

Religiosity Dynamics of Tabut Community in Bengkulu

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Submission date: 15-Feb-2020 12:12AM (UTC+0800)

Submission ID: 1257476266

File name: Religiosity_Dynamics.docx (82.13K)

Word count: 7490

Character count: 39614

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Abstract:

This study aimed to identify religiosity dynamics of Tabut culture community in Bengkulu. Tabut culture community is minority group in Bengkulu who keep trying to defend their ancestor's culture. The inherited culture is known as Tabut. Tabut Culture can be defined as Syi'ah culture heritage which is still preserved and practiced by Sunni's group. The Tabut performance with its 13 rites is held in 1-10 Muharram month annually aiming to celebrate Islamic Hijriah New Year, to commemorate all martyrs in Karbala field especially Hussein and to commemorate Islam glory.

Based on observation result and data in the field it is concluded that there are two religiosity dynamics existing in this community. The first group is those whose religiosity getting increased due to their participation in every Tabut rites. Second group is those whose religiosity level is not influenced by Tabut rites or in other words whether the diversity increases or not is not due to Tabut culture.

Keywords: Religiosity, Dynamics, Tabut Community, Minority

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Background

Syi'ah is a group considered as dilemmatic in Indonesian religion life today. In one side, Syi'ah clerics used to be important figures in Islamization process in Nusantara (Indonesian Archipelago) while in other hand, Syi'ah has religious comprehension which is difficult to trace in Indonesian muslim religiosity. Syiah heritage which can be seen in Indonesia until today is Karbala tragedy celebration.

Karbala Tragedy or Asyura day is incidence of Husain and his 70 families were slaughtered brutally by Yazid bin Mu'awiyah soldiers from Umayyah clan in Karbala Field, Damaskus. Based on historical record, Husain was beheaded and his head was paraded around Damascus city to be shown off the public as threat for whoever followed Ahl a-Bayt thought.¹ Donaldson (1993) in his writing stated that people Husain death was a national calamity and Husain blood spilling in karbale was believed to have sacrifice value.

Commemoration of Karbala tragedy considered as Syiah thought is not only in Indonesia. Rabbani (2013) in his study found that based on history, Malaka King Sultan Alauddin Riayat Syah leadership is influenced by Syiah and Persia akidah. It

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¹ Dicky Sofjan, *Sejarah dan Budaya Syiahdi Asia Tenggara* (Yogyakarta: Sekolah Pascasarjana Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2013), p. xxi.

is evidenced by practice of Syiah tradition and rites in some South Asia countries including Indonesia, Thailand, and Philippines.²

The existence of Karbela tragedy in Thailand and Philippine is known more as Asyura tradition. Until today, it can be seen in Thailand and Philippine because of King and ruling government support. Meanwhile in Indonesia, the commemoration of Karbala tragedy which initially could be found in some areas in Indonesia, today it can only be found in Bengkulu known as Tabut and in Pariaman known as Tabuik. The lost of Asyura tradition in some areas of Indonesia is due to the accusation that Asyura tradition contains Syiah thought and lack of support from local government¹¹

Herawansyah (2014) in his study stated that Tabut in the beginning was not only developing in Bengkulu but also in Painan, Padang Pariaman, Maninjau, Pidie, Banda Aceh, Meulaboh and Singkil. Further development of the rites was vary where most of areas showed rejection and further disappeared due to abandonment by its supporters. Tabut which is still exist until today can be found in Bengkulu City and Pariaman of West Sumatra where it is called Tabuik. The difference between the two traditions resides in the rites and the date of performance. Tabut festival in Bengkulu is accompanied by series of rites performed by Tabut descendants and held every Muharram month while Tabuik in Padang is performed only as a festival without rits and sometimes held out of Muharram month.

The purpose of Tabut festival in Bengkulu which is held for 13 days in overall is firstly to welcome Hijriyah New Year; secondly to commemorate all martyrs who died in Karbala Field especially Al-Hussein; thirdly, to commemorate Islam glory which reached its peak between VII and XIII Centuries (Syafriil, 2016).

As previously stated, Tabut celebration is frequently related to Syiah school hence perception in public will exist that the group who performs Tabut tradition is Syi'ah followers. Based on O.L Helfrich writing in "*Het Hasan-Hosein Taboet Feest in Bencoelen*" written in 1888, it was explained that Tabut festival was introduced to Pariaman and Bengkulu not by local Muslims but by some *Sepooy* soldiers who incidentally were Syiah followers coming from Delhi, India. The coming soldiers were for accompanying Sir Stamford Raffles to West Coast of Sumatera, particularly Pariaman and Bengkulu areas in 1795-1824.³

Despite finally Bengkulu and Pariaman people adopted Tabut culture, it didn't mean that Muslim in these regions converted to Syiah. It was evidenced from Ronkel study (1914) (in Azra, 2013) about muslim religiosity life in Bengkulu and Pariaman

² Muhammad Ali Rabbani, Faktor Syi'ah dalam Masuk dan Tersebarannya Islam di Asia Tenggara Melalui Arab, India, Persia, dan Cina, dalam Dicky Sofyan (ed) *Sejarah dan Budaya Syiah di Asia Tenggara*, (Yogyakarta: Sekolah Pascasarjana Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2013), P. 33

³ R. Michael Feener, Tabut: Muharram Observances in The History of Bengkulu. *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies*, 6 (2): 87-130. (1999) dan dalam Azyumardi Azra, "Kaum Syi'ah di Asia Tenggara: Menuju Pemulihan Hubungan dan Kerjasama" Dalam Dicky Sofyan (Ed). *Sejarah dan Budaya Syi'ah di Asia Tenggara*. (Yogyakarta: Sekolah Pascasarjana Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2013), Hal: 5-31

where he concluded that there were no signs of Syiah influence both in Bengkulu and Pariaman despite muslims there performed Tabut tradition.

