

## Functions of Traditional Ceremony in Large-Scale Fishing Communities in Takalar District, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** This study was conducted to elucidate the functions of traditional ceremonies in fishermen's communities in the District of Takalar (Takalar is a district in South Sulawesi province in Indonesia as the research location), South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. Phenomenology method was applied in this study, including the following steps: location selection, respondent selection, data collection, data validation and data analysis. Results showed that in Takalar (Takalar is a district in South Sulawesi province in Indonesia as the research location) District, there are three cultural ceremonies usually conducted by local fishermen's groups, namely: thanks giving ceremony for abundance fish catch (Cera' Turungang) (Cara'Turungang is a thanksgiving ceremony of fishers for the big result of catching fish), new ship inauguration ceremony (Icaru-carui) and blessing ceremony (Passili) (Passili is a blessing ceremony for the pregnant in the 7th months). Those fishermen's cultural ceremonies function not only as a vehicle to communicate with the metaphysic nature owning supra natural power but also as a tool to maintain harmonious and integrative relationship amongst the community members. Thus, they eventually believe that cultural ceremonies synergistically blend the transcendental belief (Islam Religion) and immanence belief (fishermen's culture) to transform what is uncertain to be certain in their life, including their optimism of having abundant fish catch every time they are heading to the fishing field. To the fishermen, religion and culture (magic) have effective integrative power with strong values and norms, institutionalized in their communities through the processes of "Usages", "Folkways", "Mores" and "Custom".

**Key words:** Function, cultural ceremony, fishermen's community, mores, folkways

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### INTRODUCTION

The reality of the dialectical relationship between individuals (patron and clients) (Arifin, 2014) in large-scale fishing (locally known as Pa'rengge (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purseseing in their work) communities tends to be directed to provide sufficient sea products and distribution of marine resources, especially fish (Sallatang 1982; Ahimsa, 1991). Large-scale fishing groups such as Pa'rengge (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purseseing in their work) where every client (labor) in the group has a leading role and additional roles in regard to fishing and sailing operations. Therefore, among the clients, there are workers who have the same major roles and there are many who have the same additional roles. The fishing groups in adapting their production process always cooperate and maintain compatibility and harmony among them. Although, according to Scott (1983) that each client has a major role which might be different from the others but as a whole they cannot be separated

because, it is an integral system in which all roles involved are related and interdependent each other in conducting production activities at sea.

A harmonious relationship in a group of fishermen is always the main priority, so, the land patron or the big patron who is the capital provider for the whole operation, always seeks to engage in social action to strengthen the relationship between the sea patron or small patron and the clients. Production adaptation in a large scale fishing groups always needs a team work that requires a good coordination of all roles involved. Therefore, the adaptation patterns of production in a group of Pa'rengge (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purseseing in their work) fishermen require suitability, harmony and unity among the workers, especially while the group is operating fishing gears (nets). Thus, all personals involved are expected to be able to strictly perform their respective roles until the group arrives on land to bring production to the large patron as the venture capitalists. This means that social interaction between fishermen in economic activity has produced an integrative relationship amongst themselves.

The relationship that is built through an integrative manner in fishing activities is maintained or strengthened through ritual activities. Even though the dialectical relationship between clients and their patron is mainly led by economic needs, there are other requirements that must be met as they are believed to have the power to perpetuate the group's activities and save navigation for fishing on the sea. The terms are carried out through a fishing ritual or "fishermen's ceremony" which is generally carried out by groups of fishermen before and after the fishing activities on the sea.

The results of this study are expected to be useful for academia with an interest in the field of Maritime Anthropology. In addition, it can also contribute to the government's policy in order to maintain and strengthen the integration of the maritime community.

**Research objectives:** To identify and analyze: the types of the traditional ceremonies that exist in fishermen's community in South Sulawesi and the roles of the traditional fishermen's ceremonies towards the integration patterns that are built into the Patron-Client system.

**Research questions:** What were the types of the traditional ceremonies that exist in fishermen's community in South Sulawesi and what were the roles of the traditional fishermen's ceremonies towards the integration patterns that are built into the patron-Client system.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a "Phenomenology Method" because it was considered as an appropriate design to explore and identify in depth about the meaning of a form of social acts among groups of fishermen. By using the phenomenology method, researchers can ascertain there are no curtains preventing reality in fishing communities from revealing itself. Researchers must have confidence that whatever is seen and recorded in the reality, happens in fishing communities. A phenomenon happening in Pa'rengge (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purseseing in their work) fishermen's community may appear in our mind as long as it is clear to us.

