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Water Ritual at Balamut Oral Tradition of Banjar People, South Borneo, Indonesia

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Abstract— *Some Southeast Asian Nations have water rituals. This article explores one of water rituals in Indonesia, namely Balamut. Balamut is one of oral traditions in Banjarmasin performed both for entertaining and healing. This paper aims to relate this tradition to its place, Banjarmasin that often called as a city of thousands river. There is no direct connection between the traditions of balamut and rivers, but there is no balamut hajat (balamut for thanksgiving) and or tatamba (healing) if there is no water. Nevertheless, my observations of some of the rituals of balamut hajat and healing performed by Pak Jamhar Akbar, one of the palamutan in Banjarmasin, indicate that the Banjarese people who conduct this ritual generally lived near the river (Jingah River, Tabuk River, Kalayan River, Kuin River). In the past, the river was certainly the main source of water used in this ritual. Although some Banjarmasin people now get clean water through PDAM (regional water factory), this ritual symbolically shows Banjar beliefs in the magical power of water. When the community heard that there would be a balamut ritual, they came with a bottle in various sizes. The water they carry is not only sourced from the taps, but also the bottled water from a very remote place. The water spread out in the sacred arena is believed to be able to provide various benefits for those who believe in it: curing disease, increasing luck, and so forth. Water rites in general mean a variety of human activities that are routine or repeated use as a medium that is very important and fundamental.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The essential element of life on this planet is water. Many spiritual traditions across cultures recognized and revered the necessity and dynamic capacities of water. As Thiessen (2020) states that water is a giver of life, a source of purification, and an element that can be infused with sacred blessings. It has been long utilized water in their rituals from the washing of oneself before daily prayers (Islam); pilgrimages to sacred rivers (Hinduism); the baptism and admission of a soul into a religious sect (Christianity). Moreover, water is also used in coronation ritual of King in Thailand (Wongcha-um and Chayut, 2019) such water ritual is easily found entire Southeast Asian nations. This article explores how water is utilized in one of Banjar people's oral tradition, *Balamut*, to honor water as sacred element of life.

Balamut ritual is a form of social action that uses sound patterns, movements, scents, objects and stories to express or communicate shared values. As symbolic languages these elements are such kind of "wrap" that needs to be opened to understand the meaning of it. This article focuses on the presence of water, as two important elements in the ritual process, particularly in the ritual sequence and as the object of the ritual. The analysis based on observations of several rituals of *balamut tatamba* (healing) or *hajat* (thanksgiving) at different places and times, namely in Jingah River (2011), Kelayan Barat (2012), and Alalak Selatan (2013 and 2016).

II. LITERATUR REVIEW

The notion of ritual first emerged as the official term of analysis in the 19th century to identify what is believed to be a universal category of human experience. This term marked the beginning of a major change in European culture when comparing itself to other cultures and religions. Since then, many other definitions of ritual have been developed in relation to various scientific interests. Myth and ritual theorists, for example, look to rituals to describe religion. Functionalists explore ritual action and value in order to analyze "society" and the nature of social phenomena. Symbolic anthropologists use ritual to see the dynamics of "culture". (Bell, 2009)

The ambiguity of the term has generated much debate and confusion in the social sciences. Durkheim treats ritual as a social function that serves to promote group solidarity (Quantz, 2011; Bjork, 2002). Meanwhile Quantz defines ritual as a formal symbolic performance (Quantz, 2011; Bjork, 2002). The term ritual is explored reflectively and understood to accumulate various meanings (Potts, 2008). Significantly, Gluckman's work changed the definition of ritual from the Durkheimian idea that rites were primarily concerned with religion or "the sacred." Gluckman defines ritual as a category that includes more social acts. Religious activity is at one pole and social ethics at the other. With this approach, the term "ritual" can more freely refer to a spectrum of formal but not necessarily religious activities. Thus, ritual studies can relate to social and community problems, not just religious or religious institutions. A realization began to be seen as a distinctive way of organizing social relations: not merely a reflection of the structure of social relations. Rituals and structures are managed as the main means of social relations (Bell, 1997).

