

Hoyak Tabuik: Shiah Ritual Celebration During the Dutch Colonial Period in Padang

Zusneli Zubir¹, Fikrul Hanif Sufyan², Refisrul³, Yulino Indra⁴, Rita Novita⁵, Abu Muslim^{6*}, Syamsurijal⁷, Wardiah Hamid⁸, Mujizatullah⁹, Amiruddin¹⁰, Muh. Subair¹¹, Nensia¹²

Abstract

Hoyak Tabuik is a Shia ritual tradition that was once brought by Indian Tamils to the West Coast of Sumatra and lasted for three centuries. The massive celebration, which falls on Muharram 10th, was attended by thousands of spectators, mostly Sunnis. This paper is prepared based on the historical method—heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Tabuik began to be preached massively at the end of the 19th century. The Syattariyah enlivened the Shia ritual during the Dutch Colonial period. Then, in the 20th century, Muhammadiyah and a small number of Naqsyabandiyah and PERTI adherents were also witnessed. The 9th and 10th of Muharram are the culmination of the implementation of Shia rituals – as an illustration of the Padang Karbala event by carrying a 7-meter-high monument, with replicas of Husein and Kasim's fingers, fine silk cloth, various decorations, colourful paper, and buraq. The big Tabuik, simultaneously pitted, drowned in Muaro Padang Beach and fought over by the audience in the afternoon. According to newspaper records during the Dutch colonial era, many in the audience were picked on, injured, and even eaten by sharks.

Keywords: *hoyak tabuik, ritual celebration, shia tradition, dutch colonial.*

INTRODUCTION

"Hoyak-hoyak Tabuik", "Hayya-Hayya Hosein" - these were the chants of the participants of the Tabuik (Coffin) Festival held in Pariaman City from August 1-14, 2022. It was the first time the festival was held after the global Covid-19 pandemic.

It is strange that in the midst of a Sunni community on the west coast of Sumatra, this "Shi'a" ritual is held with pomp and circumstance. It is no exaggeration to say that the

¹ Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

² Department of Education History STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan Payakumbuh, Indonesia

³ Pusat Riset Manuskrip Literatur dan Tradisi Lisan, Badan Riset Dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

⁴ Research Center for Language and Literature Preservation, National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Indonesia

⁵ Research Center for Language and Literature Preservation, National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Indonesia

⁶ Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia, abu.muslim@brin.go.id

⁷ Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

⁸ Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

⁹ Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

¹⁰ Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

¹¹ Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

¹² Pusat Riset Khazanah Keagamaan dan Peradaban, Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN), Indonesia

traditional tabuik event on the coast of Pariaman - which culminates on August 14, 2022 - is the most spectacular on the coast of Sumatra (Republika, 2022).

Two centuries ago, the Tabuik Festival was not immediately present on the shores of Pariaman Beach. In fact, the three-century-old tradition was also celebrated with great fanfare in Padang City - especially during the Dutch colonial period.

The celebration, enlivened by *gandang tambua* and *tassa* music, was not only covered by the local media, but also attracted the attention of Dutch journalists. The Dutch were astonished by the tabuik celebrations organized by Sunni Muslims in Padang and Pariaman (Sumatra Courant, 1891). In fact, Sunni scholars have issued a haram fatwa against anything that might seem Shi'a

For the Minang people, tabuik is a tradition commemorating the death of Hussein in the events of Padang Karbala, in the year 61 Hijriyah, or coinciding with October 10, 680 (F. H. Sufyan, 2022). Since the 17th century, Tabuik was brought by soldiers of Indian-Tamil descent, but some suspect that after the Shattariyah order developed on the West Coast of Sumatra, tabuik was introduced by Persians who made contact with the Minang people.

Taking the soil, *manabang* (cutting) banana stalks, *maanja* (carrying the finger of Hussein cut off by Yazid bin Muawiyah), *maarak panja* (parading Hussein's fingers), *maarak panja* Hussein's turban, and ending with the tabuik ascension - these are the processions of a tradition enlivened by thousands of participants and culminating on the 10th of Muharram. It is certainly interesting to celebrate Tabuik without being a Shia.

