

A Case Study of The Exploration of Implicit Symbolic Meaning and Practices of The Native People of Sematan Areas, Lundu, Sarawak

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Abstract

Ritual practice is an activity that is still practiced by most people today. The habit of this ritual practice is inherited from generation to generation. The Salako community is one of the communities that still maintains the culture inherited from generation to generation and they strongly believe that if the custom is not practiced it will bring harm to themselves, family and society. In each of these ritual practices, there are various symbols used, whether verbal symbols or nonverbal symbols. This research will discuss the rice ritual practices of the Salako community in the Sematan area, Lundu Sarawak. Although the Salako community has widely embraced Islam and Christianity, they still practice this custom, and the ceremony is carried out in mutual cooperation regardless of the religion they follow. The interpretation of the meaning of the symbols contained in the *padi* ritual (rice ritual) also has an implicit meaning and is only understood by the practitioner only to ensure that the ritual carried out can provide prosperity to the community. The main focus of this research is to identify the meaning of symbols contained in the rice rituals of the Salako community. To achieve this focus, several series of fieldwork will be controlled at the study site. The methods of study used are such as individual and group interviewing, direct observation, photography and video recording will be used in fieldwork. As a result, this research is expected to identify, classify and analyse the meaning of symbols in the paddy ritual of the Salako community, Sarawak which has never been studied by any previous researchers. New theories and interpretations of the symbols in the rice ritual will also be discovered through the analysis that will be done in this research.

Keywords: Case Study, Ritual, Symbol Meaning, Salako Community, Sematan Lundu Sarawak

Introduction

Ritual is an event or behaviour that aims to display the customs and traditions of a society symbolically. This ritual has several definitions according to anthropologists (Kreinath, 2018). Among them, ritual comes from the Latin word *ritualist* which means anything related to ceremony (Boudewijnse, 1998). According to Couldry (2000); Dewantara (2022), ritual is a ceremony that is inherited from generation to generation, it is formal and contains supernatural elements. According to Couldry and Dewantara insists that, this ritual contains behaviours that have been planned that will be followed by the descendants of the community in the future and used as a symbol of influence in a community. The rice ritual is one of the most important ceremonies in the culture of the Salako community that is celebrated by the Salako community annually. This ceremony is one way to express gratitude and ask for blessings from *Jubata* (God). In the life of the Salako community, they believe that rice has a spirit and spirit that needs to be worshiped and fed so that they can produce a good rice. In addition, it aims to request that *Jubata* to protect each family member of the Salako community from any evil elements that may disturb the peace and health of the family members.

Most of the ritual ceremonies practiced by the Salako community in Sematan district still sustain the old traditions inherited from their ancestors. However, there are also changes in the rituals that are performed along with the changing times and there are among the people who have religious beliefs such as Islam and Christianity. Even so, family ties in this community are still strong so that the role of religion is set aside for the purpose of celebrating the rice ritual every year. This situation is due to the fact that the Salako community still has the belief that if this ritual is eliminated, they will experience some problems especially related to rice which will eventually cause the rice yield to decrease or not be. This is due to the concept of plague found in the culture of the Salako community.

Ritual is one of the ways a community conveys a message or wish by using an intermediary to convey to their God (Inai, 2020). Rituals are different according to the customs and practices of a society. Nevertheless, it has the same function where every ritual that is delivered is intended to convey a sense of gratitude or a way to ask for blessings before carrying out an activity that involves customs in a community of practitioners. According to Mulyana (2000); Inai (2020); Kreinath (2018), rituals are closely related to a society where a variety of different ceremonies will be carried out throughout the year for well-being. According to Gennep (1960), people also say words or use symbolic behaviour as a sign to express the ritual they want to convey. Examples are praying, reading the holy book, performing Hajj and standing upright when singing the national anthem. This ritual is a sign to express their commitment to family tradition, race, nation, country, ideology, and religion.

Among the rituals of the Salako community that are inherited from their ancestors are wedding rituals, births, deaths, rice rituals and safe prayers when having something successful such as entering a new house. The ritual is an idea and a relationship that not only involves one human being with another human being, but also relates one age to another (Smith, 2005). Also, Turner (1969) stated that ritual is a tool of transformation where every ritual performance contains symbolic elements. Turner also addresses that, in the process of forming social rules, every behaviour or presentation must be done according to the rules that have been set. The treatment or rules that have existed will determine whether the ritual that is carried out will bring results or not. In addition, the performance and ritual behavior performed is one of the ways of revealing symbols in the process of uniting people who apply for power and those who give power which is referring to the owner of supernatural power.

