

# THE MEANING OF THE *TAWAN BASI* IN VEHICLES: CASE STUDY OF THE NAGARI SILANTAI COMMUNITY SUMPUR KUDUS DISTRICT SIJUNJUNG REGENCY

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## ABSTRACT

*This research aimed to describe the process of the Tawan Basi tradition on vehicles and find out the symbolic meaning contained in the Tawan Basi tradition on vehicles. The theory used in this research is Clifford Geertz's theory. The method used in this research is a qualitative method. Data collection uses observation, interviews, documentation methods. The data analysis techniques used are data collection, data reduction and data display. The results of this research show that the Tawan Basi tradition is a tradition carried out for vehicles, both new and old vehicles. The aim of carrying out the Tawan Basi tradition is so that the devil in the vehicle does not harm the user. The meaning of the Tawan Basi tradition is to obtain protection and safety from God.*

**Keywords:** Process, Tawan Basi, Meaning

## 1. Introduction

Culture is the entire system of ideas, actions and results of human work in social life which are made into human property by learning (Koentjaraningrat. 2009: 144). Ideas that originate from the human mind are used as a way of life in carrying out all activities. The way of life

carried out by humans has become a habit that is carried out repeatedly. Habits that are carried out repeatedly will become a culture or tradition which is then passed down from generation to generation who continue a culture or tradition in a society.

Darwis (2017: 3) believes that traditions created by humans are customs that originate from supernatural habits related to cultural values, norms, laws and rules related to human life. Traditions are all community activities that originate from habits and provide meaning and benefits in every implementation process. Traditions found in a community group can be in the form of language, cuisine, customs, art, and so on.

The Tawan Basi tradition is a tradition carried out for vehicles, whether motorbikes or cars, in the people of Nagari Silantai, Sumpur Kudus District, Sijunjung Regency. People believe that when buying a new vehicle, people will first put the metal of the newly purchased vehicle in Bukik Lontiak so that the engine of the vehicle remains cool. The vehicles that people have bought have arrived in Silantai, so the people will carry out the Tawan Basi tradition. The people of Silantai believe that the tradition of taking a ride on vehicles must be carried out and also placing iron from newly purchased vehicles in Bukik Lontiak. The Tawan Basi tradition etymologically comes from the Minang language, namely Tawan and Basi. Tawan means bidder, while basi means iron. So the tradition of Tawan Basi is a tradition carried out to antidote to the devil in the iron on the vehicle.

The aim of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition carried out by the people of Nagari Silantai is so that people who use these vehicles do not have accidents and also do not get damaged quickly. The tradition of taking captive vehicles that have been purchased for a long time is carried out when the vehicle experiences an accident, such as hitting a cat. The purpose of the tradition of taking out old vehicles is so that the vehicle affected by the disaster does not

experience a disaster that is worse than before. The people of Nagari Silantai consider this tradition to be very important to ensure that undesirable things don't happen to their vehicles.

The process of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition for the people who carry it out will first prepare the materials that will be needed, such as preparing one free-range chicken, tawagh nan ompek, and also oranges or limau kapeh which will later be given to people who can carry out the Tawan Basi tradition. . Tawagh nan ompek is a plant consisting of sicepat, sijukpai, sitawagh, and sikowouw. With the materials provided, the process of the Tawan Basi tradition will be carried out. Tawagh nan ompek is also used by the people of Nagari Silantai in traditional medicine.

The Tawan Basi tradition for the Silantai people is very important to carry out. People who do not carry out the Tawan Basi tradition assume that the vehicle they buy is not protected by Allah SWT. In Nagari Silantai, not all people carry out the tradition of being captive when buying a vehicle or when people have the misfortune of hitting a cat.

