

# Indang Tigo Sandiang: A Representation of the Education System of the Surau Packaged in the Form of a Performing Art in Padang Pariaman, West Sumatera, Indonesia

Surherni<sup>1</sup> Andar Indra Sastra<sup>2</sup> Desmawardi<sup>2</sup>

1. Departement of Dance, Faculty of Performing Art, Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Padangpanjang, Indonesia

2. Departement of Karawitan, Faculty of Performing Art, Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Padangpanjang, Indonesia

## Abstract

The goal of this article is to investigate *indang tigo sandiang* as a representation of the education system of the *surau* packaged in the form of a performing art. *Indang* is a musical instrument belonging to the class of membranophones – a type of tambourine which the people of Pariaman call the *rapa'i*. *Tigo sandiang* (three sides) refers to the formulation of the performance which originates from three *indang* genres or associations that are found in the Pariaman community and known as *guguih* (group). These *guguih* are: (1) *Guguih Kulipah* (Khalifah) Husein; (2) *Guguih Kulipah* (Khalifah) Mak Amuik; and (3) *Guguih Kulipah* (Khalifah) Tan Karim. Each of the three *guguih* has its own strengths and advantages in terms of its religious understanding; the three *guguih* are a representation of the education system of the *surau* (a religious center used for worship and religious instruction). In sociological and religious terms these *guguih* are involved in a psychological conflict that has been conditioned; it is impossible for them to be united since they exist within three different conceptions. Philosophically, the ideology in the education system of the *surau* is the foundation of the concept of *indang tigo sandiang* that emerged in the Pariaman community. As an art text – a performance – it consists of three dimensions, namely literature, music, and “dance”. It is representation in the sense of “an act of presenting something through something else or something that exists outside of itself, usually in the form of a sign or a symbol” – in this case through the education system of the *surau*. The education system of the *surau* is characterized by its specialization on the knowledge of Islam and Sufism – *kaji tarekat*. In the context of the performing arts, *indang tigo sandiang* is an arena for different *indang* groups to test the performers’ skills in verbal art. The texts used in *indang tigo sandiang* are filled with satire, analogies, allusions, allegories, metaphors, aphorisms, music, and “dance”.

**Keywords:** *Indang Tigo Sandiang*, representation, education system of the *surau*, performing art, Padang Pariaman

## 1. Introduction

*Indang tigo sandiang* consists of three separate words: *indang*, *tigo*, and *sandiang*. According to Yos Magek Bapayuang, *indang* is a traditional game played by the people of West Sumatera, usually by groups of young men, who sit close together as they sing *pantun* (a form of traditional verse) while twisting and turning their bodies backwards and forwards as they play tambourines (*rapa'i*) (Bapayuang, 2005: 159). Etymologically, the word *indang* means a kind of flat basket or tray used for winnowing (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 1995: 376). Furthermore, the word *indang* appears in a Minangkabau proverb: *baindang batampi tareh, dipilih atah ciek-ciek* (“winnow to remove the husks from the grain; select the grains of rice one by one”). *Ba* (ber)-*indang* is a verb which in the context of this proverb describes the movement of the tray to the front, to the left, and to the right looking for husks from the rice that has been pounded, using a shallow tray (*tampi/nyiru*). *Batampi* (*bertampi*) describes a movement in which the rice is tossed up to discard the bran and chaff that is still mixed with the rice. Therefore, *baindang batampi tareh* means moving the tray to the front and to the sides, left and right, and tossing the pile of rice up in the air to remove the bran and chaff that is still attached to the rice. Asril states that from a philosophical perspective, the meaning of this proverb is the attempt to separate something of value from something worthless or to separate right from wrong (Asril, 1997: 35).

In subsequent developments, *indang* has adopted two further meanings: first, a musical instrument – membranophone – in the form of a one-sided drum known in Pariaman as a *rapa'i* (a kind of small tambourine), which is played in interlocking rhythms and at the same time functions as a property and a medium for dance. Asril states that the art of dance emerges during the singing while the text is realized in the form of poetry, verse, and lyrical prose using a language style of cynicism and sarcasm (Asril, interview 2017).

