



MALAY CULTURE ACCULTURATION: THE EXISTENCE AND THE GLOBALIZATION

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 26th September, 2017
Received in revised form
21st October, 2017
Accepted 19th November, 2017
Published online 29th December, 2017

Key Words:

Riau Malay Culture,
Acculturation,
Existence,
Globalization.

ABSTRACT

At this present time, Malay culture in Riau Province faces three conditions affecting its existence. Firstly, the coming and domination of contemporary culture that influenced by the globalization. Secondly, Indonesian culture is always side by side with local cultures. Thirdly, primordialism still exists in several Riau Malay people who refuse any mixing and changing. Among of those three conditions, the changing brought by the globalization seems unavoidable. Making integration is needed to be done with negotiation and consolidation between sub-culture or culture function with running-time context. Malay at the very beginning which is essential should be changed into contextual. Negotiation and consolidation is actualized in the process called acculturation. At this present time, Malay culture in Riau Province faces three conditions affecting its existence. Firstly, the coming and domination of contemporary culture that influenced by the globalization. Secondly, Indonesian culture is always side by side with local cultures. Thirdly, primordialism still exists in several Riau Malay people who refuse any mixing and changing. Among of those three conditions, the changing brought by the globalization seems unavoidable. Making integration is needed to be done with negotiation and consolidation between sub-culture or culture function with running-time context. Malay at the very beginning which is essential should be changed into contextual. Negotiation and consolidation is actualized in the process called acculturation.

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Citation: Noor Efni, R. 2017. "Malay culture acculturation: the existence and the globalization", *International Journal of Development Research*, 7, (12), 17790-17794.

INTRODUCTION

In the history, Malay culture ever reached its glory in the 16th to the 18th century. At that time, cultural centers stood in the form of kingdoms in East Sumatra (Riau) and in the Peninsula of Malacca which can be traced until the present time. Those kingdoms were prestigious with life system and law which are fully supported by their people. Malay people also have completed cultural symbols aspects as the main part of their society like language, clothing, housing, food system, and many others. (Suwardi, 2003:52). After the Dutch colonizer entered and colonized the archipelago of Indonesia, the Malay people experienced many limitations in developing themselves. Mostly, since the colonial government pushed the local people to accommodate its importances particularly in economy, the local people activities directly connected to local needs and culture were ignored.

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The point of colonization was the values, moral and civilization destruction so that Malay people lost their identity. The situations above were repeated after Indonesia independence, particularly in the New Order Reign. Cultures and local residents were prepared and oriented to become part of national cultures and Indonesian people. Indeed, in Indonesian fundamental constitution of 1945 (UUD 1945), it was affirmed that the points of local culture were integral parts of Indonesian culture. Nevertheless, in its practice, the local cultures were removed by the developing cultural practicing, just like in national center (Jakarta). The risk was that the local culture did not significantly develop according to the local demands. The local people were afraid showing their identities since it was subversive and "contradictory" with Indonesian cultural agenda. After the falling of the New Order Reign, the reformation gives possibilities to the Malay culture restoring and developing itself. However, corresponding with spirit to revitalize self-identity, the freedom makes Indonesia dissolve into what we called globalization. This condition brings contemporary culture with it.

Surviving and becoming part of this progressed culture, the Malay culture does many acculturations, at last. This article is going to explore many forms of acculturation with all of its aspects in the globalization circle. Besides as tracking record of form or process of Malay culture existence defence, this article also is going to observe various limitations derived from barrier which appears in the process formed to help the government and decision makers in formulizing strategies to keep the existence of Malay culture in Riau province.

The Acculturation and the existence of Malay Cultural Symbols

According to Koentjaraningrat (2004), acculturation is a social process that happens if a certain cultural social group faces foreign culture which is totally different. Acculturation happens when these requirements fulfilled, that is, affinity, it is an acceptance for the new culture without startling. Another requirement is homogeneity to the new norm assimilated by similarities and kinds of cultures. What have been experienced by the Malay culture when facing globalization is acculturation process though characteristics and conditions are like being explained by Koentjaraningrat. There is a typicality that has been brought by each symbol of Malay culture since intrinsic and extrinsic condition cover them. The following description is going to discuss three cultural symbols that has typical acculturation kinds, they are arts, culinary, and cultural events in order to find the certain patterns which can be used for further study.

