

Dialectic of Religion and Tradition: Investigating Remote Indigenous Communities Belief in Riau, Indonesia

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Abstract: Belief is the core of every religious teaching in advanced civilizations and remote indigenous communities. The existence and religious practice cannot be separated from the traditions that develop in the community. The interplay between religion and tradition is nearby. A qualitative approach was used to answer research questions related to (1) the relationship between religion and tradition in the Akit Tribe community and (2) to explain why this tradition is maintained. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants like tribal chiefs, traditional healers, midwives, community leaders, and members. The results show that the practice of belief in the Akit Tribe follows their ancestors, even though they adhere to one official religion, especially Islam. Religion for the Akit Tribe is not crucial, it is only a compliment. Thus, there is no problem if they have a different religion. Religion is only for administrative purposes, such as getting married and making identity cards. Traditions are still maintained due to the low level of education and lack of understanding of their religion, especially Islam. It makes a practice of acculturation in belief and creates syncretism.

Keywords: Akit Tribe; Remote Indigenous Community; Tradition.

Abstrak: Kepercayaan merupakan inti dari setiap ajaran agama, baik pada masyarakat yang sudah maju maupun pada Komunitas Adat Terpencil. Bentuk dan praktik keagamaan pada satu masyarakat tidak dapat dilepaskan dari tradisi yang berkembang pada masyarakat tersebut. Agama dan tradisi berjalan secara berdampingan, dan dalam praktiknya saling mempengaruhi. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan tentang hubungan agama dan tradisi dalam masyarakat Suku Akit dan mengapa mereka masih tetap mempertahankan tradisi tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Metode ini dipandang tepat digunakan untuk menjawab tujuan artikel ini karena tidak memerlukan data-data berupa angka. Data diperoleh dengan melakukan wawancara mendalam dengan informan seperti kepala suku, dukun, bidan tradisional, tokoh masyarakat, dan warga masyarakat. Hasil penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa praktik kepercayaan pada masyarakat Suku Akit masih mengikuti kepercayaan yang diwariskan oleh nenek moyang mereka, meskipun mereka sudah menganut salah satu agama resmi, khususnya Islam. Agama bagi masyarakat Suku Akit bukan merupakan hal yang utama, melainkan hanyalah pelengkap saja, sehingga perbedaan agama dalam satu keluarga tidaklah dipermasalahkan. Mereka menganut salah satu agama resmi lebih kepada kepentingan administrasi, seperti untuk menikah dan buat Kartu Tanda Penduduk (KTP). Masih bertahannya tradisi dalam masyarakat Suku Akit disebabkan oleh rendahnya tingkat pendidikan dan kurangnya pemahaman terhadap agama yang mereka anut, khususnya Islam. Hal ini berakibat pada terjadinya praktik akulturasi dalam kepercayaan yang melahirkan sinkretisme.

Kata Kunci: Suku Akit; Komunitas Adat Terpencil; Tradisi.

1. Introduction

Ethnic groups in the world are classified based on their categories and culture, as in Indonesia. They have characteristics to distinguish them from others. Culture serves as a guide for carrying out group life and regulating relationships within other groups starting from ordinary communities to the advanced ones.

The existence of ordinary communities – often also referred to as isolated communities, remote indigenous communities, customary law communities, and indigenous tribes – is found in various regions in Indonesia (Kemenperpempnas, 2013). The progress of the times and the development of information technology do not eliminate their existence, despite changes in mindset and life. Government policies and social interactions with other groups accelerate changes in the lifestyle of this group (Astarika, Endang, & Sulastrri, 2019). Besides, the group's residential area is getting narrower due to the large number of plantations being developed, both by the government and the private sector (Koespramoedyo et al., 2004).

Remote Indigenous Communities still maintain the traditions handed down by their ancestors, even though they have communicated with other communities and experienced technological advances. They are already familiar with television, cell phones, motor vehicles, and other technologies but still practice traditions. It shows a mindset and behaviour that has not changed. The persistence of tradition in various aspects of remote indigenous community life amidst the progress of the times is important to be investigated. It is noteworthy to show the function of this tradition, unable to change their mindset and behaviour to technological advances and the rapid flow of information.