This opinion was supported by initial data gained by researcher in field. There was rejection from Tabut family on negative perception by public that their tradition was Syiah let alone syirik. One of sacred Tabut figures in Bengkulu stated that:

“this tradition is purely containing Islam thought, not Syiah, let alone syirik. If there were *kemenyan* burning and praying to be recited when the rites was performed where in some cases making some persons lost of conscience was so natural incidence and showed the “miracle” of Tabut tradition.” (initial interview with informant SY, 2015).⁴

Zubaedi (2008) in his study stated that Tabut culture has experienced cultural assimilation, accommodation, and interaction processes in very intense way between rites with Syiah nuances and local cultures of Bengkulu people. Due to these processes, Tabut experiences revitalization through indigenization or cultural metamorphosis. The revitalization process is marked by Tabut change which initially was held in context to practice Syiah doctrine into a local wisdom or merely as cultural Syiah practice.⁵

To support Zubaedi's (2008) based on researcher's initial study by viewing acculturation strategy used by Tabut society it was found that Tabut as a culture was shaped from long acculturation process named integration. Integration was done by preserving initial culture, in this case Tabut culture, but also accepting new culture from society they encountered, in this case Bengkulu society.⁶

Based on the explanation above it can be said that Tabut community in Bengkulu despite they preserved and performed Syiah culture annually still practicing and believing in Sunni thought as believed by majority in Bengkulu and even in Indonesia as a strategy they used to keep survived.

Tabut as a culture with 13 rites performed every year by some of Tabut community members is not only considered as merely containing cultural value but also religious value. The religious value existing in Tabut culture surely will influence religiosity dynamics of Tabut culture proponents. Based on the explanation, researcher is keen to identify religiosity dynamics in Tabut community in Bengkulu. Thus by identifying religiosity dynamics in Tabut community it was expected that attitude and perception of general public on Tabut community could be changed where so far it has been controversially debated among people.

⁴ Dalam Nelly, Marhayati. *Dinamika Kelompok Minoritas dalam Mempertahankan Tradisi Studi Pada Keluarga Tabut di Bengkulu*. Prosiding Temilnas IPS. (Jakarta: 2015)

⁵ Zubaedi. Revitalisasi Tabut Untuk Membangun Kerukunan Umat Beragama Bengkulu di Bengkulu. *Jurnal Harmoni*. Depag RI. Vol. VII No.27. (Juli-September 2008).

⁶ Nelly Marhayati & Suryanto, "The acculturation strategy of The Tabut community in Bengkulu", *Studia Islamika*, Vol. 24, No.3. (Desember 2017)

Religiosity Dynamics

Religion and religiosity are two inseparable but differentiable things. Religion is collection of doctrines, tenets, and laws which have been formalized and believed as collection of God commandments for human being. Meanwhile, religiosity is defined as quality of contemplation and attitude of individual based on religiosity values he/she believes. Doctrine and contemplation quality in any religion followers are inseparable. Both show life dynamics in religious practice.⁷

Mukti Ali stated that religion is faith reflection which consist belief and revelation of belief in life (dogmatic reflection and statement). Religion consists of faith and faith statement in real practice. The faith reflection is contemplation on religion tenets while reflection on the religion tenets is about how the individual faith being manifested in social life. Religious life is not merely psychological and private matters but it also relates with belief on the faith and how to implement it in daily social life.⁸

Emile Duerkheim (1976) has differentiated term “religion” and “religious phenomenon.” Religion relates to faith or dogma while religious phenomenon is religious behavior and mental attitude. This difference in essence is more functional meaning that it views religion from its function in social life. The religion function in social life can be viewed from: 1) its function among society; 2) its function as interpretation system of the world which translates self and space concepts and individual tasks among society; 3) religion as society center; and 4) religion as constitutive part of society.

Furthermore it is said that in addition to have social function, religion also has accommodative nature embodied in the way religion approached by individual and influenced by environment, social, culture and politic where individual lives. In addition, religion as a belief system can be part and center of value system existing in any culture and becomes booster for society member behavior in to be in accordance with his/her culture and religion values.⁹

Difficult thing in understanding religiosity is the rise of religion in “inner being” and “sense” in each individual as member of a community or society. The inner being and religiosity sense experience constitute a very subjective act and cannot be measured by thought strength. In more extreme perspective, faith in any religion is considered as inner being speculation. The sense of believe and disbelieve on God existence is merely an inner being speculation which cannot be evidenced

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⁷ Adeng Muchtar Ghazali & Busro, “Pendidikan Islam dalam Dinamika Kehidupan Beragama di Indonesia.”, *Intizar*, Volume 23, Nomor 1, (2017). P. 93-112

⁸ Benny Ridwan, “Potret Organisasi Keagamaan dan Respon Terhadap Dinamika Kehidupan Keberagamaan di Salatiga.”, *INFERENSI, Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, Volume. 5, No. 1, (Juni 2015). P. 101-120

⁹ dalam, Adeng Muchtar Ghazali & Busro, “Pendidikan Islam dalam Dinamika Kehidupan Beragama di Indonesia.”, *Intizar*, Volume 23, Nomor 1, (2017). P. 93-112

scientifically. However for specific individual or society, faith on God is more beneficial since it will tranquil the inner being.¹⁰

Furthermore, Ridwan (2011) stated that Indonesian people with tradition basis are tend to believe the existence of inner being attitude. They consider religion as important part to be involved in every life aspect. Scopes of life require people to involve religiosity aspect hence religion could grow and develop along with tradition in society.