The Malay Arts, Political History and Functional Acculturation

The Malay arts in Riau Province are a cultural element where the acculturation emerges in huge scope, is complicated and takes a quiet long time. Malay arts are in various fields, such as singing, dancing, theater. Each art has been appeared and played for about two centuries. Each art gets along together and completes to each other. Just like another cultural aspects, Riau Malay arts are very influenced by extrinsic aspects, particularly politic. The trading life of Malay kingdoms in the past has greatly influenced to Malay art dynamicization. The influence of Siam that passed through Kedah and Perlis to Riau was portrayed into Mahyong, Menora and Mendu shows in the region of Aru Bay in Langkat and in the Deli Serdang Kingdom. Asian India, in this matter is Keling or Tamil, went on after Malay being identical with Islam. By the end of 19th century, Asian India influence was marked by the flourish of Parsi, Aristocratic's puppets' shows, etc. Meanwhile, the Islamic Arabic influence was portrayed in Zapin Arts (Gambus), Qasidah, Roket (Barodah), and Western Dhikr. In other words, the cultures derived from Islamic culture were the most prominent (Turner, 1985).

Among of the archaic arts as mention above, the dancing developed very well into several groups upon the characteristic and the motivation. First, magical dancing group, it is magical religious, Second, dancing war group, Third, dancing performance, Fourth, Ronggeng dance group for "menandak". The "Tandak" Dancing is a newly developed among all of them. Though each dancing has its own uniqueness, for those who master Tandak dancing, there is a possibility for them learning other Malay dances easily. It is shown that Tandak dancing has main role in the developing of Malay dancing generally.

Others Malay dancing that is quiet well known in Riau is Zapin. Zapin is viscosly Islam. Besides those dances, there is a dancing which is typically and had been existed earlier in the beginning of 20th century, it is called Sambrah dancing. Dancing existence is always relevant to every human kind then and now. It is since dancing has function in human kinds' life (Lange, 1975). Whenever the civilization and the culture change, the dancing's functions also change. Along with its functions, dancing also has its values. One of the functions is a unity since it has communal spiritual values which ties each personality in certain groups. Spiritual value is very important since it gives functional meaning to human kind's life. Spiritual values friction in dancing will cause its functional friction. In this friction, the acculturation of dancing goes on. Consequently, arts acculturation particularly dancing is called functional acculturation.

Unfortunately, acculturation is not accompanied by dancing functional enrichment itself. In the old times, these functions such as social value, ritual value, medicinal, recreational are still performed in Malay dancing. Nowadays, these functions are subsided becoming only for recreational value. Therefore, a talk is needed to discuss newly dancing function that is appropriate for present development and era or present human kind, particularly Riau human kind. Other Riau important art is theater. Theater is complicated artwork; it is since theater has other arts elements. The most outstanding theater is Makyong Theater. Other theater is Bangsawan Theater (Parsi Puppet), Berdah, Unrequited Rhyme, Dul Muluk, Nandung, Mak Yong, Mamanda, Mendu, Nandai, Randai Kuantan, The Ship's Letter, etc. Makyong Theater is Malay traditional theater which develops in Riau, East Sumatera and Malaysia. Seeing the traces, in the old times, Makyong was always sponsored by Malay kingdom. Makyong seemingly came from folk dancing like Joget, Tandak, and Ronggeng. Several opinions say that Makyong is for entertaining only, but it is closely seen in Buka Tanah ceremony done in some Riau areas; there is possibility that it has deep meaning such as spiritual meaning.

Just like dancing art problem, there is spiritual value in Makyong theater, but it is unrealizable and never developed for recently used so it is being ignored toward extinction. Besides functional factor, Makyong performers are no longer young (there is no significant regeneration performers), very rare performance chances (mainly problem is expenses), and this theater is less desirable by people since there is another interesting performance such as Joged/Ronggeng. Just like Makyong Theater, traditional theaters experience same situation. It is only performed just for cultural icon to support tourism importance. It is not far from dancing, traditional theater is not able to follow development and requirement of age. Their existences are only ceremonial matters. Maintained function of dancing and theatre are only recreational function—not to mention memorial function. Traditional theater is only showing historical aspect which is of course only becoming interest for certain people (historist, artist, and intellectual). Furthermore, entertaining function presented is also something left out. Entertainment standard is used only for the old times people. Whereas things make people entertain are always changing with ticking time. If previously written literatures on inscriptions were influenced by Hindi culture (Pallawa letters), now developing written literature in royal environment shows Islam influence.