This study is interesting to see because when the people of Nagari Silantai buy a new vehicle, but do not carry out the Tawan Basi tradition, the community feels afraid because the Tawan Basi tradition has not been implemented. People who have just had the misfortune of hitting a cat while driving a vehicle, the people think that the tradition of captive basi must be carried out so that they don't experience disaster or misfortune when driving a vehicle. The phenomenon that exists in the Nagari Silantai community regarding the tradition of Tawan Basi on vehicles needs to be researched further as to why the

community carries out this Tawan Basi tradition.

## 2. Literature Review

Darwis, Robi. (2017). Tradisi *Ngaruwat* Bumi Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat (Studi Deskriptif Kampung Cihideung Girag Desa Sukakerti Kecamatan Cisalak Kabupaten Subang). Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Lintas Budaya. Fakultas Ushuluddin UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Vo. 2. No. 1.

Hamzah, Ghufran dan Iman Fadhillah. 2022. Tradisi *Teng-Tengan*, *Ketuwinan*, dan *Weh-Wehan* Di Kaliwungu Kendal Jawa Tengah (Kajian Living Hadist Dan Pendekatan Antropologi Interpretatif Simbolik). Jurnal *For Aswaja Studies*. Universitas Wahid Hasyim Semarang. Vol. 2. No. 2.

Koentjaraningrat. 2009. *Pengantar Ilmu Antropologi*. Rineka Cipta. Jakarta. 2009 : 114.

## 3. Research Method

This research was conducted using qualitative research methods. The object of this research is the tradition of captive basi on vehicles in the community in Nagari Silantai, Sumpur Kudus District, Sijunjung Regency. This research was conducted in Nagari Silantai, Sumpur Kudus District, Sijunjung Regency. Primary data in this research is data obtained directly through direct observation and in-depth interviews in Nagari Silantai, Sumpur Kudus District, Sijunjung Regency in the form of informants obtained such as people who can carry out the Tawan Basi tradition, people who carry it out, and know the Tawan Basi tradition. the informant was able to provide all the information regarding the tradition of basi Tawan. Secondary data in this research is

data obtained from literature studies in the form of books, journals, theses and theses to provide data related to the tradition of captive basi on vehicles in Nagari Silantai, Sumpur Kudus District, Sijunjung Regency. The data analysis technique in this research includes several stages, namely: data collection, data reduction, and data analysis.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### A. Profile of Nagari Silantai

Geographically, Nagari Silantai is located in the north of Sijunjung Regency. Nagari Silantai was originally inhabited in the 16th century. The history of Nagari Silantai begins with the arrival of an ancestor named Dt. Banda and Sutan Digunuang. The ancestors of the Nagari Silantai people came from the foot of Mount Merapi, precisely in the Sandi Laweh (RPJM Nagari Silantai Tahun 2021-2026).

In terms of governance, Nagari Silantai has 5 jorongs, namely Jorong Batang Kinkin, Jorong Kinkin, Jorong Koto Tengah, Jorong Koto Ateh, and Jorong Ujung Koto. The population of Nagari Silantai is 2,108 people, with 1,056 men and 1,052 women, with 645 heads of families. Most of the residents in Nagari Silantai know the Tawan Basi tradition and it still persists to this day.

### B. History and Background of the Tawan Basi Tradition

#### 1. History of the Tawan Basi Tradition

The history of the existence of the Tawan Basi tradition has existed as long as Nagari Silantai has been inhabited. This Tawan was started by the people of Nagari Silantai in the past. As time progresses, people not only bid on housing, but people also bid on vehicles.

Towan was initially only used for housing, but as time progressed, people also showed off vehicles used in ancient times. In ancient times, horses were used as a means of transportation by the community as a vehicle to carry loads or equipment owned by the community, known as kudo boban. Before the people of Nagari Silantai used horses as vehicles, the people of Nagari Silantai would carry out a tradition, namely mangokang kudo.

Along with developments over time, precisely in the 1975s, the road infrastructure in Nagari Silantai began to improve. The improvements made to the road brought changes to the community. One of the changes seen in the community in Nagari Silantai as a result of the road improvements is the change in terms of vehicle use. People who initially used kudo boban as vehicles, over time kudo boban were replaced with more sophisticated vehicles such as motorbikes and cars.