Various studies related to Remote Indigenous Communities have been carried out by scholars, as well as the perspectives used. The study perspective is divided into three parts; first, socio-economic changes due to government policies and social interactions (My & Kusnadi, 2010; Ningsih & Jalil, 2017; Prawirosusanto, 2015; Rahmawati, 2014; Setiyadi, Ranati, & Atani, 2020), second, the Remote Indigenous Community empowerment program to change lives (Ariningrum & Sukoco, 2012; Suyanto & Mujiyadi, 2015; Tumanggor, 2007; Yulinawati & Sidiq, 2017), last, Religious life of Remote Indigenous Communities (Hamid, 2018; Jamalie, 2015; Muntholib, 2005).

This paper focused more on the dialectic of religion and traditions found in the Remote Indigenous Community in Riau, especially the Akit Tribe in the Meranti Islands. It is important to be investigated to see how the relationship between religion and customs in the Akit Tribe community, including aspects of medicine and the circle of life, and why traditions were still maintained amid advances in information technology.

2. The Meaning of Religion for the Akit Tribe Community

Religion is an eternal phenomenon that is found in society, both simple and advanced. That explains the existence of religion can not be separated from the influence of the surrounding reality. In reality, various religious rituals and practices were developed by the community from the doctrine of religious teachings and then adapted to the socio-cultural conditions of the community (Hartono & Firdaningsih, 2019; Kholil, 2008; Abidin Nurdin, 2016). There is two intercourse between religion and culture. Religion as a socio-cultural conception and religion as a cultural reality. Religion as a cultural conception is called the great tradition, religion as a cultural reality is called the little tradition or local tradition (Corwin, 1977; Obeyesekere, 1963; Redfield, 1989).

Religion is a necessity for humans to fulfill the spiritual side of life. It is a phenomenon in society. Religion is a central and fundamental aspect of culture, including socio-cultural symbols that provide a conception of reality and interpret it. Tibi (1999) explains that religion is both a cultural and symbolic system. Religion, as a model for reality, cannot be penetrated experimentally but only interpretatively. Religion is frequently explained in simple society using animistic and dynamistic concepts (commonly known as traditional religion). Religion is understood to be more complex in modern society and is associated with all aspects of human life that do not belong to a specific group

(Miharja, 2013). It can be concluded that every society has its own way of fulfilling its spiritual needs and is influenced by many factors.

The Akit Tribe community as a community that is still classified as a Remote Indigenous Community, adheres to the beliefs and customs inherited by their ancestors. They hold and carry out traditional beliefs that are full of animism and dynamism elements (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). Apart from practising traditional beliefs, they also adhere to certain religions recognized by the state. The majority of the Akit people adhere to Buddhism, and only a small number follow Christianity, Catholicism, and Islam (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). Adhering to a certain religion that is recognized by the state is only for the fulfillment of administrative requirements (for Identity Card) so that they are easy to deal with. It explains that the Akit people have not been able to leave traditional beliefs or religions, even though they have adhered to certain religions that the government recognizes.

Religion or belief for the Akit Tribe is something that must be fulfilled in carrying out daily life. The belief that they profess still contains elements of animism and dynamism, considering that some of their lives still depend on nature. There are many rituals performed in carrying out daily activities. It shows that belief cannot be separated from human life. Different practices in some modern societies place religion as something separate or can be separated from everyday life. The Akit Tribe people live their lives full of various rules and beliefs, which are believed, if not implemented, will hurt life (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019).

The life ritual of the Akit Tribe is something that must be done. They believed that it would have an impact on one's life if it was not done. The Akit Tribe still believes in the existence of natural forces that can influence the course of their lives (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). Various life activities are carried out accompanied by rituals so that activities run well and produce results (Nugroho, 2018). The trust is passed down from generation to generation and is sustainable today. It can be seen when a woman is pregnant, the role of the *Bidan Kampung* is still needed even though there are already public health centres and midwives in the area. In the practice of giving birth, the government midwife always cooperates with the *bidan kampung*/midwife in the village (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). If the birthing process does not involve the village midwife, and something happens to the patient, the village midwife does not want to help her. People's belief in traditional medicine is still strong, even though they are familiar with modern medicine.

Even though they have embraced official religions, such as Islam and Buddhism, the practice of animism and dynamism that has been passed down from generation to generation is still ongoing. They carry out various religious rituals handed down by their ancestors. The phenomenon shows that the Akit people have an accommodative attitude in religious practices. This attitude created a syncretistic tradition. The practice of syncretistic beliefs can be seen in various healing rituals and death rituals.

