

CONTROVERSY OVER MANGASE UDAN RITUAL AT SIANJUR MULAMULA DISTRICT, SAMOSIR REGENCY, NORTH SUMATRA

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**CONTROVERSY OVER MANGASE UDAN RITUAL
AT SIANJUR MULAMULA DISTRICT, SAMOSIR REGENCY, NORTH SUMATRA**

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ABSTRACT

The mangase udan ritual is a Batak tradition when they still embrace the Parbaringin school. This ritual is done when they face a prolonged dry season. The entry of the Dutch colonial to the Tapanuli region, as well as the broadcast of religion make this ritual becomes a forbidden tradition. On October 10, 2016, the mangase udan ritual was performed again at Dolok Simanggurguri, Sianjur District, Mulamula District, Samosir Regency, North Sumatera. The implementation of the ritual mangase udan experience pros and cons in society. To explore this pro and contra attitude, it is necessary to conduct research which is aimed to know how the implementation of mangase udan ritual does; why there is controversy about the ritual; and what are the implications of the mangase udan ritual controversy. The method used in this research is qualitative method. Theories used to analyze the problems are power/knowledge (discourse) theory, postcolonial theory, and social practice theory.

The results showed that the *mangase udan* ritual was carried out in Sianjur Mulamula District due to a prolonged drought. Through the implementation of the *mangase udan* ritual, the stoning kings wanted to show their existence. The Catholic Church supports the implementation of the *mangase udan* ritual in order to broadcast the religion while the Christian church rejects it for the reasons that it is in contrary with Christianity. The implications of the *mangase udan* ritual controversy are the increasingly high polarization between the Christianity and the Catholicism. There is another implication that is the Catholic religion has good relation with the government and the relationship between Christianity and the government is not good.

Keywords: controversy, ideology, ritual, power, discourse.

INTRODUCTION

The *mangase udan* ritual is a tradition performed by Batak people to beg for rain to fall down on their so-called *Mula Jadi na Bolon*. This tradition is done since the Batak people still embrace the Parbaringin school. The entry of Dutch colonial to Tapanuli as well as the

bringing mission and zending impact on traditions owned Batak people. The Dutch treat the Batak people in accordance with the Dutch's wishes. After the Dutch managed to control the area of Tapanuli, Batak people experienced a drastic change. This happens because the Dutch in carrying out colonization brings three missions at once namely, spreading religion; looking for wealth; and gain glory and power. These three elements are complemented each other when the Dutch colonized the Tapanuli.

All traditions that go against the invaders become a forbidden tradition. Similarly the tradition of *mangase udan* becomes a forbidden tradition. This tradition became forbidden because of two factors that disrupt the position of the invaders because in the tradition of the *mangase udan*, the bond of the related community in the region is better and better. The second factor is the difference of beliefs possessed by the invaders. The tradition of *mangase udan* is a religious ritual performed by Parbaringin school.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this research is qualitative. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with community leaders, *adat* (traditional system) leaders, Christian and Catholic religious leaders as well as the local kings. The data is obtained from primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews guided by interview guidelines and developed during the interview. Secondary data is used to support the primary data.

To obtain complete data, this research uses purposive technique followed by snowballs technique (snowball). Instruments in this study are the researcher himself assisted by other tools. Data collection techniques are observation, interview, literature study, and document study. The analysis is done through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The technique in presenting the results of data analysis is done informally.

DISCUSSION

The *mangase udan* ritual is a ritual performed by the Batak people to beg for the rain to their God from *Mula Jadi na Bolon*. The meaning of the word manglase is to offer a sacrifice in the field and the *udan* means rain. So *mangase udan* is making offerings in the field so that *Mula Jadi na Bolon* will bring the rain. This ritual is done when the community face a prolonged dry season.

The Samosir people are generally professing Christianity and Catholicism, but because of their prolonged drought, they want to do a long-lost tradition of ancestors. As Durkheim says, religion exists because it can fulfill certain important social functions that can not be fulfilled without religion (Sanderson, 2010: 554). There are unfinished needs through their religious beliefs, so they find another way of doing the tradition of their long-lost ancestors.

On Monday, October 10, 2016 the *mangase udan* tradition was held at the summit of Dolok Simanggurguri Samosir. They gathered together with the king of *bius* and the public in Dolok Simanggurguri. The ritual was also followed by the District Leadership Council (Muspika) and the Village Heads in Sianjur Mulamula District.

