are capable of maintaining their own customs. Even today, many ethnic communities have forgotten this, either because of their fading concern or because of the great influence of modern developments.

The friendly or communicative character expressed by the community during the Hajat Sasih Ceremony. They do not prohibit outsiders from coming to visit. They are also happy to welcome every guest who intends to conduct an interview asking questions related to the ceremony. It is an action during the ceremony that shows the pleasure of talking, socializing and cooperating with others.

As for the social care character, it is illustrated during the interaction among the participants in the Hajat Sasih ceremony. The participants prioritize togetherness,

kinship, as well as mutual care between community members who are involved in the activities. After the Dzuhur prayer around noon, at the end of the ceremony and as the whole procession for the Hajat Sasih event ends with a meal together. Tumpeng and Indonesian rice dishes are served with vegetables and meat, and all members of the community, from village leaders such as Kuncen, Lebe and Punduh Adat to the commoners, enjoy a meal together.

Kampung Naga people have a great deal of respect for the merits of their ancestors. The Hajat Sasih Ceremony is an example of the nature of the responsibility of the Kampung Naga community. They carry out these activities on a consistent basis throughout the year. The sense of responsibility for the implementation of these norms and regulations is rooted in every individual which has been going on for generations. These characters can also be found among the people of Kampung Naga in their daily lives. As part of an attempt to retain culture and grow characters, parents reiterate the narratives to the younger communities.

Discussion of Character Education Values in Hajat Sasih Ceremony

The tradition of the Hajat Sasih ceremony performed by the indigenous people of Kampung Naga in this study is basically a cultural inheritance. The series of implementation of these activities is the implementation of expressions of gratitude from the community to the Creator. This finding is in line with the results of research conducted by Suryani & Charlian (2010) stated that the Hajat Sasih ritual is performed as an expression of public gratitude for the greatness of God Almighty. This is also in line with Indonesian Law no. 20 of 2003 Chapter 2 Article 3 that Education strives to create

people who believe and fear the Almighty God, have a noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, imaginative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

The ritual of Hajat Sasih offers lessons for the people to understand and honor their ancestors' contributions. In the concept of character education, this shows an attitude of appreciating accomplishment including inspiring people to create something helpful for society, also understanding and honoring the achievements of others. This finding is in line with the results of research conducted by Wijaya (2018) which states that good character is also obtained by imitating individuals who stand out, respected, and admired among people.

Education is a cultural process. Ki Hadjar Dewantara states that education cannot be separated from culture because the basis of education is culture (Tilaar, 2002). Furthermore, Tilaar (2015) states that local awareness has the pedagogical importance of regulating conduct that benefits the community's common interest. The values of local wisdom are an important source in shaping the character of the young generation of a nation. According to Sibarani (2012) character is an identity that is rooted in an individual while Majid (2010) states that personality is a mental or moral quality, moral strength, name or reputation. Both opinions are in accordance with what Juanda (2011) stated, which states that the results of character education can be seen from one's real actions, such as good behavior, honesty, responsibility, respect for the rights of others, and hard work.

Needless to say, the implementation of Hajat Sasih ceremony is always awaited. The ceremony has certain advantages associated with community activities, including the principles of mutual cooperation, respect for the environment,

the growth of mutual love and giving among fellow citizens, stronger relationship among the people, fulfillment of all provisions, becoming a role model for other communities, discouragement from breaking laws that have been in practice since the beginning, and improvement of moral, religious behavior or faith, and devotion to God Almighty.

CONCLUSION

People in Kampung Naga still adhere to the customs of their ancestors. The advancement of the world and the growth of increasingly modern technology have not had much influence on the lives of these indigenous village communities. At one of their ceremonies named Hajat Sasih, the attributes of character education are found including being religious as shown on the purpose of the ceremony itself as an expression of gratitude to the God and ask for the protection, being discipline which shown on their obedience in performing the ceremony six times a year and follow the rules in its implementation, having patriotism, having reverence, building and maintaining friendship, sustaining the environment, developing social care, and showing responsibility. These characters can also be found among the people of Kampung Naga in their daily lives. As part of an attempt to retain culture and grow characters, parents reiterate the narratives to the younger communities.

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