Rituals are not limited to religious matters. Rituals and ritualistic behavior can be found in performance venues in public spaces, such as concerts, theater and dance. Ritual behavior can also be found in the public and private sphere in a variety of forms ranging from normal daily behavior of various forms of psychological and social ailments. Rituals can be found in art, architecture, music, literature, children's games to professional sports (Seligman et. Al., 2008), schools (McLaren, 1999; Hildebrant, 2001; Bjork, 2002), courtroom law courts to ceremonies (Navon, 1995; Moore & Myerhoff, 1977).

One of the definitions of ritual that is relevant to the purpose of this article is the definition of ritual from Rappaport. There are clear parallels between Roy Rappaport and Victor Turner, both of whom have backgrounds that emphasize a scientific approach to societal and cultural studies, but both see anthropology as a dialogue between the humanities and the natural sciences. Both were born from the brilliant era of anthropology. Their interrelation of thoughts comes from the same historical context and subject. They both struggle to understand the meaning of ritual and use it to understand social problems. Rappaport uses Turner's conceptual work to construct his own ritual theory (Potts, 2008).

For Rappaport, rituals are performances of formal speech acts that are not fully encoded by the perpetrators. The dream is that rituals create and re-create the world of social convention and authority beyond any individual's inner desires (Seligman, et. Al., 2008; Potts, 2008). In Miller's view (2014), formal utterances and actions that are not fully encoded by the perpetrator mean that the utterance is tied to tradition. The basic components of the ritual performance open up the possibility of resistance. Rituals will never fully belong to the ritual performer. Adherence to tradition is negotiable. This distance is what in a certain sense can be called the absence of authenticity which allows the ritual performer to provide new content, purpose and meaning. Thus, resistance is built into the ritual. In this theoretical context, the *balamut* tradition understands the world as essentially tattered and unsustainable. By ritual temporary order was created through the building of the show, a world of "possibility".

The creation of a "possible" or "as if" world is a major aspect of the ritual action required of human life. By emphasizing that ritual is an "as if" world, it means that ritual to some extent creates a world of shared illusions. Participants who perform the ritual act feel as if the world created in the ritual is real. They do it with full awareness (Seligman, 2008)

In relation to the *balamut* ritual, apart from the concept of ritual as an "as if" world, there are two other concepts that are very influential in ritual studies and offer a useful background for the study of discussing rituals. First, Stanley Tambiah's idea of ritual performativity in the sense that rituals are performative. Tambiah (1979) states that ritual is a symbolic communication system that is culturally built. Rituals are formed from a series of patterned and ordered words and actions, which are expressed using various media whose content and composition are characterized by varying degrees of formality (convention), stereotypes (rigidity), compaction (fusion) and redundancy (repetition). Ritual acts are performative in three senses: first, in the sense of performance according to Austin that stating something also means doing something as an act of convention; second, in the sense of a performance that is staged using a variety of media through which the participants experience ritual events intensively; and third, performative in the sense of containing indexical values as in Pierce's concept,

namely the values linked to and concluded by the actors during the performance. In other words, during the performance the actors show that they are adopting and demonstrating certain roles and status.

Through the ritual behavior method, people communicate thoughts and feelings as well as their world views (Bossard & Boll, 1950; Laird, 1984). In addition, rituals help humans to celebrate something new, celebrate beliefs, grief, make transitions, maintain or enhance, renew, and define relationships and treat trauma or feelings of loss (Imber-Black & Robert, 1992). Rituals are able to embrace multiple points of view, facilitate social coordination between individuals, family members and communities.

