



### A CULTURAL HARMONY BETWEEN ISLAM AND LOCAL TRADITION OF CARAM SEGUGUK IN RENGAS PAYARAMAN, OGAN ILIR, SOUTH SUMATERA

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#### **Abstract**

*The study attempts to look Islam as a religion which teaches various aspects of normative and humanism has undergone a process of acceptance and rejection in the society. Meanwhile, tradition as an identity of a particular community also has undergone an eclectic process in acquiring adaptation with the Islamic teachings. It proves that Islam is not merely understood as a doctrine but also as a result of the interaction of cultural values, norms, and morals representing the forms of religious practices which tolerate the local values. The meeting between Islamic values and local tradition values are maintained. Then, they form Islamic narrated activities as a form of internalization of the teachings and community behaviors. Caram Seguguk tradition in South Sumatera is one of the results of the harmonization between Islam and local traditions in daily activities.*

**Keywords:** Caram Seguguk, local values, harmonization, Islam.

#### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat Islam sebagai agama yang mengajarkan berbagai aspek normatif dan humanisme telah mengalami proses penerimaan dan penolakan dalam masyarakat. Sementara itu, tradisi sebagai suatu identitas masyarakat tertentu juga mengalami proses eklektif dalam membangun penyesuaian dengan ajaran keislaman. Ini membuktikan bahwa Islam tidak saja dipahami sebagai suatu ajaran tapi juga hasil interaksi berbagai nilai budaya, norma dan moral yang hadir dalam bentuk-bentuk praktek keagamaan yang mentolerir nilai lokal. Pertemuan nilai antara Islam dan tradisi lokal terpelihara dan membentuk serangkaian aktivitas-aktivitas bernarasi Islam sebagai wujud internalisasi ajaran

dan perilaku masyarakat. Salah satu diantaranya adalah tradisi *Caram Seguguk* yang merupakan hasil harmonisasi dari perjumpaan antara Islam dan tradisi lokal dalam perilaku sehari-hari.

**Kata kunci:** *Caram Seguguk*, Kearifan Lokal, Marga, *Simboer Tjahaya*.

## Introduction

Islamic studies and the tradition continue to evolve to be an eclectic studies which try to combine the tradition of Islamic studies with the tradition of social sciences as well as anthropology. In addition, Islamic studies also attempt to concern on the social interactions and patterns within a Muslim society. It proves that Islam is not merely understood as a doctrine but also as a result of the interaction of cultural values, norms, and morals representing the forms of religious practices that tolerate the local values. Islam and local tradition cannot be separated from the social dynamics and relationships of various cultural behaviors that create the power of social transformation and social institutions in the local community.

According to this view, the value of Islam which are developed in the life of the society is inseparable from the culture. Furthermore, the combination of Islam and culture can also be seen in particular events or ceremonies. It is difficult to say that the local tradition is not synonymous with Islam or vice versa. Islam is the entity that forms the local tradition. Islamic historical process cannot be separated from the process of religious civilization. Therefore, several Islamic practices in Indonesia present the cultural values. These practices are still maintained and performed until today. Among the activities are the practices of dowry and reading haul by someone who is considered "sacred" in the wedding ceremony, kinds of tradition which are common among Mataram Hindu and Bikhsu.

The Islamization in Indonesia took place in a long time. The process continues to be the entity and identity of Islam in Indonesia. The emergence of Islam Nusantara, recently, shows Islam as a social agent and portrays Islam and the archipelago as an episode of civilization in Indonesia. This episode indicates an open and a dynamic character that blends Islam and local tradition values. The blending between Islam and the local traditions refer to the notion that human beings and others are connected. *Caram Seguguk* is one of the traditions that reflects the acculturation of Islam and the local traditions. This tradition still exists and takes place in Rengas Payaraman, South Sumatera. It is interesting

to examine *Caram Seguguk* tradition by employing in-depth empirical and holistic study.

## Research Methods

Through a case study approach, the researcher wants to emphasize on the rationalism and the reality of the social, political, and cultural aspects. As the data are dynamic and open, and they occur in social relationships, this approach emphasizes on the nature of the real dynamic social formation. Thus, the data were obtained through observation and interviews. The data analysis was conducted with interpretative technique as the researcher tried to understand the events and their relation to the historical period.

This research uses the theory of structural functionalism<sup>1</sup> which is required to give explanation of how collective cultural accumulation occurs and how it is interpreted as a form of local tradition. Furthermore, culture is a medium which provides a field of study for the actors of *Caram Seguguk* in Rengas while Islam becomes an adhesive and evaluative tools. The core concept of structural functionalism theory lies<sup>2</sup> in the full understanding of the convergent process of cultures, traditions, systems, materials in the form of traditions in everyday life. The events of *Caram Seguguk* performed by Rengas society affect the development of Islam and social change<sup>3</sup>.