The ritual performed is one of the elements found in the customs of a society. According to the Salako Community, custom is a mechanism that controls the behaviour of every creature in the universe according to the laws of nature. Therefore, customs have been made as values and rules that need to be followed to control the behaviour of the community. This custom is also considered as mutual cooperation where this custom is used as ethics or social procedures that act and control harmony in a society. Indirectly, these custom plays a role as a shaper of society's civilization. The rituals that take place are also closely related to symbols. Every society uses symbols in rituals related to their daily life. Each symbol found in the ritual has its own meaning. Symbols act as a mechanism to convey a message or one of the ways to communicate. According to the Salako community, the symbols that exist in the rituals that are practiced need to be obeyed and respected. This is because, according to them, the symbols have spirit and spirit and if they are not respected or obeyed, they will bring bad effects or better known as plague. They strongly believe that the well-being of life in the community depends heavily on the blessings requested from *Jubata* (God). For instant, in the *Basamsam* ritual in the rice ritual, the Salako community has to place *widodok* leaves in front of their house as a symbol that they are abstaining, and no one is allowed to enter or leave the house. If this custom is not followed, the family members of the house will be subject to a fine that will be determined by the head of the respective custom. The fine imposed is according to community custom and will be determined by the Head of Custom.

Methodology

Field research conducted is using case studies (Yin, 1991; Harwati, 2019) with participation-observation methods (Blomberg & Burrell, 2009) and ethnographic interviews (Saydam et al., 2022).

Fieldwork

Participation-observation or known as observation was done in June 2019 to July 2020 by going back and forth to Kampung Siru Dayak and Kampung Biawak Sematan, Sarawak. There are thirteen levels of rice rituals carried out by the Salako community throughout the observation. The ceremonies are *Madagi*, *Ngawah*, *Berhuma*, *Munoh Manok Ka Pagar*, *Ngabu*, *Menampi Banih*, *Nugal*, *Akak Pagar*, *Nyiang Bunting*, *Ngarantika*, *Nuruntni'*, *Baranak* and *Ngabayatn*. All these ceremonies need to be done to prevent unwanted things from happening to the rice plant.

Ethnographic Interviews

The ethnographic interview method is widely used by researchers. The researcher was in the study area throughout 2019 and 2020 back and forth to obtain data and make observations for this study. This method is used to obtain authentic data from several informants. The informants involved in this study are two Traditional Leaders, namely Mr. Akang anak Lani (79 years old) who is the highest traditional leader (Binua), the Traditional Leader of Village Biawak, Mr. Siru Anak Bidin (69 years old), the Director of Uma, Mr. Lobo Anak Bikok (75 years old) and several residents of Siru Dayak Village and Biawak Village, namely Mr. Rabin son of Pujun (50 years old), Mrs. Midi Son of Banting (79 years old), Mr. Willie Son of Muin (61 years old), Mrs. Lina Son of Kerani (56 years), Mr. Rambe Anak Ahang (53 years old), Mr. Tair Anak Mawar (49 years old) and Mr. Sagang (61 years old). The interview was conducted by asking about the background of the traditional leader before turning to questions that are more directed to the content of the study linked to the objectives of the study. The interview

focused on the phases of the rice ritual in the Salako community and the symbols found in the rice ritual.

Participant-Observation

Participant-Observation or observations that have been made in June 2019 to July 2020 by going back and forth to the Sematan district if there is a ritual being conducted. This technique is used every time a ritual is carried out by the traditional leader of the Salako community in the villages of Sematan district. The first observation was carried out when the Salako community held a ritual to ask for blessings from *Jubata* for their plant seeds. The *uma* director is the person responsible for holding this ritual in the traditional house (*Pabuisant*). This ritual is carried out so that the rice seeds that will be planted later will produce a fertile crop and will always be protected by *Jubata* from any problems.