A life that is not isolated requires them to associate with various other community groups. In addition, they also get in touch with technology such as mobile phones, television, vehicles, and others (Observation, October 2019). These are not been able to change the mindset and behaviour of the Akit Tribe related to old beliefs. This phenomenon explains that belief is difficult to change, as Koentjaraningrat calls the ideal form (Koentjaraningrat, 2009) and Ralph Linton (Linton, 1936) calls *covert culture*, although there has been contacted with different cultural groups, not isolated, and starting to get in touch with technology.

The Akit Tribe does not have a problem with different religions. They live in groups with different religions, as long as the group does not disturb them. The Akit Tribe community does not prohibit the existence of *da'wah* carried out by people of different religions. Religion is only a complement to life for them that regulates how to live a good life, so there is no need to contradict it (Sudin, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). There is a phenomenon in the younger generation of the Akit Tribe who began to adhere to a certain religion as a result of daily interactions. Their children who are studying receive religious (Islamic) lessons at school, which slowly affects

them and converts them to Islam (Alam, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019; Meria, 2014). They don't mind religious conversion in their family and respect that choice. Religious conversion is not used as a breaker of family ties, so it is easily found in a family that has various adherents of different religions, this phenomenon also occurs in the Orang Rawa Native Tribe community (Masyur, 2014). It is different from other community conditions, when a religious conversion occurs, it causes conflict within the family and group (Amaruli & Utama, 2015b; Elizabeth, 2013).

The tolerance of the attitude of the Akit Tribe which does not place religion as a fundamental thing in their lives, makes it easier for this group to change religions and marry people of different religions (Sudin, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). They think that living a balanced, harmonious life, and avoiding conflicts that harm life are necessary. Religion regulates spiritual matters and brings peace so that the function of religion which can outwardly distinguish one group from another, does not appear in the Akit Tribe community. Religious differences are only differences in paths or ways to the Almighty, but in essence, is doing good deeds in life, both towards nature and fellow human beings (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). This attitude is caused by traditional beliefs that have no da'wah value and do not teach responsibility as a religious adherent (Widagdo, 2013).

3. Treatment Rituals

Health is the most important thing in life. Humans do various ways to ensure that they are healthy. Because with good health, a person can carry out various activities. Nowadays, the development of the medical is so rapid, that health facilities are available in every area. However, this condition does not eliminate traditional medicine (involving shamans), alternative medicine, herbs, to *thibbun nabawi*. If someone is sick, various ways are taken to cure the disease, ranging from the traditional to the modern (Sembiring, 2015; Sumarlina, Heriyanto, & Husen, 2017). Treating diseases of obligation must be done by humans, various factors influence whether these efforts are successful or not.

There are many ways to recover from illness, both medically and therapeutically (Caninsti, 2013; Rosida, Imardiani, & Wahyudi, 2019; Skarayadi, Sutarna, & Ambarsundari, 2017), Islamic therapy and ruqyah syar'iyah (Amaruli & Utama, 2015a; Amin, 2020; Arifin & Zulkhair, 2011; Saifullah, Hasbullah, & Hasbi, 2018; Syukur, 2012), alternative medicine (Ali, 2015; Subu, 2015), herbs (Darnita & Toyib, 2021; Irawan, 2013; Saija, Berlianty, & Radjawane, 2021; Setiawan, 2018), *thibbun nabawi* (Ihsan, 2016), and shaman (Jauhari, Utami, & Padmawati, 2008; Nurdin, 2012; Satria, 2013). There are various reasons behind the choice of treatment methods, one of which is related to understanding the source or cause of the disease (Awang A.R., 1990; Febriani, 2019; Musadad, Rahajeng, Syafei, & Notoatmodjo, 1997).

The Akit Tribe community treats diseases and still chooses traditional medicine without ruling out modern medicine. The Akit tribe believes that not all diseases can be cured using medicine, especially those related to spirits, exposure to magic, certain physical ailments, etc. In other words, if someone is sick, then the family must make a careful decision, about whether the illness can be cured by a medical doctor or a shaman. In addition, the economic condition of the lower middle class is a reason for choosing traditional medicine (Armi, Personal Communication, October 08, 2019). The presence of health facilities, such as the public health centre (puskesmas), has not changed the public's view of treatment habits. Thereto, the medical personnel on duty at the Public health centre are often not available.

The Akit Tribe believes that a shaman knows medicinal ingredients. He dialogues and interacts with spirits. It is known the disease suffers from the dialogue and finding the right medicine for the patient (Sudin, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). The ingredients used by the Akit Tribe in medicine are sourced from natural surroundings. It can be seen in the treatment system carried out by tribal chiefs and their assistants. They still use plant materials around them. They believed that trees could cure illnesses of the suffering. The healing was accompanied by a prayer carried out in a sacred place by bringing white rice, yellow rice, *bertih*, and incense.