The tradition is also called institution since it is used as reference for norm in the society. Parsudi Suparlan (in Jalaluddin, 2012) stated that sociologists identify primary institution. The primary institution is fundamental norm framework in human life. Primary institution relates to honor and dignity, personality and society preservation. Therefore it cannot be changed easily. It puts emphasis the importance of belief and collectivity and has closed or personal nature, like institution of family, kin, religiosity, friendship or companionship.¹¹

Based on explanation above it can be said that religious tradition is contained in primary institution. It is due to the tradition contains elements related to Divinity, religious act, mystical feelings, worshiping and belief on eternal values. Hence, religious tradition is difficult to change because in addition to community support it consists of some noble values related with community belief.

Religious tradition with one's religious attitude is to influence each other. The religious attitude as something individual or personal in nature will support the religious tradition building. While religious tradition as life environment will provide values and norms of religious behavior pattern to individual or in other words, it will shape a behavior pattern embodied in his/her religious attitude.

Sosis (2007) stated that many anthropologists tried to give understanding that religious belief and rites to perform in religious tradition will shape point of view and influence individual daily life.¹² Surely it includes religious attitude or life. Religious attitude built from religious tradition will influence the way of thinking, sense, or judgment on everything related to religion. In Robert C. Monk view (in Jalaluddin; 2012) religious tradition has two main functions which also have double roles for community and individual. The first is that it functions as strength able to create stability and unity in community and individual. While the second, it functions as agent of change in society or individual even in situation where conflict occurs.¹³

Mutual influence between religious tradition and religious attitude of individual in society is very interesting to study particularly its deeper effect. It is

¹⁰ Benny Ridwan, "Potret Organisasi Keagamaan dan Respon Terhadap Dinamika Kehidupan Keberagamaan di Salatiga.", *INFERENSI, Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, Volume. 5, No. 1, (Juli 2011). P. 101-120

¹¹ Benny Ridwan, "Potret Organisasi Keagamaan dan Respon Terhadap Dinamika Kehidupan Keberagamaan di Salatiga.",

¹² Richard Sosis., 2007. *The Adaptive Value of Religious Ritual*. dalam Aaron Podolefsky dan Peter J. Brown. *Applying Cultural Anthropology*. 7 ed. New York: Mc Graw Hill. Hal. 205

¹³ Jalaluddin. hal: 231

conducted by observing religious tradition in any regions with religiosity dynamics of society where a tradition actor lives. Attitude of individual religiosity in society that hold specific belief as Monk stated above will become proponent in building of religious tradition.

This is the belief community with Tabut culture in Bengkulu held so far. Tabut tradition by part of its proponent is believed to have religious values that according to them has indirect influence upon their religiosity and daily situation. However, as part of long acculturation process, the existence of inherited culture and its effect on diversity among its community member is adapted to native people real condition. Inherited culture with Syiah nuance has to adapt with the native culture which is Sunni hence assumption of the culture tradition proponents have to be evidenced by viewing religiosity dynamics occurred among them.

Tabut Culture Community

Based on the previous explanation it is stated that Tabut culture is inherited¹⁹ from Syiah culture in order to commemorate the martyr of Imam Husain bin Ali bin Abi Thalib who had been brutally killed in Karbala Field. Figure considered as the initiator of Tabut culture in Bengkulu was Syekh Burhanuddin or Imam Senggolo. Title of Imam or Syekh designated to Tabut performer strengthens the assumption that Tabut culture was inherited from Muslim figure with Syiah school.

However, despite with the fact that Tabut culture was coming from Syiah follower, today Tabut culture proponents gradually want to abolish public perception that Tabut culture which they held annually contained Syiah tenets and values.

Result of initial interview by author with one of sacred Tabut figures stated that:

“This tradition is purely containing Islam thought, not syiah, moreover Syirik. If any *kemenyan* burning exist and prayers being recited during the rites hence some trance condition occurs it is so natural and indicates “miracle” of Tabut tradition.”¹⁴

Since 1993, Tabut family has formed organization within which groups of family who perform Tabut tradition are gathered⁴ or known more as Tabut Harmony Family (KKT). The establishment of KKT aimed to organize and preserve Tabut⁴ rites and continuity of sacred Tabut performance. Member of KKT consists of Imam Senggolo descendants and public outside of Imam Senggolo descendants who have passion in preserving and developing Tabut tradition. This opinion was supported by author interview with one of sacred Tabut performance head (Anwar, 2015) from Berkas village where in the interview he stated⁴ that:

“one reason KKT was established is to preserve Tabut tradition and the members are not limited merely to Imam Senggolo descendants. As long as these persons have great interests and passion to preserve tabut they can be

¹⁴ Result of interview with informant SY, 16 September 2015

part of KKT member. It is done since pure descendants of Imam Senggolo particularly the young generation are so few having interest in Tabut tradition performance".¹⁵ (in Marhayati, 2015)

Furthermore, Tabut culture is performed by Imam Senggolo descendant who has had acculturation with native people of Bengkulu. Based on study of the previous studies, acculturation strategy which has been long practiced in Tabut community is integration since Tabut society are still preserving their original culture but also receive or open to change based on the native society situation in Bengkulu.¹⁶

Based on several sources and history record, it is stated that Tabut family ancestors came to these regions in two ways: by voluntarily coming and intended to settle in order to preach islam and in this case was Imam Senggolo and his relatives, and the second by involuntarily coming as slave or labor. However, both groups understood their position and existence. Hence, to be accepted by natives they did assimilation by marrying natives and taking change in culture and behavior.

Zubaedi (2008) stated that intense cultural assimilation, accommodation, and interaction have been occurred between rites with Syiah nuance and Bengkulu local culture hence Tabut experiences revitalization through indigenization process or cultural metamorphosis. The revitalization process is marked by change of Tabut which was initially held in context to practice Syiah doctrine transformed into a local wisdom or merely cultural Syiah practice.¹⁷

Research Method

Study on religiosity dynamics is traced through ethnography approach aiming to comprehend and describe cultural social phenomena existing in Tabut community of Bengkulu. This approach is considered be able to dig more information with wider sources.

Ethnography study is based on assumption that culture is learned and shared among society members therefore it needs to be described and understood. Despite the focuses were on perspective of community to be studied (emics) and researcher perspective (ethics), they are correlated.¹⁸

Analysis units in study on collective continuity behavior in cultural preservation are individual and group which starting from observation on group culture behavior and continued by observing group cultural behavior and then performs data digging on the individual about collective continuity behavior of group

¹⁵ Interview result with Anwar, 5 Januari 2016. Dalam Nelly Marhayati, "Dinamika Kelompok Minoritas dalam Mempertahankan Tradisi: Studi pada Keluarga Kerukunan Tabut di Bengkulu.", *Prosiding Temilnas IPS*, Bali, (2018), ISBN: 2503-0965.

¹⁶ Nelly Marhayati & Suryanto, "The Acculturation Strategy For Tabut Community in Bengkulu.", *Studia Islamika*, Volume 24, Number 3 (December, 2017): 403-433

¹⁷ Poniman, *Dialektika Agama dan Budaya Dalam Upacara Tabut*. Bogor: IAIN Press, 2014.

¹⁸ E. Kristi Poerwandari, *Pendekatan Kualitatif Untuk Penelitian Perilaku Manusia*, Jakarta: LPSP3 Fak.Psikologi Universitas Indonesia, 2011.

member in culture preservation. Then the data obtained from individual as member of group were analyzed and the result was used for group the individual belongs. Informant characteristics derived from Tabut Harmony Family are: sacred Tabut performer, descendants of Tabut performing Family, having active participation during Tabut tradition performance. Informants in this study were 6 persons representing 17 groups of sacred Tabut.

Selection of 6 informants were based on suggestion from KKT head as in his opinion not all performers from Tabut tradition understood the meaning of the rites they performed. Most of them didn't understand about the meaning of Tabut rites they routinely performed every year where they would say they knew it as it was. Data were collected using participant observation where researcher listened, viewed and participated directly in every culture activity committed by Tabut community. During participant observation, researcher also collected data using ethnography interview based on Spradley's (1980).¹⁹

The collected data were analyzed by four step analysis including domain, taxonomy, componential, and thematic analyses. In ethnography study in every analysis step, researcher still could collect data both interview data and other secondary data where finding in these analyses could be used as questions material for further stage of analysis. Like quantitative study result which requires data validity and reliability tests, qualitative test also requires data validity test. In this research qualitative data validity test were performed by performing data triangulation, member checking and auditing.

Findings in the Field

Before elucidating findings about religiosity dynamics in Tabut culture, 13 rites in tabut culture and values contained within each according to some informants would be presented.

a. Value contained in Tabut rites

In overall, informants stated that value contained in Tabut rites is to preach islam since it is the essence of Tabut festival performed by their ancestors since hundreds years ago in the first settlement time in Bengkulu. As stated by informant AQ:

“.....The point is Islam preaching... that is the most important.. so, to preach Islam, syech Burhanuddin initiated this ceremony with purpose to convey islam teaching. So, when he came to Bengkulu, a long time ago, okay, Islam had not been entering Malay yet,,(but) entering Bengkulu was in seventh century, in eighth century Islam was here.. but it yet. Yet.. ehmm... well

socialized.. so by the Tabut culture, Islam was thought by Syech Burhanuddin with the thirteen rites...²⁰

Furthermore for meaning or value contained in the 13 rites of Tabut are following:

“...if like praying, we muslims are obliged to pray, to always remember Allah., the praying is good.. we beg His permit so in the ceremony we beg for safety, not begging to other than Him, many had misunderstood, in Tabut many people did... People thought that we asked something to Jin, asked other things,, in fact we didn't.. nothing at all.. we kept praying to God, Allah subhana wata'ala.. then for *ambik tanah* (taking earth), it is also reminding us, ee prophet Adam was made from earth.. and we do too as recited in Quran. During forty days our spirit was given.. but prophet Adam was initially made from earth, from the essence of earth and given with spirit..that's the story.. and also for *duduk penja*, as you (researcher) saw yesterday.. keep praying, in *penja* position.. *penja* is directing toward Allah.. for praying, also for *menjara*.. *menjara* is preserving tahuid, sometimes we have to struggle until our life end, *menjara* is performed at night, long walking at night, as if we experienced the moment by ourselfe, like it.. for *meradai*, *meradai* is kind of...emm...public emphaty.. ee emphaty for muslims who were lost at the war..so what is like the emphaty...so, as human being we have to help each other.. then *arak penja* and *arak jari-jari*..so we remind it again.. *arak sorban* is like *arak jari-jari*..if gham... meaning that despite with our mourning, we kept remembering Allah as creator... Gham means silence.. silence and mourning... Pakistan ordo language.. the writing is Gham.. reading Gam. Then *gabut naek puncak*..*gabut naek puncak* is connecting between lower building and upper building. After being connected that is the Islam.. it will be always toward the peak. Despite once it was down, as muslims we have obligation to raise Islam up (laughing). Then *senja*. *Senja* is worshipping or giving respect.. so as young man, it is a warning for young man.. no matter clever we are, we have to respect the older one.... Like that. Then *tabut tebuang*, Tabut tebuang is tabut parade as our anchestor said it was toward the grave, until burying... In fact... (thinking) it is different. I interpreted it as different. But sometimes some people thought like Mamu that it was a pilgrim.. I don't think so... in Tabut parade, there is earth inside, *penjanyo*..to me it is burial....²¹

Based on informant AQ description above, meanings or values of 13 Tabut rites are following

²⁰ Result of interview with informant AQ, 14 Januari 2017

²¹ Result of interview with informant AQ

1. Pray to Allah swt, performed before Tabut festival is an obligation as a muslim with meaning of asking savior both in this world and afterworld and safety during the Tabut festival.
2. *Ambik tanah*, this rite contains value that as human being we are warned about our origin that we were created from earth.
3. *Duduk penja*, this rite contain value of praying to Allah, viewed from penja position which is set directing upward like hands open to the sky like in praying position.
4. *Menjara*, contains value to live tauhid by jihad even if sacrificing the soul.
5. *Meradai*, contains value of raising emphaty sense from community to muslims due to lost in battlefield.
6. *Arak penja* or *arak jari-jari*, contains value which remind us to al-Husain struggle and his death in Karbala war by the finding of Husain's fingers after he was killed by Yazid.
7. *Arak Seroban*, is similar to previous rites which contains meaning that al-Husain *sorban* had been found which then been paraded to his followers.
8. *Gam day*, contains sorrow value. It is sorrow due to al-Husain death but it has to remind Allah as the Creator.
9. *Tabut Naik Puncak*, contains value that Islam is always toward the peak despite once it used to fall down, as muslims we have duty to rise Islam to the peak.
10. *Soja*, contains value of mutual respect and appreciation where no matter smart a young man he has to respect and appreciate the older one and vice a versa .
11. *Tabut Tebuang* is understood as funeral day. However, some define it as a tomb pilgrim.
12. *Cuci penja*, contains value of self cleaning according to Sunnah that muslim shouldn't annul his wudhu.

Other informant EEN in responding meaning of 13 Tabut rites showed less detail information than previous informants. The informant only understood partly the value contained in Tabut culture despite he participated the rites every year. All they did in the rites were considered as merely following what ancestor inherited to them. The informant considered Tabut as just a culture hence it cannot be blamed or considered as against Islam tenets.

"...Indeed it doesn't have any meaning, but it has been passed for generations from our ancestors. Performing the rites, the culture, indeed previously the religion (Islam) had not been developing well. Ehm, the praying was in accordance with those recited by Tabut carrier. It was named praying for safety (words emphasized) or Yasinan (words emphasized) in our comprehension it is the way we send our praying for the Prophet's grandson (Husain) and to commemorate Islam struggle. Just it, the praying and to symolize that human in essence was made from earth, it is the philosophy.

Duduk penja is comparable with we prepare, prepare for war. *Penja* is equal to weapon. Ehm...sword. Just like that. That's all I know. I don't know more details But I define the Tabut as a culture, nothing more. Never misunderstand it. *Menjara* can be defined as a context where we live now. We visit each other. We are living in a group, aren't we? Visiting our neighbor and also getting visited. The Tabut festival is not funded by government, so we raise money from those who support the culture, the general public. That's the fund raising. And *Jejari* based on the story is about searching for Husain body. The only parts to be found were his fingers and then his sorban. Then it is generalized in *arak gedang* (complete parts). *Gham* is mourning and silence day lasting until 03.00 PM. After that the process run to the peak, in Ashar time, it was the peak (Interview, January 21st 2017).