The performative aspect of rituals is very important because rituals relate to aspects of the relationship between roles and aspects of oneself and others. The ritual creates boundaries and allows moving between boundaries. By recognizing the boundaries, ritual provides the means to transcend them. Setting boundaries and breaking boundaries is the human capacity not only to tolerate ambiguity, but also to develop it creatively as a means of overcoming the contradictory demands of existence in the world. Ambiguity and ambivalence are not just passive experiences (Seligman, 2008). Tambiah (1985) emphasizes that performativity is not just repetition and staging but also affirming certain values (Day, 2011).

Another important concept is Chaterine Bell's idea of ritualization which describes the strategies an activity uses to differentiate itself from everyday activities by creating an environment that creates a distinction between the sacred and the profane. In simple language, ritualization describes how non-ritual activities can become rituals. This concept is important because it theorizes non-ritual actions using symbolic and communicative means of ritual action.

The concept of "ritualization" initiated by Bell (1997) is a response to modern Western society who think that ritual is just a matter of special activities that are inherently different from daily routine actions and closely related to the sacredness of organized tradition and religion. With the concept of ritualization, Bell sees ritual as a general, strategic, and flexible way of acting. There are six categories which are the main attributes of "ritual-like" action, namely: formality, traditionally, disciplinary conventions, rules, sacred symbols, and performances. This category is not definitive and exclusive.

Bell (1997) in *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* assesses that the approach to ritualization has so far paid less attention to issues of social control. Therefore, Bell pays more attention to complex power relations, especially how non-human and indirect (gods, traditions, values, etc.) Allow for individual appropriation and communal. Therefore he offers a theory of practice. Practice theory allows researchers to focus more directly on what people do and how they do it. This theory does not involve the dominant notion of ritual in general. The theory assumes that rituals are not the same way of acting at all times and places. Rituals, or ritualizations, can be well defined specifically because cultures, and even subcultures, differentiate their actions. Therefore, a universal definition of ritual can obscure how and why people perform ritual actions; universal definitions obscure an important aspect of ritual as a strategic way of acting. For this reason, theory of practice appears to offer a greater opportunity to define the more subtle ways in which power is recognized and combined, interpretation is negotiated, and people struggle to make meaning that is personally effective. In other words, ritual and ritual-like activities can express a variety of messages and attitudes that connect people's existence with sources of authority, power, and values (Bell, 1997; Ratcliff, 2001). Although rituals are typically considered "traditional" cultural practices, certain ritual practices can also be placed in a broader process of social change, and also function as a form of resistance and a means of presenting cultural identity (Banks, 2011).

Bell and Grime understood ritual as a concrete social act (embodied). Ritual is intrinsically attached to the body, and therefore it exists in time and space. Therefore, rituals become very particular. Understanding ritual means reducing understanding of ritual as a general phenomenon, but focusing on particular examples. In this case, a broad attention to context is very important (Potts, 2008)

The concept of Bell and Grime's ritual theory which sees ritual as practice, Rappaport who sees ritual as a possible world construction, and Tambiah who sees ritual as a form of symbolic communication become the main theoretical orientation to see the *balamut* tradition as ritual (in the context of *balamut hajat* and *tatamba*) and as a ritualization in the context of *balamut karasmin* (entertainment lamut).

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The *balamut* tradition is a family tradition. Therefore, this study does not intend to quantify this tradition but rather to understand what this tradition means for the community. The type of research that fits this purpose is ethnography.

As an ethnographic research, this research has the following characteristics. First, the research is field-based, that is, it is carried out in a setting where real people actually live, not in a laboratory where the researcher can control elements of behavior to observe or measure. Second, this research is personalized in the sense that it is carried out by researchers who have daily face-to-face contact with the people being studied and become participants and observers of the life being studied. Third, multifactor research, which is carried out through the use of two or more data collection techniques (qualitative or quantitative) to trace or triangulate conclusions, which can be strengthened in several ways. Fourth, this research requires a long-term commitment that is, by the researcher to interact with the people studied over a long period of time, although the exact time frame may vary, ranging from a few weeks to a year or more. Fifth, it is inductive (done by using an accumulation of detailed descriptions to build general patterns or clear theories, not structured to test hypotheses derived from existing theories or models. Sixth, is dialogical in the sense of what the researcher does (including conclusions and interpretations) can be commented on by those under study. Finally, it is holistic, which is done to produce a portrait of the group being studied as fully as possible (Angrosino, 2007).

