

Nurul Shima Taharuddin, Mohamad Khalil Amran (2017). A Study On Assimilation In Culture And Tradition Of Community At Kampung Gagu Jelebu Negeri Sembilan. *Ideology*, 2(2) : 130-136, 2017

A Study On Assimilation In Culture And Tradition Of Community At Kampung Gagu Jelebu Negeri Sembilan

Nurul Shima Taharuddin, Mohamad Khalil Amran
Fakulti Seni Lukis & Seni Reka
Universiti Teknologi MARA
32610, Seri Iskandar Campus Perak, Malaysia

nurul026@perak.uitm.edu.my
khalil34105@yahoo.com

Abstrak.

The purpose of this research is to study and to understand the assimilation that happen to Minangkabau ethnic that live in kampung Gagu, Jelebu Negeri Sembilan. The aim of this study is to identify the assimilation that happens to social life of Minangkabau ethnic in Kampung Gagu, Jelebu negeri Sembilan. Assimilation that happen to culture has giving a big change to the dynamic process whereby the living cultures of the world are changing and adapting to external or internal forces. This process is occurring within western culture as well as non-western and indigenou cultures of the world. Forces which contribute to the cultural change is technological, socio culture, migration and economic. Base on method that collected from interview and photo documentation, this study has come out with a result that factor contribute to the various formation of culture Minagkabau ethnic in kampung Gagu is because of development of economy. This factor speeded up the process of the eradication of all the Adat culture, except for its weak and powerless political structure and organisation

Keyword: Identify social changes of community, assimilation on culture and tradition

Case study is about documenting the present of social life in Kampung Gagu, Jelebu, Negeri Sembilan which can be said as the This most challenging part. A colourful of culture and custom portrays the image of their life, starting from *adat berendoi*, *korban*, *marhaban*, *merisik* and wedding ceremony whereby the ritual of *bertandu* or *berarak lilin* is performed. In Kampung Gagu, Minangkabau ethnic was an active ethnic. They are still preserving and practicing *the tarian randai*, *tarian piring* and *caklempong* (Zin,1998). It is quite difficult to find a traditional house with *gonjong* at its rooftop which represents the identity of Minangkabau ethnic. The same situation also happens to the wood carving in which this uniqueness of Minangkabau ethnic starts to be extinct.

Currently, there are a lot of changes in Negeri Sembilan because of the development that happened to their social-cultural. In Kampong Gagu itself, there are only eight clans (*suku*), which are *suku Biduanda Waris Menteri*, *suku Biduanda Waris Ombi*, *suku Mungkal*, *suku Tanah Datar*, *suku Batu Belang*, *suku Biduanda Ulu Jelebu*, *suku Biduanda Sarin* and *suku Biduanda Kemin*. In Kampung Gagu, they are still practicing *Adat Perpatih* as a guideline in the way of their life. After Islam came to Malaya, *Adat Perpatih*, as a custom and culture of Minangkabau ethnic has been changed, to suit it with the religion and as result of this; *Adat Perpatih* in Islamic context became much more flexible and based on *Hukum Syarak*, which is very important in Islam. In Minangkabau ethnic, their custom like *Majlis Nikah Kahwin* is a very unique custom whereby in this custom, there is a few *adat* or ceremonies that they must do in order to complete this ceremony, such as *marhaban*, *kbatam Quran*, *sanding*, *arak lilin*, *makan beradab* and *tepung tawar*. In the way of Minangkabau ethnic's life, they need to practice the Minangkabau custom because it is one of their *tuntutan* or obligations. In *Adat Perpatih* that this ethnic practices, there is a law that they need to follow such as, youngest needs to respect the eldest, eldest needs to be responsible for the youngest. In their culture, there are certain ceremonies need to be completed as a ritual for the baby in order to have a good life in the future. In addition of this, *Adat Berendoi* is for the newborn baby, *Arak Lilin* is a ritual in order to celebrate the bridegroom and *Marhaban* is more towards Islamic ritual.