The concept of literary presentation is known by the people of Pariaman as *kato bayang* (figurative speech). The material of *indang* is essentially questioning and answering between the different *indang* groups which leads to a battle of their skills in various fields of knowledge (Asril, 1997: 35). The second meaning of *indang* is a unique performing arts genre that has grown and developed in the Padang Pariaman community of West Sumatera. As a performing arts genre, *indang* is a fusion of literature, music, and dance. Nurmalena and Sri

Rustiyanti state that there is an associative relationship between the word *indang* and its performance because the word *indang* in the form of a verb (to winnow [rice]) is used to present figures of speech in such a way that each *indang* group is able to give a good performance. On the other hand, from the aspect of movement, the word *indang* describes the movements of the players (*anak indang*) who continuously move their arms to the left and to the right as though winnowing (*me-indang*) rice while seated cross-legged on the floor (Nurmalena & Rustiyanti, 2014: 250-251).

The word *tigo* (three) refers to the number of *indang* genres or associations taking part in an *indang* performance, while the word *sandiang* literally means ‘side’. *Tigo sandiang* (three sides) in terms of the formulation of the performance refers to the three *indang* genres or associations that are found in the Pariaman community, which they call *guguih* (group). Therefore, *indang tigo sandiang* is the formulation of the performance that is made up of three genres or *guguih*, namely *guguih kulipah* Husein, *guguih kulipah* Mak Amuik, and *guguih kulipah* Tan Karim.

The word *kulipah* (*khalifah* – caliph) refers to the caliph to which each association is affiliated, for example the caliph Husein. Thus, although different *indang* groups are found in various villages (*nagari*), as long as they still belong to the same *guguih*, they can function as the host of a performance (*sapangka*). Ediwar explains that an *indang* group from another *nagari* can act as the *sapangka*. Such a group should not be chosen at random but must have a spiritual connection with the *sapangka*, meaning that the groups must belong to the same *guguih*. All *indang* groups that are incorporated in the same *guguih* have a strong emotional bond even though they may be located in different *nagari* that are far away from each other (Ediwar, 1999: 182). In connection with the term *guguih*, Andar Indra Sastra explains that:

“A *guguih* as a kind of bond – or brotherhood – as described above shows that the fraternal bond between each *indang* group is exactly the same as the concept of spiritual genealogy – *ranji* – in the organization of *tarekat* Syatariyah. The spiritual genealogy of a *tarekat* is always connected when the *syekh* (teacher of the *tarekat*) establishes a *surau* or prayer center far from the main center. This kind of spiritual genealogy is extremely important in the study of tasawwuf – the connection with Allah s.w.t. must be through the intermediary of a tasawwuf (*tarekat*) teacher or *syekh*. According to the belief of tasawwuf followers, they must pass through the door of *tawajjuh* through the intermediary of a teacher, and for this reason, the position of a teacher in the teachings of tasawwuf is highly venerated. It is not surprising, therefore, that wherever *tarekat* centres are built, a picture of the teacher (*syekh*) is always put in a place where it can be seen by the members of the *tarekat* (Sastra, 2017: 13).”

Returning to the subject of *guguih*, Ediwar states that the names assigned to the three *guguih* are closely related to the focus of the study of each group: *guguih kulipah* Husein focuses on the prophets and apostles; *guguih kulipah* Mak Amuik discusses the religious leaders who developed Islam; and *guguih kulipah* Tan Karim talks about natural events (Ediwar, 1999: 6). Nevertheless, it can be said that the original activities of *indang* took place in the *surau* in the form of singing, accompanied by the music of the *rapa’i*. The texts presented were praises to God, the 20 characteristics of God, stories of the prophets and apostles, and other lessons about Islam. These activities were led by the teachers who asked questions about the lessons that had been given.