Shamans have an important position in the Akit Tribe community. The tribal chief or assistant usually acts as a shaman. They hold social control in the community and play an important role in the health sector. They usually work with traditional healers in carrying out treatment, especially concerning pregnant women. The chieftain has magical powers and can communicate with the supernatural beings who occupy sacred places in the village. Various rituals are performed in sacred places, such as asking for healing or asking for prayer. Shamans know plants that can be used as medicinal ingredients and master spells for treatment.

The function of mantras in traditional medicine is very important. Mantras that are also called incantations, are in the form of words, sentences, and symbolic pronunciations that have meaning. The incantation is said to worship, call upon, and summon the spirit of others. If it is used for self-function as a protector or wall. If it is used for the community, it functions to keep disease away, repel evil, deceive enemies, get good harvests, seek water, expel and persuade evil spirits; and the most powerful incantation is also used to hurt or damage other people, control other people, envy other people. The dimensions of incantation are too broad so people who practice incantations, sapphire, and spells are said to be knowledgeable people because their range of knowledge is not only limited to knowing objects but also being able to master and manipulate the spirit of these objects (Borhan, 2001).

4. Tradition of Life

Childbirth Tradition

Culture is an expression of society carrying out the needs of physical and non-physical life. One form of culture is to reveal important events in human life. Humans in their life experience three periods, namely; birth, marriage, and death. These events are called life cycles and are commemorated in the form of ceremonies and rituals (Busro & Qodim, 2018). Every society has its way of commemorating it. This celebration sometimes contains mystical elements. This is because the understanding of mystical things influences the journey of human life.

Birth rituals in various cultures have started since pregnancy. This ritual aims to ensure that the baby is healthy and safe until it is born. One of the ways used by the Akit Tribe of Sonde Village to achieve this goal is to pray at sacred places in the village. People believe that praying in a sacred place is a way to get their wishes fulfilled. In addition, they also hold pregnancy rituals that are carried out from the first to the ninth month. They not only perform rituals to keep the baby in the womb but also keep taboos in the form of food for pregnant women, such as pineapple. Foods that are prohibited are believed to damage the womb or cause miscarriage. Thus, the combination of prayer and keeping the prohibition is an effort made during pregnancy so that the baby and mother are healthy and safe.

Husband and wife visit their chosen midwife (Bidan kampung) at six to seven months of pregnancy. Visiting a midwife is a stage of preparation for childbirth. This stage is necessary because there is a bond between the couple and the midwife who will be responsible for the birth process. They visit the midwife with items such as cloth or money, to keep the midwife from going anywhere at the time of birth. The midwife will massage and check the content regularly. Bidan Kampung mastered knowledge related to childbirth and mysticism to help the delivery process run smoothly. The Akit people believe that people who give birth are favoured by spirits (usually called *hantu polong*). The midwife will put thorny pandan leaves and a machete under the house while the mother is giving birth. The goal is to keep the ghost do not come near the house.

The birth process in the Akit tribal community of Sonde village is carried out in collaboration with traditional and public health centre midwives and is assisted by tribal chiefs. The chief is only involved when there is difficulty in giving birth and it causes bleeding. He gives a glass of "*selusuh*" water, which is water that has been enchanted to facilitate the delivery process. The health centre midwife is responsible for administering injections for blood enhancement and making birth certificates. Bidan Kampung plays an important role in the delivery process. She carries out the process of removing the baby, cutting the baby's umbilical cord, bathing the baby, and cleaning the

baby's mother (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). The lack of role of the public health centre midwives in the birth process of Akit Tribe community was caused by the influence of trust and the public health centre midwives are rarely available due to official matters.

The Akit tribe believes that the placenta is the baby's twin brother. The placenta is cleaned and buried behind the house. It must be ensured to be safe from various animal disturbances. It is then believed by the community that, if the placenta is buried far from home, when it grows up it will wander far away (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). *Bidan kampung* is responsible for 44 days, that is until the baby's umbilical cord falls out. The end of the responsibility along with the feast as well as naming the baby.