During the ten days of the tabuik festival, which culminates every 10 Muharram, villagers come out of their homes all day long and go around in tabuik processions under the supervision of the *veldpolitie* (Post, 1938). Thousands of spectators reach their peak when the large tabuik are carried to the West Coast (Muaro Padang) (Courant, 1938).

From archives and newspapers reporting on tabuik during the Dutch Colonial period, it is mentioned that there were no protests, nor prohibitions from traditional and modernist scholars in West Sumatra, to participate in tabuik processions. The records found, instead, show a ban issued by the Resident of Sumatra Westkust, to organise tabuik festivals. He accused tabuik of being immoral, noisy, deafening and often murderous (Advond Post, 1936).

Further elaboration is questioning the condition of Padang during the Dutch colonial period, the beginning and procession of Tabuik during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the reaction of the West Sumatra government to the Tabuik celebration in Padang.

The Hoyak Tabuik research aims to examine the implementation of the Tabuik procession in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by Sunni Muslims in Padang and the reaction of the West Sumatra government to the Tabuik celebration in Padang.

Research on the tabuik tradition has been conducted by previous authors, but within a different scope of study and in a different time context. Arifian and Ayundasari (2021), in "Kebudayaan Tabuik Sebagai Upacara Adat di Kota Pariaman Sumatra Barat", writes that in Pariaman, the tabuik tradition is unique because most of the city's population is Sunni. This ritual is only performed by the Minangkabau people, most of whom are followers of the Shafi'i Mazhab introduced by Sheikh Burhanuddin in the 17th century.

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There is a criticism of this article, which claims that the majority of Pariaman residents are Shattari. This is because Muhammadiyah is more dominant in Pariaman as part of its initial base in Kurai Taji in 1929 (F. H. & Z. Z. Sufyan, 2023). However, Arifian and

Ayundasari did not write about tabuik celebrations during the Dutch Colonial period in Padang City.

Zainal Fadri (Fadri, 2019) in “Tabuik: Local Wisdom as an Alternative for Suppressing The Impact of Structural Change in Pariaman” writes, that tabuik is an annual routine. Zainal claims that tabuik controls the flow of globalisation, and triggers community and economic activities that can be managed as development in Pariaman with traditional agriculture naturally. However, Tabuik celebrations during the Dutch colonial period in the capital of Sumatra, Westkust, are not mentioned in Zainal's article.

“The procession of Hoyak Tabuik: a Tourism Urgency and Education Values in Pariaman City” – which is written Nanda Nelri (Nelri, 2019), writes that Hoyak Tabuik was still carried out before the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, because it has benefits in the lives of its people. Some of these benefits, according to the author, are seen in terms of sociology, anthropology, religion, economy and education (Rahman et al., 2020). The most important part of the tabuik celebration is the implementation of the party; however, Nanda's writing did not find the tabuik celebration during the Dutch Colonial period in Padang. However, Tabuik celebrations during the Dutch colonial period in the capital of Sumatra, Westkust, are not mentioned in Zainal's article.

The issue of Hoyak Tabuik in Padang City during the Dutch Colonial period is closely related to cultural history. Cultural history essentially records and interprets events in the past - those related to human beings (Arcangeli, 2011). Cultural history also interprets society's records, taking into account the various methods humans use to form groups (Burke, 2004).

Looking at the process of Tabuik's entry into Padang in the 17th century, it has to do with acculturation strategies. The concept of acculturation begins with the relationship between two or more cultural systems (Jayanti et al., 2024). In this context, acculturative change results from cultural change (Berry, 2019). According to Berry, realized cultural integrity has several qualities. People/groups in this strategy try to find and participate as an integral part of an extensive network of social groups (Berry, 1997). From Berry's cultural strategy is closely related to the tactics of Indian Tamils and Persians as a minority group trying to survive and maintain Shiite traditions among the Sunni community in Padang.