The study of Zulfikriddin<sup>4</sup> on the relationship between the leadership of Meraje Semende in society and the conformity with Islam shows that both aspects, Meraje Semende and Islam, are able to assimilate one another. Saudi Berlian's research on the management of traditional Islamic gender study on the draft of *Simboer-Tjahaya* in South Sumatra illustrates that the setting behavior of citizens within the clan system is, in fact, strongly influenced by the understanding and awareness of Islamic teachings adopted by the citizens at particular time. Furthermore, it describes that the clan system governing the family relationships and the relationships between women and men in *Simboer-Tjahaya* turns out to be derived from the Islamic teachings.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Hamilton, *Talcott Parsons dan Pemikirannya: Sebuah Pengantar*, translated by Hartono Hadikusumo, (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1991), p. 1. George Ritzer and Douglas J. Goodman, *Teori Sosiologi Modern*, translated by Alimandan, (Jakarta: Pranada Media, 2005), p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> George Ritzer and Douglas J. Goodman, *Teori Sosiologi*, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> J.C. Alexander and J.L. Mast, "Introduction: Symbolic action in theory and practice: The cultural pragmatics of symbolic action" in J. C. Alexander, B. Giesen, & J. L. Mast (eds.), *Social Performance: Symbolic action, cultural pragmatics, and ritual* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Zulfikriddin, *Meraje Leadership in Indigenous Leadership Semende within Islam*, (Palembang: Auliya, 2001).

Fauzie Nurdin's study on the culture of the indigenous people of Pepadun *Muakhi* in Lampung shows that the indigenous people of Pepadun *Muakhi*, Lampung are accommodated by various values, norms and philosophies of life which constantly run.<sup>5</sup> This phenomenon portrays an internalization process. Interestingly, *Muakhi* is derived from the Arabic language which is often delivered by Islamic religious leaders in their advices. The research conducted by Fasuedma Irasti<sup>6</sup> on the great tradition of *Agung Gawe* in Meranjat II, Ogan Ilir describes the glorious tradition as a tradition that contributes to the social change by teaching about social capital. According to him, one-on-one social value in *Ageng Gawe* adapts the teachings of Islam embraced by the citizens of Meranjat II.

The findings of these studies claim that Islam and local traditions co-exist in accommodating the tradition, interaction and institutionalization. The researcher notes that the correlation between Islam and the tradition of *Caram Seguguk* is different from the previous studies. Thus, this research examines the internalization between Islam and the traditions of *Caram Seguguk* as a collective action of people who describe the transformation of religious and cultural reality is dynamic, innovative and peaceful.

## Result and Discussion

One of the local wisdoms that continues to be maintained in the society of South Sumatra is *Caram Seguguk*. This local wisdom builds unity and mutual cooperation and becomes the motto of Ogan Ilir district. Ogan Ilir has its indigenous people and tribes that migrated from Javanese and Sudanese. The indigenous population of Ogan Ilir consists of:

1. Ogan Ethnic: the residents along Ogan river, from the village of Munggu to Embacang Muara Kuang and Lubuk Keliat. The language used is Ogan
2. Pegagan Ethnic: the residents in the district of Tanjung Raja, Rantau Panjang, Sungai Pinang, Rantau Alai, Kandis, Pemulutan, West Pemulutan, South Pemulutan, Indralaya and South Indralaya
3. Penesak Ethnic also called as Meranjat: the residents in the district of Tanjung Batu, Payaraman, and parts of Lubuk Keliat in Malay Palembang

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<sup>5</sup> A. Fauzie Nurdin, *Budaya Muakhi dan Pembangunan Daerah menuju Masyarakat Bermartabat*, (Yogyakarta: Gama Media, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Irasti Fasuedma, "Social Capital in the Great Tradition *Gawe* on Meranjat II Villagers Indralaya Ogan Ilir District", *Skripsi pada Fisipol Unsri*, 2013.

