

ISLAMIC TRADITIONS IN BIMA ETHNIC CULTURES: FROM LIVING TRADITION TO LEAVING TRADITION

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ABSTRACT

Bima ethnics were the genealogies of specific ethnic who once strongly upheld the traditions and local cultures in their everyday life. The local understanding of the Bima ethnics was reflected in the idea of their local wisdom and cultural spirit embedded in the fundamental values of Islamic teaching and tradition that considered as moral attitudes and guidance to control their behavior and morality in their daily basis either in private sphere or in social sphere. There are at least two cultural values that were strongly influenced by Islamic teachings and traditions, namely *Maja Labo Dabu* (Shamed and Scared) and *Nggabi Ravi Pahu* (Speech according to actions). Those cultural values can be considered as *living traditions* because those local wisdoms reflected in people everyday life in the past. Besides, those terms have been a *slogan* for Bima and Dompu regency as a way of Bima ethnic moral life that shaped how they conduct elite life in government and human's everyday life in society. On the other hand, those cultural values are not strongly reflected in Bima youth generation nowadays. This case is what I call as *leaving tradition* because the cultures of *Maja Labo Dabu* and *Nggabi Ravi Pahu* have gradually disappeared in Bima society nowadays. Therefore, the main question of this article is (1) How does the construction of Islamic teaching and tradition uphold in Bima cultural life? and (2). Why does the value of Bima cultures not gradually apply in their daily basis nowadays? This research employs qualitative research, with data analyses of literature review from academic article, journal, and thesis.

Keywords: Islamic Traditions, Local Cultures, From Living Tradition to Leaving Tradition, Bima Ethnic Cultures.

1) INTRODUCTION

Religion is arguably as one of the most powerful and pervasive force in the way of its followers though and acted in their daily life (Bielefeldt, 2019; Kimbal, 2002), and one of the ways to understand religion is to look for its presence and manifestation in the culture of the society in the form of practices, rituals, and beliefs. This is what Ammerman called as *Everyday Religion* (Ammerman, 2014).

According to Alatas, Islam is a sociological reality which is a result of a historically and culturally situated articulatory tradition that seeks to bring into line a cultivated community to the

normative teachings of the Prophet to the image of Islam in social realization. Time-based distancing from the prophetic era requires the work of linking stories along with reconstructing, selecting, and representing Islam (Alatas, 2021). Thus, finding the face of Islam in social life refers to the work of human actors such as religious authorities, saints or sultans, scholars or teachers who reproduce and conceptualize the link of its normative teaching and its history. Each of them reinterprets Islam in their own perspectives with their own way. Therefore, we can identify and recognize the local cultures by looking at the values and symbols in particular phenomena (Durkheim, 1912; Geertz, 1973, 142). It implies that when religion meets one or more cultures, they often overlap and influence each other due to the power of religious authority.

The local understanding of the Bima ethnics was reflected in the idea of their local wisdom and cultural spirit based on the fundamental values of Islamic teaching and tradition that considered as moral attitudes and guidance to control their behavior and morality in daily basis (Hamzah, 2004; Komariah, 2018; Zuber & Haryono, 2018, Umar, U, Hendra and Yussof, M. H. B, 2019).

Historically, the coming of Islam in Bima was related to the roles of the Makassar Sultanate of Gowa in today's South Sulawesi and the Malay Islamic propagators in the spread of the Muslim faith in the 17th century. Following a series of military expeditions of the Makassar Sultanate of Gowa in the early 1600s, then the king of Bima converted to Islam in 1640 and changed his name to Sultan Abdul Kahir under the influence of Gowa Sultanate. No longer after the conversion, the Gowa Sultanate sent the Malay Islamic propagators Dato Dibandang and Dato Ditiro to further teach Sultan Abdul Kahir the basic principle of Islam. Dato Dibandang and Dato Ditiro also introduced the writing of Malay script to the Bima sultanate which is locally known as “Bo” (ICRS, 2021). The acculturation of local wisdoms and Islamic teaching and tradition in Bima can be seen when Islam came to be the official religion and its first implementation as a source of customary law in Bima. It adapts and tends to change local culture to be Islamic traditions. No longer after the first sultan of Bima converted to Islam, Islamic teaching and tradition was strongly influenced and implemented in all aspects of life. Therefore, Islam became everyday life, and changed the cultures. It means that some culture should be left behind when it does not fit with the Islamic traditions.