METHODS

This article used the historical method, which includes four stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and writing (Gottschalk, 1950; Kuntowijoyo, 2003; Mufid et al., 2023; F. H. Sufyan, 2018). Heuristics was the first stage involving the search and collection of historical sources.

The second stage was source criticism, further divided into external and internal criticism. External criticism is performed to determine the authenticity of the received documents. Internal criticism was used to obtain data validity from historical records (Kartodirdjo, 1992).

The third stage involved interpretation. The facts obtained from written and oral sources were analyzed using process and structural analysis (Lloyd, 1993). The fourth stage was the writing stage (historiography). The writing was done regarding cultural history with the object of tabuik tradition research. The paper was based on an evolutionary writing model to describe the development of a complex society in Padang.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The celebration of the tabuik was associated with the death of Husein, the prophet Muhammad's grandson. Shi'a tradition originated in three locations, eventually becoming the primary hubs during the Dutch Colonial period - namely Padang, Pariaman (Sumatra Westkust), and Benkoelen - as documented through archival and newspaper records.

1. The Beginning of the Tabuik Celebration

a. Padang Township: Lowland, Often Flooded

Padang City with an area of about 11.5 km, after the reorganisation in 1913, the onderafdeeling government was simplified into seven districts. The seven districts were: Tanah Tinggi, Batang Harau, Binuang, Koto Tengah, Pauh, Sungkai and V Lurah (Amran, 1981). In the 19th century, the population of Padang City was estimated at 8,500 inhabitants - living in an area identical to scattered hamlets.

Padang is synonymous with low-lying areas, prone to flooding, and covered in swampy forests and thatched trees. According to the oral tradition, the original settlement in Padang occupied the southern part of Batang Arau, in an area known today as Seberang Padang. They expanded, and some moved north, where they established new villages, such as Alang Laweh, Ranah, Parak Gadang and Ganting (F. H. Sufyan, 2021).

The population growth, from statistical records, is known to have been around 52,054 people in 1930. This was a slow increase compared to 1878 (27,971) and 1905 (47,000). In 1930, the composition of the ethnicities that inhabited Padang, consisted of whites or Europeans 2,592, indigenous people 40,744, Chinese 7,263, and Arabs, Indians, Japanese totalling 1,455 (Asnan, 1992).

Since becoming a Gemeente, Padang has gained decentralized rights, including financial management previously determined by Batavia. Padang was equipped with government offices, public facilities, a press company, and markets, which have existed for centuries in scattered locations and now form economic enclaves.

All these facilities underwent rapid development throughout the 20th century. The city's residents visit five markets; the oldest became Pasar Gadang. The market is situated near Muaro, the historical city centre.

Along the Handelskade (Jalan Batang Arau) to Pasar Gadang are wholesale agents, company warehouses and government offices. Here white merchants are generally dominant. In addition, Pasar Mudik, located further in or south of Pasar Gadang, has been busy since the 19th century (Suryadi, 2010a).

In all four markets in Padang Township, in Adrial Adli's account, are controlled by both natives as well as Chinese. Here there was an agent of a native company called Badu Ata & Co (Adli, 1999). A famous merchant here was Mohammad Taher, who later also became a member of the Padang Gemeente Council. The next was Pasar Tanah Kongsu in Kampung Cina, and the fourth was Pasar Belakang Tangsi.

Gemeente Padang became more modern when black gold was discovered in Sawahlunto in 1868. The discovery of this coal marked its exploitation - beginning with the construction of the Emmahaven port and a railway linking Sawahlunto with several regions, to the Emmahaven Port in Padang (F. H. Sufyan, 2017). On the positive side, Gemeente Padang quickly adapted to the influx of modernisation, including traditions. One of these was tabuik - a tradition celebrated by the Shi'a.

b. The Early Distribution of Taboeik: Tamil Indian, or Persian?

The word taboet, tabuik, comes from tabut, which means a wooden chest (Assegaf, 2010). The ark, if traced far back, is related to the story of Prophet Moses. According to Musthafa Al-Maraghi and Sayyid Qutb, the word ark refers to a story in the Qur'an of Prophet Musa A.s and Pharaoh. And, At-tabut is an object used for the salvation of Prophet Moses from his enemy Pharaoh.