One of the villages that preserves *Caram Seguguk* is Rengas village, Payaraman, Ogan Ilir, South Sumatera. Rengas village was originally included in the district of Tanjung Batu. Since 2005, Tanjung Batu was divided into two subdistricts, namely Tanjung Batu and Payaraman. Rengas village is in the subdistrict of Payaraman. Penesak ethnic is one of the tribes that dominates in Rengas and other areas (Tebedak, Lubuk Bandung, Betung, Ketiau, Tanjung Dayang, Series Bandung, Seri Kembang, Payaraman, Talang Seleman, Paya Besar, Tanjung Lalang, Seri Tanjung, Bangun Jaya, Tanjung Tambak, Tanjung Baru Petai, Limbang Jaya, Tanjung Laut, Meranjat, Meranjat II, Meranjat Ilir, Beti, Tanjung Pinang, Tanjung Batu, Tanjung Batu Seberang, Pajar Bulan, Senuro, Sentul, Burai, Tanjung Burai). Rengas village itself is the oldest village in the district of Ogan Ilir, Payaraman consisting of two regions: Rengas one and Rengas two.

The word “Rengas” is taken from the word meaning cleft Ronges. Rengas village was once led by a Kerio but since 1989 the village was led by a village chief. Based on the ownership of the land, Rengas village is divided into two types: personal land and village garden land called *Umoh or Duson*. The ownership of the land is based largely on the land legacy for generations without any administration stuffs, even if it is only in the form of a Certificate of Business Rights (SKHU) on land.

The practice of *Caram Seguguk* system in Rengas society plays the role as a social and cultural institutionalization of the family and relatives. There are several aspects in a common type of family unit:

1. Kinship system
2. Line of descent
3. Inheritance system

Kinship is a social unit in which the members have blood ties. In terms of kinship system, especially in a pluralistic society, Ogan Ilir uses patrilineal system<sup>7</sup>. This system involves the type of family unit in a patrilineal society. Some activities in the local daily life shows kinship system, for example in dealing with jobs that requires a lot of people, the sense of collateral (*seduluran*) is very prominent. The nature of family the basis in resolving conflicts among citizens in Panesak clan. The mechanism is called as *Tepung Tawar* and *Are Basare*. *Tepung Tawar* is a custom that is performed to remove the brotherhood between people or between family members when they disagree of something and want to finish

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<sup>7</sup> Saudi Berlian, *Pengelolaan Tradisional Jender: Telaah Keislaman atas Naskah Simboer Tjahaya*, (Jakarta: Millenium Press, 2002).

it. Some disputes are generally resolved and facilitated by the *adat*. Meanwhile, *Are Basare* is a custom intended to lift the brotherhood between families through weddings, circumcisions, and other occasions.

There is no maintenance pattern that motivates the society in order to maintain the continuity between clans with *Caram Seguguk*. Thus, the ideas of using cultural attributes inherent in the social systems are maintained, such as: the existence of Pasirah (village chief) is very much appreciated and often asked to give advice called *peradatan*. The pattern in *Caram Seguguk* territorial relationship is symbolized in the person's status and role in the local community. This pattern is conserved terms like Pesirah, headmen, traditional leaders, Kerio, pembarab, saplings. Each of them in certain events of kinship or cultural attributes are still used. To clarify someone's identity, they typically use special clothes.

The nuclear family is the core family formed through marriage, the elements and all the requirements refer to the customary rules and Sharia. A nuclear family consisting of father, mother, and children each serves as a protector and breadwinner and the successor generation in which there is the responsibility to continue the tradition. Children receive and perform the role of tradition in the nursery-courteous both in the context of differences in age, sex and how to behave with others. Law is the identification of parent-child relationship in the extended family.

This leads to the expansion of the functions of the roles, rights and responsibilities of its members. Kinships that create a strong position and influence each other even become a solid foothold for various activities. The expansion of the nuclear family is generally obtained through the blood relationship of grandparents and obtained through *besanan* relationship with a wife or a husband. Norms applied in social interactions of both within the family and the environment are the extension of the existing norms in the nuclear family. However, the more polite relationship shows a firmer and tighter pattern.

With regard to Islamic procession, *Caram Seguguk* is no longer used to be a source of law that does not contradict with the principles of Islam. The elements that are contradictive with the principles of Islam must be removed and replaced. This is the meaning of the Islamic presence in a place or country. In the science of *Usul Al-Fiqh*, the local culture in the form of customs is often called '*Urf*' (derived from the same root of *al-Ma'ruf*). Because the '*urf*' is one that comes from people's behavior, and contains wrong and right elements, naturally the Muslims must look at the phenomena more widely and critically.

Relieving the views of the socio-economic fulfillment is one of the ways to get “respect” from other social layers<sup>8</sup>. However, there are also some people in the village and in the subdistrict of Payaraman Rengas who have different views about the social status of “elite” based on wealth and jobs. The results of in-depth observation and analysis of public perception and understanding in Rengas show that, generally, the rich will be deemed to have a social status as an “elite” who is respected in the society, especially, if the person has behaviors and life orders which are in accordance with the values and norms of the society.