The growth of these groups in every *surau* provided new inspiration for teachers to visit (*batandang*) and form bonds of friendship. Asril states that the bonds between different *surau* groups were developed by holding *indang* competitions. Each *indang* group was responsible for presenting themes about: the 20 characteristics of God, stories about the prophets and apostles, and other lessons about Islam (Asril, interview, 2017). The question and answer sessions between teachers and their students would be displayed in front of different people when they visited another *surau*. Each *indang* group was led by the teacher who acted as the head of the group (*tu indang*). *Batandang* using the art of *indang* was often referred to as *manapa* (going to visit), which has the same meaning as *batandang* in this context.

The goal of *batandang* was essentially to test the religious knowledge of the students in the *surau* that was being represented and show how they had mastered the knowledge they had been given. According to Asril, in this context there was also the hidden intention of testing the ability of the teachers in the field of Islam – their knowledge of *tarekat*. This kind of examination was implicitly questioning the competence of the teacher to teach in a *surau* (Asril, interview, 2017).

In order to deepen a person’s knowledge about Islam, perfection is needed in performance. Christine Dobbin writes that according to followers of tasawwuf – mysticism that grows in Islam – the Islamic teachings that are considered perfect are those in which the teachings of tasawwuf are performed by carrying out *tarekat*. *Tarekat* emerged as a response to the general need to form a closer relationship with God. Followers of *tarekat* are known as Sufis, and they pursue the *tariqah* (the Arabic word for way or path) that has been assigned by a teacher or *syekh* – such as is done by *tarekat* groups in the *surau*. They call the name of God [the 20 characteristics of God] through song, swaying and rocking in time with the music [of the *rapa’i*] (Dobbin, 1992: 142-143). From what Christine Dobbin writes, it can be understood that the music she describes for singing

about the 20 characteristics of God is *indang* (*rapa'i*). At this point in time, it can be said that *indang* still exists inside the *surau*.

The change of *indang* texts from religious topics to worldly topics, according to Asril, was first carried out by an *Indang* Group from Surau Koto Marapak (about 20 km from Tanjung Medan Ulakan) in 1917. The changes that this group made were very daring and implemented much more quickly than the changes made by the group from Surau Tanjung Medan in 1948-49 (Asril, 1997: 42). At that time, *indang* began to enter into the domain of performing arts.

As a performing art, *indang* is a fusion of literature, music, and “dance”. In an open interview, Asril states that the music of an *indang* performance is presented in the form of song, with an interplay of rhythms played by the *rapa'ito* to create interlocking patterns. At certain points, the *rapa'i* also provides accompaniment for the “dance” that is performed while the musicians sing. The literary texts are presented in the form of poetry, verse, and lyrical prose using a language filled with cynicism and sarcasm (Asril, interview, 2017). In this context, the texts of an *indang* performance have begun to undergo changes from religious topics to worldly or profane topics. This separation has altered the nature of *indang* completely from a religious art to one which is profane and filled with cheer and joy, leading it into the world of performing arts. The problems addressed in this article are: (1) *indang* as a representation of the education system of the *surau*; (2) *indang tigo sandiang* packaged in the form of a performing art.

## 2. Research Method

A qualitative method was chosen for this study since it was considered relevant to the focus of the study. The researcher was the primary instrument directly responsible for collecting data on the material object – *indang tigo sandiang* in the Pariaman community. The primary data was collected by means of participant observation, interviews, and documentation. The primary data obtained through these three models of investigation was used as the basis for the analysis in accordance with the focus of the research. In addition, secondary data was also needed to strengthen the argumentation so that the results of the research could reach a level of credibility that could be accounted for.