Tabuik is also interpreted as a pallbearer carried during the procession of events from 1-10 Muharram. The events of the Field of Karbala on 10 Muharram 61 Hijri are the reason this tradition is commemorated by Shi'a Islam (Brockelmann, 1956; Gibb, 1974); (Gibb, 1974).

The tabuik narrative began with a battle involving Husein and Yazid in which Husein and his troops were killed, except for some women and children. This unequal war, in the

Shi'a historical perspective, is often called the massacre of Husein and his entourage (Ronkel, 1914). Husein for the Shi'a was considered the third Imam after the death of Ali b. Abi Talib and his brother Hasan. Husein's death left a wake of grief among the Shi'a. The Shi'a outside Persia then spread the tradition of tabuik. It was the route utilised by the Shi'a to spread tabuik.

The narrative of tabuik in the archipelago began with British soldiers - originally from Tamil India - performing the ritual in the 17th century (Suryadi, 2010b). Military of Tamil origin who follow Shi'a Islam, call it tabot (Bode, 1902). The Treaty of London of March 17th 1824 forced the British to hand over Benkoelen to the Dutch Colonials.

The Tamil military rebelled and escaped to the northern part of the West Coast of Sumatra, specifically Pariaman. The area was initially introduced to the Shattariyah order during the 17th century. These Tamil ex-military were responsible for introducing the tradition of tabuik, which is held every Muharram. The cultural strategy of the Tamil minority proved successful and was adopted by adherents of Sunni Islam.

It is worth noting that during the late 19th century, a few Syi'ah followers wedded Minang women residing on the outskirts of Padang. These women were mainly artisans, launderers, tin labourers, cooks, and other professionals.

2. Hayya Husein: Hoyak Tabuik in Muaro Padang

From Pariaman, it is suspected that the tabuik tradition then spread to Padang. However, it is not known when and who introduced the Shi'a tradition to the community. By the end of the 19th century, it is known that the number of Shi'a people was very small (Sumatra Courant, 1891).

a. Ritual Tabuik: Kesaksian T.F.A Delprat

A Sumatra Courant journalist named Theodore Fransiscus A. Delprat, witnessed, and wrote a full report on the stages of the tabuik celebration. The almost full-page article was extracted from an Arabic Malay manuscript entitled, "Tertib Pelaksanaan Taboet Hasan dan Husein".

The tabuik celebrations on the West Coast of Sumatra, according to Delprat, are similar to those in their native Persia. Some groups are busy making replicas of graves (darga) from Hussein, the coffin. The celebration begins on 1 Muharram and culminates on 10 Muharram, or September 10 1891 (Sumatra Courant, 1891).

On August 31 1891 several men gathered weapons, spears, and other items for tabuik. In the early evening of August 1 1891, the participants went to a fishing pond, or river outside the town, to collect soil, presumably for grave decoration.

Ahead walked the musicians, who played the mournful music of Hussein's death, on elongated drums (dool) and small round drums (tassa), covered with woollen cloth. The pot of stew contains sorbet water, which is a mixture of cloves, ginger in warm water with sugar. Next, all participants sit and recite the prayer of salawat for the Prophet.

Performing this prayer, one of the participants then enters the water, and brings to the surface two handfuls of earth, which at once with great mystery is poured into two heaps under the cloth covering the pot, hidden around it and muttering a prayer, while under the cloth each heap of earth is wrapped in a piece of cloth (Sumatra Courant, 1891).

After the earthen parcel was placed and the sorbet was consumed as directed, the ceremony began—the sorrowful music resumed, accompanied by a drum with an unusual rhythm. Regardless of location, the musician always carries straw material for supply.

Small pieces of soil, a tray, and a pot are placed on top to decorate graves. A bottle of incense and candles are ignited. All attendees gather around it, and after reciting the pre-established prayer, the service proceeds. The ritual concludes with a communal meal afterwards.