However, informant kept trying to explain the values of some rites as much as he knew:

1. Do'a selamat, contains value of sending praying for Prophet grandson that is Al-Husain and to commemorate Islam struggle history.
2. Ambik Tanah, contains value that human being is derived from earth.
3. *Duduk penja*, *penja* by informant is described like a sword and the value contained in *duduk penja* is preparation for war.
4. *Menjara*, according to informant it contains value as form of silaturahmi
5. *Meradai*, contains value of fund raising to community for Tabut ceremony
6. *Arak penja* and *arak eroban*, according to informant contains a value as search of al-Husain body where in the first day of searching his fingers were found and in the second day his sorban was found. The peak is in the third day of *arak gedang* defined as recollected al-Husain body parts.
7. *Gham*, contains value of sorrow day or tranquillizing time

The third informant, MT gave slightly different meaning of Tabut rites including meaning from *duduk penja*, *arak seroban* and *arak penja*.

"if taking earth the meaning is, truly meaning is.. it is Husain oath.. derived from earth will return to earth....emh before going to Karbala field, he visited his grandfather (Prophet Muhammad) tomb and taking earth from his grave, and then he departed, it is the meaning of earth taking...its history. If *duduk penja* means celebrating 1 Muharram, then for *arak-arak jari*, it was the first time to be found from Husain (his fingers), *arak Sorban* is when the sorban being found, *arak gedang* when the complete parts of Husain body were gathered. It was the bodily series, it was *arak gedang*, it was started from 1 to 10 Muharram. Formerly *Dol-dol* were not sounded except from 1st Muharram, then at 5th Muharram the *dol-dol* were sounded again In *menjara* night, it was like war. But here, it was understood as silaturahmi. We visit each other. *Meradai* means giving food to children who perform the Tabut, since in the past Calendar had not been made so *Meradai* was used to mark Tabut time. *Gam*

day is the mourning day hence in this day no sound is allowed. The body parts, fingers, sorban, the head.. that's all the Arak gedang about. Soja means to respect the older man by younger one. Tabut tebuang mens to clean self. After all we were destined to be burried.²²

Like the previous informant, informant MT didn't much understand about meaning and values contained in every Tabut rites. However, based on the interview above, his explanation can be concluded as follows:

1. praying and *duduk penja* rites, defined by informant as in addition to celebrate 1 Muharram or Islamic New Year it is also performed in order to send praying for Prophet Muhammad and his companions.
2. *Ngambik tanah*, is defined by informant as depiction of al-Husain story where he put earth in Prophet Muhammad tomb before departing to meet Abu yazid and having value that human being is derived from earth and will return to the earth.
3. *Arak jari-jari and arak seroban*, informant stated that the meaning of this rite is related to the finding of Husain's fingers and Husain's sorban.
4. *Menjara*, contains silaturrahmi night, to visit each other among groups of Tabut families.
5. *Meradai* is to raise fund from public and defined as public care and concern on Tabut tradition and also to signify that this tradition has begun and would be processed.
6. Gham is defined as mourning moment hence ringing *Dol* is prohibited.
7. Then it was continued by *arak gedang* where all body parts of Husain has been collected.
8. Soja contains honor value on the older people from the younger and vice a versa.
9. meaning of *tabut tebuang* is self cleaning.

SY informant as KKT leader who had written book about Tabut showed his disappointment on Tabut family. According to him, he had tried to socialize the meaning of Tabut rites but due to majority of Tabut family members were lazy to read until now only few of them understood the Tabut rites meaning. In general, meaning contained in Tabut rites is to commemorate the martyr of al-Husain in Karbala war and to commemorate Islam glory. Informant did very disagree if the Tabut tradition be connected to Syiah teaching.

"Most of Tabut community has not been socialized, some said it was custom but they don't know exactly what they do, what the meaning, and everything, I know exactly what it is (Tabut ceremony), so I make the details, I socialize it

²² Result of interview with informant MT, January 1st 2017

to everyone so they understand, but sometimes they don't read it. I have written it but they don't write. So far they don't understand. (interview line 6). The point is that they are wrong about the essence, custom for people to focus on heroic things, it doesn't have any correlation with the heroism,.. martyrdom (heightening the tone).. the focus is martyr. Hero could be Christian, or Kafir could also be hero. So, Syuhada is different, al-Husain syahid (martyr), so the martyrdom of Husain we commemorate and we pray so it wouldn't happen again. But why to be martyr? For tauhid sake! That's the point Commemorating al-Husain and all martyrs in Karbala Field. (interview of line-10). Yes, commemorating Islam glory era, automatically by expectation that Islam would again be glorious. The point is the Islam. But misunderstanding by other clerics is occurring. That Syiah is heretic. It's devastating. Actually Syiah is political in nature. Muhammad followers are loving HIS family and becoming Ali's successor. That's the different, why Ali? Because Ali is considered free from any sins since the beginning. It's different with Abu Bakar and others. He was used to have sins, it doesn't mean Abu Bakar is hated, but he and they were not as pure as Ali. Then the hatred created hoax news. Is that true prophet descendants be heretic? Impossible. In fact, they were preserving the thought, Husain descendants struggled and ready to die."²³

Informant SY explained his disappointment on Tabut family that reluctant to read the book he wrote about history and meaning of Tabut rites Informant also revealed his disappointment to Islam clerics for labelling those who performed Tabut tradition as Syiah.

Based on informant explanation above, in general 13 rites of Tabut contains value or meaning so specific where many people had not been knowing even among Tabut family it remained unknown. The different opinions were occurred about value contained in every Tabut rites due to the different perceptions about it. Previously it has been stated that there is difference in perception about Tabut culture. One opinion stated that Tabut had Religion and Culture values and other stated that the Tabut merely contained Culture value.

