

Nyimur Ritual as a Healing Media and Refusing Bad Luck in Traditional Knowledge System of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar Communities

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Abstract—This research is motivated by the presence of *nyimur* traditions in the community life of the native village of *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar*, South Sukabumi, Indonesia. This tradition is held every year and is believed to be a healing ceremony and refusing bad luck so that the life of a child in the future will be physically and mentally healthy. This study attempts to investigate the procession of *nyimur* traditional ceremony. This study was conducted using a descriptive-analytical study. The data were collected using interview techniques. The findings showed that *nyimur* tradition existed in *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar* and had certain procedures and functions of the tradition. The study also investigated the knowledge of the indigenous people of *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar* about the tradition of *nyimur* and its relationship to the healing/refusing bad luck method in the traditional knowledge system of *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar Indigenous Peoples* since hundreds of years ago. It can be concluded that this tradition is included in the community's knowledge system that should be maintained since it includes human knowledge, especially the community of *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar* regarding matters or elements used in their lives.

Keywords: *Ciptagelar, culture, knowledge, nyimur, tradition*

I. INTRODUCTION

Humans have the mind and intellect to exploit anything that existed in the world in fulfilling their needs. Likewise, humans are given the ability to develop their thoughts and feelings, including developing their social and cultural lives. Indonesia is well-known for its cultural diversity and its traditions. This noble culture and tradition come from hundreds of tribes that inhabit the archipelago (Ramadhan, Djono & Suryani, 2018). Therefore, the social life and culture that develops in an area will certainly be influenced by a lot of matters, both those that support and hindered it's the development. According to Koentjaraningrat (2014) culture is all thoughts and behaviors of humans that are functionally and dysfunctionally arranged or constructed around their environment. In addition, Pasaribu (2013) states that culture is the result of human behavior that is organised by the behaviour that should be learned through learning and organized in social life.

Furthermore, Koentjaraningrat (2014) also believes that universally humans have seven cultural elements i.e. 1) language, 2) knowledge systems; 3) social organization; 4) equipment and technology systems; 5) livelihood system; 6) religious system; and 7) the art system. In the knowledge system, each ethnic group has knowledge in: 1) the surrounding nature, 2) plants that grow in their environment, 3) animals that live in the area where they live, 4) substances, raw materials, and goods that are located in the environment, 5) human body, 6) human characteristics and behavior, and 7) time and space.

We all know that culture is the work of human creativity created from generation to generation. This is supported by Koentjaraningrat (2014) who states that culture is all thoughts and behaviors of humans that are functionally and dysfunctionally arranged or regulated in their environment. Among the seven culture elements, one of them is equally important with the other elements i.e. the knowledge system.

Knowledge is closely related to the nature of human to know and learn. Human curiosity drives the development of science. Knowledge is something known by humans through the senses they possessed (Siany, 2009). Knowledge can be obtained through research, thinking, intuition, and revelation from God. The development of logical, systematic knowledge, and good cognizance will produce good knowledge as well.

The knowledge system in universal culture is closely related to the system of tools and technology, because the knowledge system is abstract and manifested in the ideas and human thought. The knowledge system is very limited, because it includes human knowledge about the elements that are utilized in people's lives. Yet what becomes a study in the anthropology of knowledge system is how human knowledge employed to sustain life, such as a group of people who have knowledge of traditional astronomy so that they could calculate days by the moon or celestial bodies considered to give a sign on human

life. Some knowledge is related to people's lives in a day, a week, a month, or even years.

The next element is the knowledge system based on one's ability regarding the surrounding natural conditions, as well as the character of the equipment used. The area of this knowledge system includes the nature, flora and fauna, time, space and numbers, personality of human beings, and the human body. Knowledge systems in culture are formed through the process of interaction of each member of the community. In addition, knowledge can be in the form of traditions passed down from one generation to another generation.

Villagers who live by farming will have a traditional agricultural calendar knowledge system called *pranata mangsa* (season order). This was previously used by Sundanese ancestors to carry out agricultural activities. According to Marsono (as cited in Siany, 2009), the season order has been used for about 2000 years by the Javanese community. The season order system is used to determine the relationship patterns between rainy and dry season. Through this system, farmers will be able to know when to cultivate the land, plant, and harvest agricultural products as all farming activities are based on natural events cycles. According to Koentjaraningrat (2014), knowledge systems have not been the subject of concern in anthropological research, because they have the notion that societies or cultures outside of Europe cannot possibly have more advanced knowledge systems, but the assumption shifted slowly caused by a better understanding of the fact that there is no society that can live without having the knowledge of the surrounding nature and also the character of the tools around it.