Schramm said (1996:4) that cultural acculturation through literature, particularly written literature, is easy and intensive other than directly vigorous personal contact. Then, saga was started known by local people widely since 1511, like the publishing of “Hikayat Amir Hamzah” and “Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah” in Malay History, which is according to Roolvink (1975:7), was the oldest version of Malay written text. Saga in Malay literature was written in prose (it was different compared to Acehnese literature that was written in poem). Besides, heroic stories in Javanese literature like stories of Pandawa and Panji also had great influence in Malay literature era at that time (Sutrisno, 1983:74). Thus, Malay literature that developed was mixing between Malay with India (Hinduism), Islam, and Javanese culture.

Based on the finding above, past Malay literature can be mentioned has had perfect acculturation process. When one writes about Malay culture, he has experienced enculturation process, that is socialization, education, and cultural symbols learning into nerve system and become part of personalities. When foreign culture came (particularly Islam), Malay people are adaptable with various reasons, change old cultural pattern into new ones. They have experienced second enculturation called acculturation (Kim, 1996: 138-139).

Malay literatures also experience the same thing. In its development, the acculturation is rapid, even too rapid which causes assimilation. There is a symptom of Malay element loss in late literatures. It is obviously seen from literature work themes proposed by Riau Malay men of letters. Also, policies arranged by the literature protection institutes which is legitimized has become more national and global. Nevertheless, in positive view, this condition makes various acculturation formations and its function frictions possible and indirectly enriches the Riau Malay literatures itself.

Malay Culinary and Dynamic Acculturation

Culinary plays important part for a culture and therefore its existence is very dynamic. Culinary is the slushiest cultural, changeable and evolvable. It is since the existence growing and maintaining along with its biological existence that local people bring. Therefore, preserving and maintaining certain culinary means preparing acculturation process continuously. That is why local people’s taste also changes. In Riau, Malay culinary is also maintained that way. Programs and shows relates to culinary are always shown; for example, becoming parts of cultural festival programs. In the World Malay Cultural Festival which is held annually, there are always culinary stands which prepare for preserving event of Riau Malay culinary. Besides, Riau Malay culinary competition is always held prior to Pekanbaru anniversary. Malay culinary is competed in many related scopes, like district competition, Malay breakfast competition, “Bolu Kemojo” Making Competition, and Shopping Delivery Making Competition. Preserving Malay culinary actions have internal and external purposes, Malay cultural preservation itself and cultural promotion to people in outside Riau. In those competitions, traditional food and snacks are not only served but also created. Food like “anyang pakis”, “ikan pantau”, “baung asam pedas”, “rendang ikan salai”, and “gulai telur ikan bungkus daun kunyit” are beautifully served with modern culinary knowledge. Acculturation with modern culinary knowledge in this event is seen in “bolu kemojo” or “bolu koja”. This bread is varied with dip and durian so that it has additional values.

Aside from food composition aspect, culinary also shows acculturation in its distribution. Malay culinary can be everywhere and combined with other various culinary. It is proven where there are many culinary stalls combined typical dishes of Riau Malay with other food from other areas. For example, “Pondok Gurih” Restaurant in Pekanbaru serves Malay, Minang, and Javanese food. Even on its restaurant board’s name is clearly written “Hidangan Memija” which means Malay, Minang, and Javanese served food. It is done to attract more visitors and raises earning for Pekanbaru as the number of Minang and Javanese people is high enough here. Another popular restaurant is “Riau Kuring”. This restaurant serves Malay-Sudanese fusion. The phenomenon above shows that Riau Malay culinary to this present time is still well preserved and constantly progresses. Riau Malay culinary is negotiative and consolidative toward differences and time changing. Besides, varieties in Riau culinary do not trigger argumentations about which is better than others. This is since culinary variety in every region in Riau province is not conservative. Culinary at one place can be enjoyed in other places. Its distribution level is high enough so that there is no sentimental sense of belonging. Then acculturative process appears significantly. Besides, these social culinary functions are easily adapted to support consolidative process. Food, which is only eaten by several royal people then, now is easily eaten by common people. It is resulting proudness effect and distinguished sense to local people’s mind.

