

Revisiting Traditional Communication in Indonesia: Why do Self-Immunity Rituals of Pelauw Indigenous Community, Moluccas

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Revisiting Traditional Communication in Indonesia: Why do Self-Immunity Rituals of Pelauw Indigenous Community, Moluccas

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Abstract. Culturally, self-immunity is one of the diversity of traditional communication in Indonesia. Self-immunity, the ritual has an integrated interaction of the relationship of Islamic teachings with traditional values. The self-immunity communication, beginning with salvation prayer is integrated with the medium. Such as the use of machetes, swords, drums, tambourines, to forms of self-courage testing with the power given from the ancestors to hurt limbs. The research is focused on expressing the motives and symbols exploration and meanings of self-immunity ritual communication. Through a phenomenological communication approach and a qualitative interpretive paradigm with data collection techniques on interviews supported by observations based on the symbolic communication perspective. The motives experienced Indigenous community due to the soul calling, willingness to preserve indigenous and ancestral culture, and self-appreciation seeking that has value and beliefs affects the Indigenous community life. The meaning as a plea to Allah, respect to ancestors, and the spirit of struggle based on the self-immunity ritual communication procession, starting with clan house, sacred tombs, self-cleansing, self-courage testing, and fabric on the neck.

Keywords. Self-immunity. Ritual traditional. Motives. Symbolic communication

Introduction

The Moluccas, one of the provinces in Eastern Indonesia, including the archipelago province, the tendency of its population to be on the seacoast with a diversity of traditional communication enforced, starting from urban and rural communities. Communities in rural areas always have compliance with traditional communication, such as the *Pelauw*.

The *Pelauw*, Moluccas Indigenous community. Indigenous communities as evidence of cultural plurality in Indonesia. Has an ancestral pedigree of the next generation of generations. Occupy the setting of a particular place with a system of values and rules, integrated between Islamic teachings and traditional values, such as the self-immunity ritual.

Culturally, the self-immunity is the ritual "*Cakalele*" traditional communication of the Indigenous community. The *Cakalele* ritual, tells the courage of the indigenous community in upholding Islamic teachings and against invaders through the *Hatuhaha* war.

Hatuhaha's ancestral war, visualized in the self-immunity ritual communication. Every three years a ritual is held. The last was a self-immunity ritual held on the date February 02th,

2018 in the Indigenous community *Pelauw*. The ritual participants selected by the clan leader. Then, the participants were selected again by the team implementing rituals. Representative selection team from fourteen clans.

Ritual participants, meet requirements including the *Pelauw* Indigenous community. There is a bond of awareness, having a powerful physique to self-courage testing and the psychology of communication, get blessing, or permission from family and wife. The participants must interact and communicate well with fellow families and indigenous community.

The self-immunity, the self-courage testing ritual. The limbs entered by ancestral spirits are not realized. Introducing ancestral spirits begins with salvation prayer. Then use the symbolic communication (Carter and Celene 2016, 931-961; Rauty 2019, 171-182) of machetes, swords, drums, and tambourine. The symbolic of machetes and swords to hurt limbs. The symbolic communication of drums and tambourine gives the spirit of struggle participants in ritual communication.

The self-immunity is a traditional ritual which uses the ritual symbol communication (Bruggemann and Hartmut 2014, 394-414), where individuals communicate as participants to meaning the procession ritual communication (Underwood et al. 2011, 197-218). The ritual communication is related to expressive communication (Broad 2013, 20-40). Expressive communication is the ritual communication, collectively performed as an action to establish social interaction (Fiedler 2016, 189-215; Salvatore 2019, 1-12). The ritual approach is used to understand communication as a symbolic process (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527) that produces, maintains, improves, and transforms reality rather than merely transferring messages (Carey 2009, 78). This provides communication expert review of the ritual understanding of the communicative. Rituals have obedience to rules agreed with the community in the form of language, aesthetics, and relations between the principals of tradition. Ritual represents shared belief in a modified form (Underwood et al, 2011: 197-218). "Ritual is the voluntary performance of appropriately patterned behavior to symbolically effect or participate in the serious life" (Rothenbuhler 2016). However, the ritual tradition as a non-verbal ritual communication (Muslim 2017, 21-30) conceiving and approach communication (Knowlton 2015, 239-255). Communication in the dialogic and culture model has become more common in the past decade (Blue 2018, 243-253). Forms of traditional communication is the symbolic communication in principle of self-immunity ritual communication.

The ritual communication is linked to phenomenological theory and symbolic interaction based on Blummer (1969) symbolic interaction perspective is a social fact that arises from humans through communication symbols that have meaning (Carter and Celene 2015, 1-17; Rauty 2019, 171-182). Symbols created from the essence in human beings are interconnected (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527; Hoskins 2015, 860-865; Smith 2017, 1-4; Sulaeman et al. 2020, 1-19). The interaction perspective focuses on how Indigenous community performs of self-immunity ritual by identifying the meaning of symbols of ritual. In this context, the symbol construction process can be related to knowledge and belief systems and socio-cultural values on the self-immunity ritual symbols.