Around the 1980s, motorbikes entered Nagari Silantai for the first time. The first people to use motorbikes in Nagari Silantai were only two people, namely Jamal and Kabagh. People who initially used kudo boban as vehicles are starting to be replaced by using vehicles such as motorbikes and cars. Currently, the people in Nagari Silantai use motorbikes and cars, both at work and during daily use, but before using them, the traditional Tawan Basi must be carried out first.

## **2. Background to the Tawan Basi Tradition**

The background of the people of Nagari Silantai carries out the Tawan Basi tradition, where the people of Nagari Silantai believe that every object created in the world has a mambang or has a devil

in it. The people of Nagari Silantai believe that if the ghosts contained in objects are not captured, then the spirits or demons contained in these objects will be dangerous to their owners. Objects created by God in the universe must be kept captive so that the mining contained in them does not harm the people who use these objects. The same applies to vehicles, whether motorbikes or cars, owned by people in Nagari Silantai. Before using vehicles that people own, they will first carry out the Tawan Basi tradition. After the community carries out the Tawan Basi tradition, people who use vehicles will feel safe using the vehicle to carry out the activities they carry out.

The Tawan Basi tradition is carried out on new vehicles, both motorbikes and cars. The aim of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition for new vehicles is that people who use these vehicles are safe when using them and also when people use these vehicles to seek fortune, the fortune they obtain will be a blessing. The criteria for a vehicle that has been purchased for a long time and then carries out the tradition of being captive is when the vehicle experiences an accident such as hitting a cat. The Tawan Basi tradition is used for vehicles that have been purchased a long time ago so that a bigger disaster does not occur and so that no lives are lost if an accident occurs again, so the people of Nagari Silantai carry out the Tawan Basi tradition on old vehicles.

The old vehicle that hit the cat had to carry out the stale tradition of captives. The cat is considered a noble animal created by God and also Kuncing is a beloved friend of the Prophet. The people of Nagari Silantai believe that if a motorbike or car hits a cat, it must be kept captive so that it leaves the vehicle without causing greater harm later.

The people of Nagari Silantai think that the Tawan Basi tradition must be carried out, both for new vehicles and for old vehicles that have experienced accidents. The Tawan Basi tradition was formed because of the presence of mambang on vehicles. Mambang who has a bad or negative character will be held captive by carrying out the tradition of captive basi.

### **3. Community Belief System Regarding the Tawan Basi Tradition**

The Tawan Basi tradition that developed among the people of Nagari Silantai is able to influence the belief system that exists in the people of Nagari Silantai. The Tawan Basi tradition for the people of Nagari Silantai is always associated with the traditions in Bukik Lontiak. Bukik Lontiak is an area that people pass through to enter Nagari Sumpur Kudus or leave Nagari Sumpur Kudus. Bukik Lontiak is famous for various traditions which most of the people still carry out, for example the tradition of sticking twigs for people who have just entered the Sumpur Kudus area, while for vehicles you have to put the iron from the vehicle you just bought in Bukik Lontiak. The tradition that developed from Bukik Lontiak, the majority of people still believe in and still practice it to this day.

Belief in something supernatural begins with faith in Allah SWT who created the universe and its contents. Belief in angels or supernatural beings is included in the articles of faith. Allah SWT creates something supernatural in accordance with the duties and functions of each one that has been determined. Supernatural creatures are creations of God whose existence must be believed, so that supernatural beings and humans will coexist with each other. The beliefs held

by the people of Nagari Silantai are based on the faith they each have within themselves, one of which is the belief in the Tawan Basi tradition.

Residents of Nagari Silantai who buy new vehicles such as cars and motorbikes, before entering Nagari Silantai, people will first stop at Bukik Lontiak. The purpose of the people of Nagari Silantai in stopping at Bukik Lontiak was to place small pieces of metal from their newly purchased vehicles. The iron placed by the people in Bukik Lontiak is like bolts and nuts from motorbikes or cars bought by the people. After the iron from the new vehicle has been placed in Bukik Lontiak, the people of Nagari Silantai believe that when descending Bukik Lontiak the engine of the vehicle will cool down.