A simple *kenduri* is done by the family who gave birth by cooking green bean porridge, yellow sticky rice on top in which an egg is placed and black sticky rice on top. This food is eaten together or shared with the closest neighbours. The purpose is gratitude for the safe birth of their child. The yellow sticky rice symbolizes women and the black sticky rice symbolizes men. While the egg above the yellow sticky rice symbolizes a woman who gives birth easily. The meaning contained in this media implies people's expectations that the process is the same as a chicken laying eggs and then hatching. The chicken left the place easily, without any danger that resulted in fatal things. The *Bidan kampung*'s responsibility has been completed, which is also marked by the provision of *asam-garam* by the family. Then, the responsibility for taking care of the baby is handed over to the baby's mother; administration of *asam-garam* in the form of; ½ kg sticky rice, ½ kg sugar, ½ kg mung beans, 2 coconuts, and one piece of cloth, plus 1 piece of clothing if the baby urinates or excretes when she/he is born so that it hits the midwife's body. These items are *asam-garam* that must be handed over to the village midwife because if these items are not handed over to the village midwife, it will be fatal for the midwife such as an illness (Timah, Personal Communication, October 05, 2019).

Marriage Traditions

Marriage is an institution regulated by custom and law and should not be done arbitrarily. (Ghazali, 2011) Every society has its tradition in carrying out marriages. The state through its formal law only regulates marriage registration (legality aspect). Religion has an important role in regulating aspects of marriage. Indonesia is known as a religious society, that pays attention to various religious norms related to marriage. So, people follow state and religious rules in carrying out marriages.

The Akit tribe of Sonde Village adheres to three official religions, namely: Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism. The Akit Tribe community which adheres to religion, has different marriage customs according to their religion. Muslim community marriage is based on Islamic law. It can be done at Religious Affairs Office or their homes by bringing in a headman and witnesses. Christians' marriage is carried out by the priest, they read a letter of agreement for life and death in the church. The pastor provides a marriage certificate as the basis for making a marriage certificate at the civil registry office. Buddhists have three forms of marriage: customary marriage, ordinary marriage, and forced marriage (Miskak, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019). The marriage system in the Akit Tribe of Sonde Village more often uses the ordinary marriage system than traditional marriage. It is because traditional marriages require a lot of money.

Death Tradition

Death is an important stage passed by humans, where each ethnic group has its ritual to commemorate it. Death is understood as a period of transition from the life of the world to another life. The death ritual performed by each ethnic group is a process of initiation ceremony, as stated by Hertz in Ghazali (2011) it has five meanings: (1) The view that the transition from one social position to another is a time of crisis, a time full of danger, not only for the person concerned, but also for all members of society; (2) The view that the corpse and all people who have a family relationship with the person who died are considered to have a sacred character; (3) The view that the transition from one social position to another cannot take place all at once, but gradually through; (4) The view that the initiation ceremony must go through three stages, namely the stage that releases the object from

its relationship with the old society, the stage that prepares it for a new position, and the stage that elevates it to a new position; and (5) The view that in the preparatory stage of the initiation period, the object is a weak being that needs to be strengthened through various ceremonies.

A similar belief exists in the Akit Tribe, they believe that death is the beginning of a new life. If a family member dies, the presence of the family who lives far away is awaited so that the funeral is carried out only after all the close family has gathered. There are several stages carried out by the Akit Tribe related to the tradition of death, namely (1) bathing the corpse, but before the corpse is first rubbed with washing powder that has been given a spell in the form of washing oneself from the world to the hereafter, (2) watering the corpse with plain water twice, and the third spray using washing water that has been given a spell in the form of washing oneself from the world to the hereafter, (3) the corpse is dressed in his favourite clothes while he was alive, and must not be black, (4) the corpse is made up and put on shoes or sandals which was used during his life, (5) the corpse was wrapped in a white shroud and tied (a total of five ties) in the form of a *pocong*, and (6) put in a coffin and faced towards the west (Sudin, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019).

The Akit people believe that after seven steps of the coffin bearer walking, the corpse wakes up and realizes that he is dead by looking at the marks on the mat and the hole in the shirt. The corpse is lowered to the ground first and a spell is recited to ward off demons from getting on top of the coffin. This is so that the coffin containing the corpse is not heavy. Arriving at the tomb, the ritual leader recites a mantra and sprinkles turmeric or washing rice. A long cloth is stretched over the grave before the coffin is inserted into the grave. The coffin was opened to tidy up the corpse, it was feared that the corpse's body would change position during the journey to the grave, as well as open the *pocong* rope. Then the chest is covered with soil so that it cannot be seen, then the long cloth is folded back. The purpose of the long cloth is so that the coffin is not exposed to bird droppings. Finally, the corpse's family did a flower sprinkling on the grave as a form of farewell that they were going home (Armi, Personal Communication, October 05, 2019). Residents who accompanied the corpse to the cemetery went corpse's house before returning to their respective homes. They had a down-to-earth feast. The deceased's family provided food as much as they could, such as mung bean porridge (Sudin, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019).