In gathering information, this study uses five documentation methods suggested by Joubert (2004). First, observation and participation to make an audio recording. The observation involved is an absolute prerequisite for ethnographic research. Researchers must be present or in the middle of the community group being researched. Second, transcribing audio material to make it easier to recapture the events of the show on paper. Transcription or transfer of speech in the form of sound into written form by using sound symbols to represent written audio in the Banjar language is done orthographically, using standard Indonesian orthography by including orthographic conventions for punctuation. Third, making performance texts with visual recordings to complement the inability of audio recordings to capture visual aspects of performance events in various social contexts. Fourth, translating transcriptions of performance speeches and interviews in Banjarese into Indonesian. Transcription translation is carried out relatively freely by emphasizing the meaning of speech rather than word for word translation to produce an easy to read translation. Fifth, interpreting library materials by asking *palamutan* and community leaders who have long known this tradition to understand this tradition from various points of view.

In addition to these five ways, information in this study was obtained through interviews conducted in several ways, namely face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, and interviews via social media. Some interviews were conducted formally in the sense that I did prepare myself to meet with the informants to ask some questions. Some interviews were conducted informally, were conducted without a plan or were spontaneous but still to reinforce previously obtained information. Interviews were conducted repeatedly to dig deeper into the information and to confirm the accuracy of the previous information, both semi-structured and unstructured. In fact, I also noted interviews conducted by other people who were present at the performance that had strong relevance to reinforce existing information. Interviews were conducted in Banjar and Indonesian.

The information in this study came from informants who were divided into four groups. Informants were selected purposively in accordance with the objectives to be achieved so that the selected informants were limited to those who subjectively-qualitatively had knowledge of the *balamut* tradition. The first and main group consists of *palamutans*. The second group consists of the *lamut* responders. The third group consists of performance audiences. The last group consists of the general public who have concerns about this tradition.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ritual Sequences

The sequence of *balamut* ritual consists of six stages: (1) burning incense in a fireplace; (2) *tampung tawar*, i.e. sprinkling of fragrant water and yellow rice that has been prayed for; (3) *bahundang-hundang* or inviting spirit from the unseen world; (4) *bakisah* or telling the story of Lamut; (5) *mambulikakan*, or deliver the unseen guests back to their nature; (6), say a prayer of salvation.

The burning of incense signifies the beginning of the ritual. It was then that the *palamutan* begged for healing water.

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

Assalamumu'alaikum ya Baya Ibnu Mulkan

Wa alaikum salam

Assalamu'alaikum ya Baya Ibnu Mulkan

Assalamumu'alaikum ya Baya Ibnu Mulkan

Wa alaikum salam

Nah ulun minta banyu yang sampian... oleh Allah swt menjaga lautan dan ulun minta banyu sampian dengan izin Allah swt dan air ini ulun jadikan sebagai air rambah rimbangun, untuk membangun batang tubuhnya Mawardi bin Asmani. Air rambah rimbangun, air parwito sari, mawar pancadriya, banyu tatamba untuk mananambahi Mawardi bin Asmani. Air tatamba dan tampung tawar untuk menawar seluruh tubuhnya, yaitu Mawardi bin Asmani dengan izin Allah. Semoga Allah menyembuhkan segala penyakit yang diderita oleh Mawardi. Berkat la ila ha illallah muhammadar-rasulullah.