Bukik Lontiak was a stopping place for Niniak Tanah Bato in the past. When in Bukik Lontiak, Niniak Tanah Bato always sticks up yellow bamboo as a marker to stop at Bukik Lontiak. The habit of planting bamboo continues to be carried out and passed on to the next generation. People who are entering Sumpur Kudus for the first time will stick twigs, while people who have just bought a vehicle will put iron from the vehicle. This custom is used as an offering to the Niniak Tanah Bato.

However, as time goes by, some of the people of Nagari Silantai no longer believe in the Tawan Basi tradition and the habit of placing iron in Bukik Lontiak is increasingly fading. The community factor in Nagari Silantai does not carry out the Tawan Basi tradition because of the influence of advances in science which are felt by the community. Another factor that causes people not to carry out the Tawan Basi tradition is because not carrying out the Tawan Basi tradition has



no impact on vehicles and also has no impact on the people of Nagari Silantai.

From a religious perspective, the tradition of Tawan Basi and placing iron on Bukik Lontiak is not obligatory. It is believed that the teachings adhered to by the people of Nagari Silantai do not teach their people to carry out the traditional Tawan Basi tradition. The people of Nagari Silantai think that by carrying out the tradition of Tawan Basi, the people who practice it are the same as associating partners with God or in other words the same as shirk.

The Tawan Basi tradition developed according to the beliefs of each community in Nagari Silantai and was able to influence the beliefs of the community. People who do not believe in the existence of the Tawan Basi tradition, think that the Tawan Basi tradition and laying iron is the same as associating partners with God. People who believe in the Tawan Basi tradition believe that by carrying out the Tawan Basi tradition and placing iron, the community will be protected by God and this tradition must be based on God, so that belief in the Tawan Basi tradition is part of human faith.

For some people, the tradition of Tawan Basi and placing iron in Bukik Lontiak is not mandatory. Factors that influence some people not to carry out the tradition of stale captives and laying down iron because they are influenced by the progress of the times. The Tawan Basi tradition is a tradition that was only carried out by ancient people and some people associate this tradition with the beliefs of the people of Nagari Silantai who embraced Islam.

Examined in the concept of the 7 elements of Koentjaraningrat culture, namely religion, the people of Nagari

Silantai still believe in animism. People believe that vehicles purchased by people have ghosts or demons in the vehicle's metal. So that the mambang or devils in the vehicle are not dangerous to the public, some of the people of Nagari Silantai carry out the tradition of Tawan Basi. In the Nagari Silantai community, the Tawan Basi tradition is based on the beliefs of the community. Believing in something is based on people's beliefs, as well as the tradition of Tawan Basi. People think that something supernatural that exists in the universe must be believed to exist in the same way as ghosts in vehicles. However, some of the people of Nagari Silantai do not believe in the Tawan Basi tradition, because it is contrary to Islam and is the same as associating partners with God.

#### **4. Tawan Basi Tradition Process**

##### **a. Material Preparation Process**

The ingredients used in the Tawan Basi tradition are one free-range chicken, tawagh nan ompek (sikumpai, sibisnis, sitawagh, and sikowouw), and puwuik lime/kaffir lime. The materials that have been obtained will later be handed over to the Shaman (the term for smart people in Nagari Silantai) or people who can carry out the Tawan Basi tradition.

##### **b. Prepare Tawagh Nan Ompek And Limau Puwuik**

After all the ingredients for the Tawan Basi tradition have been obtained, the tawagh nan ompek consisting of sikumpai, sibisnis, sitawagh, and sikowouw will be cut and the lime puwuik will also be cut into pieces. Tawagh nan ompek and puwuik limes are placed in a bucket filled with water. Tawagh nan ompek and puwuik limes that have been cut into pieces are placed in water and left

until the free-range chicken is finished being cut.