The earthen packages wrapped in cloth are visible. The damp and wet contents of these packets leave stains; grey signifies soil from Hasan's grave, who died from poisoning, whereas red indicates Hussein's blood during the battle of Karbala.

For the next five days (August 31- September 4 1891), all participants designed grave decorations, twice a day at seven in the morning and at five in the evening, for prayer. On the evening of the fifth day, a second procession was formed. This was followed by tassa and music. The entire procession proceeded to the garden, where four banana stalks and four cut brown sugars were planted in the four "grave decorations" (Sumatra Courant, 1891).

The procession, according to Delprat, produces a spectacle that is beyond rationalisation. The crowd of people in disguise is part of those wearing the funniest clothing attributes. They are seen as dignified. This means that he is a figure below a general, an administrative officer in a large uniform and surrounded by many beasts.

Those in costume can be divided into two groups, the Ardjoenoes (called Madjenoens in Padang) and the Simoentoes. The Ardjoenoes represent the Kasim warriors, without wearing masks, but with some weapons in the form of large knobs, or swords in hand. Those wearing yellow straps, represent Husein's soldiers, and those wearing blue straps are Kasim's soldiers.

The Simoentoes were masked, but unarmed. They carry small money bags, for people who mourn the dead. The Simoentoes represent the friends of Husein and Kasim, who are looking for the leader who died in Karbala. The wandering Simoentoes were forced to beg, and lost their clothes. Because of their destitute condition, they returned with strange clothes.

Some Shi'ites who were tabuik instructors told Delprat that the Simoentoes were collecting money to provide food for Hasan in prison. For the first time, a small tabuik was present in the procession. The small tabuik was ornamented with a stern made of bamboo, covered in red, blue, gold and silver paper, and hung with paper flowers and other decorations.

When the procession returns from the banana plantation, several banana stalks are carried around the town. Poison was collected at home. Warriors Simoentoes and Ardjoenoes performed strange dances. And, the man carrying the small tabuik, it is difficult to shake him because he keeps moving and making strange jumps in front of the giant statue (buraq). In the small tabuik, prize money is provided, sacrificial ribbons are also collected at people's homes, which must be brought the next day.

Eunuch's hand-cut off in the battle of Karbala-then became a sacred object. In return, a silver hand was given in a procession to expel the spy. In the story of Karbala, many women took an oath, all treasures were collected, to be returned to their owners, after the war was over (Sumatra Courant, 1891).

Finally, on the afternoon of 5 September 1891, the procession returned to its starting position. Banana stalks and sugar cane were planted back at the corner of the grave decoration (keranda tabuik), after being carried seven times round. The afternoon's programme was full of excitement and wild dancing.

When the ceremony is over, the big tabuik is brought out. The replica of Kasim will be carried out on 9 September 1891. According to tabuik tradition, anyone who pledged to participate from 1 to 10 September 1891, could only bathe on the day of Ashura. This bathing of participants, according to Delprat, is not to commemorate the suffering of Hussein and his followers.

On the eighth day, the tabuik procession was much the same as the night before. Passing through the streets with Simoentoes and Ardjoenoes. The music, however, was full of joy. The troupe performs strange dance celebrations. Meanwhile, a small tabuik is present and is torn apart by several men (Nederlandsch-Indië, 1891).

As the evening approaches, the procession gets busier. The Tabuik passes through the streets, accompanied by cheerful music. At the front is a kind of altar with lit candles, on which the turban of the Hussein is placed. This turban is covered with a fine cloth, and between the folds is a silver ribbon. After a few turns, everything is placed on the tabuik. This procession is interpreted to mean that some of Husein's companions are returning home, along with the body of Ali's son.

On the ninth day, the big tabuik is put into production. For each tabuik there is a minimum contribution of f. 5 (Nieuwsblad, 1913). This compensation is small, for the cost of the tabuik until completion. The expensive materials are fine silk, as well as materials for decoration. The assembly of the tabuik is also very laborious. The time-consuming assembly proves the sense of artistic flavour among the Minang people.

