



Social, Economic, and Religious Behavior in The Tradition of The Labuh Saji Ceremony

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ABSTRACT

One of the concrete manifestations of community behavior that respects their ancestors is the traditional *Labuh Saji* ceremony carried out by the fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village as an expression of gratitude to Sang Hyang Widi, who provides welfare in their lives. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method, which describes the traditional ceremony of *Labuh Saji*. The data obtained are in the form of observational data, interviews, and document studies. To analyze the data that will be collected, the writer will do it using data unitization, data categorization, and data interpretation. To test the validity of the data was carried out by extending participation, persistence in making observations, adequacy of references, case studies, and detailed descriptions. From the research results, it was concluded that the people of Palabuhanratu Village are still firm in upholding the traditions of their ancestors and preserving local cultural wisdom, such as carrying out the traditional *Labuh saji* ceremony. As for the concept of the ceremony, first, determine the place of implementation, then prepare the necessary equipment. The implementation process begins with various remarks from the committee and government officials. The community makes social contact, resulting in social interaction, and this ceremony is a medium of friendship between the local community. In the economy, the ceremony is a driving factor for community welfare, then in religious behavior, *Labuh saji* is a form of expression and gratitude for the abundance of sustenance received by the fishing community of Palabuhanratu.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Culture is passed down from generation to generation (Nurwani, 2020; Pohl, 2006; Sevisari, 2020). According to Andreas Eppink, culture contains all the meanings, values, norms, knowledge, and all social, religious, and other structures (Eppink, 2013). Similarly, Edward B. Tylor argues that culture is a complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral law, customs, and other capabilities acquired by a person as a member of society (Tylor, 1871). Meanwhile, Parsudi Suparlan explained explicitly that culture is a blueprint for life or a guideline for people's lives, namely reference devices that are generally accepted and comprehensive in dealing with the environment to meet the needs of community members who support that culture (Suparlan, 1995).

From this understanding of culture, it can be concluded that culture is a system of knowledge that includes ideas or ideas in the human mind (Rahman, 2021). In everyday life, culture is abstract. While the embodiment of

culture are objects created by humans as cultured beings, in the form of behavior and objects that are real, for example behavior patterns, language, tools of life, social organization, religion, art, etc., which all of which are intended to help humans in carrying out social life (Rosyad, 2007). Thus, culture in a society is a certain value system that is used as a way of life by citizens who support that culture (Mukarromah, 2021; Rahman, 2018). Because it is used as a frame of reference in acting and behaving, culture tends to become a societal tradition (Agus, 2021). Tradition is difficult to change because it is integrated into people's lives. Therefore, it seems that tradition has been formed as a standardized norm in people's lives.

Customs are visible forms of culture included in customs, community manners, and traditional ceremonies, related to a person's life cycle and to various natural events, to how to dress, work and prepare food (Rahman & Mufti, 2021; Wibisono, 2020). Customs are symbolic, meaning they reflect the beliefs and noble values a society believes in (Herbert, 1972).

One of the traditional ceremonies that live and develop in Palabuhanratu Sukabumi, West Java, is a concrete manifestation of people's behavior that respects their ancestors. One of them is the traditional *Labuh saji* ceremony carried out by the coastal fishing community of Palabuhanratu as an expression of gratitude to Sang Hyang Widi, who provides prosperity in their lives (Maryani, 2018; Syaifudin, 2022). This ceremony is a hereditary tradition of the Palabuhanratu fishing community to pay homage to a daughter named Nyai Puteri Mayangsagara or Nyai Puteri Mayangsari for her concern for the welfare of fishermen at that time. Mayangsari began to perform this ceremony as an annual tradition since the 15th century to manifest gratitude for the abundance of good fortune and to ask for safety and fertility. Furthermore, Mayangsagara carried out the ceremony so that his people would benefit from their work as fishermen (interview, Maman Suparman, 2016).