In recognizing social and cultural realities of fishing, I tried to understand the meanings of events that are closely related to individuals or groups of fishermen that happened to be in a particular situation. Researchers not only recognize the fishermen's life from biological and cultural aspects but also in respect to social relationship: social reality with its own quality which is different from cultural and biological realities. Because of that with a

phenomenological method, I tried to catch meanings through signs of social acts in fishermen's groups in Takalar (Takalar is a district in South Sulawesi provinsi in Indonesia as the research location) District, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia.

Other than a philosophical thought, phenomenology is also a method of human's thinking channel (Siregar, 2005). Hence, phenomenology can be defined as: subjective experience or phenomenological, a study of consciousness of someone's main perspective (Husserl, 1970). Tjahjono (1999) describes the strength of phenomenology that lies on how a researcher can set aside his or her own preexisting thought in understanding a problem at hand and just focus on the observation details. By doing so, a researcher can reveal hidden realities, based on which a new conception about the problem can be developed. Research procedures used in this study included: Site selection technique respondent selection technique data collection technique data validation technique and data analysis technique.

**Research site:** The location of this research was chosen deliberately that is the coastal areas of Takalar (Takalar is a district in South Sulawesi provinsi in Indonesia as the research location) District in the province of South Sulawesi. The research location was selected based on relevant indicators, namely: coastal communities where the majority of their residents work as fishermen; places where people from multiple villages come to perform traditional fishing ceremonies; places where fishermen collect to perform transaction and trade of sea catch (fish, crabs, squid, scallops, sea cucumbers, etc.) at fish auctions; communities with the largest armada of large and small boats that are used primarily by fishermen. With these indicators in mind, the researcher became convinced that the coastal area of Takalar (Takalar is a district in South Sulawesi provinsi in Indonesia as the research location) district is the perfect research site to obtain data and information relating to the focus of this research.

**Research subjects:** Subjects were chosen purposively and were selected from large patrons (capital holders), small patrons (captains of fishing vessels) and clients (laborers) based on the social stratification at the research location. Sources with extensive and deep knowledge of the need for information and data for this research were also used. These sources were community leaders, ethnic leaders, religious community figures, local government officials, officials of government agencies relevant to the study, locals, women in fishermen's communities and children of fishermen as the information or data they possessed were necessary for this research.

**Data collection:** Data were collected through observation and in-depth interviews with sources. In conducting interviews with the sources, the researcher used a combination of the local language (Makassarise Language) and Indonesian language. Tools used during interviews were an interview questionnaires, notebook, tape recorder and camera. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face and collectively in focus group discussions. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in cases where the data being collected pertained to private, covert behaviors. Focus group discussions were conducted to collect non-factual data-events or incidents that occurred in the past that are relevant to this research. In addition, data was collected through literature studies.

**Data validation:** Verification of the validity of the data collected through interviews and observation was conducted using triangulation. Essentially, the purpose of triangulation is not to find the truth in the phenomena that are being researched but to increase the researcher's understanding of the discovered phenomena in order to improve the strength of the collected data. Literature research, studying documents and journals were also conducted in the researcher's data validation efforts.

**Data analysis:** The data and information collected through observation and interviews with sources underwent categorization. Qualitative data analysis was then performed using the descriptive-interpretive method based on the data groups for each focus and purpose of the research. Analysis of each data group was performed by linking the significance of a single piece of data with the significance of all other data throughout all data/information combinations relevant to the purpose of each data group. In the final stage of the analysis, analysis was conducted by linking the significance of each data group to derive a higher level significance. This process was repeated until a series of significances were derived that could be considered the conclusion of this research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Types of fishermen's cultural ceremonies:** Various types of fishermen's traditional cultural ceremonies exist as part of a belief system that must be performed by large scaled fishermen's groups in many coastal areas and islands of South Sulawesi. For example, in Takalar (Takalar is a district in South Sulawesi provinsi in Indonesia as the research location) District, there are three cultural ceremonies usually conducted by local fishermen's groups, namely: thanks giving ceremony for abundance fish catch (Cera' Turungang) (Cara' Turungang is a thanksgiving cereemony of fishers for the big result of

catching fish), new ship inauguration ceremony (Icaru-carui) and blessing ceremony (Passili) (Passili is a blessing ceremony for the pregant in the 7th months). Those three fishermen's ceremonies reflect syncritization between transcendental values (Islam religion) and immanency values (local belief or culture).