This study aims to complement the shortcomings of the existing approach in addition to the method of carefully mapping the experience behind the self-immunity ritual communication of the Indigenous community. Explain also the symbolic (Smith 2017, 1-4) and meaning self-immunity procession in the context of Moluccas, Indonesia. Various symbolic and meaning ritual communication processes need to be known because it has direct implications on the lives of the Indigenous community. Similarly, knowledge about the background that underlies the self-immunity ritual communication, being an experience of self-courage testing the Indigenous

community. Rituals are implemented in collective solidarity, self-cleansing to continue and the spirit of struggle ancestral, asking Allah for the source of harmony in life.

The self-immunity ritual with the axiology of novelty, provide knowledge and meaning of the Indigenous community. Awareness gives birth, in particular the millennial generation of the importance of understanding the meaning contained in the self-immunity ritual communication. It is not easy to maintain and preserve it as a symbol of the self-identity of the Indigenous community.

The self-Immunity ritual communication, a special procession marks the uniqueness of the rituals of the Indigenous community. Being an important reason for conducting this research, show how the Indigenous community expressing the motives and exporting symbols and meanings of self-immunity ritual that enables the traditional communication to survive in the current contemporary community.

Theoretical Orientation

The ritual approach is used to understand communication as a symbolic process that produces, maintains, improves, and transforms reality rather than merely transferring messages (Carey 2009, 18). The traditional ritual (Nakamura 2018, 309-332), becomes part of the community by strengthening the fulfillment of identity as a joint effort. The traditional ritual as a non-verbal ritual communication (Pierre 2017, 1-8). Traditional imposed by the community will be described as an inseparable part of communication rituals. According to Basu (2017, 233-253) "ritual communication is art, carried out semiosis, dominated but not only involving speech, which is formulaic and repetitive and therefore anticipated in the context of certain social interactions."

The study of ritual communication provides an understanding of regarding the diversity of traditional communication (Broad 2013, 20-40) through interactions Indigenous community which develop relationships and patterns of harmonious interaction among people based on their beliefs. Blue (2018, 243-253) stated that communication in the dialogic and culture model has become more common in the past decade.

Communities that conduct the communication ritual thus develop harmonious patterns of interaction among people based on their religious beliefs. This ritual communication provides an understanding between the diversity of local traditions based on the interaction which is conducted (Broad 2013, 20-40). Ritual communication has unique characteristics and it is sometimes difficult for individuals to understand based on their knowledge and belief systems that originate outside of traditional society, such as the *Pelauw* indigenous community practices traditional communication of respect to ancestors. Traditional communication in the self-immunity ritual which reflects a blend of traditional values with Islamic religious values.

For the *Pelauw* indigenous community, traditional communication plays an important role in self-immunity ritual. Traditional communication occurs among ritual participants, particularly how to interpret and act on the self-immunity ritual procession of their fellow people, which are bequeathed, interpreted, and carried out in line with the process of social change occurring in the Indigenous community (Underwood et al. 2011, 197-218). Several previous studies were conducted on this topic, such as the study of Sulaeman^b et al. (2020, 1-19), "The Symbolic Communication of the Uku⁵⁰ a Mahiate Ritual of the Indigenous Peoples of Mamala, Moluccas, Indonesia", Blue (2018, 243-253) "Science communication is culture: Foregrounding ritual in the public communication⁶⁰ of science". Pickstock (2018, 217-221), "Ritual. An Introduction", Basu (2017, 233-253), "Ritual Communication: The Case of the Sidi in Gujarat", Habashi (2017, 1-8), "Cultural Communication, Overview", Peers et al. (2017, 1-8), "Introduction: Repatriation and Ritual, Repatriation as Ritual", Blommfield and

Doolin (2012, 502-527), “Symbolic Communication in Public Protest Over Genetic Modification: Visual Rhetoric, Symbolic Excess, and Social Mores”, Underwood et al. (2011, 197-218), “Reconstructing Gender Norms Through Ritual Communication: A Study of African Transformation”.

There are similarities and differences between previous studies and research will be conducted. Similarities in the methods and approaches used do research. The difference is the purpose, focus and characteristics of the informants studied about the self-immunity ritual of traditional communication of the Indigenous community experience.

The ritual communication is linked to phenomenology theory and symbolic interaction. Based on Blummer’s (1969) symbolic interaction perspective, social fact that arises from humans through communication symbols that have meaning. Symbols created from the essence in human beings are interconnected (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527; Hoskins 2015, 860-865; Smith 2017, 1-4; Sulaeman^b et al. 2020, 1-19). The interaction perspective focuses on how the *Pelauw* Indigenous community erforms the self-immunity ritual by identifying the meaning of symbols of ritual. In this context, the symbol construction process can be related to knowledge and belief systems and socio-cultural values on the self-immunity ritual symbolic.

Methods

The study used is phenomenological of communication of the *Pelauw* Indigenous community through the self-immunity ritual communication procession. Based on the selection of research methodology on the research questions, assumptions, and values that the researcher brings to this study (Sulaeman^b et al. 2020, 1-19). In these methodological considerations, begins with the explication of the research approach, the selected phenomenological study research design, the research participants, and the method to generate data, and data analysis that is salient to study. With follow discussion of the process in which obtained access to the location research, gained approval from the Indigenous community, role as a researcher, data generation methods, and data analysis process of the research.

Study design

The traditional ritual communication procession of the Indigenous community is an experience of a series of events experienced through various stages using the approach of the phenomenology of communication, a study that seeks to reveal reality based on awareness experience.