One of the existing knowledge systems in *Kasepuhan Adat Ciptagelar*, which is closely related to agriculture and health is the knowledge system that exists in *Nyimur* traditional ceremony. The traditional ceremony or tradition of *Nyimur* is closely related to health because it has something to do with immunization. *Nyimur* tradition in *Kasepuhan Adat Ciptagelar* is believed to be able to ward off disease and crime that will attack children or newborns.

When the rice grain already contained in *huma* and fields (field for dry rice cultivation), it was a sign that the people of *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar* had to carry out a *nyimur* ritual that held out for one week. *Nyimur* is nasalization of the word *simbur* or it can be formulated with N + *simbur*, so *Nyimur*. According to Danadibrata (2015), *simbur* has a meaning of *sembur*; *bura*, *dibanjur*, *disebrotkeun dengan menggunakan cai*; *banjur* (sprayed by water). The tradition of *nyimur* in *Ciptagelar* belongs to the initiation of traditional ceremonial activity. Initiation or *Inisiasi* /*ini•si•a•si*/ is a ceremony or test that has to be undertaken by people who will be members of an association, tribe, age group, and so on (KBBI, 2007).

Like immunization, *nyimur* is a ceremony that must be followed by every newborn baby or 0-1-year-old in *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar*. Every baby will be taken to Imah Gedé, the village head's house. *Nyimur* activities are sacred, led by a shaman, each baby will be prayed for, splashed, and their eyes are dripped with water that has been blessed by prayers, hoping that after this ritual ceremony the baby will recover or be healthy throughout their life lifetime. Prevented them from physical and

mental illness, which is a disease that not only comes from germs or viruses but also mystical diseases, such as jinn possession and witchcraft.

Nyimur tradition is an annual event that has been held for hundreds of years and continues to be held today with traditions that are still maintained. Even though babies in *Ciptagelar* have got the government's immunization program but for them, the babies still have to follow *nyimur* procession. For this reason, this research is considered to be important to know the implementation of *nyimur* tradition and its functions, which is still carried out by the adat people of *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar*.

This research on *Ciptagelar* is not the first research. Previously there were several studies that have been carried out. The research carried out by Ramadhan, Djono & Suryani (2018) explains the pattern of dualism or *sakuren* in the social organization system of *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar* community. The issues that distinguish between research that has been carried out by Ramadhan, Djono & Suryani (2018) and Kusdiwanggo & Jakob Sumardjo (2016) with this research is in terms of the content and subject discussed. The research discusses the knowledge system of *Ciptagelar* society, more specifically about the tradition of *Nyimur* in *Ciptagelar*, whereas previous research discussed the social organization system that exists in *Ciptagelar*. From a number of previous literature reviews, it can be concluded that this study is the first study to be conducted, so it may be argued that this research is important since no one has ever examined it before.

The purpose of this research is to find out the tradition of *Nyimur*, which includes the procedures, functions, and the relationship of this tradition with the healing methods and refusing bad luck in *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar*, Sukabumi Regency, West Java Province. The scope of the discussion is the traditional knowledge system that exists in *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar*, especially those related to *Nyimur* tradition.

II. METHOD

A. Research Method

This research is qualitative research. The method used in this research is an analytical-descriptive method employing observation and interview. The analytical descriptive method, according to Sugiyono (2017), is a method that serves to describe or give an overview of the study object based on the data or samples that have been collected genuinely without any analysis and any general conclusions. In simple terms, this method is used to explain the procession of *Nyimur* culture and its functions.

B. Research Subject

The subject of this research is *Nyimur* procession which is held once a year in Kampung *Kasepuhan Ciptagelar*, Sirnaresmi Village, Sukabumi Regency, West Java Province.

C. Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments were observation and interviews. The researchers led directly to the field and interviewed the respondents (elders) and recorded it. The results of the recording will be used as research data.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the discussion and theory of culture put forward earlier, the following will discuss *Nyimur* tradition, its procedures, functions, and relationship with the healing methods and refusing bad luck in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar.