On the third day, the family also had a simple feast by cooking the same food (mung bean porridge). It is because green beans are easy to find and affordable. On the seventh day, the feast is done bigger, by cooking mung bean porridge, Wajid cake, and layer cake. Besides, the bed and pillows of the corpse are kept from being stepped on by animals, especially the black cat. According to the Akit Tribe belief, a black cat steps on will be possessed by a ghost. The spirit of the corpse will wander and disturb his family members. They do this guard from night to dawn. They believe the spirit of the corpse comes out of the house before the rooster crows on the seventh day. Then the corpse's bed was made. Then, the family performs a ritual of sending clothes for the corpse by burning the clothes on the corpse in front of their house to reach the corpse. After the delivery of clothes is complete, then they make food to be taken to the grave which is placed on the grave while burning frankincense to let them know that there is food.

After the ritual is complete, the next day the corpse's family will fence the cemetery using wood and zinc so that the graveyard does not collapse. It continued with a feast on the 20th day to commemorate the spirit of the corpse that was still around the house. On the 40th day, the family also held a feast to commemorate the spirit of the corpse who had started to be far from home. Furthermore, on the 60th day, the feast is held to commemorate the spirit of the corpse heading to the grave. Besides, on the 80th day the family held a feast to commemorate the spirit of the corpse that was close to the grave. Then, it continued with the 100th day to commemorate the entry of the spirit into the grave. On that day the family cooks food to be brought and placed on the tomb while burning incense by reciting mantras to inform that there is food (Sudin, Personal Communication, October 02, 2019).

Furthermore, it was found in other communities in Indonesia, they commemorated day 3 with the intention of *slametan* to honour the spirits of the dead. Slametan day 7 pays homage to the spirit

that started leaving the house. At the same time, the 40th day *slametan* is intended to make the journey of the spirit to the grave easier. In addition, the 100th-day *slametan* is meant to pay homage to the spirits who are already in the grave. The salvation after 1000 deaths meant that the corpse had been shattered, and only the bones were left. On these days, prayers are sent utilizing *Tahlil* (Aufa, 2017; Karim, 2017; Rahman, 2019; Syukriah, 2014; Ubad, Hanani, & Iswantir, 2020).

The same tradition is found in the Malay community, they perform a *kenduri* (spirit feast) or prayer for the dead. The implementation is carried out by the family who died after the body was buried. There are differences regarding the days after death in some areas of the Malay community, feast is generally held on days 3, 7, 40, and 100. It is carried out with the aim that the souls of the deceased receive prosperity in the *barzah realm* (Johansyah, 2018; Kadir, Syahdanur, Syamsiar, & Kadir, 1985; Sukarniawati, 2019).

5. Conclusion

Religion and tradition are two things that cannot be separated. The style of tradition that develops in society is influenced and shaped by religious values, and religious practices are influenced by tradition. So that religion has a distinctive local style. Traditions for Remote Indigenous Communities are closely held and become guidelines for living life. Traditions are passed down from generation to generation and are known as groups oriented to traditional things handed down by ancestors. Besides, they also know the official religion and adhere to it following state regulations. The Remote Indigenous Community (Akit Tribe) in Sonde Village adheres to several official religions, such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam. They know religion through the process of social interaction with other communities

The Akit Tribe community in Sonde Village has known Islam for a long time, and the number of its adherents shows an increase from time to time. As adherents of Islam, they have not fully implemented the teachings of Islam; it is still in tandem with the practice of their traditional beliefs. It shows that the relationship between religion and tradition in the Akit Tribe is accommodative. Religion for them is not fundamental and becomes an ideology that must be defended. It is only a complement to administrative interests. They have no problem with their children converting to a certain religion, or in the same family following a different religion. This phenomenon explains that religion for them is not a binding factor for the family. The position of tradition in society is more important and becomes a binding factor in life. It created acculturation in the form of syncretism between Islamic teachings and their traditions. External and internal factors cause the persistence of the tradition in the Akit Tribe Society to date. External factors include (1) lack of religious guidance by religious institutions or figures, (2) lack of social interaction with other groups, and (3) they live in a separate environment. At the same time, internal factors include: (1) low level of education, (2) still holding on to ancestral traditions, and (3) the existence of inheritance of traditions carried out by parents to their children.

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