It is this awareness and experience of the Indigenous community that does ritual communication that shapes the motives and meaning of social reality that is different from those that did not do. This interpretation is related to the object of study on the self-immunity ritual communication procession. This study uses a qualitative study design (Biber and Leavy 2010; Sulaeman^a et al. 2020, 1-30) from a subjective interpretive perspective to explore more deeply the self-immunity ritual. The selected qualitative interpretive paradigm.

Setting and participants

This study focuses on the self-immunity ritual communication of the Indigenous community. The study was conducted from January 04th, 2019 to March 21th, 2020. The informant’s in this study were the Indigenous community. Chose the participants using purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2017; Sulaeman^a et al. 2020, 1-30). Obtaining access to the research area. It was essential to identify the gatekeepers (Oliver, 2003). Initially, the researcher approached the key stakeholders of the designated village; the village chief, village secretary, and Indigenous leaders as formal and informal leaders of the village. Identified them as the gatekeepers, and

their consent to conduct the study was essential as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 Research informants identification of Pulau Indigenes community

| No. | Name are pseudonyms | Age/Year | Gender | Education | Work | Population status |
|-----|---------------------|----------|--------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | . | 25 | Man | High school education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 2. | . | 37 | Man | Undergraduate education | Village secretary | Married |
| 3. | . | 22 | Man | Diploma education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 4. | . | 36 | Woman | High school education | Housewives | Married |
| 5. | . | 39 | Man | High school education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 6. | . | 18 | Man | High school education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 7. | . | 51 | Man | Undergraduate education | Traditional leaders | Married |
| 8. | . | 33 | Man | Undergraduate education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 9. | . | 27 | Woman | High school education | Housewives | Single |
| 10. | . | 25 | Man | Basic education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 11. | . | 34 | Man | Diploma education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 12. | . | 18 | Man | Basic education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 13. | . | 23 | Man | High school education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 14. | . | 33 | Man | Basic education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 15. | . | 39 | Woman | High school education | Housewives | Married |
| 16. | . | 22 | Man | High school education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 17. | . | 24 | Man | Basic education | Self courage testing | Single |
| 18. | . | 27 | Man | Undergraduate education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 19. | . | 42 | Man | High school education | Religious leaders | Married |
| 20. | . | 30 | Man | High school education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 21. | . | 41 | Man | Undergraduate education | Traditional leaders | Married |
| 22. | . | 36 | Woman | First school education | Housewives | Married |
| 23. | . | 39 | Man | Diploma education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 24. | . | 28 | Man | Basic education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 25. | . | 31 | Man | High school education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 26. | . | 22 | Woman | First school education | Housewives | Single |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|-------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------|
| 27 | 52 | Man | High school education | Village chief | Married |
| 28 | 49 | Man | Undergraduate education | Traditional leaders | Married |
| 29 | 25 | Woman | Basic education | Housewives | Single |
| 30 | 33 | Man | Undergraduate education | Self courage testing | Married |
| 31 | 57 | Man | Undergraduate education | Religious leaders | Married |
| 32 | 21 | Man | Diploma education | Self courage testing | Single |

Source: Field observations and interviews

Involving 32 informants, 12 informants were single. Each of one the village chief and village secretary, the two-person from religious leaders, the three people from the traditional leaders, 19 participants the self courage testing, and the six housewives. The researcher determines by purposive means. With expressing the motives and exporting symbols and meanings of self-immunity ritual communication.

Data collection

The selection of informants based on the Indigenous community has the ability and willingness to convey the self-immunity ritual experiences, they were willing to accept the presence of the researcher. Data collection techniques used were literature study, observation, and in-depth interview participants.

In this study, used structured interviews. The in-depth interview was chosen as a method to maintain the confidentiality of the informant by choosing a place that was considered comfortable by the Informant. The unscheduled informal interviews also took place during the research in which. The research done broader conversations while at the same time able to ask more specific questions (Sulaeman^a et al. 2020, 1-30). According to Burgess (1984), the gain many insights through informal conversations with informants. This is applied because want to explore the experiences, views, and knowledge possessed by the informants without being burdened by his mind. This means that when the conducts the interview process with the questions raised to the Indigenous community.

Initially, the interview was not easy to do, the informant considered the researchers not ethnic *Pelauw*. When they are willing to be interviewed, at first they seem nervous. The researcher is can collect data from informants in a way to show patience and empathy for them. The results of the interview are facilitated by using local languages, researchers use interpreters, finally, interviews are conducted smoothly and intimately.

Data analysis

Reflection of the interviewer during the interview process was added in the analysis denoting any specific issues that were worth mentioning for analysis. Data analysis is one of the most fundamental stages of qualitative research as it involves a complex and dynamic process of reasoning, interpreting, and theorizing also characterized by an intuitive and reflective approach in making sense of the data (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2009) motives, symbol, and meanings of the self-immunity traditional communication ritual procession.

Motives do Self-Immunity Traditional Communication Ritual

None of the researchers discussed why a the Indigenous community finally decided to does the self-immunity, so the researchers intended to take a closer look at how this phenomenon occurred in Pelauw, Moluccas, Indonesia. In the early, Husserl (1928) developed a qualitative research model called phenomenology that is used in this research. It aims to investigate how phenomena are experienced in consciousness, mind and in action, and how these phenomena are valued or accepted aesthetically. The phenomenological tradition assume that people actively interpret what happens around them and come to understand the world through personal experience with it. Phenomenology concentrates on the conscious experience of the individual who knows or perceives a phenomenon – an object, event, or experience – through direct experience (Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel, 2017).