Participant observation was the second step carried out and involved the observation of a live performance of *indang tigo sandiang* in Nagari Limaru Puruik Pariaman, after the writer had first read a variety of articles and other literature on the subject of *indang* in the Pariaman community. The information collected and the empirical knowledge gained through direct involvement in a performance were used to form the guidelines for interviewing the informants. The data from the interviews with the informants was divided into four sections. First, about *indang* performances in the *surau*, in the open space in front of shops, and in the *laga-laga*. The *laga-laga* is a special place made from lengths of bamboo that are tied together with roots (rope) to create an area of 6 x 8 meters. Second, data related to the emergence of the concept of *indang tigo sandiang*. Third, data about the number of *anak indang* (7 players) with the following roles: 1 (one) person as the *tukangdikia* (*dhikr*); 2 (two) people as the *tukang apik* (*tukang apit*) – on the left and right; 2 (two) *tukang pangg* (*tukangpenggal*); and 2 (two) *tukang kalang* (*tukangpelang*). Fourth, data concerned with the management of *indang tigo sandiang* performances on a large scale (*alek gadang*). The management of a performance is associated with the emergence of the mystification of the symbol or number 7 and its multiples, beginning with 7 (seven) musicians or *anak indang* in each of the groups in the three *guguih indang*; the duration of the performance which lasts 14 nights – equal to 2 x 7; and the involvement of 21 groups in a performance – equal to 3 x 7). Each *guguih* consists of 7 *indang* groups.

In addition to holding interviews, documentation was also carried out using audio-visual and visual media. The purpose of this was to complement the data and strengthen the argumentation that this event really is taking place and is in accordance with its context. The documentation process was also important for helping the writer to recreate an *indang tigo sandiang* performance in accordance with its context for the requirements of the analysis. The data analysis was carried out using an inductive method – according to the phenomenological nature of the research; the researcher constructed an emic thought pattern for providing the explanation. The writer did not depart from an a priori etic theory, because formal theories are unable to explain some of the phenomena – findings, or realities – that exist in an *indang tigo sandiang* performance in the Pariaman community, which is the material object of the study.

## 3. Literature Review

The researcher has already carried out previous studies and discussions about *indang* as a form of Islamic art in Minangkabau. However, the current research and discussion focus on the changes that have occurred in the art of *indang*, from its original use in the *surau* to become a performing art of a profane nature. Previous studies in which the material object is the art of *indang* include Asril's article (1997: 42) which discusses the changes made by the Surau Koto Marapak *Indang* group around 1948-1949. Christine Dobbin (1992) writes about the historical aspect, describing the study of the 20 characteristics in the *surau* through singing accompanied by musical

instruments [the *rapa'i*]. In his thesis, Ediwar (1999: 6) writes about the emergence of three *guguih* or *indang* genres/associations that are oriented towards religious study (*pengajian*) in Pariaman, namely *guguih Kulipah* (Khalifah) Husein which focuses on the prophets and apostles; *guguih kulipah* Mak Amuik which discusses the religious leaders who developed Islam; and *guguih kulipah* Tan Karim which talks about natural events. Meanwhile, Nurmalena (2014: 250-251) discusses *indang* from the perspective of its dance and form of performance. In another article, Andar Indra Sastra (2017: 13) talks about the subject of *guguih* as a form of representation of the system of Sufi organization; the spiritual genealogy – *ranji* – in the *tarekat* Syatariyah organization in Minangkabau.

Piliang (2003: 21), meanwhile, explains representation as “an act of presenting something through something else or something that exists outside of itself”, while Jhon J.O.I. Ihalaw (2004: 27) talks about concept, explaining that a concept is a symbol which is given a certain meaning (conception) for a particular event (object). *Indang tigo sandiang* is a representation of the education system of the *surau* and is conceived in the event of a performance. Fadlil Munawwar Mansur (2017: 316) concentrates on the subject of religious Sufi literature which describes the spiritual experiences of a person and is inspired by the teachings of tasawwuf. Oman Faturahman (2008: 171) explains the two paths of *tarekat*, namely *tanazzaul* (tanzawul), which means descending, and *taraqqi* (taruka), which means ascending; both are part of the knowledge studied in *pengajian tarekat*. The discussions and research presented in this various literature can be used as a reference for the discussion of *indang tigo sandiang* as a representation of the education system of the *surau* packaged in the form of a performing art in the Padang Pariaman District of West Sumatra, Indonesia.