Based on informant opinion there is difference in initial perception about meaning or value of Tabut culture. Three informants stated that Tabut culture contained religion and culture value while three others stated that Tabut was purely culture. The difference of both views can be seen in the following diagram:

²³ Interview result with informant SY, January 14th 2017

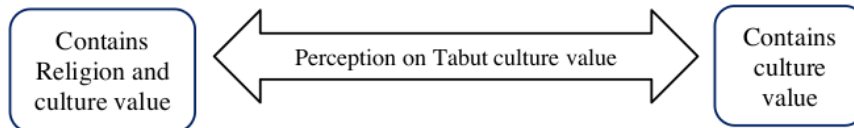


Figure 1: Diagram of Perception on Tabut Culture

The values contained in Tabut rites which constitute the most important part of Tabut festival can be figured in following table:

Table 1 : Table of Value contained in Tabut rites

No	Ritual	Nilai
1	Do'a Selamat	Meaning is to always remember Allah SWT, pray for safety in the world of afterworld particularly during Tabut rite practice
2	¹² Ambik Tanah	Means that all humans are from earth and will return to earth
3	Duduk Penja	Means to pray to Allah swt.
4	Menjara	Contain value of silaturrahmi and jihad for Tauhid
5	Meradai	Contains value of public empathy
6	Arak Penja dan	Contains value of respect to Husain who died in Karbala field.
7	Arak Seroban Gham	Contains value in mourning day due to Husain death in Karbala Field
8	Soja	Contains value of respect each other between the young and old men
9	Tabut Naik Puncak	Contains value of Islam glory
10	Tabut Tebuang	Contains pilgrim and removing bad deed of human
11	Cuci Penja	Contains value of self cleaning.

Religiosity Dynamic in Tabut community

Based on previous explanation it is found that four informants consider that Tabut culture is merely containing cultural value while two other informants consider Tabut culture is not merely containing cultural value but also religious value.

The difference in perception about Tabut cultural value also influences religiosity dynamics of Tabut community in their daily activity. The four informants considering that Tabut is only having cultural value state that their religiosity level is not influenced by Tabut rites and culture. Meanwhile, two other informants considering that tabut having cultural and religious value state that their religiosity level is influenced by Tabut rites and culture.

Question about religiosity has definition whether tradition and rites of Tabut influence informant's life and religiosity in his way of thinking and behavior. Responses of informants are following:

Informant AQ recognized that since he followed Tabut rite in 2011, he had desire in his heart to keep digging the truth within Tabut tradition, to keep improving the rites into the truly Islam value. The impulse was exists due to awareness in his self that as one of Islam preacher descendant he had obligation to continue his ancestors struggle by means not only performing Tabut rites but also digging, seeking for each meaning behind the rites and to eliminate any rites against Islamic values.

Following is complete response of informant AQ:

“Since two thousands and eleven. Since I was forty years old (laughing). So, previously I just followed, just joined... previously, then two thousands and eleven, Mamu had not been here. Mamu was no longer in Bengkulu, I was appointed as leader despite I wasn't ready. Two thousands and eleven Mamu had been a leader but the members were so few... So. I was appointed here, all activities I handled and one asked me a question that time whether I still had Punjab lineage and incidentally I did but was different than him who got his lineage from Empu Sendok in Jakarta. Once there was a riot as the tomb would be destroyed but it failed nah, I also have the similar lineage “Brother, we both are descendants of Islam preacher in Indonesia, so have you been doing deed like our ancestors?” Nah, since then, Insyah Allah, we tried to do the same as our ancestors. By that way we got more guidance. It has not been right yet not one hundred percent right.. but its okay, just do it. It was the message, just do, if the time is coming, we will give more than this.”²⁴

Different than informant AQ, informant EEN and MT stated that Tabut tradition and its rites had no effect on their religiosity. The change occurred in their way of thinking and behavior like in religiosity was not due to Tabut. According to EEN informant he just considered Tabut as culture hence he thought that it had no influence. The influence on his religiosity was happening more from his participation in one organization named “Life Guardian”. Following is informant EEN response:

²⁴Result of interview with informant AQ, January, 14th 2017

“*nothing*...it doesn’t have any influence to me. But I don’t know if others do. And even if it so, sometimes it’s too excessive.. I give a picture... it is not good to be excessive, it is just enough to be culture. I have been studying it. Since I join in *Life Guardian* I can answer every problem ”.²⁵

Meanwhile according to informant MT, behavior and mindset about his religiosity is increased due to worship as obligation and has to be fulfilled not because of the Tabut rites. Complete statement by informant MT is following:

“....Not due to Tabut... actually if we know the meaning we should improve our faith. The faith improves not due to Tabut.. but it is our obligation (to improve it).. so the faith is about an obligation... sholat is obligation.. not due to Tabut.”²⁶

Meanwhile, informant SY response confirmed AQ response that Tabut rites will influence daily and religiosity behaviors of Tabut family particularly values contained in every rites being performed. Following is complete statement by informant SY:

“Definitely the rites have influence. So I enter, attach this in order people to read it, related to liquor, drugs, and surah in Quran. (give example verses about liquor and recite it), but if any Allah writing exist I kept it so not being trampled, I avoided writing Allah in caligraph, so we take only those that relate to ummat benefit, then we attach it (line-15). Yes, our Islam sense improved, we contemplated it and it is improved..”²⁷

The effect will appear in practice of faith and Islam which will keep improved by participating in Tabut rites and culture tradition. It happens because by the rites performance love of Islam particularly love to prophet family will be heightened.