Phenomenology deals with an understanding of how everyday inter-subjective worlds are formed and aims to find out how individuals can interpret their social actions as meaningful and to reconstruct the derivative of meaning in individual inter-subjective communication in the world of social life (Schutz, 1967). It means how to interpret social actions with others as meaningful (to be interpreted) and to reconstruct the derivation of meaning from meaningful actions in individual inter-subjective communication in the life of *Pelauw* Indigenous community in phenomenological studies. This research focuses on the essence of the why the Indigenous community does the self-immunity traditional communication ritual (Table 2).

Table 1 The motive of the *Pelauw* Indigenous community conducting the self-immunity traditional communication ritual

| No. | Motives | Charactistics |
|-----|---|---|
| 1. | The soul calling | Self-courage testing Respect to ancestors Uphold Islamic ideological teaching |
| 2. | Willingness to preserve custom and ancestral culture | The spirit of struggle Willing devote himself Willing learn about customs and culture |
| 3. | Self-appreciation seeking | Raising social status Eliminating bad behaviour The source of life harmony |

Source: Field observations and interviews

In every action, there is a motive to be the orientation of his actions. According to Max Weber, these subjective meanings and motives are directly related to human actions (Schutz, 1967). The motive is important in seeing the self of the Indigenous community as the background of performing the self immunity ritual, because the motive can see the Indigenous community and their actions “because of motive,” the motive because it refers to the past and the action “in-order-to-motive”, the goal motive refers in the future (Schutz, 1967). These two motifs are not separate elements from each other, motives as integrated elements are consistent and consistent. Regarding this, the Indigenous community gave various answers and generally more than one reasons. The first statement or answer of the Indigenous community is considered the primary motive of does self immunity ritual. Those answers were categorized into more general theme.

Some of the Indigenous communities say that they are motivated to self-immunity ritual communication because of their soul calling. This soul calling motives, included in the category of because of motives (Schutz, 1967) which means something that refers to the Indigenous community's past experience. The call of the soul experienced by Indigenous community in the

form of self-courage testing, respect to ancestors, *Pelauw* village devotion, uphold Islam ideological teaching.

Willingness to preserve custom and ancestral culture motives is one of the motives to do the self-courage testing, some of the Indigenous community explained that they chose to do the self-courage testing to order to preserve ancestral customs and culture. This theme is classified into the spirit of struggle, willing devote himself, and willing learn about customs and culture.

The self-appreciation seeking is one of the motives that the Indigenous community of self-courage testing. This motive is categorized into the raising social status, eliminating bad behaviour, and the source of life in harmony.

In the context of phenomenological studies, the Indigenous community are participants who carry out traditional communication actions alone or together with others who have similarities and togetherness in the bond of inter-subjective meaning, in this case, the Indigenous community who decides to do self-immunity. Related to this research, Alfred Schutz asserts that the Indigenous community who eventually chose to do self-immunity as an actor might have one of those three phases mentioned above.

Motive refers to an identity called Berger and Thomas (1966) as typification to explain the social construction of an action that has become habitual. Like also Schutz's (1967) statement "in every genuine because-motivation both motivating and motivated lived experiences have the temporal character of pastness." The motive for doing the self-immunity ritual is motivated by the soul calling, willingness to preserve custom and ancestral culture, and self-appreciation seeking which is based on the past experience of Indigenous community.

The motives based the Indigenous community decided to carry out of self-immunity traditional communication ritual which is motivated by self-courage testing, respect to ancestors, uphold Islamic ideological teaching, the spirit of struggle, willing devote himself, willing to learn about customs and culture, raising social status, eliminating bad behavior, and the source of life in harmony. The motives of the Indigenous community to perform the self-immunity ritual do not just form. There are a number of interactions that accumulate into an experience and lead to a collection of knowledge that ultimately they have.

Knowledge does not necessarily exist in Indigenous community. Knowledge is generated from interactions that involve the process of various information between individuals and their environment. That knowledge also underlies the formation of a motive for conducting of self-immunity ritual. The procession of forming a motive in an Indigenous community when it decides to do a test of self-courage is based on knowledge and raises expectations for realizing an of traditional communication ritual.

There is a statement mentioning "... Schutz posits that individuals orient to objects and actions by assuming a reciprocity of perspective with other humans" (Schutz 1967). The orientation of Indigenous community actions is based on their own knowledge. Knowledge can be obtained from the experience of sharing information with other Indigenous community. This knowledge can encourage the emergence of certain motives in Indigenous community. The motive for rituals is based on the knowledge gained when they perform the self-immunity traditional communication ritual.

The tendency that encourages Indigenous community to take action to perform rituals can be seen from their motives. Motive, the context of meaning that exists in Indigenous community as a basis for action and their efforts to interpret themselves and the environment. Motive, motivating factor (Schutz 1967) Indigenous community to act in rituals. The Indigenous community perform rituals based on certain motives. The motive can be understood by the tendency of Indigenous community when performing rituals. The motive is the stimulus for Indigenous community to carry out of self-immunity traditional communication ritual.