#### 4. Discussion

##### 4.1. *Indang* and the Representation of the Education System of the *Surau*

Yasraf Amir Piliang defines the term representation as “an action which presents or re-presents something through something else outside itself, usually in the form of a sign or a symbol” (Piliang, 2003: 21). An action that represents something can be read in the concept of *indang tigo sandiang* (three-sided *indang*), the concept of *guguih* and the concept of the *surau*. John J.O.I. Ihalaw states that a concept is a symbol which is given a certain meaning (conception) for a particular event (object) (Ihalaw, 2004: 27). *Indang*, *indang tigo sandiang*, *guguih*, and *surau* are all symbols that are assigned a particular meaning for a particular event according to Ihalaw’s explanation.

According to Christine Dobbin, the *surau* was originally a place where boys went to live after coming of age (*akil baligh*). It was a separate building from the family house. Later, when Islam had entered Minangkabau, the function of the *surau* changed to become a place for worship, education, and religious study – *pengajian tarekat*. Nowadays, the understanding of the *surau* is almost the same as the *musyala* or prayer house, the primary function of which is a place of worship (Dobbin, 1992: 142-141). It was originally in the *surau* that *indang* developed as a medium for deepening religious knowledge – about both sharia and *tarekat*.

On the subject of sharia, students in the *surau* usually learned about the pillars of Islam, pillars of faith, 13 rules of prayer, and so on. The pillars of Islam consist of five basic acts, namely: (1) the declaration of faith, or *shahada*; (2) prayer or *salat*; (3) fasting in the month of Ramadhan; (4) charity or *zakat*; (5) the Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca for those who can afford it. According to Desmawardi, the method for learning about sharia usually involved certain rhythms – often known as *kaji baramulo*; *baramulo* is the first word uttered prior to study (Desmawardi, interview, 2017), with the following text.

*Baramulo rukun lah Isilam, yaitu limo lah parakaro;*  
*Paratamu mangucap duo kalimah lah syahadat;*  
*Sarato mangatahui syaraik jo rukunnyo;*  
*Kaduo sumbayang limo lai wakatunyo sahari samalam;*  
*sarato mangatahui syaraik jo rukunnyo;*  
*Katigo puaso di bulan Ramadhan;*  
*Sarato mangatahui syaraik jo rukunnyo;*  
*Kaampekk bazakaikdi ateh sampai jo nisabnyo;*  
*Sarato mangatahui syaraik jo rukunnyo;*  
*Kalimo naik haji di ateh kuaso'*  
*Sarato mangatahui syaraik jo rukunnyo;*

(Begin the pillars of Islam, the five acts;  
First utter twice the declaration of faith;  
and understand the conditions and rules concerned;  
second, pray five times a day;  
and understand the conditions and rules concerned;  
third, fast during the month of Ramadhan;

and understand the conditions and rules concerned;  
fourth, give charity according to the rules of *fnisab*;  
and understand the conditions and rules concerned  
fifth, make a pilgrimage to Mecca;  
and understand the conditions and rules concerned);

The 13 rules of prayer are also a part of sharia law and are as follows: (1) pray with intention; (2) stand properly erect for those who are able; (3) *takbiraturihram* (utter the *takbir*: Allahuakbar; (4) read Al-fatehah; (5) *ruku'*: (6) *i'tidal*' (stand upright after *ruku'*); (7) bow down prostrate so that seven parts of the body touch the ground and repeat twice with *tuma'ninah*; (8) sit between the two prostrations; (9) sit at the final *tasyahut*; (10) read the final *tasyahut*; (11) read the invocation to the prophet (*salawatnabi*); (12) give a greeting twice; and (13) be well-mannered. The 13 rules of prayer are divided into 3 (three) groups: (1) *qalbi* (heart); (2) *qauli* (words or speech); and (3) *fikli* (action). These 13 principles are the basic knowledge for every Muslim to follow when praying – after making the initial declaration of faith.