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

Assalamumu'alaikum ya Baya Ibnu Mulkan

Wa alaikum salam

Assalamu'alaikum ya Baya Ibnu Mulkan

Assalamumu'alaikum ya Baya Ibnu Mulkan

Wa alaikum salam

I beg for your water because you guard the ocean by Allah's permission and I make your water to wake up Mawardi bin Asmani's body. Water builder, water of parwito sari, rose of five senses, healing water to treat Mawardi bin Asmani. Healing water and *tampung tawar* to negotiate Mawardi's entire body by Allah's permission. May Allah cures all Mawardi's illnesses. Thanks to Allah, and the prophet Muhammad.



Figure 1 Pak Jamhar, the palamutan, puts yellow rice to the head of a treated child in South Alalak, Banjarmasin, December 2013 (photo by Sainul Hermawan)

The second stage after the burning of incense and opening speech is the provision of *tampung tawar*. The *tampung tawar* is made from a mixture of perfume and water that is contained in one cup. Material and how to use it have symbolic meaning. The water in the cup that has been mixed with perfume is called "holy rain water of nature" which is expected to refresh the body which is imagined such a dry tree. Sprinkling the natural holy water to the head is an expression of hope that the mind of the sprinkled person is cold and his name re-envelopes. Splashes on the right and left shoulders tell the two angels guarding the human that the *palamutan* is asking for help to Allah swt.

The next stage is *bahundang-hundang* or inviting the unseen spirit to attend the ritual space. This utterance is always repeated in the ritual of *balamut hajat* or *tatamba* with the order of hierarchy that is not always the same. Sometimes the mention of the prophet is earlier than the angel. The repetition affirms the cultural meaning of the sacred hierarchy of

authority that enables the execution of help. For *palamutan*, Allah is the main determiner. The statement is also a symbolic statement that has both vertical and horizontal meaning.

In this position, *palamutan* is an ambivalent two-sided representative agent. On the one hand, physically, he is Pak Jamhar but on the other hand he portrays himself as Sangiang Terbang or the God of Drum. Past and present voices come out of the same channel: Mr. Jamhar's oral expression. On the one hand, the repetition is addressed to God, but on the other hand, a plea to a non-Allah is also voiced. In carrying out this arduous task, Pak Jamhar used the ayangilah formula as a safeguard of his creed.



Figure 2 *Santak terbang* (arrow sign) dipped in a jar of water in *balamut* healing ritual at Kelayan Barat, September 2012 (photo by Sainul Hermawan)

The phrase Sangiang Terbang symbolizes the blend of two cultures: Sangiang (God in local religion) and *terbang* or drum (representation of Islamic music). Hence, the drum has a sacred status. The drum is usually made by *palamutan* himself and not sold in the public market. A family of *palamutan* on Jl. Banyuur Dalam, Basirih Urban Village, West Banjarmasin, for example, still keeps the *santak* of the drum heritage as a family heritage. If any of its members are sick, the drum fasteners (*santak*) or straps are dipped in water for healing (Fig. 2).

In the ritual sequence of *balamut hajat* and *tatamba*, Sangiang Terbang places Lamut in four roles at once: (1) as the head of all recipients of offerings, (2) as a mediator of the family that conducts the ritual and needs the healing; (3) as an audience; and (4) as the fictional characters told in ritual. All of these roles depend on speech of *palamutan*.

Inviting spirits (*bahundang-hundang*) is the *palamutan's* efforts to define his position in ritual. As a performative act, Pak Jamhar transforms himself into Sangiang Terbang to communicate with angels, companions of the prophet, the four brothers, and Lamut. Indirect, in this way, Pak Jamhar puts Sangiang Terbang as the narrator, not himself. Sangiang Terbang as a narrator is not identical to Pak Jamhar as the storyteller. If any of the stories were false, he wanted to be free of any responsibility. Sangiang Terbang is a mediator Pak Jamhar or *Tukang Ki Dalang* to communicate with supernatural spirits. Lamut became a mediator connecting the Sangiang Terbang and the unseen spirit from the gods' realms. In such cases he is in a liminal position: Islam as well as Hinduism, but also it is not both of them.