The Symbol and Meanings of the Self-Immunity Traditional Communication Ritual Procession

Traditional communication of the emphasizes the process of the meaning of ritual symbols (Camaioni et al. 2003, 1-26; Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527; Hoskins 2015, 860-865; Baso 2017, 233-253; Habashi 2017, 1-18; Peers et al. 2017, 1-8; Smith 2017, 1-4; Blue 2018, 243-253; Sulaeman^b et al. 2020, 1-19). Five conclusions of this study are reached through interviews and observations, and symbols are interpreted as a distinct phenomenon for the *Pelauw* Indigenous community through the process of a clan house, sacred tombs, self-cleansing, self-courage testing, and fabric on the neck.

The Symbolism of Clan House

The clan house, the first stage of the self-immunity ritual procession as a traditional communication symbol (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527; Sulaeman^b et al. 2020, 1-19). The clan house involves the process to gather in a small clan house as an identifier for the traditional communication symbol (Hoskins 2015, 860-865). The clan house, starting from staying over in staying over in clan house, shaving hair, bleeding or injured, clan consolidation in the house of the *Tualepe*, *Ma'ahalat Lahat*, *Ma'ataru Ame*, carrying *Lahat* fabric, water, and white plate, water splash, Prayers to Prophet of Muhammad, thus forming culture through traditional communication (Habashi 2017, 1-18; Velkova, 2016, 139). This activity is interpreted as “collective solidarity and self-cleansing” in this world for their attitudes as dedication and respect to ancestors of asking the creator of the earth for permission to perform the ritual.

Participants of the self-immunity ritual communication are required to stay awake until the morning while shaving hair. For the Indigenous community, staying at a small clan house and shaving hair was in the meaning of identity (Wood 2014, 81-85; Goitom 2016, 1163-1180; Donovan 2019, 279-301), a reflection of togetherness (Hoskins 2015, 860-865) to assert themselves as adherents of Islamic by acting in a self-immunity rituals.

Rituals participant stated particular words or displayed certain symbolic behaviors (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527; Hoskins 2015, 860-865). The symbol was to embody ideas and values (Salvatore 2019, 1-12) related to hospitality, also as celebrations or of worship and fellowship (Hilderbrand 2019, 1-15; Benussi 2020, 111-134). If the ritual participant were taking part in self-immunity ritual for the first time, would stay overnight in the house of a small clan. If ever done a ritual, return to their home.

The ritual firstly carried out, gathering in a small clan house as a part of the elderly's house with the fourteen clans in *Pelauw* Indigenous community. The house divided into three clan sectors (West, South, and East), and the gathering place has been arranged as illustrated in Fig. 1.

In the West Sector, the merger of the *Latu* clan includes the *Latuconsina*, *Latupono*, *Latuamury*, *Talaohu*, and *Sahubawa*. The five clans of the gathering place still separated from each other. The *Talaohu* and *Sahubawa* clans gather at the *Rumanai Lesirohi*, and the *Latuconsina*, *Latupono*, and *Latuamury* clans gather at the *Rumani Latuconsina*. For the South Sector, *Urato Roro Rhima* often called *Waelurui* upstream of the *Wae Marike* river, and there are five clans domiciled in the mountains. They are the *Salampessy*, *Angkotasana*, *Tuankotta*, *Tuakia*, and *Tualepe* with their gathering place in *Rumanai Tualepe*. Then, in the East Sector, there is *Tuny Mahua Waelapia* as a combination of *Tuny Mahua* with the *Tuny*, *Tualeka*, *Tuahenka* and *Tuasikal* clans gathered in a place called *Rumanai Tualeka*.



Fig. 1 The symbolism of clan haous the self-immunity ritual communication procession

At 06.00-06.30, Thursday, February 1, 2018, all three clan sectors continued the ritual towards the main clan house, part of the large clan house occupied by clans, an elder from the male lineage in the old clan house of *Tualepe*. On the way to the main clan house, participants have carried out communication of *Ka'a* condition while showing Immunity and endurance using sword and machete, but the limbs do not experience injuries and bleed. If a member of the body suffers wounds and bleeds, participants were considered unclean and did not receive the blessing of the family, “we apologized to one another with the family” (Interview with Fadli Latumury at *Pelauw* village, August 17th, 2019), had a particular fault and had not yet resolved them while trying to join the clan house rituals.

The clan house rituals are believed to be a sacred act. Religious actions are entirely symbolic, and thus during these action-specific symbols are used (Hilderbrand 2019, 1-15). The symbolic of clan house signifies “self-identity”; it is a form of reflecting on consciousness, which leads every member of society to realize who they are, their position within the community, how to behave and interact with others, and how to behave appropriately within their own culture.

The clan house rituals through the communication approach, using the theory of symbolic interactionism. The symbolic reality is a process communication ritual with the meaning of togetherness Indigenous community and occurs in a space of mutual understanding (Lattu 2019, 1-23) and activities carried out as a process of communication and exchange of symbols that are given meaning (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527). The symbolic interactions try to understand Indigenous community actions from the perspective of the clan house. The Indigenous actions must be seen as processes that enable forming and organizing actions (Sulaeman^b et al. 2020, 1-19). The Indigenous community is always bound by various rules that apply to the clan house communication rituals, form their actions, and provide meaning.