Meanwhile SM informant stated that effect of culture tradition and Tabut rites appears merely in social behavior but not in religiosity behavior. Following is statement of informant SM:

“If social problem there is effect, like gathering, mutual help; then we can observe whether someone works unconditionally or not... It is so clear that it cannot be correlated with religion. Religion is religion, it has the right guide. But it is tradition passed for generations it is wrong assumption that it was a religion.”²⁸

Effect of Tabut rites and culture on religiosity is not exists because Tabut is culture which doesn’t have religious values at all and it is only tradition inherited from generation to generation. Meanwhile religion has its own rules and guidance.

²⁵ Result of interview with informant EEN, January 21st 2017

²⁶Result of interview with informant MT, January 1st 2017

²⁷Result of interview with informant AQ, January, 14th 2017

²⁸Result of interview with informant SM, February 2016

Further response from informant JNI showed that he responded in deeper way about effect of Tabut rites and culture on his thinking and daily behavior as one of Tabut family members. According to the informant, positive meaning influencing his daily behavior includes people commanded to learn, to help each other since all have equal position. In more clearly way, informant JNI responded as follows:

“yes the influence exists. So it is directed toward us, we are asked to learn, for example when some have problem we have to help each other.. that’s the point...remember that we are created from earth and will return to the earth.. so don’t be arrogant, if personal value includes beautiful attitude, giving, help each other, but I disagree if it is considered as religious rite as many people misunderstand, so you can make your own interpretation, take the good one and leave the bad one. So I say we just perform culture like *duduk penja*, it is not wrong if before the group comes we have dzikir (remembering Allah), nah we ask boarding school students about forty students to recite sholawat, we gave them uniform, we sell this culture so people don’t consider it as amateur culture”²⁹

Other influence of Tabut culture and rites for example from *ambik tanah* rites contains value of warning that human being is God creature mad from earth and will return to earth so human may not be arrogant. In addition, value of helping each other also exists. However one thing informant didn’t like was the assumption that Ritual Tabut constituted a religious rite. This assumption makes Tabut culture existence considered as controversial tradition among Bengkulu people.

Based on informant opinion above it can be concluded that Informant stated the Tabut rites was influencing religiosity and daily life where not only he considered Tabut as culture but as also contained religious values which could influence his daily life and religiosity. Informant who considered that Tabut was merely a culture and had no religiosity value didn’t get significant influence from it in his religiosity and daily life.

Following is figure of Tabut community religiosity dynamics in Bengkulu

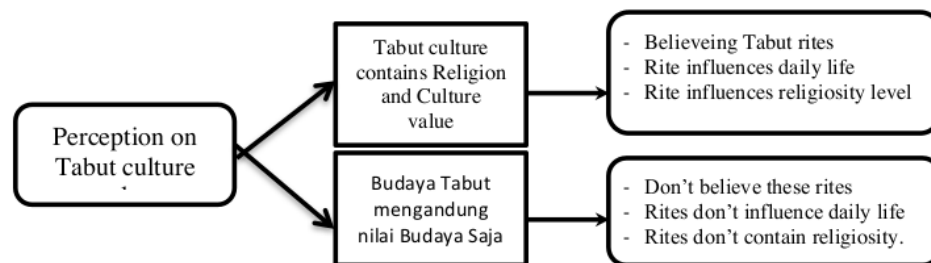


Figure 2: Religiosity Dynamics in Tabut Community

²⁹Result of interview with informant JNI, May, 9th 2017

Based on the diagram above, when informant states that Tabut culture contains Religion and Culture values, then they will believe the rites and the rites itself will influence their daily practice and religiosity. It is evidenced by informant statement that after following Tabut rites every year, his religiosity sense gets increased. While one informant stating that Tabut culture was only containing merely cultural value had opinion that the rites was not in conflict with Islam tenets and influenced his mentality where he considered that Tabut culture changed his personality to be caring more and felt that he had equal position with others. Other informant stated that Tabut culture merely contained cultural value didn't believe in Tabut rites, didn't perform rites outside of Tabut month and the Tabut rites also didn't influence his mentality. Such informant tended to consider that Tabut culture was merely culture inherited generation to generation that keep preserved because of ancestor's message.

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Conclusion

Based on the explanation of findings above, it can be concluded that religiosity dynamics occurred in Tabut community is influenced by Tabut community perception on their culture. There were some informants considering that Tabut culture could increase individual religiosity because their perception on Tabut culture was considered to contain religion and culture values, but informants who considered that Tabut culture was merely containing cultural value, their religiosity was not influenced by Tabut culture as they frequently practiced.

Based on this research, it can be stated that the height of Tabut community religiosity doesn't depend on Tabut culture as they believe as generation to generation heritage and merely contains cultural value, but not in conflict with Islam tenets in Sunni school and has long been held by majority of Bengkulu. That cultural tradition frequently practiced doesn't influence public or community religiosity in which the tradition be practiced. It is due to perception difference exists in understanding value existing in culture that Tabut community practice.

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