In practice, the cultural ceremonies mentioned above always prioritize the suitability between time, space and activities. In addition, it is also important to notice that since the ceremonies are related to the usage of sea resources, in performing the rituals, participants must face towards the sea.

Fishing communities strongly believe that by conducting the ceremonies, they will neutralize natural marine atmosphere filled with supernatural strengths and mysteries or at least be able to calm the sea guards that had been previously believed as something that can interfere with and hinder their fishing activities. In addition, fishing communities also believe that by carrying out the traditional ceremony, the fish caught will be more abundant in the future operations. At least, the meaning contained in the execution of fishermen's ceremonies is going to provide ease and smoothness for fishermen in the conduct of shipping and fishing on the sea.

In addition, very important in any ceremonial activities which take place at the village level is that the social relations of kinship can be maintained and even the mechanical solidarity can be improved among fishermen, among fishing groups, family members and neighbors. There is a tendency that the fishermen's ceremonies conducted at the village level have always proceeded in an atmosphere of intimacy between the people directly and indirectly involved. In fact, children and teenagers also feel and enjoy the atmosphere of the ceremony conducted by groups of fishermen. Thus, it can be said that even the ceremonies are mainly conducted by groups of fishermen as a form of tribute acts against "Metaphysical Nature" (supernatural powers) but they also contribute towards social integration in fishing communities. Many groups of fishermen believe that combination of transcendental (religion) and immanence (custom) can change what is considered uncertain to become certain. Correspondingly, religion and customs (magical) has a powerful integrative force because it contains values, norms and trust built through a process of "Usages", "Folkways", "Mores" and "Custom".

**Function prerequisites for pa'rengge (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purseseing in their work):** Fishermen group ceremony: Prerequisite for the functions taking place in the economic institution of a maritime community system is that the institution must be able to adapt itself to the

internal and external environments for a dynamic balance (integrative) in order to fulfill the needs of production, distribution, consumption and investment. Within a fishermen's economic environment, social actions that are meaningful to keep the harmonious relationship between the bio-geo-physical environment and the metaphysical environment must be preserved. Likewise, the harmonious relationship with their social environment, in particular the relationship between patron and clients through social construction that lead to the formation of a structure of significance (symbolic schemata that builds compliance structure, taming and praise) and the structures of dominance (holding structure of capital) in order to perpetuate the structure of legitimacy (attestation structure) associated with rules governing profit-sharing and other rules in place in the group. Basically, social action leading to the formation of such structures is a new social construction process that in turn contributes to the integration patterns in fishing communities. Dynamic balance or integration pattern that develops through economic activities can be preserved even enhanced through the fishermen's traditional ceremonies.

As already mentioned above, the fishing group's social environment always strives to maintain harmonious relationship with other environments (especially, metaphysical environment) through reading incantations and offerings to the ancestors and the supernatural power of the sea during traditional ceremonies. The offerings are made by the Pa'rengge (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purseseing in their work) fishermen in the form of socio-cultural acts who hope that the continuity of economic adaptation can produce adequate catch yield and safety in their operation.

Similarly, the prerequisite for the function to achievement the objectives in the fishermen's institutional system, including increased members' income, good social relationships of kinship between groups of fishermen (maintaining integration), improved quality of marine resources and mobilized existing resources. Achievement of all of the objectives are the prerequisites to achieving the political goals of the fishermen's institution. Therefore, the quality of the fishermen's ceremonies is a beacon of hope for fishing groups in perpetuating the desire of achievement for institutional objectives.

Furthermore, the prerequisite to integrate the fishermen's institution functions in order to strengthen social relations amongst individuals and groups is carried out through the activities of fishermen's traditional ceremonies and ceremonial life cycle as well as religious rituals which are expected to contribute to a dynamic balance in fishing communities. For the fishermen's

group, it is also considered that fishermen's traditional ceremonies can neutralize the small conflicts that took place amongst members during fishing activities in the sea. Therefore, the ceremonies also serve as a means or medium to rebuild social relations of kinship among fishermen actors in the group.

Likewise, the prerequisite to maintain the fishermen's cultural ceremony patterns conducted in educational institutions and families of the fishermen through socialization processes at the fishermen's households. In addition, they are also expected to be internalized at individual level and institutionalized or entrenched at community level.