The Negeri Sembilan people are characterized by a matrilineal custom and decent group organization which they refer as *Adat Perpatih*. The *Adat Perpatih* is found almost exclusively in Negeri Sembilan although there are also groups of people practicing *Adat Perpatih* in Nanning, Melaka and in enclaves in Lukut, Johor and in Beranang, Selangor. Throughout the other states of Peninsular Malaysia, and among groups of people in the District of Port Dickson, the coastal district of Negeri Sembilan itself, the *Adat Temenggong* is being practiced. The *Adat Temenggong* refers to a bilateral form of social organization in which, in accordance with Islam, the emphasis is placed on the male line (Norazit, 1992).

The name of Negeri Sembilan means nine states. It refers to the fact that prior to the European contact, Negeri Sembilan was a confederacy of minor states which was known as "luak" with independent chiefs called Penghulu or Undang. The people of Negeri Sembilan, like the Malay of the other states of Malaysia, are Muslim. In Negeri Sembilan, traditionally there are two spheres with the examples of matrilineal custom (*Adat Perpatih*) and the Islamic law (*Syarak*) that have been kept for the most part, separately and distinctly in the lives of the people (Norhalim,1992).. The *syarak* was being practiced in those areas in which it did not contravene custom, principally with the regard to the law of the marriage and divorce. In certain traditional institution, the *Adat* and religion represented

separate aspects of life that were being synthesized. The apparent contradictions between the *Adat Perpatih* and Islam have been culturally resolved.

Adat Perpatih is a way of life which can be best characterized as communal, fairly egalitarian and democratic. As a conceptual system, adaptation of *Adat Perpatih* including both specific rules can reflect and generate the behavior of its society such as where to live, who has the right to that property, who is responsible for whose children and also a natural as well as supernatural world and man's place in it. The conceptual and ideological components tend to reinforce each other and each deal with many inter-relating themes (Norhalim,1992).

In each village, there is a head which is called as *Penghulu*. The *Penghulu* administers the territory (*mukim*) under their jurisdiction with the help of *Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung (JKKK)*. This is the organization that responsible to the village. The people of Kampung Gagu as mentioned earlier are purely from Minangkabau ethnic and they are still practicing their custom and culture. This is the main point why this village had been chosen as the research area. Villagers that live in Kampung Gagu are loyal and united to each other because they still stick to their custom and culture. *Adat* rule includes every decision by its practitioner on any matters required to be referred to *Adat* itself. If there are differences among *rumpun*, *ruang perut*, and *suku* members that can lead to the breaking up of the entire group's solidarity before any activities, *Adat* specifically states that the differences had to be solved through *berkampung*, means gathering, sometimes used with similar meaning to *kerapatan* and *Adat bertimbang salah*, means asking judgment (Nellie, 1992).

Most of the young generation of the modern era nowadays is influenced by the external culture and this can lead to the culture disorder among them. The culture practice is no longer like before as pure as the original Malay culture. Preservation and conservation ought to be committed as an initial step in order to ensure that the custom practice can be continued no matter how developed the state is.

Minangkabau refers to a large ethnic group that lives on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia. Most of them are Muslim and practicing the Minangkabau custom and culture known as matrilineal system. Traditionally, the wife remained living with her maternal relatives after marriage and her husband could continuously live with his mother and he could not bring along his wife to live there together but could visit her anytime he likes (Nellie, 1992). The domestic unit, a community house, held a head woman, her sisters, their daughters, and their children and visiting husbands. Nowadays, this kinship structure has been declined, and more men have to leave their villages together with their wife and children in order to establish their own households. Generally, traditional Minangkabau people worked as farmers, and their crafts including wood carving, metalwork, and weaving. Some of them migrated to Malaya in the 1850s in order to participate in the rapid expansion of Malayan tin mining. As time passed by, the immigrants switched to the farming field, and in the 20th century, they managed to control most of the Malaya's retail trade.