Library Research

Library research methods are used to obtain information about past studies and reviews of works. Raw data such as books, brochures, documents, newspapers, magazines, reports, websites, journals, working papers, thesis manuscripts and the like are used as material to be analyzed to explain some identified questions. This is very important to ensure that the research results have evidence and guidance in the production of quality thesis writing. This library method is a method related to the search for general information with keywords for a study. The keywords for this study are rituals, traditional practices, beliefs, symbols, religious practices and so on. In order to obtain as much information as possible related to this study, the researcher went to several libraries namely the Sarawak State Library, Sarawak Museum Library, Language and Library Council Library, National Archives, UPM Bintulu Campus Library and UNIMAS Library. In addition, the researcher also refers to some writings that revolve around studies that are almost the same as the research done by the previous researcher. This basic reference is important so that the researcher's writing does not deviate from the true track. Library research is also done by researchers by searching the Internet. Among the materials obtained through internet searches are international journals in addition to domestic journals. Although a variety of information is easily accessible, the researcher only selects information related to the study of rituals, symbols and practices of animism that can be used as a reference source in this study. This bibliographic method is done to increase knowledge related to the research topic in more depth.

Findings

Rice planting activity is one of the biggest ceremonies held by the Salako community in Sematan district, Lundu Sarawak. The Salako community strongly believes that the spirit of paddy should be respected and treated like a king. Several rituals need to be held to honor the spirit of the paddy in addition to asking for blessings from *Jubata* found around nature. The rice ritual of the Salako community that is held every year consists of several phases and contains several symbols.

Madagi's Case study (Plant Seed Nyangahatn Ceremony)

The first phase is a ritual carried out for the seeds of the plant known as *Madagi*. All plant seeds including rice seeds need to be in *Nyangahatn* to ensure that the seeds will produce good results. All the Salako people in the village who want to grow crops need to bring their respective plant seeds to *Pabuisant* to be blessed by the Tuha Adat. *Buis* must be prepared

before the *Nyangahatn* ceremony is conducted by the Tuha Adat. The seeds brought by the villagers are seeds obtained from generations and it has been known that the seeds are the best and will give very fertile results. Director Uma will perform *Nyangahatn* at Pabuisant and every farmer has to contribute to the ceremony either in the form of ringgit money or *Nyangahatn* necessities such as chicken, flour, glutinous rice and so on. The purpose of this ceremony is to request that *Jubata* take care of the rice seeds that will be planted later and will produce fertile crops. *Buis* prepared is to be presented to *Jubata* as a sign of respect and to be eaten by the communities in a large number after the ceremony.

Ngawah's Case study (Open Land)

The second phase that is carried out is *Ngawah* or better known as *Nurunatn Darah Manok* (chicken blood). At this stage, the farmers will open up the land to carry out rice cultivation. The sowing of rice seeds will be carried out where the Tuha Adat will perform a ceremony in the middle of the paddy field. Equipment such as betel nut, areca nut, pango (small wood) cut short by 3 sticks should be prepared and placed in the middle of the paddy field. An urn filled with gold and silver was placed on the side of the paddy field. While a bowl should be placed on top of the urn. In addition, *Buis* needs to be placed on a wooden arrangement called *kangkang*. The purpose of this ceremony is to ask for permission from all the guardians of the land such as Wood *Jubata*, Rattan *Jubata*, Water *Jubata*, Land *Jubata*, Wind *Jubata*, spirits of people who have died and others that the farmers will start planting rice in the land area. This ceremony needs to be done to ensure that the cleaning works go smoothly and are not disturbed by the watchmen of the area. The equipment used in this ceremony is a symbol that the land is protected by *Jubata* from any evil.

Bahuma's Case study (Sow 7 seeds)

After the ritual ceremony is completed, the farmer will start to sow 7 seeds on the paddy cultivation area. *Tuha Adat* will start the sowing of seeds in the nursery and will be followed by other farmers. 7 rice seeds that have been selected and stored during the previous rice harvest season are the first seeds that must be planted in the rice nursery area. This is a sign that the crops will grow lushly with rice seeds that have been selected from good rice crops. The rice seed was also in *Nyangahatn* and was presented to *Jubata* to ask for blessings. In addition, these 7 rice seeds are planted first to ward off all evil creatures that can damage the rice seeds from growing fruitfully. After this ceremony is done, the other rice seeds can be planted.

Munoh Manok Ka Pagar's Case study

At this stage, all farmers will start cleaning their respective paddy fields (Gennep, 2013). Large logs are cut down and collected in a designated place for the next ceremony. *Tuha Adat* will lead this cleaning activity. Before the cleaning ceremony, *Tuha Adat* will perform the *Nyangahatn* ceremony in the rice paddy planting area. Equipment such as pots and chickens are needed to perform the ceremony. The purpose of this ceremony is to inform all *Jubata* that land clearing activities will be carried out. This ceremony was also held to prevent the caretakers of the land in the area from being surprised because their area was being disturbed. In addition, the farmers need to seek the blessing of *Jubata* so that the land clearing activities go smoothly. The chicken that was brought earlier will be waved around the rice planting area as a symbol to ask the caretaker of the land to run to another place. After the process of felling and cleaning the land is done, all the wood that has been collected needs