Through the clan house ritual, the strength is united as a symbol of the “source of unity and strength” for the Indigenous community. The clan house rituals are a symbol of “building togetherness and harmony” with each other and with relatives from outside the village who visit and or return to the village, as well as solidifying the relationships of the Indigenous community.

The Indigenous community interprets the effort of everyone gathered at the clan house to conduct “self-introspection” in this world. The attitude and manner of each participant’s devotion are observed within the context of how far the individuals can build harmonious

relationships. Not only with Allah, but also with others and even with their ancestors, as exemplified by believing in the beliefs and values of local traditions. The clan house, an ancestral heritage in the context of self-immunity communication media, in which the initial assumption is that gatherings conducted on behalf of members of the traditional communities. This work is interpreted as a form of “virtuous duty,” devotion to the society, and must be carried out with full sincerity and preserve ancestral values and beliefs.

A series of self-immunity rituals as the symbolic communication of the Indigenous community on clan houses are conducted in different places. Starting from each small *marga* clan house, the participants of the self-immunity communication actions then gather the main clan house and finally gather at merging clan house.

They gather at merging clan houses is a functional local medium for indigenous people to reflect on the communication of self-immunity as a tangible form of interaction between the Indigenous community his ancestors and Allah, as well as a reflection of the awareness of preserving traditional communication. It imagines the awareness of how sacred and noble working together is and requires them to continue to rebuild and maintain social solidarity among the Indigenous clan to create harmonious cooperation and togetherness.

Through the ritual communication approach, using the theory of symbolic interactionism (Blumer1986, 78), the reality is regarded as a process of maintaining common meaning within the Indigenous community, though the ritual of clan house. As Broad notes, communication is symbolic and occurs in a space in which meaning is shared by participants (Broad, 2013, 20-40). Participants are bound to the various ritual components of the clan house, which informs their behavior.

The Symbolism of Sacred Tombs

After gathering in the main clan house, the three clan sectors united in the *Tualepe* clan house to consolidate power while waiting for the arrival of *Ma'ahala Lahat* from the *Tualepe* clan. *Ma'ahala Lahat* will be the figure to lead the “supreme ruler” prayers. *Ma'ataru Ame*, an aide from *Ma'ahala Lahat*, will be the party responsible for evoking the performer of the ritual who has not yet experienced the conditions of *Ka'a* and bring the presence of the ancestors. *Ma'ahala Lahat* leads participants, and *Ma'ataru Ame* enters one by one and sits in a circle to fill the available space to greet the chief of the clan. During the ritual, *Ma'ahala Lahat* carrying a *lahat* cloth (red cloth) which interpreted as the communication psychology of the ritual participants’ as illustrated in Fig. 2.



Fig. 2 The symbolism of sacred tombs the self-immunity ritual communication procession

The gathering in the principal clan house is a process to identify nonverbal communication symbols displayed on participants' faces related to their psychological preparedness. In the ritual, participants created a circle with a white bowl filled with dial as water with a white plate in the center. The property identified as a non-verbal communication that shows the blessing and purification of the ritual participants from Allah through the water and white plates as the communication media. The water was sprinkled on the head of ritual participants, symbolizes the contextualization of custom and religion. *Ma'ahala Lahat* led the prayer and recitation of the Prophet Muhammad's Salawat for participants' safety and wellness during the ritual. Recitation the Salawat of Prophet, was followed by all the participants to provide calmness and strength for them.

Through the communication approach, with the symbolic interactionism point of view, it is apparent that there is a process of shared meaning from the community that takes form in mutual understanding between the Indigenous community.

There is also a communication process implemented by the communities by exchanging symbols (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527) towards the ritual gather in the house of small clans and parent clans, and merged clans. The Indigenous community interprets that every human effort to gather in the house of a small clan and parent clan, as well as the merged clans, is an effort to create collective solidarity and self-cleansing. The effort was also elucidated as dedication and respect for ancestors to examine individuals' ability to build harmonious solidarity, and not only with Allah, but with each other. It is essential to affirm the existence of Islamic as a religion, also acted based on local wisdom to self-courage testing.

After completing the ritual at the main clan house, around 10 am Eastern Indonesia time, participants started the trip to the sacred tomb. The participants perform rituals on pilgrimage to visit sacred tombs. Pilgrimage, a visit to a place considered sacred or noble (Frantzman and Doron 2013, 96-111). The pilgrimage not to visit many places but a determined place that considered sacred such as a tomb or grave (Smith 1998, 211-249).

The three clan groups visit sacred tombs according to the clan sector. The Western Sector group, the *Latu Rhima* appointed with the sacred of the ancestors located in *Matasiri* sacred tomb. For the Eastern Sector, *Tuny Mahua Waelapia* located in a village near the *Waelapia* River. Finally, the Southern Sector, *Urato Roro Rhima*, with the sacred tombs located in the headwaters of the *Wae Marikee* River, the most distant sacred tombs compared to the *Matasiri* and *Waelapia*. Pilgrimage to the sacred tomb was highly related to the elements of local wisdom and religion (Frantzman and Doron 2013, 96-111). The Indigenous community believes the sacred tomb as a place for the burial of ancestral is where ancestral spirits stay. Pilgrimage to the tomb is a way to spiritually reconnected with these spirits (Woodward 1999).