The type of data collected to solve the problems in this study is qualitative data. In the collection technique through observation, interviews, literature studies and documentation. Data sources are objects from which data can be obtained (Brannen, 2017; Mustari & Rahman, 2012). The data sources in this study consisted of two sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data is data obtained directly from the source; observed and recorded for the first time. The data becomes secondary data if it is used by people who are not directly related to the research in question. Secondary data is not data that researchers try to collect themselves, for example from statistical bureaus, magazines, statements or other publications (Setia & Rahman, 2022).

To review this scientific study the authors use a phenomenological approach (Moustakas, 1994; Tada, 2019). What is meant by the phenomenological approach is the approach taken to seek an understanding of how humans construct meaning and essential concepts in their lives. With this approach, the author tries to describe the situation and condition of society, namely the economic system, education, environmental conditions, and religious cultural behavior. This research was conducted in Palabuhanratu Village, Palabuhanratu District, Sukabumi Regency, West Java. The reason for determining this location is because the location is where the author lives, so it is easy to reach the author to retrieve the data. The author has long known about the activities of the *Labuh saji* traditional ceremony as a form of gratitude for the coastal fishermen of Palabuhanratu.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of Palabuhanratu Village

Palabuhanratu Village is one of the villages that belong to Palabuhanratu District, Sukabumi Regency, West Java Province, with an area of 1,023,220 Ha. In his history, it is said that during the reign of Puun Purnamasari, there were frequent attacks by Bajo (pirates from Nusa Barung, East Java). But they were powerless because of the courage and supernatural powers of Purnamasari's *kanuragan* knowledge and collaboration with the community, so no Bajo was left, all of them were annihilated. the Cidadap Palabuan Nyai Ratu area (Iskandar, 2021).

When Princess Purnamaari was getting old, government power was handed over to her daughter, namely Mayangsari or Mayang Sagara, but because Princess Mayang Sagara was not old enough, she was assisted by three elders namely Ki Saragato, Ki Gandana, and Ki Sanaya (who accompanied Princess Mayangsari when she was born). Meanwhile Puun Purnamasari moved and meditated in Kiara Papak Village, which is located near the Cibuhun river which is now in Cicareuh Village, Warung Kiara sub-district. As long as the government was handed over to three elders, Cidadap Palabuan Nyai Ratu experienced setbacks, so the center of government was moved to the north of the Cimandiri river (Palabuhanratu now) (Wulung et al., 2020).

After Mayang Sagara grew up, the three elders handed the government back to Princess Mayang Sagara, who was then given the title Nyai Ratu Kidul. Whereas the name Cidadap Palabuan Nyai Ratu after being led by Nyai Ratu Kidul was replaced with the name Palabuan Nyai Ratu not using Cidadap because it was too long and so that it was easy for the community to remember, the name change occurred on the advice of 3 elders

(abdicated). On the advice and input to 3 elders and the approval of Nyai Ratu Kidul (Puteri Mayangsari) on April 6, 1580 AD the name Palabuan Nyai Ratu was changed to Palabuhanratu (Cahyadi & Newsome, 2021).

As a leader, Puteri Mayangsari, or Mayang Sagara, is known to be very close to her people but still respected. He always motivates to manage resources and the natural surroundings in a friendly manner while respecting nature, mainly marine resources. Because the Mayangsari government area is directly related to the southern sea, and most of the population are fishermen (Dsikowitzky et al., 2019).

As a milestone in the history of Princess Mayangsari or Mayang Sagara, every April 6 they always hold a "curak-curak" or "nadran" event (their version of the ritual at that time), as a manifestation of gratitude for the abundance of fortune obtained and asking for safety and fertility. The event began with a hunting contest to catch a "deer" on Mount Jayanti. The "deer" obtained is then slaughtered, and its head is brought out to sea at a serving event. The blood from the deer is taken by the fishing community and rubbed on their boats, this has the intention that the fish can smell the fishy smell of the blood and enter the Palabuhanratu bay and in the end the fish are easy to catch (Interview, Nandang Heryadie, April 2016).