to be burned. Before the burning starts, the *Nyangahatn* ceremony must be performed by the *Tuha Adat*. Equipment such as betel nut, areca nuts and chickens that have been slaughtered and placed on the *kangkang* are arranged at the edge of the rice fields before the ceremony. *Tuha Adat* will begin the ceremony by reciting spells that have been passed down from generation to generation. The purpose of this ceremony is to inform the caretaker of the land that they will start burning the wood that has been cut down and so that the caretaker will not be surprised.

Ngabu's Case study (For Soil Fertility)

After the wood has been burned, the *Tuha Adat* will perform the *Ngabu* ceremony which is a ceremony to ask *Jubata* so that the land that has been cleared will become fertile land. Equipment such as chicken placed on a rack, pots and bowls should be placed at the edge of the rice field. The traditional leader will perform *Nyangahatn* in the paddy field area. The chicken placed at the edge of the rice field is a symbol of *Jubata* who protects the land from any evil. While the pots and bowls found at the edge of the rice fields are symbols to ask that the land will produce a good crop.

Menampi Banih's Case study (Plant Seeds Accepted)

The *Menampi Banih* ceremony is performed by *Tuha Adat* at the farmers' houses. To perform this ceremony, *Buis* must be prepared before *Tuha Adat* begins the *Nyangahatn* ceremony. Usually, the villagers will do cooperative activities the day before the ceremony to prepare the *Buis*. Once the equipment has been prepared, the *Tuha Adat* will begin the *Nyangahatn* ceremony. When the *Nyangahatn* ceremony is performed, a farmer has to collect rice seeds and a chicken has to be whipped. The purpose of this ceremony is so that the seeds will be fertile and grow quickly and produce fruit in a short time.

Nugal's Case study

The next day after the *Menampi Banih* ceremony, *Tuha Adat* will perform the *Nugal* ceremony in the rice fields. This ceremony is a ceremony to sow rice seeds on a large scale. Before the rice seeds are sown, *Tuha Adat* will perform a *Nugal* ceremony which requires some equipment to be prepared and taken to the rice fields. Among the equipment that needs to be prepared are 7 seeds of rice, *Manamur* lemongrass, betel nut, areca nuts, *simpur* leaf stems, sharp wood roots taken from the forest and basil flowers. A hole was made in the middle of the paddy field to *plow* (plant) the 7 seeds. Stems of *simpur* leaves, betel leaves, betel nuts and basil flowers are placed at the edge of the hole as a symbol of praying for fertility for the planted seeds. While *Manamur* lemongrass is planted in the four corners of the paddy field. The *Manamur* lemongrass planted in the four corners is a symbol of light that will illuminate the paddy fields. After this ceremony is done, the farmers can plant rice seeds on a large scale in the paddy fields. The planting of rice seeds needs to be done in stages to prevent the rice from ripening at the same time and the farmers are not able to harvest a large amount of rice in a short time. If the ripened rice is not harvested immediately, the rice will be damaged and bad.

Akak Pagar's Case study (Applying for Fertility of Rice Seeds)

The next ceremony performed after planting rice seeds is the *Akak Pagar* ceremony. *Tuha Adat* needs to perform this ceremony to pray for the fertility of the rice seeds that have been planted from *Jubata*. In addition, this ceremony is performed to pray that the rice plant is spared from rice diseases, protected from disasters and to pray that all evil spirits and spirits do not hurt and disturb the spirit of the rice and the spirit of the farmer's family and also as a symbol to feed the spirits evil, the spirit of rice and the spirits of long-dead ancestors. A chicken was slaughtered in the paddy field. *Buis* also needs to be prepared for the *Nyangahatn* ceremony to be performed by the *Tuha Adat*. The chicken and *Buis* are placed on the *kangkang* and placed at the edge of the paddy field.

***Nyang Bunting's* Case study (Rice Begins to Fruit)**

At this stage, *Tuha Adat* and Director Uma will go to the paddy fields to perform the ceremony together. *Buis* is prepared the day before this ceremony is carried out. *Buis* should be placed on the frame in the middle of the paddy field. The purpose of this ceremony is so that the *buis* that has been prepared becomes a symbol of food given to angels, guardians of rice fields and the spirits of people who have long died in the hope that they will be satisfied and will not disturb the rice that has already produced fruit in the rice fields.