The more productive thing is that culinary is also able to mix people with various background either economy or social as seen in food stall “Mak Cuik” that is near Caltex housing complex at Rumbai. The signature dish at “Mak Cuik” is *gulai ikan baung*. Though it is a simple stall, workers, officials and businessmen always come to this stall. This stall also serves its customers fairly. Its slogan *First come first served!* It is well obeyed. They do not accept reserving or booking system. Even the government officials those want to eat there must be in line whenever they come late. It means there is status gap ruined when we eat this typical Riau Malay dish. In the old times, it is possible that food (and other cultural elements) is used to firm people’s social status. But now Riau Malay culinary is being a destructed mean for every social status of a community. Several strategies as innovation inform, serving, exhibition, social functions of the Malay food as mentioned above are created based on belief that Riau Malay typical food is going to be existed for a quiet long time. As just mentioned above, there are factors tied and rooted in Riau Malay people toward certain food. Factors like history, philosophy, and custom have already constructed Riau Malay people taste for food that is appropriate to their taste that is Malay typical dish. *Bolu kemojo* saus durian merupakan contoh proses komunikasi bejana besar ini. *Bolu kemojo* yang merupakan masakan khas Melayu, diinovasi dengan ide-ide modern berupa penambahan saus durian di atasnya. Saus durian itu akan menambah nilai dari *bolu kemojo* sebagai makanan khas Melayu, bukan mengaburkannya. Malay dish position and its acculturation in fast changing age is like a big jug filled with high taste of Malay so when things come into jug will dissolve into the taste. Any new tastes and spices which are added to Riau Malay typical culinary do not change main taste that becomes the characteristics. For a dish that loses its original taste of Malay, it is no longer distinguished and can not be called Malay dish. Therefore, Malay typical dish, that is like a big jug, can accept any additional spices into it, but those things is going to have additional value toward Malay dish

itself. Durian-sauced *bolu kemojo* is an example of this big jug communication process. Bolu Kemojo is Malay typical food innovated with modern idea that is pouring sauce on it. This durian sauce adds the value of Malay Typical food, not obscure it. In globalization context, cultural elements which attach themselves cannot change Malay culinary. Though culinary is the slushiest aspect which is changeable in its acculturation process, its original taste and shape are not changing. This original shape makes contemporary cultural elements adapt to it.

Cultural events and Strategic Acculturation

Cultural events are all events that involve cultural universal elements like specified by Koentjaraningrat (2004), they are religion, organization, society, knowledge, language, income, arts, and technology. Those events include preparation, conduction, and impact towards people who preserve them. There are two cultural events that are typically Malay culture in Riau, that are "Pacu Jalur" and "Mandi Balimau". "Pacu Jalur" is religious, society organization, knowledge, arts and technology combination. Meanwhile, "Mandi Balimau" is dominantly religious, but there are arts and knowledge in it. In contemporary era, aspects or related importance is changeable or disappear. In contemporary era, aspects or related importance is changeable or disappear. In contemporary era, aspects or related importance is changeable or disappear. Here, functional acculturation happens in these cultural events' aspect. Nevertheless, acculturation does not stop in functional aspects only. There are more strategic steps and directions within it. Seeing this, it is necessary to examine the characteristics of the both significant Malay cultural events.

Pacu Jalur

"Pacu jalur" is a traditional rowboat race in Riau. This tradition is a maritime inheritance in the past when waters became the main route of the archipelago. In the beginning of 17th century, the *jalur* (Eng: mud rowboat) was the main transportation of Rantau Kuantan villagers. Then beautiful carved rowboats appeared. The changing directly marked the rowboat function changing; it was not only as a main transportation, but also as social identity. It is since those beautiful decorated rowboats ridden only by the rulers of the area. A century later, local people started notifying another function of the rowboats. They started a speed race among the rowboats that now is known as "Pacu Jalur". In the beginning, "pacu jalur" simply was held to fill leisure time at moment of rice and sugar cane harvesting. The price was also simple, a traditional snack called "godok" that was eaten together, and afterwards known as "Pacu Godok". Furthermore, "pacu jalur" was held to celebrate Islam feasts or other feasts. In colonial time, this race was held to celebrate the descendant years and Dutch birthday and many others. Recently, "Pacu Jalur" is connected to celebrate our independence day in August.