Based on the results of an interview with Mr. Nandang Heryadie (general secretary of the fisherman's day committee or Labuh Sasa traditional ceremony in 2016) at the secretariat office of the Indonesian Fishermen Association (HNSI) at April 2016 that along with the development of government in Sukabumi district, in 2002/2003, PEMDA DT 11 Sukabumi Regency (at that time led by regent Maman Sulaeman and deputy regent Ucok Haris Maulana Yusuf), the administrative center of Sukabumi district was moved to Palabuhanratu, at the same time making Palabuhanratu the capital of Sukabumi Regency. So on April 6 (436 years ago, from 1580) the fishing community of Palabuhanratu Sukabumi, West Java, commemorated this event by holding the traditional harbor serving ceremony. Even though it was only 56 years ago that the fishing community officially made April 6 as Fisherman's Day, it has not dampened the fishermen's struggle to keep trying to preserve their ancestral culture.

The concept of the Labuh Saji Traditional Ceremony

Meaning of Labuh Saji

Based on the results of an interview with Mr. Maman Suparman (elder of Palabuhanratu fishermen) at the secretariat office of the Indonesian Fishermen Association (HNSI) on April 7 2016, Labuh Sasa comes from the language Labuh (to anchor or drop), Sasajen (offerings) to the sea, with the hope that the sea catches will be abundant every year and as a form of gratitude to the creator for the abundance of fortune and favors received, to protect and preserve traditions that have been passed down for generations as well as to maintain and build a sense of solidarity in the same fate among fishermen.

Labuh serving is often interpreted as a sea party or fisherman's day. Some people think that Labuh Sasa comes from the Sundanese word Labuh which means to drop. This has its background when someone wants to do something and promises himself that if his business is booming, he will hold a salvation, usually called a vow. From this vow, the fishing community of Palabuhanratu held a thanksgiving ceremony called the *Labuh saji*. (Personal interview with Mr. Maman Suparman (an elder of Palabuhanratu fishermen) at the secretariat office of the Indonesian Fishermen Association (HNSI) on April 7 2016).

The Labuh Saji traditional ceremony is inseparable from ritual elements that contain religious meaning in it, namely as a request for salvation and at the same time as an expression of gratitude to the Almighty Creator. The fishing community in the Palabuhanratu sub-district as a religious community realizes that for a full year they work for a living in the Indian Ocean, who always depend all their lives on the grace of nature as a gift from the Most Gracious. As an expression of gratitude to God Almighty, the community holds a traditional Labuh saji ceremony once a year (Personal interview with Mr. Maman Suparman (an elder of Palabuhanratu fishermen) at the secretariat office of the Indonesian Fishermen Association (HNSI) on April 7 2016).

Implementation Concept

The implementation of the traditional *Labuh saji* ceremony is located at the Nusantara Palabuhanratu fishing port (PPNP), or the local community often calls it the Pier or Fish Auction Place (TPI). The activities were carried out from February 1 to April 17, with the event's peak being held on April 6. Implementing the Labuh Sasa traditional ceremony in Palabuhanratu Village is inseparable from the influence of culture and religious elements contained therein. The gratitude of the fishing community is not only manifested in the form of praying or prostration of thanksgiving to the presence of God Almighty, more than that, the fishing community tries to use this traditional Labuh saji ceremony as a symbol or ritual of gratitude to the Most Beneficent (Logayah et al., 2021).

Meaning of Labuh Saji Traditional Ceremony

Labuh serving or sea party is a ritual carried out by fishing communities as a form of gratitude to the creator (*Allah SWT*) who has provided sustenance to hope for welfare and safety. The *Labuh saji* ceremony is carried out at the Indonesian Archipelago Fishing Port (place where fishing boats dock) with very varied activities, this ceremony is held every year on April 6.

The first procession started with the election of the king and daughter of fishermen, which he carried out to find the cast of Puteri Mayangsari and Raden Bagus Setra. The second procession, on April 6, at 07:00 WIB, the Labuh Sasa traditional ceremony began with a carnival activity, which the Regent of Sukabumi opened. The third procession, the reading of prayers by religious leaders, is intended so that the fishermen are given good fortune and are prevented from all kinds of harm that might befall the fishermen. Then after reading the prayers and remarks, a lengser or drama is carried out, which tells the story of the early history of the founding of the city of Palabuhanratu and the history of why people carry out the traditional *Labuh saji* ceremony. The fourth procession, a boat parade out to sea carrying offerings that have been prepared and a large decorated boat, moves towards the estuary accompanied by hundreds of large and small boats decorated with others loaded with passengers.