***Ngarantika's* Case study (Taking 7 Stalks of Rice Seeds)**

The *Ngarantika* ceremony is a ceremony that must be performed by the *Tuha Adat* when the rice has started to ripen and can be harvested. At this point, the first phase of rice has started to ripen and the *Tuha Adat* has to hold a *Nyangahatn* ceremony in the middle of the rice field and then hold a *Nyangahatn* ceremony in the houses of the farmers who have planted rice in that area the following day. In addition, *Tuha Adat* also needs to take 7 stalks of rice to be used as seeds in the next rice planting season. This *Ngarantika* ceremony is performed for 2 consecutive days. On the first day, *Tuha Adat* will take 7 stalks of rice and place them inside the body. Then, *Buis* needs to be placed on the *Kangkang* which is placed in the middle of the paddy field. This ceremony is performed as a symbol of feeding all the waiting people in the land so that they do not disturb the rice crops that have started to ripen. In addition, this ceremony is also a sign of asking for *Jubata* to give protection to their crops that have not yet been harvested. On the following day, the *Nyangahatn* ceremony is performed early in the morning outside the *Tuha Adat* house. This ceremony should be done early in the morning before sunrise. This is because *Jubata* will descend early to the earth and *Tuha Adat* will call the *Jubata* to give blessings to their rice crops.

***Nuruntni's* Case study (Rice Harvest)**

The *Nuruntni'* ceremony is a ceremony performed after the fourth day of the *Ngarantika* ceremony. This ceremony is a symbol of calling *Jubata* down to earth and feeding the newly harvested rice. At this stage, rice from new rice is made into *poek*. The new rice that has been harvested needs to be treated like a king because for the Salako community, if the new rice is not respected the rice yield in the coming season will not give good results. *Buis* that has been in *Nyangahatn* is also a symbol of food that is used as a supply for *Jubata* to take with them when they return and give to their families.

***Baronak's* Case Study (Saving Paddy)**

The *Baranok* ceremony is performed after all the rice has been harvested. The harvested rice will be stored in the *Lumbung* (rice house or *dango*). The *Nyangahatn* ceremony also needs to be done using *Buis* and a chicken. *Beliong* and *Paradah* need to be placed on top of the *Angko* which is the place to place the paddy as a symbol of the guardian who will take care of the paddy as long as the paddy is in the *Lumbung*. The purpose of this *Baranok* ceremony is to request that *Jubata* take care of the paddies.

Ngabayatn's Case study (Sign of Gratitude)

The *Ngabayatn* ceremony is the last ceremony performed after the end of the rice harvest season. This ceremony is a ceremony that is performed every year on a large scale as a sign of expressing gratitude to *Jubata* for having provided a good yield of rice crops that year. When this ceremony is performed, all the villagers will work together to prepare especially the *Buis* that needs to be prepared for the *Nyangahatn* ceremony. Performances such as the *Totonk* Dance were also held at that time to show the joy of the Salako community over the good harvest of rice that year. Villagers will gather together to enjoy the *Buis* that has been prepared.

Discussion

Through observations for a year and a half back and forth in the Sematan district and information that has been obtained from several informants including *Tuha Adat*, *Uma* Director and villagers show that the *Padi* ritual contains 13 stages consisting of *Madagi*, *Ngawah*, *Berhuma*, Paddy Field Cleaning, *Ngabu*, *Menampi Banih*, *Nugal*, *Akak Pagar*, *Nyiang Bunting*, *Ngarantika*, *Nuruntni'*, *Baranok* and *Ngabayatn*. Each ceremony carried out contains certain equipment and tools that need to be prepared before the *Tuha Adat* can proceed with a *Nyangahatn* ceremony. The equipment and treatment made by *Tuha Adat* is a symbol as an intermediary between the farmers and *Jubata*. Each stage of the ritual ceremony must not be abandoned because the Salako community strongly believes that if it is not carried out, it will bring harm to the farmers themselves, the farmers' families, and the community around them.

The Salako community strongly believes that the spirit of paddy must be protected, and every ritual ceremony carried out must be carried out according to custom and carried out by the *Tuha Adat* and Director of *Uma*. The customs that have been practiced since long ago will still be held by this community because they are very protective of the harmony within the community itself. Although there are among them who have embraced the religion of Islam and embrace the religion of Christianity, but that does not limit them to continue to maintain the custom because for them the custom does not conflict with their religion.