**c. Chicken Slaughter**

The next process is slaughtering free-range chickens. The slaughter of free-range chickens is carried out next to the vehicle's iron, because the vehicle's iron has mambang in it. After the free-range chicken is slaughtered, the blood from the chicken will be dripped into the engine of the vehicle. Before slaughtering the chicken, the miner in the vehicle will first be called. After the mambang has finished being called, the chicken is slaughtered.

**d. Tawagh Nan Ompek And Limau Puwuik Sprinkled**

The next process is tawagh nan ompek and puwuik limes which have been cut into pieces and placed in a bucket filled with water which will be sprinkled on the vehicle. Tawagh nan ompek and lime puwuik are sprinkled around the vehicle. The mambang contained in the vehicle is around the vehicle, so to dispel the mambang, tawagh nan ompek and puwuik lime are sprinkled around the motorbike.

**e. The Symbolic Meaning Of The Tawan Basi Tradition**

**f. The Meaning Of The Tawan Basi Tradition**

- a) The meaning of safety and protection. The Tawan Basi tradition carried out by the people of Nagari Silantai means hoping for safety and protection. Dangerous mamabangs are found in vehicles so that they do not endanger vehicle users. The safety and protection requested is based on God.
- b) Religious meaning. The Tawan Basi tradition contains religious

meaning in the process of its implementation. Everything that society will do must begin and end with the name of God. The process of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition opens by reciting basmallah before observing the chicken first and ends with takbir when sprinkling tawagh nan ompek and lime puwuik onto the vehicle.

- c) c. Economic Meaning. The Tawan Basi tradition in the implementation process contains economic meaning. People who have finished carrying out the Tawan Basi tradition will feel safe when using vehicles to earn a living. People think that in order to be protected from mining when looking for sustenance, motorbikes or cars will be carried out in the Tawan Basi tradition.

**g. The Symbolic Meaning Of The Tawan Basi Tradition**

- a) Kampong chicken. Chickens are one of the animals kept by the people of Nagari Silantai. Chicken in the Tawan Basi tradition is an ingredient used in the Tawan Basi tradition. The chicken used in carrying out the Tawan Basi tradition depends on the person bringing the vehicle. If the person driving the vehicle is a man, the chicken used is a rooster and if the person driving the vehicle is a woman, the chicken used is a hen. Chickens are interpreted as a substitute object when carrying out the Tawan Basi tradition. The mambang contained in the vehicle is replaced or treated with chicken blood, where chicken blood will be

dripped around the vehicle. Chicken blood is used as an offering to the mambang in the vehicle. The chicken's life will be returned to Allah SWT as a form of sacrifice so that the vehicle does not experience a disaster that will not later claim lives. The meat from the chicken will return to humans as a form of sustenance that Allah SWT has provided for his servants.

- b) Tawagh nan ompek is a plant that consists of sikempai, sicepat, sitawagh, and sikowouw. Sikumpai is a plant that lives in watery areas such as riverbanks, rice fields and other watery places. Sikumpai is used by the people of Nagari Silantai as a prisoner for houses that are disturbed by spirits. Sicepat grows around the yards of people's houses. The cold plant has soft stems and leaves. Cold water is used in healing, for example to lower the temperature of a hot body so that cold water is crushed and placed on the forehead. Sitawagh is a plant that can be found around people's yards. Sitawagh has elongated leaves and stringy roots. The roots of sitawagh can also be used by people in traditional medicine, such as fever. Sikowouw also grows in watery places. Sikowouw is also used by the community as an ingredient in medicine, for example the spinach treatment carried out by the people of Nagari Silantai.