The *mangase udan* rituals are performed at three locations, namely Dolok Simanggurguri, Partukkoan Ginolatan, and Parbona-bonaan. The last procession is to open the *piso solom debata* from the glove. This knife is meant to have the solacle that can solve the problems faced by the community. After all the procession is done, they are sure that *Mula Jadi na Bolon* will bring down the rain.

The entry of the Dutch colonial which carried the mission and zending was resulted in the lost of the tradition of *mangase udan*. This tradition is lost because it is no longer compatible with the religion they profess. As Schreiner (2002: 11) says, the Bataks open themselves to missions and zending and allow themselves to be colonized. The Dutch succeeded in changing the Batak religion to Christianity and Catholicism. In addition, the Dutch also managed to replace the culture they already have.

This cultural shift relates to Western superiority and Eastern inferiority. The Dutch treat the Batak people according to their wishes. As Said (2016: 257) points out, Europeans are trying to place the East as an imaginative stage that can be treated at any time as the Westerners wish. All traditions that are not in accordance with the wishes of the invaders is made a forbidden tradition. As a result of the ban so that the tradition of *mangase udan* is disappeared from the life of the Batak People.

The prolonged dry season in Samosir raises the discourse to re-do the *mangase udan* ritual. This discourse arose from the local archbishop. This is in accordance with what Foucault (2016) says, discourse has a close relationship with power because discourse comes from people who have power and people who have knowledge or creative thinking. The discourse to perform *mangase udan* rituals responded positively to the other anesthetic

kings and some community leaders. Implementation of mangase udan ritual becomes the truth to bring rain as Foucault refers to.

Truth (knowledge) is related to power (Ritzer, 2010: 94). Implementation of mangase ritual udan accepted some people because the perpetrators are the king stoner. To smooth his wishes, the kings stood together in cooperation with Muspika Sianjur Mulamula District. This cooperation needs to be done to increase the capital possessed by the kings. The goal of capital increase as Bourdieu expressed to gain recognition that the self or his group is influential, and most entitled to follow (Fashri, 2014: 3).

The prolonged dry season becomes an opportunity to show the existence of the *bius* kings in Sianjur Mulamula District. The discourse on performing the *mangase udan* ritual into an arena as proposed by Bourdieu (2015: 215). Through the implementation of the *mangase udan* ritual, the existence of the *bius* kings was revived which had been lost due to the Dutch ban on all the *bius* organizations.

Power in practice, as Foucault says, does not always run smoothly. Power and resistance to it are everywhere (Ritzer, 2012: 621). The power possessed by the *bius* kings which is supported by the Muspika of Sianjur Mulamula received resistance from the Christian community. This disagreement is caused by the activity is considered animism. Therefore the Christians forbade his followers to follow *the mangase udan* ritual.

In contrast to the attitude of Christianity, Catholicism encourages its people to participate in the *mangase udan* ritual. This attitude arises because the Catholic religion do its mission through inculturation approach. What is meant by inculturation is to maintain the core of Christian faith, especially Christ, but simultaneously express it in the form and style of the local culture (Sinaga, 2011: 116). The sacrifices made in the *mangase udan* ritual are addressed to *Mula Jadi na Bolon* which is identical to the sacrifices addressed to God performed in Catholic rituals.

The implication of the *mangase udan* ritual is the increasingly higher polarization between the Christianity and the Catholicism. The Christianity holds that Catholics live in an animist tradition. Catholicism, on the other hand, considers that Christians are innocent and disrespectful to ancestral traditions.

Another implication is in relation with the relationship between the religion and the government. The relationship of the Catholicism with the District Government of Sianjur Mulamula went well because both agreed to perform the *mangase udan* ritual. But, the

Christianity's relationship with the government is less harmonious because the Christianity refuses to do the *mangase udan* ritual.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The mangase udan ritual becomes controversial due to ideological differences in each group. The kings of *bius* as the main agents are willing to carry out the ritual to show their existence in society. The Catholic Church supports the implementation of the *mangase udan* ritual and its purpose to broadcast Catholicism. However, the Christian Church rejects the mangase udan ritual as it is against Christianity.

Through this research it is suggested that the *mangase udan* tradition remains preserved. How to preserve this tradition is by giving space to Parbaringin school to perform their religious rituals. If Parbaringin school exist then the traditions of ancient Batak people will be sustainable including the *mangase udan*. This ritual integrates with the Parbaringin school. The *mangase udan* tradition needs to be preserved because in it there are many values such as the value of togetherness, the value of obedience, and the value of sacrifice.

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