On the ninth day, the small tabuik is tied on top of the house. Two black coloured turbans symbolise Hussein, and white for Kasim. At seven o'clock in the evening, the same person takes the small tabuik, and the light-coloured turban used for tying, and places it on the grave.

Finally, the large tabuik (catafalque) is brought out. In the previous years mentioned, 20 large tabuik were produced. The large tabuik was more valuable than the others, as each village competed to design it. However, in 1891 there was a decline, both in size and decoration.

The large tabuik is a true masterpiece of construction made over many days with bamboo, rattan, and paper. It measures 6 lots, with a height of 7 metres. Delphart was amazed. He saw a tower made of light construction, tapered and furnished with coloured paper, gold and silver (Nederlandsch-Indië, 1891).

Often the tabuik tower is carried by several animals. He describes the animals as beautiful birds, horses, sometimes giraffes with a woman's head. This, the description of the buraq in the Shi'ah perspective, is the main icon of the tabuik. On top of the tabuik is a replica of a pumpkin tree - a symbol of the vegetation from the sands of the Karbala desert. This symbol describes Hussein's attitude to get out of trouble.

The welcoming of the big tabuik has gotten out of hand. Some participants representing the Arajoenoes and Simantoes move wildly seven times. They jumped, full of panic. Soon they stopped, and the procession was organised. At the front is a trident, representing the spears and weapons of Husein and Kasim. At the end is an orange fruit. This fruit means the power of medicine for a year.

After the big tabuik, three small tabuik follow. The small tabuik contains an altar with a turban, a replica of the victim's hand with a lit candle. Behind the big tabuik is usually followed by a group of men until the procession is over. The entire tabuik procession is surrounded by Simoentoes and Ardjoenoes dancers. At night, the procession passes through a large road. The aim is to continue the journey in the morning, the 10th of Muharram (Sumatra Courant, 1891).

On September 10, 1891, everyone rushed to watch the tabuik attraction. The audience who attended, numbered in the thousands. Some walked, some rode horses, and ethnic Chinese travelled in carriages. Some people who lived in Padang were well dressed, carrying their wives and children on buffalo carts.

“Thousands of people walk the streets. Upon arrival at the disposal site the tabuik is sunk in the sea. A small number watch from high up (Monkey Mountain). From the top of the hill, they get a good view of the tabuik ceremony.” (Sumatra Courant, 1891).

The large Tabuik has been torn down on the beach, stripped of everything from flags to replica weapons. The silver hand of the Eunuch symbol was taken to safety, but other decorations were taken. On the orders of an Indian descendant, the rest of the equipment was thrown into the sea. After being washed away, the site soon became a public bathing place.

The entire entourage of Ardjoenoes, Simoentoes, the participants of the feast who were forbidden to bathe from 1-9 Muharram, immediately stripped off their clothes. "Undress and go to the water to cheer," explained Delphrat in Sumatra Courant.

b. The Small Tabuik and the Eunuch's Wedding Feast

The big tabuik was destroyed, having been drowned in the ocean on 10 September 1891. What was the position of the small tabuik? The *Bataviasch Nieuwsblad* presented an interesting article on the existence of the Tabuik festival in Padang. The newspaper's journalists wonder why the tabuik festival is also celebrated by thousands of Sunni Minangkabau Muslims?

"...If we now compare the Christmas celebrations that take place here (read: Padang) with those in Persia. Apart from the great differences, the similarities between the two also attract tremendous attention. Because the festival (tabuik) here is celebrated by a handful of Shi'a." (*Nieuwsblad*, 1891).

The celebrations and festivities of the small tabuik came to an end, as everything began to be put away. Next, the coffin for Kasim was prepared. And the big tabuik, witnessed by the Dutch journalist, was carried out with great vigour. The big tabuik was then destroyed, so that no part of the palanquin containing Kasim's body was left, as it had already fallen and been thrown into the ocean.

3. Tabuik celebrations: There are pickpockets, injuries, and broken arms

The tenth day of the tabuik festival is always lively and attended by thousands of people in Padang. Each village carries a large tabuik with the best decorations and ornaments. The carved tabuik is made of woven bamboo and rattan, imitating a mosque. Inside the tabuik, there are replicas of Hussein's severed finger, a statue of buraq, and others - as a form of Shi'a doctrine.