In the stage of telling stories, *palamutan* (the story teller) chooses the story according to the respondent's request. If the user wants a swinging events, *palamutan* will choose a story in which there is a child swung in it. Similarly, if the user of *balamut hajat* wants to wish a luckiness in the island of Kembang, *palamutan* will choose the story of Maharaja Bungsu went to the island Madu Menyan Madu Dupa. In general, the story chosen for healing is Kasan Mandi's story. This story can be called as the main story pattern whose pattern is repeated and modified in other stories.

After the stage of *bakisah*, the next sequence of *balamut* ritual is returning the audience from the unseen world to its (*mambulikakan*) nature. This action was first performed by Lamut. Lamut woke them one by one (Dewa Pande Rudiah, the seven angels, Labay, Anglung, and Anggasinga) and invited back to their places. They are released with a sprinkling of yellow rice. The 10-15 minute formulaic expression asks for the followings: (1) asking them to return to their place, (2) bringing the offerings they should have, (3) leaving the healing water, (4) promising not to return forever. At this stage again the *palamutan* requests again for healing water.

“Apa saja yang dibawa, dan ujar Lamut bajanji, kalau sudah manarima ikam kada bulih lagi manapak, mangibit, mangguyang, manyinggul, ujar urang Banjar, jangan lagi maminta, karna sudah bajanji, karna inggat sidin ujar Lamut bajanji, biarpun ibu bapak sidin, dingsanak sidin, anak kamanakan sidin, cucu sidin, ujar Lamut kada manggawi lagi, nah di sini dipotong, arti dipotong ditatak, nah dihabisi di sini, jadi ujar Lamut na ayu bulikan, sabalum bulik maninggal ruhui rahayu obat jajampin tawar surga, besok untuk mamandi Mawardi, mandudus Mawardi,

"Take it with you," Lamut said. But if you have accepted, you can no longer hit, pinch, shake, nudge, as Banjarese said. Do not ask anymore because it has promised, to get to him alone. His father and his mother, his brother, his son and his nephew, his grandson, Lamut said would not carry out the ritual anymore. It means 'cut off', ended up here, "said Lamut. "Just go home. Before you leave, give me healing water from heaven for Mawardi's bath tomorrow."

The final stage of the *balamut* ritual is praying for salvation in Islamic way. This stage was also performed by the *palamutan* when he performed the ritual in the Chinese family's home. The stage of saying the prayer of salvation is replaced with *qunut* prayer. A prayer of salvation whose meaning is activated as the meaning of *ayangilah*, as the inner calling of God to the creed of faith is protected as long as he performs the ritual. The prayer indicates the end of the ritual and offerings can be eaten together.

The ritual sequence shows the ritual order reflects the community order. God is at the center of power while the gods as the goal of Shari'a or human efforts that do not guarantee the certainty of the end result, and water as the medium.

Ritual Objects

The objects used in the *balamut* ritual are ordinary objects, such as raw materials, food, and daily drinks that surround them. These objects have a sacred value for this ritual. The offerings or *dadaharan* is used as a symbol of debt payment to Lamut, Dewa Pande Rudiah, and seven nymphs, Labay, Anglung and Anggasinga. In this paper these objects have a capacity as a mnemonic device, or such a reminder for the rituals in creating ritual speech when communicating with the supernatural beings. In addition, the objects in this ritual are a part of the identity of the *balamut* community which can also be interpreted as an expression of resistance to the arrival of new identities in their culture.

As a mnemonic device, ritual objects help the *palamutan* to remember the ritual language, and the ritual language form the myth of ritual objects. For example, the expression of the *palamutan* when he will begin to greet supernatural beings, he said, "I burn this white fragrant incense and its scent can fly to seven layers of sky and dip down to the seven layers of earth, its fog covers all over universe." The statement contains two important objects, namely fireplaces and incense or white incense.