Moreover, the institutionalization of values and norms in the social life of society is a long series of processes in society, there are changes, there are improvements and some are maintained as long as they do not conflict with the changes taking place in society (Syarifuddin Jurdi, 2008). Therefore, some local expressions consist of certain values, ways of life, norms, and guidance or reference for community life.

The process of adaptation or integration of Islam into the Bima Sultanate was implemented by the coexistence of three assemblies during the reign of Sultan Abdul Khair Sirajuddin (1640-1682). There are three main organizations that take responsible for the implementation of Islam in local culture in Bima, Firstly, the *Majelis Tureli* (administrative assembly) which is responsible for administrative affairs, secondly the *Majelis Hadat* (or adat assembly) which is in charge of local tradition issues, and thirdly was by the *Majelis Agama* (religious assembly) which is responsible for mosque services, the Islamic ritual and calendar, and the application of Islamic law concerning marriage, divorce, and inheritance (Sila, 2021).

Since that period, Islam has strongly influenced in constructing the cultural identity of Bima to be Islamic identity. Therefore, Islam is not only just an official religion, but it also becomes a core value that shapes their everyday life and their philosophy of life. Everything should be based on Islamic teaching and tradition because it applies as a source of law (*syariah*). Therefore, Islamic teaching in the form of ethnic culture creates new concept of life guidance

that touched the society into the grass root who was familiar with the local languages and expressions in Bima community.

Hence, this article will examine how Islamic teaching and tradition have influenced and applied in Bima ethnic culture such as the philosophy of *Maja Labo Dabu* as slogan of Bima regency and *Nggahi rawi Pahu* as a slogan of Dompu regency. Both cultural philosophies are not only just a slogan, but those also become the identity of Bima society. Besides, this article will also find out the cause of its gradual absence in Bima ethnic culture.

2) METHODS

This article is a qualitative approach. The techniques of data collection and analysis used literature studies from articles, journal, theses, and internet observation and social media. Hence, researcher collected the insights from local scholars' works on the internet, and got more related topics from academic journal, thesis, and books.

This case studies aim to describe (1). The implementation of Islamic tradition in Bima cultures, specifically the philosophy of *Maja Labo Dabu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*. (2). Finding out the recent reality of those cultural values in their daily basis.

3) RESULTS

A value of certain traditions can be regarded as a culture in human life when it has become an action resulting from the work and creation of man himself in and certainly done with a thorough and continuous intensity. This can be seen as Koentjaraningrat (2000: 180) picture of the culture itself is defined as the whole system of ideas, actions and the work of human beings in the framework of the life of society which is made human self by learning. Therefore, it can be assumed that almost all action in human life is a culture because everything that is done by man is through the process of learning, which in itself makes it can be categorized as an act of culture. Moreover, Islamic teaching has also been contextualized by the religious authority into cultural system and belief that shape people behavior and attitude. Ammerman called it as everyday religion (Ammerman, 2014). Here I will examine how some Islamic teaching and tradition are applied in particular tradition and faith in Bima culture.

The Construction of Islamic Teaching and Tradition in Bima Ethnic Culture

Maja Labo Dabu (Shamed and Scared)

One of the core values that have deeply rooted in Bima culture is *Maja Labo Dabu*, which has shaped the way of thoughts and actions for Bima society everywhere. This term also has been an identity and *slogan* of Bima regency. The word *Maja labo dabu* literally means *shamed and scared*. However, this word has philosophically broader meaning than its literal term because it has been a way of moral life that guides them in personal attitudes and social life. *Shamed* or '*Maja*', in Bima context, means that they feel ashamed when they do bad things or bad attitudes. *Shamed* carried out with full of moral awareness because it does not exist without being awakened and practice with awareness of moral life. While *Scared* or '*Dabu*' means that they feel afraid if they do not follow Islamic path, and guidance, or they do not obey with god's command. Feeling of '*Dabu*' is not applied in war and defense, but it is more closely related to self-control in immoral action such as violating God's laws and customary laws that have governed in social life. Therefore, this philosophy of life is not just a moral life in society, but it also relates with humans' relation with their God.