History of Kampung Gagu started in 1862. During that time, a group of Minangkabau ethnic from Minangkabau, Wet Sumatera came to this forest. They were looking for timber to make railway route. At first, they called that village as *Kampung Solok* which meant *hulu*(upstream). They gave that place a name in conjunction with the name of their previous village in West Sumatera. There was a story behind the name. After that, they started to bring their family to stay with them there. They changed its name into *Kampung Gagu* because they doubted to

stay in the village which was quite far away from other people in Hulu Klawang but after their family arrived, they decided to stay there until now.

Through this interview analysis has been made. There are a lot of changes happen to Kampung Gagu. Certain of the changes is good and certain of them is not good, Even though kampung Gagu has transform from totally 100 percent Minangkabau ethnic to multi ethnic base on marriage and migration but still Dato Empat and Penghulu try to preserve and practice the costume and culture. A few changes also were applied to several costumes to balance it with Islamic law. Example like Tarian Pring, last time it was change to become only a simple dance without ritual called Dabus. This ritual is for the dancer to have a power so that his or her foot won't get a cut by the broken glass this is not acceptable in Islam, it called *syirik* it's beyond Allah power, that's why they change it. Youngster also not interested to learn tarian piring and only En Wahid the only tarian Piring dancer left in the village.

Transformation that happens to *adat lenggang perut* is it started to extinct. This adat was a good ritual to help make a way to baby and facilitate pregnant mother. This ritual is using long *batik* fabric and swings it on left and right and also around the mother belly so that the baby in the wound will move slowly and at the right position for deliver. Now it is not been practice anymore because of the *bidan* (midwife) that know how to perform the ritual is already dead. In dato' opinion nowadays a lot of cases baby cannot be deliver smoothly, baby got problem all because of young generation didn't practice *petua* from the older. Changes that happen to architecture are because of people nowadays a old and they cannot climb up *rumah kampung*, which are high. So that why they made their home using stone it's cheaper and easier to manage.

The custom that was practiced by the Minangkabau ethnic including various activities in their life showed that there were several custom practices which are still being practiced among them. Through the comparison of the visual collection, the transformation of culture such as the way they dress and the way they organize the event and the ceremony showed a significant difference between the past and the present transformation. It can be spotted obviously when the past visual and the present visual were being compared. Through a visual that showed the transformations that happened to the culture, custom, and art in Kampung Gagu, Jelebu, Negeri Sembilan. By using an observation, photo documentation, video documentation and interview, all the data can be collected and analyzed in order to make a comparison and directly show the result.

Transformation that happened brought good and bad influences to the custom and culture. These transformations had changed the uniqueness of the culture and arts of this ethnic based on the observation. Based on the study, it was found that the faith of the young generation towards the culture and custom had being diminished gradually. They no longer thought that the culture and custom were important in their lives since they felt that the modernity was better and more fun. Even though there are certain of the youngsters who are still participate in the event but still it starts to be different, since if there is no benefit to them, then they will not come over. As the result of this, it showed that the young generation nowadays who should continue the culture and custom did not really understand it or it can be said that they did not have any idea at all about the real function of the culture and custom in their life. The problem was the old *petua* (tip) could not be practiced any longer (Dato' Empat Tua adat Minangkabau Tuan Haji Yaakub B. Furthermore, they even did not put any efforts in appreciating and understanding what is Ghani, 2011). Furthermore, they even did

not put any efforts in appreciating and understanding what is being implied in every proverb. They also even did not practice the culture and custom because they did not really understand about the implied meaning in every culture and custom. The younger generation felt like they have been pushed to learn. So, they would leave as soon as possible, right after learning the course (En Hashim Saat, 2011).