The tabuah tassa is beaten loudly, accompanied by tambourines and flutes as the large tabuik makes its way to Muaro Padang beach. Participants carrying the tabuik around, some jumping up and down, under the deafening sound of "Hasan ... Husein!" (Sumatra, 1938). An atmosphere interpreted from the battle cry at the Field of Karbala, and accompanied by weeping.

a. Amidst the Sea of People, some were Pickpocketed and Injured

In the midst of the lively tabuik celebrations, there were several incidents that caused chaos. The collapse of a large tabuik at 4pm in Muaro Padang, followed by thousands of spectators. The large Tabuik was thrown into the sea in sunny weather. Somewhat different from the conditions in previous years, as it often rained. Thousands of people stood and waited for the moment at Muaro, some watching from above. In 1901, not four but seven large tabuik were torn down. Even without knowing factors caused the number of big tabuik in 1901 to increase, compared to last year.

In the middle of the procession witnessed by the sea of people, three pickpockets acted. However, unfortunate fate befell him. Before they could secure their loot, they were caught red-handed. They were attacked in the crowd. One pickpocket was arrested, and another was beaten. Another was caught on the beach and beaten by the mob. They were immersed in the water (*Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië*, 1901).

When the seven large tabuik were each torn down, a Dutch boy-who had witnessed a European boy's large tabuik-immediately scrambled into the sea water as the tabuik was washed away. However, the boy did not realise when the sharp bamboo tip of the big tabuik hit his leg very hard. As a result, the boy had to be taken home with severe cuts and bleeding.

b. Participant Broken Bones and Eaten by Sharks

The tabuik *basalisiah* procession often aroused the antipathy of the Westkust Sumatra Residency government. They questioned the tabuik *basalisiah* (tabuik in dispute). This event occurs on the ninth night, when children, youths and elders take part in a procession

at night. The procession, which is carried out by each village, will meet at one point, namely Koto Marapak (Sumatra, 1940).

The tabuik processions between villages soon lead to violent behaviour, in the form of fights. "But at night there are also many old people, who get into fights, because especially at tabuik parties, feuds between villages seem to be settled!" (Courant, 1938). As a result, many of the participants suffered broken bones and injuries due to this conflict.

Perhaps this is the difference between the commemoration of Ashura in the Shi'a country and the tabuik on the West Coast of Sumatra. On the Day of Ashura, the Shi'a wound themselves, by whipping and others until they bleed, as a proof of love for Hussein.

However, fights and conflicts between villages soon end, when the big tabuik has been sunk in the ocean. And, conflict returned when the tabuik commemoration came the following year. On the peak day of 10 Muharram, there is also often a stern warning from the veldpolitie. Especially for the marchers and spectators who scrambled to take part in the tabuik.

An incident that took place on March 12 1938, claimed several lives. When hundreds of spectators were fighting over a large tabuik. Two spectators were dragged away and eaten by a shark. The incident prompted other spectators to swim to shore (Post, 1938).

CONCLUSIONS

Tabuik celebrations in Padang in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were lively. Sunni Muslims joyfully celebrated the shia tradition that culminates on the 10th of Muharram, known as Ashura, the anniversary of Hussein's martyrdom at Karbala.

A crowd of Sunni Muslims in the early 20th century, including followers of Shattariyah, Muhammadiyah, Naqsyabandiyah and PERTI, accompanied the tabuik to Muaro Padang, where it was drowned.

For the people then and now, the attraction of the Tabuik is nothing more than a tradition that they still maintain and preserve without having to emphasize that the celebration is part of worship - which is undoubtedly contrary to the doctrine in Sunni Islam. The celebration, practised on a large scale until the 1970s, proved to be part of a unique icon in the life of Sunni Muslims - who voluntarily celebrated Shiite traditions. After the 1970s, the Tabuik celebration disappeared in Padang but was maintained in Pariaman.

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