The “elite” are people who own wealth and do not violate the values and norms of Rengas village. If there is a rich man who does not behave according to the norms and values, he is not “elite”. The values and norms in public life in Rengas village are strongly influenced by the socio-religious values of Islam and Malay norms. For example, if there is a rich man with, unfortunately, bad behavior in the society, that person does not consider to be an elite and does not deserve respect. From the perspective of the people of Rengas, a social status will be more dignified and respectable if it is followed by appropriate behaviors loaded with the values of Islam. Social status is often based on the types of the job. It is also a matter of problem in the rural community ratings in Rengas.

The aspects that determine the status of an “elite” is indicated by the wealth and the types of work. The types of work which are considered as having the social status are formal employments, such as civil servants, military, police and non-formal employments, such as fruit or vegetable agents, teachers, clerics, *pesantren*. The traditions in *Caram Seguguk* are driven by four factors:

1. Residents or citizens concerned are equally attached to the area occupied
2. There is a bonded feeling to each other by reason of *puyang* (descent) or
3. Due to the incorporation of territorial factors and genealogy
4. The similarity of the Islamic faith.

Aspects that stand in *Caram Seguguk* tradition are the aspects of confidence and trust. *Caram Seguguk* is not just a rule of customary norms. In the tradition of Panesak ethnic, the tribe can guarantee that kinship would remain intact in the neighborhood where a certain family lives in a particular place. The tribes would make the area as a place of their group’s settlement. As time goes by, the number of the community members within a group would gradually increase.

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<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Takari, “Ronggeng Melayu Sumatera Utara: Sejarah, Fungsi dan Strukturnya”, *Tesis pada Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta*, 1998, p. 65.

The key actor in the implementation of *Caram Seguguk* is Pasirah, for a Pasirah usually has power and authority. Pasirah also reserves the right to mobilize the labor of the population of matagawe to various official or private interests. Peonage for example *wang* clan porters *flungky*, *kemit marga*, *kemit hemlets*, and *gawe* road. The other key of the social structure of *Caram Suguguk* is Marga. Marga (clan) is functionally plays a very important role for the life and the history of civilization in South Sumatra. Traditionally, clan is the highest institution of the society after family, village and hamlet. A clan is headed by a figure who is generally known as Pasirah<sup>9</sup>. With certain qualifications, clan leader is also referred to as Depati and Prince. The head of a clan is called as Depati if he has successfully been selected to assume the position of a head of the clan at least two times in a row. Meanwhile, the head of the clan is called as Prince if he has selected at least five times in a row. Besides Pesirah as the key actor in *Caram Seguguk*, there are other actors who control the norms and values of the organization of *Caram Seguguk* namely the clerics or religious leaders.

Cleric is the highest institution acting as custodian of the clan social order (social piety). The Islamic traditions of *Caram Seguguk* are very visible, for examples: *berasan*, *bereguk*, *nolong gawe*, etc. The other charity activities are *ma'ruf Islamic teachings*, *al-wakalah*, *at-ta'awwun*, *as-syirkah* and *al-busroh*. Besides, the Islamic value is also seen in the involvement of *Kyai or Ustaz* as a normative and ideological leader. The social process that occurs within each *Caram Seguguk* shows the local actors in the social space that is dynamic and systematic as follows:

NO	Caram Seguguk	Communicative action	Islamic value
1	<i>Bereguk</i>	Inviting consultation	Working together
2	<i>Berasan</i>	Delivering the will and intention	Helping each others
3	<i>Nambah Keluargo</i>	Building sympathetic activities	Kinship
4	<i>Nyirenke Gawe</i>	Inviting and encouraging residents to do something	copyright concerns
5	<i>Nerimo sando</i>	Providing assistance for the residents' trust	making use of the grant

Source: data processed in 2016

The social functions of *Caram Seguguk* tradition which serves as a systematic function are directly felt by the local communities. One of the social

<sup>9</sup> Syed Alwi Sheikh Al-Hadi, *Adat Resam dan Istiadat Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 1986). p. 115.



function is solidarity called *pengemin*. It is a social solidarity that serves awareness and concern on the public condition, the activities are characterized by invitation at the time of mutual cooperation to carry out or assist together. In addition, *Caram Seguguk* is a social model that puts mutual trust and maintains the trust on the basis of honesty in daily life. For residents who have enough capital, they could do auctions of personal care or be an actor capable of communicating to other residents voluntarily. This form is often known as reciprocity. The process of forming reciprocity in *Caram Seguguk* is not conducted by mobilization but automatically run as a system of everyday life or systematically. It is not conducted by an agency or social engineering.