The passengers are relatives, family members of the boat owner, government officials, the organizing committee, guests, and the actors or all the performers for the ceremony. Then upon arrival in the middle of the sea or an area where the water is dark blue, the offerings in the form of offerings brought by the committee are released. While the big boats are in the middle of the sea, the small ships are waiting at the estuary to return to the Fish Auction Place (TPI: Tempat Pelelangan Ikan) or their respective residences. The fifth procession is a seminar or discussion that presents investors and government policymakers. The sixth procession, namely Istighosah and Tablig Akbar. There is something unique that has become a habit among fishing communities who believe that offerings brought and offered to the sea that has been washed away by the sea currents and waves have magical powers to ward off distress; then if these offerings are rubbed onto their boats, they believe they will invite fish to approach their boat when they were in the middle of the sea. Therefore, those who believe they do not hesitate to fight over the offerings washed away earlier to be used as amulets (Rita et al., 2020).

Ceremonial Tools or Equipment

In the equipment or tools used in making offerings and their offerings, there are several elements of food and drink that have their own meaning for fishing communities, and these offerings include:

First, food elements such as tumpeng rice. Tumpeng is a way of serving rice and side dishes in a cone shape; because it is also called '*nasi tumpeng*'. The processed rice used is generally in the form of yellow rice. However, plain white rice or *uduk* rice is often used as a form of supplication to the most gracious God so that the provision of abundant catches and as a starting point for reinforcements means to be kept away from disaster and bring in a lot of sustenance. Tumpeng rice symbolizes completeness and perfection. That is if doing something must be thorough and not half measures. While tumpeng comes from the Javanese word *tumungkulo sing mepeng*, if we want to be safe, we should always be diligent in worship.

Second, the minimum element, bitter coffee: represents the element of drinking water which is not a basic drink (primary need), and becomes a drink of brotherhood when there is an association or meeting. And the clear water in the glass symbolizes drinking water which is a necessity for human life.

Third, the elements of fruits and vegetables symbolize that our ideals are always lofty so that we can develop the nation and state.

Max Weber's study of the phenomenology of social action explains that not all human actions can be considered social actions (Coleman, 1986; Fine, 2010). An action can only be called a social action if the action is carried out by considering the behavior of others and oriented towards the behavior of others. An action is a human behavior that has subjective meaning for the perpetrator. Sociology aims to understand (*verstehen*) why social actions have certain directions and consequences, while each action has a personal meaning for the perpetrator. Weber's social actions are very relevant to the traditional *Labuh saji* ceremony tradition in the Palabuhanratu Village community (Weber, 1993).

Fisherman Community's Understanding of Religion

The Labuh Saji traditional ceremony as a historical heritage from the past and has been carried out by fishing communities for generations and has been sedimented into a regional culture, has its uniqueness in terms of respecting the worship of gratitude to God Almighty. In the traditional ceremony of Labuh saji, there are noble

values of the nation's culture, including: 1) An expression of gratitude to God Almighty and 2) Respect and preserving culture.

Historically, the *Labuh saji* traditional ceremony is a form of expression and gratitude for the awareness of fishing communities to believe in the power behind the universe. Undeniably, the *Labuh saji* traditional ceremony is a product of an ancestral culture influenced by animism and dynamism. The intersection between culture and the two religions gave birth to the conventional *Labuh saji* ceremony.

In the beginning, the Labuh Saji traditional ceremony aimed to get closer to those who provide sustenance, blessings, and safety for fishermen on the sea. A sense of amazement and feelings of inferiority to nature participate in giving birth to this tradition. Belief in "the world there" is increasingly becoming so that people are closer to mystical areas, such as believing in sacred objects, and so on.

Religious ceremonies function as a way of strengthening faith and safety; besides that they can also strengthen the social solidarity of the larger community group and are directed by the people who live (Wach, 1961). The phenomenon of belief in magical things can still be found in the people of Palabuhanratu Village. The implementation of the traditional *Labuh saji* ceremony reinforces this.