This problem arose when the ways, the rules and the understanding of the custom from those figures and practitioners of the custom did not put their effort in making documentation of their understanding so that it could be conveyed to their next generation accurately. Incomplete documentation from the start is being one of the reason why the culture and custom undergone transformation gradually. From one generation to another generation, the transformation happened based on the understanding of its practitioner verbally. This was because there were no proper guidelines or procedures in the book or document form in order to practice it. The time also be the factor of the transformation happened. The generation nowadays thinks that they have to face with the trivial matters regarding to the culture that is expected to waste their time to think about. In fact, the culture and custom are beautiful arts in which only patient can solve the matters regarding to the culture and custom wisely. There were so many taboos, the culture ways, proper guidelines and the practices that needed rituals in order to apply it. Because of these, the young generation felt this as a burden for them to practice it so that they took some solutions either ignoring the culture and custom or transform those cultures and customs that could be fitted with the current situation.

The generation nowadays took easy of this as for them it was good enough to know a bit about the culture and custom and they did not take any initiatives to get in-depth understanding of it. They were ashamed to ask either to the old folk or wiser person. As for them, all they want was simplicity and they would not put an effort to learn it because they were so impatient. They also preferred to give up and quit easily in resolving the matter related to the custom in which they would use outsiders who have no connection to the custom at all. In their opinion, they did not have to follow these customs and they thought that better they made things easier by finding another alternative. Now, it was all about the money. For them, it was better to keep their money for other necessity than spending much for the particular ceremony that related to the custom. Because of these were the practices of the custom, those beautiful rituals could not be seen anymore now. So, it was enough for them to practice only on the important thing and the most important was the intention fulfilled.

The surrounding situation also played an important role towards this transformation. Nowadays, the migration of the young generation from their village to the urban areas made them more modern and independent without having taboos to be followed, the custom to be applied and the culture to be taken care of. Everything was untied and modern, living freely, mix freely, doing their routine as they pleased and when they returned back to their village, they influenced their siblings and relatives with their new culture, which was a culture that was being assimilated between their indigenous culture, and the external culture. As a result of this, the culture and custom could not be preserved since the young generation nowadays was no longer keen to this and they more preferred to live freely. There were also some of them who were really ashamed to admit that they came from the village that was full with the culture and custom when they were being asked about their culture and custom. The problem today is

the youngster which wants to take the role had become lesser or can be said that there are no more youngster which are interested (Dato' Empat Tua adat Minangkabau Tuan Haji Yaakub B. Ghani, 2011). This was due to them who not really understood or even did not have any idea about this. They could not accept the sarcasm and prejudice of others towards their culture and custom, which were tight and full of rituals. If this continuously happens, one day our race will be a race with no culture and custom like the western countries.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the culture and custom of Minangkabau ethnic in Kampung Gagu, Jelebu, Negeri Sembilan was gradually extinct and undergone some problems that would wipe out the tradition forever. In about next 20 years time, this tradition that was being practiced would extinct gradually. In fact, *adat perpatih* was a social system which was really suitable to be used not only for the Minangkabau ethnic, but also for other society as long as it was not opposite to the Islamic law. Even there was the changes happened brought good and bad influences, it has still been practiced by the villagers in Kampung Gagu. *Adat* gave many benefits to our life in which it should be preserved and conserved. Such as *lenggang perut*, sometimes it was not all about sciences, but we still needed to practice the *petua* (a traditional way in medical) for our health and believed in it. It was true that sometimes traditional way or herb was much better compared to science.

A wonderful and colorful culture such as *adat berendoi* for the newborn baby and *adat bertandu* should be preserved and must be practiced in each wedding ceremony. A new group among future generation should be formed for performing art like *tarian randai* and *tarian piring* so that it has the continuity. The culture of Minangkabau ethnic was a form of the tradition, which became a true identity of the people in Kampung Gagu particularly and in Negeri Sembilan generally. Hence, the other parties should take action in preserving and conserving this culture and custom from being extinct. Besides, Negeri Sembilan ought to be promoted as an attractive spot to be visited by the tourists in order to experience them with the uniqueness of the culture of Minangkabau ethnic. At the same time, this could generate income of the villagers and also can increase their spirit to put an effort in preserving and conserving their own tradition.