The idea of *Maja Labo Dabu* is an idea that originates and is rooted in Islamic values then translated into culture of Bima society. Historically, this idea came from the thoughts of Sultan Abdul Khair Sirajuddin, The Sultane of Bima II (1640-1682) with scholars of Minangkabau descent who was later refined by Sultan Nuruddin, Sultane of Bima III (1682-1687) with Sheikh Umar Al-Bantami and other scholars. The idea of *Maja Labo Dabu* becomes a cultural value that

is directly related to the doctrine of monotheism and *aqidah* which is the basis for Muslims. The social aspect of the idea of *Maja Labo Dabu* lies in its power to encourage Muslim Bima society to carry out constructive activities while still following to Islamic values (Syarifuddin Jurdi, 2008, p.216-217).

Historically, *Maja Labo Dahu* philosophy is the result of a long struggle from the realities of the social, political and religious life of Bima society such as inequality in dealing with many differences in views and interests. *Maja labo dabu* then will be a guidance of life to create peace because universally, the culture of *Maja Labo Dabu* is a guidance of peaceful life for personal and social harmony because it upholds a moral value of life. Hence, this philosophy can be found in Bima ethics and morality that shape their community life, and they carry out this moral value in everyday life as personal and social control wherever they are.

According to Islamic teachings, maintaining a sense of '*Maja*' (shamed) is part of faith. Everyone who has a sense of '*Maja*' (shamed) will be able to fortify themselves from bad things. Shame is not only limited to humans but more importantly it can be defined as feeling ashamed of Allah. A Muslim who respects shame or '*Maja*' will not perform bad attitudes that are forbidden by religion because they strongly believe that Allah will surely see. As a bound terminology, '*Maja and Dabu*' has close relation and influence each other. Moreover, the word '*Dabu*' or scared can be defined as a result of '*Maja*' as moral life. People who have '*Maja*' or Shamed in their daily life will have a sense of '*Dabu*' because '*Dabu*' relates to the piety as religious obedience of all commands of Allah. For people who believe, a sense of '*Dabu*' or Scared will encourage them to increase their religious performance and avoid immoral acts to have good guidance of life on earth and reach salvation in hereafter life. Therefore, *Shame* and *Scared* describe the quality of a Muslim's faith and piety.

In the past in Sultanate Era, when the value of *Maja Labo Dabu* was still embedded in high esteem by the community, moral actions and attitudes were rarely found because all levels of society have the feeling of shamed, as believers they will be ashamed of Allah and Rasul, ashamed of society, and ashamed of themselves. If someone commits a disgraceful act such as being lazy to pray and fasting, or they conducted any bad attitudes in social life, they will receive the punishment of "Baja" who is paraded around the village, in the hope that the shame that has been lost will grow back in his soul (Djamaluddin Sahidu, 2004). This is very much similar to the Islamic law that also implement in Aceh, one of the regions implementing Islam as a basic law.

There are at least three kinds of shame that need to be attached to a person in Muslim faith. The first trait, shame on oneself when doing little good deeds before Allah and kindness to the people compared to others. This shame encourages them to increase the quantity of good deeds and one's devotion to Allah SWT and mankind. The second type of shame is shame to fellow human beings. This kind of shamed is important because it can control oneself so as not to violate religious teachings and guidance, even though the person concerned does not get a perfect reward because their shame is not because of Allah. However, this kind of shame can provide them goodness from Allah because they are saved from sin. The third is shame to Allah. This kind of shamed can bring happiness to life as well as the best type of shame as a manifestation of piety. People who are ashamed of Allah will not dare to make mistakes and leave obligations as long as they believe that Allah never sleeps and is all-seeing of what their servants do (Ridwan Anwar, 2020). This concept is believed to have close relation to the feeling of '*Maja*' or shame in Bima culture.

Furthermore, in a hadith it is explained that faith is naked (al-*iman* `uryanun), but its clothing is piety (wa *libasuhu al-taqwa*), then it is beautified by shame (wa *zinatuhu al-haya'*) (HR Ibnu Abi Syaibah), and tafsir Qut al-Ulub fi Mu`amalat al-Mahbub: 1/139.

Hence, piety is an attitude of submission and obedience to Allah by carrying out all of his commands and staying away from all his prohibitions. In another sense, the core of piety is a

very high attitude or awareness of divinity of the presence of Allah in their all activities. This value makes them 'Maja' or *Shamed* and 'Dahu' or *Scared* to have bad attitudes and sinful acts. Like the correlation of Faith and Piety in Islam, the value of *'Maja Labo dabu'* brings up the same concept applied in Bima ethnic culture. They strengthen each other in which their final goals are to shape the society's way of life either in personal sphere or in social life.