The preservation process of the cultural pattern at fishermen's family level is a process of social practices related to the fishermen's ceremonial system. The process is also expected to contribute to the balancing of social relation and cultural systems in the community. It is often that the maintenance of the fishermen's cultural patterns tend to be associated with society's view of "Nature Metaphysical". Thus, it can be said that the theory of "functionalism imperatives" which contains four functional requirements (AGIL) has shown that "there is no individual who is not an organism, personality, member of the social system and participant in the cultural system" (Poloma, 1979).

**Functions of the traditional ceremonies in strengthening of knowledge ("Erang") (Erang is knowledge by Pa'rengge fishers they get by experiences):** As has been mentioned earlier that generally the groups of fishermen still very strongly believe in the spirits (supernatural) existing on the beach and sea, then through the sacred fishermen's ceremonial activities. Therefore, Pa'rengge's (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purseseing in their work) traditional fishing ceremonies in the research site is always interpreted as a medium to worship, to persuade and to tame the forces of the spirit that is believed often disrupts the fishermen's activities. In addition, it is also expected that through the implementation of the fishermen's ceremonies, their knowledge (Erang) (Erang is knowledge by Pa'rengge fishers they get by experiences) of "Erang (Erang is knowledge by Pa'rengge fishers they get by experiences) Passimombalang" (cruise knowledge) and "Erang (Erang is knowledge by Pa'rengge fishers they get by experiences) Pa'boya-Boyang" (fish catching knowledge) can be improved. It is believed that the full implementation of the fishermen's traditional ceremony can contribute to the strengthening of knowledge in taming the forces of nature to improve the safety of the maritime shipping. In fact, the ceremony is believed can help the fishermen in conducting fishing activities on the sea.

Adoration, soliciting and taming the supernatural forces that exist at the beach and the sea are done by giving offerings through sacrificing chickens, goats and buffalo with a set of other ceremonial materials that come with reading incantations and prayers according to the teachings of Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, the values and norms derived from the belief that is immanence (Fishermen's Tradition) with the belief that transcendental (Islam) is still being used by the Pa'rengge (Pa'rengge is big group of large fishers consist of 16-17 persons of fisher using purse-seining in their work) fishermen group as something believable and believed to have the power to tame the ferocity of the waves and storm when sailing and fishing.

For groups of fishermen in Takalar (Takalar is a district in South Sulawesi province in Indonesia as the research locations) District, South Sulawesi Province, supernatural elements are interpreted to have powers that cannot be comprehended by the human mind ("ultimate reality"), so, there is an assumption that the desire or achievement of objectives with regard to safety and economic success can only be achieved, if the provisions of rituals (religious and magical) have been met. For fishermen, the process of achieving economic objectives also require worship, taming and soliciting the metaphysical nature through the media of "fishermen's ceremonies". Thus, they expect to be able to materialize the harmonious and compatible relationships with the marine's natural, cultural, social and economic environments. At the very least, they hope to create relationships in living systems integrated with socio-economic and socio-cultural.

### CONCLUSION

This study indicated that basically the ceremony is realized from the ways of use (Usage), then through a long process develops into a habit (Folkways) and habits grow into system-behavior (Mores). When the system-behavior has matured accompanied with rules and powers with relatively severe sanctions against any violators of these rules, then this means it has been materialized or formed what is called "custom" (Custom).

The social institutions found in coastal and island communities, including ceremonial institutions can be interpreted as the most important role in the culture of a society in realizing the social order as well as a dynamic balance that lead to social integration. Say so because by knowing their institutions, each actor or group of

fishermen adjusts their behavior according to the will of the people. Even specifically, it can be said that the existing institutional ceremony in coastal and island communities has the ability to transform or to strengthen the cultural system that functions as a regulator of fishermen's social systems. In such circumstances, the tendency norms of fishermen's ceremony is not only acceptable, they are agreed, treated and adhered to but also they have been retained by any person or all members of the fishing community.

It should be understood that the main basis regarding the stability of an institution is progressive; meaning the construction of a new community for the fulfillment of certain needs is an ultimate structure that had been developed. Therefore, the fishermen's ceremony institutions are the adhesives for social life and facilitate arrangements for basic life of fishing communities and make it possible for fishermen to undergo relationships between one another, as well as ensuring the survival of the connection between generations in the social system. In the meantime, every social institutional structure functions optimally in fishing communities as long as it becomes a requirement.

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