*Qalbi* refers to the principles of *salat* that involve the heart, namely having intention and being well-mannered. *Qauli* refers to the principles of *salat* that involve speech: (1) *takbiratur ihram*, or reciting Allahuakbar; (2) reading Al-Fatihah; (3) reading the final *tasyahut*; (4) reading the invocation to the prophet; and (5) giving a greeting. *Fikli*, meanwhile, is the principles of *salat* that involve action, namely: (1) standing, for those who are able; (2) *ruku'*; (3) *iktidal* after *ruku'*; (4) prostrating seven parts of the body two times with *tuma'ninah* (sincerity); (5) sitting between the two prostrations and greetings; and (6) sitting at the final *tasyahut* (<https://tuntunanshalat.com/13-rukun-rukun-shalat-yang-wajib-diketahui/4> December 2017, 12.00 pm). In order to remember the lesson about these 13 principles, it was usually sung to a certain rhythm, accompanied by the *rapa'i*, under the guidance of the teacher. Desmawardi explains that the 13 rules of sharia, the texts of which have been altered to become religious literature, are as follows:

*Baramulo rukun lah sumbayang*  
*Yaitu tigo boleh lah parakaro*  
*Paratamu baladiri batua*  
*Nan kaduo lah baniak*  
*Nan katigo takabia takalaeram*  
*Kaampekk mambaco lah patihah*  
*Nan kalimo rukua' nan kaanam i'tidal*  
*Katujuah sujuik nan kalapan duduak di antaro duo sujuik*  
*Nan sambilan duduak jo tamakninah*  
*Sapuluah tahayat yang akhir*  
*Sabaleh salawat akan nabi*  
*Nan duo baleh salam nan paratamu*  
*Tigo balek taratik*

(Begin the prayer  
Of thirteen acts  
First, stand erect  
Second, have intention  
Third, *takbiraturihram* (read the *takbir*: Allahuakbar)  
Fourth, read Al-Fatehah  
Fifth, *ruku'* and sixth *i'tidal*  
Seventh, bow down to the ground and eighth sit between the two prostrations  
Ninth, sit with *tumakninah*  
Tenth, the final *tahayat*  
Eleventh, praise the prophet  
Twelfth, give the first greeting  
Thirteenth, be well-mannered (Desmawardi, interview 2017).

From the text of the 13 principles that has been changed into the form of a song of religious literature – with specific rhythms – it is clear that *indang* became an aesthetical medium that was used to understand knowledge about the Islamic religion through the education system of the *surau*. Fadlil Munawwar Mansur in *Jurnal Humaniora* states that works of religious literature with Sufi patterns usually describe the spiritual and religious experiences of a person with the goal of sharing the experiences to benefit other people. These works of Sufi literature are influenced, inspired, and filled with the spirit of the teachings of tasawwuf. Sufi literature is literature which appears to remind people of God and to follow His commands (Mansur, 2017: 316).

On the subject of *tarekat*, the teacher usually began by teaching about the basic ways of *tarekat*, the 20 characteristics of God, lessons about the body, about extinguishing oneself before death, and so on. In

connection with the way of *tarekat*, Omar Faturahman writes:

“The way of *tarekat* involves two acts: first, *tanazzaul* (*tanzawul*), which means descending, and second, *taraqqi* (*taruka*), which means ascending. Beginning with *tanazzaul*, descending when encountering the characteristics of holiness (*jalal*) and beauty (*jamal*) and saying that Allah will come into being, light will appear from the essence of Allah. The light becomes Muhammad, from Muhammad, from Muhammad emerges the light, and the light becomes Muhammad, from Muhammad emerges the light, and the light become *sa'yansabitah*, from *a'yansabitah* emerges the light, the light becomes fire, the light of the fire becomes passion, from the fire emerges the wind, from the wind emerges the water, from the water emerges the earth (Faturahman, 2008: 171).”

In principle, the way of *tarekat* described by Omar Faturahman above explains how Allah created; through the word *kun* (came into being) emerged the word *nur* (light), which then became Muhammad. From the light of Muhammad came fire, wind, and water. This way of *tarekat* was used as material in the education system of the *surau* in Pariaman, Minangkabau, followed by the 20 characteristics of Allah.