The culture of shamed and scared embedded in the heart every human being necessarily makes them able to control them not to do something bad (forbidden), which is considered inappropriate and not in accordance with the ethics of moral life and civilized man. Those cultures guide the society to obey religious norms, customary norms, moral norms and legal norms that exist in Bima ethnic.

Nggahi Rawi Pabu (Speech according to Action)

This term has deeply philosophical meaning for Bima ethnic morality and attitudes for their everyday life. This culture has become the life guidance of the Bima community in social and political aspect as a social control. The word *Nggahi Rawi Pabu* means speech (*Nggahi*), work (*Rawi*), and face (*Pahu*). This term upholds moral value to be consistent for what have been said and what they want to do. In the other word, it can be defined as conducting action must be the manifestation of speech, or being consistent with what they said. Hence, this cultural value is a strong expression that shapes life guidance for Bimaness to always harmonize their words and attitudes.

Furthermore, this local culture is a manifestation of a moral attitude for Bimaness that should be carried out in their everyday life along with the philosophical value inside the terms of *Nggahi Rawi Pabu* itself. Elder people always said what means by it to their generation to teach them the value of consistence in life. Their message, in local language is *Renta ba lera, Kapoda baa ade, Karawi ba weki* which means what was articulated by the tongue must be strengthened by the heart, then done by the body (Alan, 2015). This old message is strongly believed to have close relations with the concept of faith or *Iman* in Islam because in the belief of *Ablusunnab Wal Jamaah*, they defined that faith is not enough belief in the heart, but must be said in the mouth and proven in the deeds of the limbs.

The value of *Nggahi Rawi Pabu* or Speech according action can be defined as a culture that strongly upholds the importance of honesty and responsibility in life which is rooted in Islamic teaching to be consistent and responsible for what they say and act. Therefore, most of the elder people in Bima in the past were seriously to take Islamic value as a way of life in daily basis that they taught through moral in family life and customary law in society. This value can be seen from QS. Ash-Shafa: 2-3) which states that "O you believer, why do you say what you do not do? It is very hateful to the side of Allah that you say things that you do not do". In my point of view, this teaching is believed to be the root of Bima culture of *Nggahi Rawi Pabu*.

Moreover, in every human being, there are only two things that can be accessed and witnessed in real terms, namely their words and their actions. Only these two things can be seen and assessed directly for someone's attitudes. In addition, these two things also bring mutual trust in human social life. People who act with honesty and sincerity tend to be trusted. At this point, *Nggahi Rawi Pabu* (speech according to action) brings up the value of truth, honesty, and sincerity.

In conclusion, those local values, *Maja Labo Dabu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pabu* have close relation to the implementation of Islamic teaching. Those are rooted from Islamic teaching, then translated into local culture that shapes people everyday life. Those values shape personal attitudes as well as form the culture of social and political value at the same time based on Islamic teaching and tradition.

It is not difficult to find the correlation of those values due to the fact that they are coming from the same teaching. This can be seen in the teaching of Islam related to the importance of obedience in personal belief, and the importance of consistency, honesty, and responsibility in social and political life. Simply in Islamic teaching, if someone has good obedience such as feeling shamed and scared of doing bad attitudes and not following God commands, they will have a sense of responsibility and trustworthy in social life. Therefore, *Maja Labo Dahu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* are strongly applied elites life where each one of them who are given a mandate or responsibility should uphold those values in running a system of life in society. Like what Allah says in Q.S. Al-Ahzab: 71-72.

"O you who believe! Be ashamed of Allah, and speak the truth, Allah will correct your deeds and forgive your sins. And whoever obeyed Allah and His Messenger, then indeed he has won the big one."

Ahmad argued that this Islamic teaching has deeply rooted in everyday expressions and languages in Bima culture such as:

"ma ne'e salama morimu, sandakapu nggahi ro eli ro ruku ro rawi mu" which literally means if you are willing to have safety life, you should be aware of your speech and behavior (Machfud Ahmad, 2002).

On the other hand, nowadays those values often applied only in political campaign where political promises should be able to make it happen to be reality when they become local elites. They tend to forget the essence of the value of *Maja Labo Dahu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* which are closer to their everyday life, not just a political contest in every 5 years.