The Culture Institution in Negeri Sembilan should be stricter in encouraging their members to deepen their understanding of the essence, philosophy and concept of the custom. A study should be conducted in order to find out on what we lost and what should we modify in the system of the custom. Suppose that documentation for history in the scope of Malay ethnic in Malaysia has been practiced and emphasized long time ago before all this transformation happened. Visual is the best method for reference and prove for our valuable heritage of culture. Visuals have to be kept well and its writing should be produced and well-kept in the archive of the custom which is Culture Museum so that it can be a guideline and reference for the next generation. The Federal Government ought to spend expenses in organizing some exposure programmed like the implementation of the custom and its interest and a talk on the discussion between the youths and the culture practitioner so that it can resolve the issue about the function of the custom among the young generation. A film or short film, which relates to the culture and custom, should be made as an additional material for the young generation learns. Hopefully, it is not only an imitation story from other countries. The young generation has to be proud of their culture

and custom. The kids have to be nurtured to love their own tradition and identity that are full with the culture and custom. Make them proud to be a part of the race that has their own custom.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Amir M.S. (2001). Adat Minangkabau Pola dan Tujuan Hidup Orang Minangkabau. PT Mutaiara
Sumber Widy.
- Bradford J. Hall. (2002). Among Cultures. The Challenge of Communication
Wadsworth A
division of Thomson Learning Inc. Thomson Learning Is A Trademark Used
Here In Under License.
- Encik Aziz B. Haji Mohd Gorip. Mohammad Firdaus B. Nosri. Mohd Nazim B.
Abd Gaman. Ahmad Afian B. Abdul Kadir. (2011). Sistem Sosial Adat Perpatih
Di Luak Inas. Lembaga Muzium
Negeri Sembilan.
- Grant Pooke. Diana Newell. (2008). Art History the Basics. Routledge 2 Park
Square Milton Park Abingdon Oxon OX144RN.
- Hj. Khalid Bonget. Raja Nafida Raja Shahminan. (2009). Adat Nan Diuca Pakai
& Seri Yang Menanti. Lembaga Muzium Negeri Sembilan. Seremban Negeri
Sembilan Malaysia.
- Haji Ismail Abdul Hadi. Haji Muhammad Tainu. Dato' Khalid Bonget. (2001).
Setitis Tinta Abadi Pesta Persukuan Adat Perpatih Tahun 1999 - 2000.
Lembaga Muzium Negeri Sembilan. Seremban Negeri Sembilan Malaysia.
- Jane Kromm. Susan Benforado Bakewell. (2010). A History Of Visual Culture
Western Civilization From The 18th To The 21st Century. First Floor, Angel
Court, 81 St Clements Street, Oxford OX4 1AW, UK.
- John Collier. Malcolm Collier. Edward T. Hall. (1986) Visual Anthropology
Photography As A Research Method. University of New Mexico Press.
- Keith F Punch. (2005). Introduction To Social Research. SAGE Lost Angeles.
London. New Delhi. Singapore. Washington DC.
- Mohammad idris Bin Haji Abdullah. Abu Chik Mat Sarom. Abu Hassan B.
Ahmad. Sulaiman B. Idris. (1962). Asal Usul Adat Perpatih Negeri
Sembilan. Malay Press Kuala Pilah N.S.
- Mohd Zin Bin Mohd Sahid. (1998). Pengenalan Ringkas Tari Piring. Unit
Pemuliharaan dan Penyelidikan Pejabat Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negeri
Sembilan.
- Marcus Banks and Howard Morphy. (1999). Rethinking Visual Anthropology.
Yale University Press New Haven and London.
- Nellie S.L Tsn Wong, KMN., PMC., PJK., JP., Vipin Patel, PMC., PJK. (1992).
Adat Perpatih A Matrilineal System In Negeri Sembilan And Other Matrilineal
Kinship Systems Throughout The World. Wintrac (WWWB/ Malaysia)
SDN. BHD. Malaysia Affiliate, Women's World Banking. Kuala
Lumpur Malaysia.
- Personel Communication with Tuan Haji Yaakub B. Ghani
Dato' Empat Tua adat Minangkabau In Jelebu Negeri Sembilan. 7
January 2011 (Sunday)