A. Process of *Nyimur* Tradition

Nyimur is a nasalization of the word *simbur* or it can be formulated with N + *simbur*, so *Nyimur*. According to Danadibrata (2015) *simbur* has a meaning of *sembur*, *bura*, *dibanjur*, *disebrotkeun dengan menggunakan cai*; *banjur* (sprayed by water). The tradition of *nyimur* in Ciptagelar belongs to the initiation / initium traditional ceremonial activity. Based on KBB Iiniasia/ini•si•a•si/is a ceremony or test that has to be undertaken by people who will be members of an association, tribe, age group, and so on. Because the tradition of *nyimur* in Kasepuhan Adat Ciptagelar has to be must be carried out as a custom for a generation to generation. The target of *Nyimur* is a newborn baby within one-year birth span.

Nyimur tradition is usually carried out once a year, with a one-week period of performance, more particularly when the rice grain already contained, or when *hiris* trees (Kongo pea) start flowering (because in Ciptagelar the Kongo pea is planted at the same time with rice). The steps in implementing *Nyimur* tradition is arranged as follows:

- Collecting the data on the number of babies born around *kampung adat* (traditional village) and centered at Kasepuhan Ciptagelar and its environs. The data collection is carried out by the elders of the village which will then be given to *rorokan dukun* (shaman division) and finally will be reported to the highest leader, "*Abah*", to prepare for the event. The shaman in Ciptagelar is Aki Karma. According to Suganda (n.d), the shaman has a function in the traditional governance structure as an assistant to the elders who is in charge of leading *nyimur* ceremony/immunization, *prah-prahan*, and medication. In addition, the shaman also has the authority to determine the cost of conducting this adat procession.
- Preparing the material needed for *Nyimur*, such as leaves (*kingkilaban*, *pacar téré*, and *pacing*), water, *tumpeng congcot* (cone rice), river shrimp, river crab, and side dishes
- Performing *Nyimur*. *Nyimur* tradition is usually carried out once a year, with a one-week period of performance, more particularly when the rice grain already contained, or when *hiris* trees (Kongo pea) start flowering (because in Ciptagelar the Kongo pea is planted at the same time with rice). *Nyimur* can be done after the above sign revealed, within one week before to thanksgiving.
- Syukuran (an expression of Gratefulness). Syukuran *Nyimur* is held at noon, which begins with a gift or *tawasil* then continued with having a meal together. Usually, food has been provided by parents who have babies. The food is in the form of small rice cone (*congcot*) added by shrimp and river crab. The number of cone rice made for this ceremony is based on the

number of babies or family heads (KK) who follow the tradition. Small cone rice (*congcot*) is a symbol of simple food with a few side dishes. Based on the data, the number of babies who have carried out *Nyimur* tradition in 2018 were 355 babies. This implies that the number of rice cones that must be provided are also 355.

After discussing the steps in *Nyimur* tradition, now in detail we will discuss its procedures:

- *Nyieun dangdaunan* (making leaves), collecting leaves (*kingkilaban*, *pacartéré*, *pacing*). The number of leaves is odd.
- *Dukun* (shaman) comes accompanied by *kokolot lembur* (elders) and their staff (*Aki Amil*, *Dukun*, *Kokolot Lembur*, and *Baris Kolot*).
- The *nyimur* event is held in the middle of the village.
- Children who are the object *Nyimur* often gather at Aki Karma's house.
- Then, the children who have been gathered at Aki Karma's house brought to the middle of the village so they can gather together.
- Aki Karma prays by facing *parukuyan*.
- Aki Karma stands up then prays to the four *juru/ujung* (corner) (West, East, South, North), asking for salvation, but before praying to the four ends, he usually starts praying towards the Qibla first.
- Then Aki Karma will sit down again and the water for trickling the eyes (*meureuhan*) was given a prayer again.
- Then the water is *diképrétkeun* or sprinkled.
- All mothers of the children bring small rice cones (*congcot*), river shrimp, river crab, and leaves provided. Then the water is *dipukprukeun* (given everything that will please the heart), drunk, splashed or dropped on the eyes of infants who follow the tradition.
- After the session in the middle of the village ends, all mothers and their babies go to Aki Karma's house to give gratitude and prayers. After that, they bring the holy water homes.

In *nyimur* tradition there is usually a special dish, namely small *tumpeng* (*congcot*). Commonly, *tumpeng* is made of rice, eggs (omelette, *balado*, boiled), vegetables, chili sauce, pieces of chicken meat, anchovies, etc. but in Ciptagelar the people make the cone rice with different ingredients. The rice cooked by using *aseupan*, a cone-shaped woven bamboo. All ingredients and side dishes are put into a basin. This ingredient is coconut which has been given herbs and roasted. Then added with other seasonings. All ingredients are mixed to have a delicious taste.