Tawagh nan ompek is likened to a friend of the Prophet who is firm, brave, generous, honest, trustworthy and always conveys

the truth. People who carry out the Tawan Basi tradition should have characteristics that reflect the Prophet's friends. The Companions of the Prophet were used as role models for humans to act and live their lives. Tawagh nan ompek is also interpreted as the 4 angels of Allah SWT, namely the Angels Gabriel, Mikail, Israfil, and Israil. Angels sent by Allah SWT have their respective duties. Tawagh nan ompek is also interpreted as four affairs that already exist and are determined by Allah SWT. The four matters in question are death, fortune, soul mate, and destiny. These four are provisions that are always in line with every human life.

- c) Limau Puwuik. Limau puwuik are oranges that are easy to get in the environment where people live in Nagari Silantai. Puwuik limes in the Tawan Basi tradition play a role in the implementation process. Puwuik limes are an important ingredient in the process of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition. The acid from puwuik limes is used as a weakness for the scale on vehicles. New vehicles carry out the tradition of Tawan Basi, so to prevent crusting, lime puruik is used. Likewise with old vehicles, where old vehicles whose metal has started to crust over then give them puwuik lime to remove it.

Ghufron Hamzah and Iman Fadhila (2022: 58) say that the symbolic interpretation by Clifford Geertz emphasizes his attention to the concrete forms of culture owned by society. This meaning is always associated with



symbols to find a meaning, so to find a meaning from a culture requires symbols. Based on the meaning of the Tawan Basi tradition which was analyzed using the symbolic interpretive theory proposed by Clifford Geertz, there are three concepts as follows:

- a) Culture as a cognitive or knowledge system. The Tawan Basi tradition is used as a symbol system adapted to the knowledge of the people in Nagari Silantai. The Tawan Basi tradition is carried out by the people of Nagari Silantai when buying a vehicle and when the vehicle experiences an accident.
- b) Culture as a value or evaluative system. Culture as an evaluative value can be seen in the process of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition. The Tawan Basi tradition is the basis for the community to carry out the process of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition, starting with looking for the required ingredients, preparing tawagh nan ompek and lime puwuik, slaughtering the chicken, and sprinkling tawagh nan ompek and lime puwuik around the vehicle.
- c) Culture as a symbol system. The meaning of each symbol contained in the Tawan Basi tradition has meaning for society. For example, chicken has the meaning of a substitute object, tawagh nan ompek is interpreted as the four friends of the prophet and four angels, and also lime puwuik has the meaning of the weakness of iron.

## 5. Conclusion

The Tawan Basi tradition is a tradition aimed at motorbikes and cars carried out by the people of Nagari Silantai, Sumpur Kudus District, Sijunjung Regency, with the aim of obtaining safety and protection from God when using a vehicle and so that mining in a vehicle is not dangerous for the user. The people of Nagari Silantai used to use Kudo Boban as a means of transportation to help with community activities. However, before the kudo boban is used, the kudo boban is first cocked by the people in Nagari Silantai. In line with developments in time, precisely in the 1980s, motorbikes entered Nagari Silantai, before the vehicle was used, the small iron from the motorbike was first placed in Bukik Lontiak and then the Tawan Basi tradition was carried out. The Tawan Basi tradition is carried out where people believe that every object in this world has a mambang, as do vehicles.

However, not all people in Nagari Silantai still carry out the Tawan Basi tradition. The community considers that the tradition of Tawan Basi is not mandatory to be carried out and is contrary to the beliefs of the people of Nagari Silantai. People also think that the Tawan Basi tradition is a tradition that was only carried out by previous people.

The process of implementing the Tawan Basi tradition has several stages that must be passed, starting from searching for ingredients such as chicken, tawagh nan ompek, and puwuik lime. Next, prepare the tawagh nan ompek and limes, slaughter the chicken, and finally sprinkle the tawagh nan ompek and lime puwuik.

The meaning contained in the Tawan Basi tradition in general is to obtain

safety and protection from the creator. The meaning of the ingredients used in the Tawan Basi tradition, for example, chicken has the meaning of a substitute object, tawagh nan ompek has the meaning of the four companions of the prophet and four angels, and lime puwuik is interpreted as the weakness of iron.

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