It is unavoidable that the mobilization of agents and actions encourages citizens to take action. However, the process is not to create a mobilization structure and social structure because the tradition of *Caram Seguguk* is an event that always run by the private citizens of Ogan Ilir, Rengas. In addition, the attitudes and behaviors of the high culture is managed by the residents. Thus, it affects the lives of the citizens.

It may be said that *Caram Seguguk* is one-on-one form of local civilization which is able to live and survive in the social system. When the local people do not do things that generally make good habits, other citizens, with the basis of the norms and values, will provide corrections to citizens who do not perform good behavior.

The actors of *Caram Seguguk* are the people from all social classes, professions and religions; from those living in the village up to the stakeholders. The social collective action is actually a manifestation of the teachings of *al-ihsan* and *tu minu billah*. This occurs because of the institutionalization of Islam in social institutions and society. *Kyai* or stakeholders build *pesantren* in Rengas while the people of Rengas send their children to *pesantren* or other Islamic institutions. In this way, the process of Islam in the local tradition of *Caram Seguguk* is able to co-exist and even complement as the norm and the value of life.

According to the above opinion, the encounter of Islam in *Caram Seguguk* tradition helps the people to participate on the overcoming life of the economic and cultural aspects, social harmony and local residents. Therefore, *Caram Seguguk* promotes social values that are not limited by the definition of humanity as for the residents, the implementation of *Caram Seguguk* is very important.

The internalization of the Islamic values in *Caram Seguguk* community of Ogan Ilir, Rengas is as follows:

	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Mutual help</b>
Caram Seguguk	Reciprocity	Cooperation
	Solidarity	Kinship
	Sympathic	Kinship, sympathetic
	Mutual trust cooperation	Togetherness

Source: data processed in 2016

*Caram Seguguk* has its own values. The values are hereditary ideas that have been considered true and important for the members of the society. The values contain consequences and plays as important roles in the life of the people and social change. The important values in *Caram Seguguk* serve as a model of natural assimilation of Islam and local traditions. It shows the values of togetherness and familiarity.

The forms of social relations or kinship exists between the members of the society. Meanwhile, other values are the merging of two or more families bounded together by mutual sympathy committed by the family members so that the families grow and establish relationships. In the context of social relationship, *Caram Seguguk*, which is the motto of Ogan Ilir, implies solidarity or mutual aid with harmonious and democratic senses, as well as upholding human rights in the welfare and prosperity of the society of Ogan Ilir. The influence of Islam in *Caram Seguguk* appears as the shifting that starts from the belief of animism-dynamism to the traditional Malay culture.

Although the tradition and Islam had not been acculturated intensively as it was connected with strong Hinduism-Buddhism as well as Chinese influences, intensive contiguity appeared at the end of the 19th century. During this period the process of the acculturation of Islam and traditional Malay culture in Palembang occured and managed to transform the traditional Malay culture into Islamic-based Malay culture. The success of the traditional Malay culture to transform Islam into the Islamic-based Malay culture is a form of acculturation of Islam and Malay which is capable of receiving various aspects of culture:

1. The transformation of the belief systems of animism-dynamism into Islam derived from revelation;
2. The transformation of custom (the rites of the life cycle, the system of the government and social system),

3. The transformation of myth and the purpose to the tradition as a means of socialization and solidarity values.

*Caram Seguguk* tradition is a cultural creation of Malay culture reconstituted with Islamic values. This is possible because the appeals of Islam are the character and spirit of egalitarian. In this context, the role of the presence of preachers and religious teachers who, then, create social places of worship and *madrrasah* is greatly contributed to the process of internalization of Islam into the personality of the local culture itself.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study provide a wide range of academic contributions as well as empirical and practical operations. Academically, the contributions of this research are the first, in the field of anthropology, the values of Islam will dominate the cultural system of a society where the Islamic values are acculturated into the culture of the community through an intensive, gradual, accommodative, emphatic, sustainable, posterior, and confrontational process. Second, in the field of sociology, the acculturation of Islam and the tradition in a society reflects Islam as an identity and solidarity of a community binder (*spirit de corps*) because the identity and solidarity of a community are not absolutely based on the ethnic unity. It can also be formed on the unity of *aqeedah*. Social unity is called the *Ummah*. Empirically, the Islamic acculturation into Malay culture in Ogan Ilir creates Islamic surname "Panesak" reflecting a Malay identity. Therefore, Malay identity is not always based on the genetic factor. It can be formed on the basis of *aqeedah*. Thus, the "Malay" is an open concept that can be entered by anyone through the corridors of Islam.

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