First, Labuh Saji is a religious ritual for the fishermen's community. Religion according to the fishing community provides an understanding that if the individual gets what is expected then the individual must be grateful for the gift, this form of expression of gratitude for the fishing community is carried out with the symbol of holding the Labuh Sasa traditional ceremony, this traditional ceremony is believed by the fishing community as a thanksgiving, the community also performs Sadaqa for the less fortunate, the community also shares happiness with other fellow citizens, even with people who don't work as fishermen though.

Seeing religion as an essential factor for identity and community integration (Munardji, 2020). "Religion is a system of collective self-interpretation. In other words, religion is a system of symbols in which society can become self-conscious; it is a way of thinking about collective existence." Religion is nothing but the projection of society itself in human consciousness. As long as society continues, religion will remain sustainable.

The form of religious rituals in the traditional ceremony of Labuh Sasa is an application of the community's gratitude for the abundance of fortune received, the same is the case with the alms tradition in farming communities, farming communities carry out this tradition; the aim is to carry out the mandate of their ancestors so that they can be grateful for success in economic life, especially in agricultural activities more specifically to rice fields.

Being grateful (thankful), to fellow human beings is more likely to show feelings of pleasure in appreciating, while being grateful to God is more likely to acknowledge that all pleasures are a gift from God. This is what is known as gratitude. Thanking Allah is one of the concepts emphasized in principle in the Al-Quran. It is so important to thank Allah because of its function as an indicator of faith and acknowledgment of the Oneness of Allah.

Second, the trust factor. Trust is a person's willingness to rely on other people where we have faith in him. Trust is a mental condition based on a person's situation and social context. When someone makes a decision, he will prefer decisions based on choices from people he can trust more than those he can trust less (Szombathy, 2021). Meanwhile, social trust is the hope that grows in a society that is shown by the existence of honest, orderly, and cooperative behavior based on the norms shared by community members. There are three essential elements in trust, which is: 1) There is a feeling of mutual respect and respect between fellow citizens; 2) There is a system of values or norms that apply and are adhered to by all levels of society, and 3) There is a cooperative relationship that exists in the community.

These three elements are part of social capital, which strongly promotes social welfare. In the tradition of the traditional ceremony of Labuh saji, belief is the essential thing that becomes a reference for the community in carrying out the ceremony. Every individual in the fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village believes that the traditional Labuh saji ceremony has a lot of influence on the sustainability of their lives, be it in the economic, religious or social fields or public relations in general. Therefore, the traditional Labuh saji ceremony is always preserved and carried out by the fishing community of Palabuhanratu because this ceremony is a concrete manifestation of the life behavior of the fishing community (Nurmalasari, 2021).

Third, familial factors (familiarity). Kinship is an interaction between humans that forms a sense of belonging and being connected; although kinship has many other meanings, anthropologists are still debating the true meaning of kinship. Families can also be used to connect the extent of human association into a coherent system that can build relationships with other people (Cipriani et al., 2017). According to Lewis Henry Morgan in his book

entitled *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* (1871), he limits kinship to sex (sisters and brothers), generations (grandfathers, fathers, and children), and marriage (Morgan, 1970).

Implementing the Labuh Sasa traditional ceremony carried out by the fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village is an effort by the local community to maintain social, economic, and religious behavior. This has become the belief of the people that the traditional ceremonial tradition of Labuh Saji has a particular meaning which implies behavior to maintain the balance of nature, harmony, and relations between humans and maintain the relationship between humans and their God. Robertson Smith emphasized that religious or religious ceremonies, usually carried out by many community members who adhere to the religion, have a social function to intensify community solidarity (Smith, 1914). In carrying out the Labuh Sasa traditional ceremony, several values can be recommended as values that need to be passed on to the next generation, namely:

First, religious outlook. The religious perspective of the people is reflected in the attitude of the people who always remember Allah SWT, because nature and everything in it is God's creation. The closer humans are to Allah SWT, Allah SWT will send down their gifts and blessings which can be in the form of welfare and peace. The fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village manifests this through the traditional Labuh saji ceremony.