The journey of the clan sector to the sacred tombs took approximately two hours. The participants of the ritual walk on an average 5-6 km² into the forest to clean up the location of the sacred tombs. They will rest for a moment and waiting for the food distribution of the women. The Indigenous community believed that sacred tomb is the graves of the ancestors who spread Islamic teaching, as mentioned in the Qur'an Hujarat (49) verse 13. Ancestors' piety becomes a great lifestyle to be exemplified and used as a role model for the community. The pilgrims with their faith will feel close to the universe and try to obtain Allah blessing by visiting people who are loved by Allah, even though that person has died (Frantzman and Doron 2013, 96-111).

The ritual communication procession in the sacred tombs identified as rituals of prayer, led by *Ma'ahala Lahat*; ritual participants will conduct salvation prayers during the rituals. The

prayer begins with the symbol of the offering of areca nut, betel leaf, and lime as a tribute to the ancestors and often the participants of the chanting the prayer to Prophet Muhammad. *Ma'ahala Lahat* burns resin to plea to Allah also to respect Ancestors that have guarded the village and protected the Indigenous community. According to Azra (1999), Muslim communities in rural areas believe that Allah is has been very kind to the people, but at the same time, evil forces continue to bring disaster, so they are forced to direct their ritual activities to deal with evil forces. The people who have died believed as assistance in dealing with the forces of evil.

Symbols of Self-Cleansing

The self-cleansing ritual processing held in-crowd, participants bathed in the river, which identified as a symbol of a communication event (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527; Rothschild et al. 2015, 722-741). The Indigenous community perceived that the self-cleansing of individuals' lousy attitude is a good source of strength to make a plea to Allah and as the act of respecting ancestors as illustrated in Fig. 3.



Fig. 3 Symbols of self-cleansing the self-immunity ritual communication procession

Self-cleaning rituals is a communication media between *Ma'ahala Lahat* and ritual participants. The nonverbal communication of *Ma'ahala Lahat* by participants' bath delivers messages about knowledge and awareness. In interpreting an object, physical characteristic is not the only element considered substantial. We can interpret the object from the collective or individual behavior toward symbols. Human needs are focused on the needs of the symbol (Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527). In this ritual, *Ma'ahala Lahat* regarded as a self-purification symbol that cleanses participants' souls so they will be able to execute the rituals with a pure intention.

Communication Symbol of the Self-Courage Testing

To be selected as self-immunity ritual participants, several requirements should be fulfilled: 1) the heredity of the *Latuconsina*, *Latupono*, *Latumury*, *Sahubawa*, *Talaohu*, *Salampessy*, *Angkotasana*, *Tuankotta*, *Tuakia*, *Tualepe*, *Tuny*, *Tualeka*, *Tuahenka*, and *Tuasikal* clan domiciled in the village or outside the village, 2) having an intense commitment to make bound and togetherness, 3) physically and mentally healthy, 4) obtaining blessing from family and wife, 5) shaving hair from the head, 6) keep maintaining verbal and psychological communication with family and the community, and 7) the ability to follow instruction such as cutting, slicing, and stabbing limbs using sharp objects as illustrated in Fig. 4.



Fig. 4 Media the communication symbol of self-courage testing of the self-immunity ritual communication procession

To fulfill these requirements, participants should use non-verbal symbols, such as white shirt and trousers, red belts, and white headbands, machetes, swords and or other sharp objects (such as knives, razors, and axes), red *Lahat* cloth, red *Salele* cloth, *Tifa* and tambourine to provide mental support and fighting spirit to self-courage testing. The symbols had displayed since the beginning of the ritual's trip from the house of a small clan, the main clan, the merged clan, the sacred tomb and finally to the square of the mosque and *Baileo*.

The uniform used is a symbol of nonverbal communication indicating participants' neatness. The symbol meaning as purity and the act to surrender to Allah to emphasize the existence of Islamic. The white colour symbolizes the sincerity and openness of Indigenous community. The red belt symbolizes the determination and courage to defend and fight for self-identity. Sharp objects, such as machetes, swords, knives, razors, and axes as a self-immunity communication medium. The meaning was resistance to fight against the enemy who threatens the territory of Indigenous community. The *Lahat* cloth symbolizes the power of *Ma'ahala Lahat* as a strength in the soul and as the symbol of safety for participants. The *Tifa* and tambourine provided psychological support for participants and played in the entire trip from the small clan house to the Mosque and *Baileo* as illustrated in Fig. 5.



Fig. 5 Communication symbol of the self-courage testing the self-immunity ritual communication procession

The self-community ritual communication lasted during approximately one hour and a half. The ritual done the square was the peak activities of participants' to the self-courage testing of the ancestral spirits without participants' consciousness. The self-courage testing with the spirit of ancestors through self cutting, stabbing stomach, chest, hand, foot, neck, cheek, tongue, and head and or other sharp objects. Their spirits through the sound of drums and tambourines. The actions displayed in self-courage is a symbolic communication system which interpreted as guidance for morals and behavior, also to strengthen emotional relations (Underwood at al. 2011, 197-218; Blommfield and Doolin 2012, 502-527; Katriel 2015, 454-459).

The self-courage testing ritual is believed as a to plea to Allah, respect to ancestors, and to the spirit of struggle among the Indigenous community in guarding territory and emphasize self-identify as adherents of Islamic. The rituals also aim to increase the strength and spiritual patience, to ask for help for Allah in facing problems when territory and self-identity were disturbed. The fulfillment of self-identity as an Indigenous community must realize existence in the context of how to interact with Allah, ancestors, and the community fellow, as well as maintaining continuity of the self-immunity ritual communication.