The rice ritual carried out contains symbols that have their own meaning. Every equipment and ceremony performed has an implicit meaning that needs to be known. *Tuha Adat* must perform *Nyangahatn* according to the levels that have been set. This ritual ceremony is also held to honor or feed the spirit of paddy and in return the paddy fields will be in good condition, the paddy trees will grow lushly, the rice yield will be good, and the well-being of the family will be guaranteed. Symbols consist of forms that are thought patterns of society where the way one society interprets symbols with another society will not be the same. In addition, symbols are not only limited to language but also have an implicit meaning.

The Salako community strongly believes that the rice ritual ceremony is a sign of gratitude to the god *Jubata*. In addition, this community still practices this old custom with

the aim of strengthening family ties within the community itself. The recitation of mantras and the preparation of equipment to be used in each rice ritual is intended to solve daily problems related to rice cultivation. *Tuha Adat* will conduct a ritual to ask permission from supernatural beings before starting a ritual ceremony. The symbols found in this rice ritual are described with the purpose of a certain act being made. *Tuha Adat* is a representative of the local community to communicate with the supernatural.

This rice ritual can solve all problems related to rice. Among the problems that often occur are the disturbance of fine creatures, diseases, pests and so on. After these rituals are carried out, they are sure that their plants are fully protected by the Land Robes, Water Robes, Sky Robes, Air Robes, Wood Robes and all the Robes found in this universe. Therefore, every time the rice harvest season is over, the new rice obtained should be celebrated and the Salako community will hold a large-scale ceremony.

The Salako community is very obedient and very respectful of the customs and rituals inherited from the previous community because they are very afraid that they will be plagued and get *Idap*. Therefore, *Tuha Adat* has been appointed in every village of the Salako community to carry out this ceremony because this ritual ceremony cannot be performed by just any person. If the *Tuha Adat* cannot perform this ritual, then the *Tuha Adat* should choose a person who is believed to be able to perform the ceremony to replace him temporarily.

Conclusion

The rice ritual ceremony has greatly influenced the formation of socio-culture and belief practices among the traditional community of Salako in Sematan, Lundu district. The Salako community strongly believes that the spirit of paddy must be cared for and respected like a king because they believe that bad things will happen if they do not take care and treat this spirit of paddy well. The rice ritual ceremony that is carried out is to maintain harmony and preserve the balance between humans and the supernatural as well as the environment so that the next year's harvest will remain fertile. Various rituals that contain various offerings of equipment and food as well as certain spells that are carried out at each stage of rice cultivation to protect the spirit of this rice and ensure the balance of the relationship between humans and the spiritual realm. *Tuha Adat* is an intermediary who has been entrusted to connect between the spiritual realm and the real world and the *Nyangahatn* ceremony is a symbol of communication between *Tuha Adat* and the spiritual realm. With the existence of this ritual ceremony, the farmers can harvest rice with a good yield. The success of obtaining a good harvest should be celebrated in a large number among the communities by holding various *Padi* ritual ceremonies.

The thirteen stages of the rice planting ritual ceremony namely *Madagi*, *Ngawah*, *Berhuma*, *Munoh Manok Ka Pagar*, *Ngabu*, *Menampi Banih*, *Nugal*, *Akak Pagar*, *Nyiang Bunting*, *Ngarantika*, *Nuruntni'*, *Baronak* and *Ngabayatn* are ceremonies that must be held because they have become a belief for the Salako community and if not done will bring hardship or plague to the community. The rice ritual that has been inherited from the ancestors needs to be continued by the Salako community as long as there are rice planting activities being carried out even though there are some groups of this community that have embraced Islam and Christianity. This community strongly believes that this custom that has been practiced since time immemorial cannot be abandoned and does not conflict with every religion they follow. The Salako community is also very confident that if the rice spirit has been feasted and treated like a king, the evil spirits will not disturb their rice crops because *Jubata* has helped to take care of the crops. Their rice crops will also give a decent yield. The

Salako community is very dependent on the rice crop because it is a staple food for this community and every ceremony carried out must use rice as a feast. If this ritual is not carried out, bad things will happen to the farmer's family and the community living in the area. Among the problems that will be faced are such as always having bad dreams, often being sick, suffering from accidents and hardships and the rice plant will die.

Therefore, customs and ritual ceremonies inherited from the ancestors have been held by the Salako community since long ago until the emergence of new religions such as Islam and Christianity. Nevertheless, even though some of them have embraced Islam and embraced Christianity, this ritual ceremony is still continued for fear of being struck by calamity or plague.

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