The number of *Tumpeng* made is ain adjusted to the number of babies or family cards (*Kartu Keluarga*; KK) that follow the tradition. This is because *tumpeng*, shrimp, and river crabs are part of the ritual event. *Tumpeng* is usually eaten together with shrimp and river crab. The meal was held after the traditional ceremonies of *nyimur* and *tawasil* or recitation. This is a sign of gratitude for their safety thanks to residents who are still alive and sending prayers to people who have died. *Tumpeng* is a unique form of a symbol of cooperation carried out by the

residents. The purpose of river shrimp and crabs as side dishes in this tradition is as mothers' source of energy and protein which will then be given to the baby through their breastfeeding.

B. The Function of Nyimur Ceremony

Nyimur traditional ceremony, a tradition that is regularly carried out, have four functions:

- Children healing, as *nyimur* is included in the traditional ceremonies of initiation/initium (the beginning /cycle of human life) whose function is the same as immunization in modern society. According to Ranuh (2008) immunization is a way to actively increase the strength and immunity of the human body against anti-genes. The purpose of immunization is to avoid diseases and eliminate certain diseases for a group of people of a certain area, a certain country or even world population. The children are prevented from diseases that attack humans and the possibility of being invalid, or even death. For this reason, *Nyimur* traditional ceremony is becoming quite important.
- (*Ngaraksa barudak tina sagala*) Protecting children from various disruption of crime from the four directions (*opat panahab*), east, west, north, and south. *Nyimur* is believed to provide safety for children. So that the children are protected from various kind of crimes that they will encounter.
- Protecting the children from *kisaroban* (*sasalad*) disease, *kisaroban* disease is a disease that comes from the mountain. The people of Ciptagelar have already known about this disease. This led to the belief originated from several Kasepuhan which stated that the existence of *Nyimur* is considered to be able to protect children from the disease.
- *Hurip-hirup salanggengna*, meaning that *Nyimur* is a sign of gratitude for the life that will be faced by the people both that has been through or yet.

C. Kasepuhan Ciptagelar Indigenous People's Knowledge of Nyimur and Its Relationship with Healing and Refusing Bad Luck

In general, the indigenous people of Ciptagelar have already known and are aware of the existence of *Nyimur* tradition. When the community members have a child, at that time they also realize the importance of following the ceremony of *nyimur* tradition, as it is part of the unity and integrity of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar community. They believe that if a baby is born, it is the time for the baby *dihuripan ku ada tpikeun pikahareupeun* meaning that it is time for parents to be thankful and prayed for his/her better future.

The people of Kasepuhan Adat Ciptagelar believe that the *Nyimur* tradition can heal and keep children away from various diseases that will infect them. In addition, *Nyimur* is also believed to be able to securing children from crimes or commonly referred to *tolak bala*. With this tradition, the people of Kasepuhan Ciptagelar come to the beliefs that their children will feel being protected from various negative circumstances.

Nyimur tradition is likened to health immunization in modern society. Based on the knowledge they know, with this tradition, their children become safer to live their own lives in the future. *Nyimur* tradition is a ceremony that should be followed by all residents who have got a baby in KasepuhanCiptagelar.

Based on the discussion and findings carried out in this study, it can be concluded that t *Nyimur* tradition belongs to the area of culture, especially regarding the knowledge system. As stated by Koentjaraningrat (2014), one element of culture that is called the knowledge system. The tradition of *Nyimur* is the knowledge system of the Kasepuhan Ciptagelar local community, especially those related to health and agriculture.

IV. CONCLUSION

Nyimur tradition is a tradition that is commonly carried out in KasepuhanCiptagelar. This tradition is usually carried out once a year, when the rice grain already contained, or when *hiris* trees (*Kongo pea*) start flowering. The tradition of *nyimur* is believed to be able to heal diseases that infect children, prevent children from crime, prevent children from *kisaroban* disease, and make children better prepared to live their own lives in the wider environment in the future.

Ciptagelar people believe that this tradition is the same as the immunization process in modern society. They also believe that this tradition can keep the children away from evil or commonly referred to *tolak bala*. *Nyimur* tradition is usually closed at noon with *syukuran* (gratefull). This *syukuran* ceremony is usually characterized by small *tumpeng* (*congcot*). *Tumpeng* in Kasepuhan Ciptagelar is different from *tumpeng* that we commonly know. Here *tumpeng* is more traditional. *Tumpeng* is a symbol of gratitude from Ciptagelar people as they been given babies as a truly divine gift from God.

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