Symbolism of Fabric on the Neck

The participants entered *Baileo* as the last destination of the whole self-immunity process. *Baileo* is believed to be a place to restore participants' condition after being possessed by ancestral spirits into normal conditions. Dhavamony (1995) distinguishing ritual acts as following: 1) magical actions are associated with the use of materials because of mystical power, 2) religious and cultic actions of the ancestors, 3) rituals to express social relations and referring to mystical notions, and 4) rituals that increase productivity, strength, purification, and protection. In the self-courage testing ritual process, participants were not injured or bleed. The ritual is a communication event held by hanging a red *Salele* fabric to the neck of participants'. The participants' entered *Baileo* one by one.

They have been expected by several middle-aged women in fabric. Women stood at the entrance of East *Baileo* welcomed them by *Salele* Fabric on the neck hanging. The fabric believed helped the recovery of the participants to their normal conditions after ancestral spirits possession. The *Salele* fabric underlies the relationship between humans and rituals as an understanding of Indigenous community.

The act of Fabric on the neck symbolizes the end of the self-immunity ritual as communication symbolic in the process of restoration and expresses gratitude to Allah. The rituals aim to respect to ancestors, the spirit of struggle, plea to Allah and solidarity of the descent of Indigenous community that had conducted the self-Immunity ritual. In addition, the role of the family, such as mothers and/or wives, has been involved since the preparation stage until the fabric on the neck giving to participants'.

Boys and/or husbands as ritual participants' need to get the blessing from mothers and/or wives as one of the ritual requirements. Mothers and/or wives present at *Baileo* are representatives of all *Pelauw* women, accepting participants as their children and husbands and becoming the source of life in harmony and strength for the Indigenous community as illustrated in Fig. 6.



Fig. 6 Symbolish of fabric on the neck of the self-immunity ritual communication procession

An Indigenous community will perceive self-immunity as awareness to self-courage portray as creatures of Allah. The awareness and knowledge about their existence transformed into guidance to build, cultivate, and develop harmonious interaction between humans. Such relations are an embodiment of supplication to Allah, respect to ancestors, and creation of social solidarity in the community. The pattern is an interaction and communication mechanism that should be accomplished in self-immunity processin.

The self-courage testing is frequently associated with the hereditary communication actions of the Indigenous community, formal actions with religious and customary values. This ritual is understood as a voluntary performance based on a patterned-behavior. The ritual offers new values that can arouse a sense of social solidarity as gratitude to Allah and the source of life in harmony. The method is to strengthen the religious values and principles of life. The ritual is an essential medium for the local policy to uphold the existence of Islamic ideology and reject the presence of invaders in the Indigenous community. The rejection transformed into a traditional ritual communication of the self-courage testing. The traditional communication was a visualization of maintaining the existence of the village, pleading to Allah, respect to ancestors, and building social solidarity among the Indigenous community.

Conclusion

The Pelauw Indigenous community carries out traditional communication of self-immunity rituals with the motives of the soul calling, willingness to preserve custom and ancestral culture, and self-appreciation seeking. The call of the soul experienced by an Indigenous community in the form of self-courage testing, respect to ancestors, Pelauw village devotion, uphold Islam ideological teaching. Willingness to preserve custom and ancestral culture motives is to do the self-courage testing. The self-courage testing to order to preserve ancestral customs and culture is the spirit of struggle, willingness to devote himself, and willingness to learn about customs and culture. The self-appreciation seeking motive is self-courage testing to the rising social status, eliminating bad behavior, and the source of life in harmony. Of these three motives, to use Schutz's terminology (1967) soul calling in the past motives are classified as because motive, and willingness to preserve custom and ancestral culture and seeking appreciation motive are grouped as the in-order-to motive. Because motive refers to the experience of the Indigenous community, while in-order-to motive refers to the self-appreciation seeking orientated for future life.

The Indigenous community has constructed the self-immunity as a practice of a plea to Allah, respect to ancestors, and the spirit of struggle. This meaning does not happen by itself but is a traditional communication of the ritual process of starting with clan house, sacred tombs, self-cleansing, self-courage testing, and fabric on the neck.

The research is focused on exploration symbols the self-immunity is defined as the fulfillment of self-identity as an effort to produce togetherness through the plea to Allah, respect to ancestors, and the spirit of struggle to development of harmonious relationships within interactions among Indigenous.

The use of symbolic interaction theory is useful in exploring the ritual symbols of the self-immunity, especially the meaning of the self-courage testing of the perform²⁵s during the use of machetes, swords, drums, tambourines t²⁵self-courage testing from the power of ancestral spirits by cutting, slicing, and stabbing the stomach, chest, hands, feet, neck, cheeks, tongue, and head.

This research has discussed several aspects of the communication experiences of the Indigenous community do self-courage testing. Further research needs to be carried out to investigate other aspects, one of which is how to explore the Indigenous community does the self-immunity ritual communication. From a methodological perspective, it is hoped that this research can be continued with the qualitative methods, approaches communication ethnography, and interpretative subjective paradigm to study the communication of the Indigenous community. Indeed, this topic is beyond our current discussion.

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