In its contemporary development, "Pacu Jalur" was a tradition, and held as great cultural festival. Several cultural events were held escorting and completing "Pacu Jalur" festival. Then the events became Kuantan Singingi Festival. In that festival, various event were held like *sendratari* (Eng: play and dance arts), *randai*, *folk songs*, etc. Pacu Jalur is scheduled as part of tourism cultural event. This festival does not involve only local people, but contingents from other regions. Scope and system development of this cultural event is called strategic

acculturation. Global condition gives possibility to many parties taking part and get "benefit" from this event. The Riau Malay people realize about this and think more strategic to use this cultural event development for local people goodness massively.

Mandi Balimau

Mandi Balimau or *Balimau Kasai* or *Potang Mogang* is a customary ceremony to purify oneself (self purification ceremony), originally from Pelalawan, Riau. This ceremony is held to greet Ramadhan that widely spread to many regions in Riau Province like Kampar, Indragiri, or outside regions, mostly in West Sumatera province. Etimologically, *mandi balimau* is formed from two local words, "Mandi" means clean oneself; "balimau" means lime water, while "kasai" means spicuous fragrance. This activity symbolizes soul purity spirit and gratitude to the God Almighty that gives chance to welcome the holy month of Ramadhan. People believe that with "mandi balimau", their soul and heart are free from devious mind.

The tradition of Mandi Balimau had been done since centuries ago by King of Pelalawan who at that time still held Hindu-Islam and the Kingdom of Muara Takus. In Riau itself, this tradition is Hindu remain whose people in India loves purify themselves in the Gangga River. "Balimau" is considered closely similar to Makara Sankranti, that is when Hindu take bath in the Gangga River to praise the God of the sun in the middle of January; then there is Raksabandha to strengthen the relationship of people done in July to August; after that, Vasanta Panchani in January to February remarks as purifying oneself to welcome spring season. In its development, this tradition has spreaded out to West Sumatra areas and Java also. In Java, this pure-bath tradition is called Padusan. It is done in remote areas of villages. Also, it is done a day before holy month of Ramadhan. "Padusan" is pure-self symbols with a hope to start fasting with physical and spiritual purity. The bath's place is supposed to be natural place. It is since they believe that water source is pure water resulting kind sense.

This tradition is also held in Rokan Hulu regency, that is called "Potang Balimau". In Pekanbaru, this tradition is called "Petang Megang" or "Mandi Balimau." "Petang Megang" is yearly tradition of the capital city of Riau Province. It is started with pilgrimage; for example, pilgrimage to the founder of Pekanbaru, Sultan Abdul Jalil Alamuddinsyah, and Senapelan cemetery. Just like "Pacu Jalur", besides of functional acculturation, the cultural event "Mandi Balimau" also experiences strategic acculturation. Contemporary culture has added and expanded scope of that cultural events. The changing happened is realized as positive matter and Malay people in Riau strategically used it for their importance in scope of economy, social and culture.

Conclusion

Globalization existence and contemporary culture create new configuration to Riau Malay culture. Globalization existence and contemporary culture create new configuration to Riau Malay culture. That configuration is formed when acculturation process had happened for long years and had been triggered by various factors. As revealed in the beginning of the paper, colonialization of Netherland and the New Reign ruler had pushed Malay culture in many ways and formed

culture whose existence remains by various negotiations and consolidations. Now, negotiation and consolidation done by Malay culture in Riau face globalization and form a new Malay culture with its existence remaining because of those efforts. Those forms are typical acculturation and different in every element. In art elements like dancing, theater and literature, functional acculturation happened. Thus, art form changes along with its functional changing. In culinary element, acculturation happened very dynamically, it is suitable with taste changing, time and place context, and changing in its supporting aspects. However, culinary is cultural element whose existence is very solid. No matter what the changing is, Malay becomes the uneraseable core. The last cultural element is cultural events which are not changing in its acculturation. The last cultural element is cultural events which are not changing in its acculturation. Yet, it experiences developing and expanding of context with added new values for the importance of the people. Hence, acculturation that happened is called strategic acculturation.

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