The Gradual Absence of Local Wisdom in Everyday Life in Bima Ethnic

Nowadays, global power relations exist through globalization, especially technological advances where everyone can access or obtain information from various regions or countries in the world through the internet network. Talking about local cultures, especially the values of *Maja Labo Dahu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*, has been a serious problem in the face of Bima nowadays. Now they are gradually absence in people everyday life because the young generations are very much influenced by modernity and westernization that make those local values gradually less popular in society.

As what already explained previously, Bima ethnic has two philosophical concepts which have been a guidance for life, and mottos for both regencies, Bima and Dompu, to be a vehicle for encouraging enthusiasm and determination to do good attitudes and behaviors, having a chivalrous character, fostering a sense of social solidarity, and prioritizing the public interest over personal interests and many more. Those are same core values embedded in the spirit of *Maja Labo Dahu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*. On the other hand, this modern era has dramatically changed the values in ethnic groups, including Bima ethnics. For modern generation of Bima, they probably know that the terms of *Maja Labo Dahu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu*, but many of them do not really understand the meaning and the values deep inside of those cultures. They would say it is just old belief and it would not fit for this modern era. Therefore, global relation directly effects the disappearance and less popular of *Maja Labo Dahu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu* in Bima ethnics.

It can be seen form many immoral acts in many places in Bima recently. Many people can easily conduct bad attitudes and do violence for other people, such as drugs, killing, and stealing that does not show the Islamic teaching and local cultural values (Kahaba, 2021). Bima which is well known as *Maja Labo Dahu City* has been a center of many criminal acts.

On the other hand, Bima and Dompu (Bima ethnics) have been believed as *Maja Labo Dahu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pahu City*, but now those values are not reflected in social life again. This

gradual disappearance can be assumed as a result of many behavioral deviations in the community life itself, which is very contrary to the prevailing norms and customs. Those immoral acts and attitudes come from individual devotion and group devotion. Inter community conflicts are easily found in Bima ethnics now in the form of conflict of students versus students, and village versus village and various criminal acts (Kahaba.net, 2021). Moreover, *Nggahi Rawi Pabu* (speech according to acts) are no longer used in everyday life in Bima community because it seems that the values of this term are only relevant in political campaign which is very highly used to be a slogan for those who want to be political elites.

Therefore, the values of *Maja Labo dabu* and *Nggahi Rawi Pabu* as social control have gradually disappeared and have been changed by western cultures which upholds for over freely expressed and violated local cultures.

4) DISCUSSION

It is important for every human being to be aware of the changing of world cultures that are caused by the rapid development of technology and science in which those have directly impacted on how people behave and think in everyday life. They should be aware that social changes are so fast and really complex, but they should not easily accept the new cultures and change their own cultures and traditions. They should have a sense of belief in their own cultural values and philosophies that have been long time as life guidance in carrying out their daily activities.

Then, who has the responsibility for maintaining this cultural value in this modern society? Parents, religious leaders, teachers, and scholars will be the main mechanisms to transform and teach the values of their cultures to the young generation. Among those actors, parents are actually the first people to give their basic knowledge of their local cultures because they are the first people to have early education for their children to prevent them from bad attitudes and behavior. I believe that the influence of personal bad attitudes and social environment has shaped young generation to leave out their cultural values. These two factors influence each other on the shaping of children's character and attitudes.

Therefore, the presence of religious leaders, charismatic teachers, and parents is important to be a role model and inherit this local value to the young generation (Umar, Hendra, and Yussof, M. H. B, 2019). Exemplary aspects of parents, teachers and elite figures are the key to the shaping of children's character. Due to the global power relation, the presence of foreign cultures, technological advances, the surrounding environment, the careless of young generations to the local value is the problem to inherit and implement local wisdom to them.

Furthermore, the other important mechanism to inherit those local values is the scholars. They have a big responsibility to inherit those local values as well as to make the society realize to their own cultures as a life guidance for moral attitudes and behaviors either in personal sphere or social space. Lastly, the integration of elites, religious leader, teachers and parents will be the best way to make those values alive and more valuable for young generation. The way of its inheritance can be given through formal education as well as through informal program such as sharing life stories and experiences of elder people, and giving advice at chatting family room, dining table, and after finishing prying together.

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