Incense has many meanings. The tradition of burning incense is done by various tribes and religions. Burning incense in *balamut* may be derived from Dayak ritual tradition, Java, Malay, Chinese. But in *balamut*, kemenyan is seen as a means of connecting the real world to the spirit world.

Sowing some grains of rice may also come from Dayak traditions. In Dayak Ngaju culture, for example, the *beras* or 'rice' is believed to symbolize a god who can arrive, meet, and ultimately be able to deliver the hope of human to the supreme being. In the *balamut* ritual, yellow rice is seen as an invitation letter and sign for returning supernatural guests.

In addition to yellow rice, in small quantities, white rice with more quantities is served as *piduduk*, namely raw offerings, consisting of rice, eggs, coconut, and yarn as a symbol of the human body. Rice in the *piduduk* symbolize meat, yarn symbol for nerve, coconut is the symbol of head, and egg symbol for the eyes. *Piduduk*, offerings (*dadaharan*), and incense fireplaces are the main requirement for the implementation of the *balamut* ritual.

The type and amount of the objects that accompany each ritual always change. In some images taken from different places and times of rituals, the ritual objects of the lamut show different social identities. The quality of attachment of objects with the sanctity of this ritual can be seen how these objects are spoken.

The number of offerings in the *balamut* ritual (healing) at the Jingah River (Figure 3) is relatively the same as at Tanjung Pagar (Figure 4). However, in Tanjung Pagar, there are different new objects, namely the swing in the middle of the room and the number of water jugs. The existence of the swing indicates the age of the child who is treated. In contrast, in the

ritual of *balamut* in the Jingah River there is no swing as it is treated as teenagers. While the jug and bottle of water with the open lid indicates the strong confidence of people around this house in the *tuah* (magical power) or water strength derived from this ritual. The water they usually use for mixing to bathe, cook, drink, and even to sprinkle to the merchandise so that their wares are in demand.



Figure 3 *Piduduk and offerings of balamut ritual in Sungai Jingah (2011)*



Figure 4 *water jugs on balamut ritual (Tanjung Pagar, 2012)*

The object of ritual in the *lamut* hajat in Alalak Selatan in 2016 (Figure 5) also indicates a new element. In general, in every ritual *balamut* hajat or *tatamba* there is only one *piduduk*, but in 2016 can be seen more than two *piduduk* although the host is only one. According to Mr. Jamhar, at that time there were four toddlers who wanted to be healed. Each toddler must provide his/her own *piduduk* although only one name of a toddler called in the ritual. The nature of the *piduduk*, according to Pak Jamhar, is like a human body symbolized by an egg.

No visible water and bottle with open cap on the execution of *balamut* hajat in Mr. Alfian Noor's house. However, it looks like baby fragrances are packed in small bottles placed in a basin to the right of the bag. All the caps are opened. All of

these facts demonstrate the openness and adaptability of this ritual to any new context that is not fully controlled by *palamutan*.



Figure 5 Ritual of *balamut hajat* at Pak Alfian Noor's home, Alalak Selatan (2016)

V. CONCLUSION

Water in ritual *balamut hajat* and *tatamba* comes in various forms and functions. The water mixed with perfume in the bargaining act symbolizes the importance of water as a mind purified and body healer. The perfumed water affirms its appreciation for water, not only clean and holy, but also fragrant. The hope of the perpetrators to God to get water that solves the problem of life in return in the stage of the *bahundang-hundang* and *mambulikakan*. Thus, the *balamut* ritual symbolically affirms the importance of water from any source. In the context of Banjarmasin, water is closely related to river. Water in ritual *balamut* is a symbol of hope to the river community to think about the sustainability, cleanliness, and benefits of water as a solution for various problems of human life in Banjarmasin.

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