Second, the outlook of loving ancestral culture or ancestral culture. Always remember the services of the ancestors or ancestors who have taught today's society. In addition, several perspectives have been shown by the fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village in carrying out the traditional Labuh saji ceremony. These outlooks must be instilled in the hearts of the younger generation, namely: 1) Collaborative outlook. In carrying out the traditional thanksgiving ceremony of Labuh saji, members of the community work hand in hand, work together selflessly; 2) The outlook of living in harmony, helping each other, which is reflected in living as a community, is always maintained in the life of the fishing community in Palabuhanratu Village; 3) The outlook of the people who always maintain friendship among fellow citizens is the capital for living in harmony, because by maintaining kinship ties, a peaceful life will be created away from mutual suspicion.

Third, the outlook of preserving culture. Tradition and culture are integral parts of building an ideal life. As with science and religion. Science and Culture also proceed from the human brain hemispheres. Science develops from the left brain which functions to build scientific, critical, and technological thinking abilities. As with tradition, it is included in one of the regional cultures that we must preserve. Preserving this tradition will enable people to respect ancestral traditions and continue to preserve them, as in these words: Know that the most important thing is not only "how to learn history", but "how to learn from history". Sukarno confirmed it with the term: "*Jasmerah*" (Never Forget History).

The fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village carries out this cultural preservation by holding a traditional Labuh saji ceremony every year, this is a substantial effort to uphold the existing culture in society, especially the people of Palabuhanratu Village. The Palabuhanratu Village area is located in Sukabumi Regency. History has given them the form of a religious, economic, social, and national cultural life so that a society with distinctive expressions in terms of life is realized.

Palabuhanratu is also an area rich in the local community's cultural heritage, which is an ancestral heritage. This cultural wealth is very natural when it is seen that Palabuhanratu is the area of the former kingdom of Padjadjaran. Palabuhanratu is also a society that is mainly cultured strongly so that the order of human life can not be separated from cultural elements. The people of Palabuhanratu Village still carry out ritual practices to uphold customs that are considered to give birth to safety, which are carried out by humans including in customary (cultural) ways such as the Labuh Saji tradition which is carried out as a form of respect for ancestors and an expression of gratitude to God the universe for the sustenance that has been bestowed (Munardji, 2020).

The tradition of the traditional Labuh saji ceremony is a form of community social action. According to Max Weber, social action is a meaningful action of an individual, that is, as long as the action he takes has subjective meaning or meaning for himself and is directed at the actions of others. Max Weber revealed that the world as we see it exists because they decided to do so to achieve what they wanted. After choosing a goal, they consider the circumstances and select a course of action.

For Max Weber, social structure is a product (result) of an action taken by individuals, and a way of life is a product of motivated choices (Weber, 2002). Understanding the social reality produced by these actions means the same as explaining to humans in choosing an option. Traditional action itself means action based on the habits of doing something in the past (Crone, 2019).

In people's lives, of course, there is a culture that has existed in society for a long time and is believed and cultivated by the community itself, both consciously and unconsciously by the community concerned, even though

the actions taken are non-rational, these actions are still carried out and cultivated. by the community involved because it is a habit that is developed and preserved by the community.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research and discussion that the author has carried out regarding Social, Economic, and Religious Behavior in the Tradition of the Labuh Saji Traditional Ceremony (Phenomenological Study of Fishermen's Communities of Palabuhanratu Sukabumi, West Java), the following conclusions can be drawn: *First*, the tradition of the Labuh saji traditional ceremony is seen from the social behavior of the community, they make social contact which results in social interaction, and this Labuh saji ceremony is a medium of friendship between the local community. The Labuh saji ceremony is a driving factor for community welfare in the economy. In religious behavior, Labuh saji is a form of expression and gratitude for the abundance of sustenance received by the fishing community of Palabuhanratu. *Second*, factors that support social, economic and religious behavior in the tradition of the traditional Labuh saji ceremony in the fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village, namely the first is trust factor and the second is the kinship factor or the feeling of shared destiny. *Third*, implementing the Labuh Saja traditional ceremony carried out by the fishing community of Palabuhanratu Village is an effort by the local community to maintain social, economic, and religious behavior.

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