The 20 characteristics of Allah are the 20 characteristics possessed by Allah that must be recognized. These twenty characteristics are: (1) *wujud* (existence); (2) *qidam* (first/original); (3) *baqa* (infinite); (4) *mukhalfatu lihawadis* (different from all the creatures He created); (5) *qiyamuhu binafsihi* (Allah stands alone); (6) *wahdaniyah* (singular/one); (7) *qudrat* (powerful); (8) *iradat* (having intention) (9) *ilmun* (knowing) (10) *hayat* (alive); (11) *sam'un* (hearing); (12) *basar* (seeing); (13) *kalam* (speaking); (14) *qadirun* (exalted) (15) *muridun* (having a will); (16) *'alimun* (all-knowing) (17) *hayyun* (living); (18) *sami'un* (all-hearing); (19) *basyiran* (all-seeing) (20) *mutakalimun* (all-speaking). In order to memorize these characteristics, they are usually sung to a certain rhythm (Adar, 2016: 4).

From the lesson about the twenty characteristics of Allah, it can be seen that there are 7 (seven) characteristics of Allah that are similar to those possessed by humans – referred to as *ma'ani* characteristics. Habibusman Bin Yahya states that the form of the lessons related to tasawwuf is designed to study the twenty characteristics. One of the points that is associated with the method of 7 (seven) is the *ma'ani* characteristics, or the characteristics of God that are also possessed by humans, namely: (1) *sami'un* (listening); (2) *basyirun* (seeing); (3) *qudrat* (powerful); (4) *iradat* (having intention); (5) *'alimun* (knowing); (6) *hayat* (living); and (7) *kalam* (speaking) (Yahya, 1996: 12-22). The comparison of these 7 (seven) characteristics of God with the 7 (seven) characteristics of the human beings He created gives rise to the concept *insanul kamil* (the perfect human being is a person of God – *Al-insanul-illahi*) – which was the central theme of the lessons of *tarekat* – *baindang* (ber-*indang*) – in the *surau* in the Pariaman community in West Sumatera.

The *indang* used in the education system of the *surau* essentially studied religious issues packaged in the form of religious or Sufi literature. Mangun Wijaya (1994) in Fadlil Munawwar Mansur –*Jurnal Humaniora*– writes that Sufi literature refers to works that are a deep expression of the language of the heart, not simply a collection of pages or pieces of paper that discuss religious matters, but works that have been raised to a level of religiosity (Munawwar, 2017: 316). This religious domain often enters into the arena of mystification and philosophy – the truth hidden behind what is written. This can be seen when *indang* – also referred to as the *rapa'i* of Sufi spirituality – becomes a property or musical instrument. Rafli in Ediwar (2016) states that the *rapa'i* is not only a tambourine that is played to accompany singing or songs containing verses from Sufi literature. In the *rapa'i* is a power which unites four important elements in life: wood, animal hide, iron, and air. Human beings cannot separate themselves from these four elements in their lives. Wherever a person happens to be at any time in his life, he will always be connected to these elements (Ediwar, 2016: 32). The word *rapa'i* comes from the name of an expert in tasawwuf by the name of Ahmad Rifa'i.

This mystification is not only connected to the *rapa'i* as a musical instrument; it also appears in the number of *anak indang*, the length of the performance, and the number of groups or participants taking part in a performance of *indang tigo sandiang* in the Pariaman community in West Sumatera. This mystification is related to the phenomenon of the symbol or number 7 (seven). This phenomenon is interesting to observe, particularly in connection with the number of *anak indang* (*indang* players) which is always 7 (seven) people; the performance lasts for 14 nights which is the same as  $2 \times 7$ ; and it involves 21 *indang* groups, equal to  $3 \times 7$ . The phenomenon related to the mystification of the number 7 and its multiples will be discussed in the section below on *indang tigo sandiang* packaged in the form of a performing art.

#### 4.2. *Indang Tigo Sandiang* Packaged in the Form of a Performing Art

Unlike the time when *indang* was still a medium for education in the *surau*, on entering into the domain of performing arts it was no longer a study of the 20 characteristics of God, the 13 principles of prayer, the history of the prophet, and so on. As a performing art, *indang tigo sandiang* is truly an art of “tongue-fu” (kungfu of the tongue); it is a genre of verbal Minangkabau art in which people are taught the art of silat without the use of knives or physical strength. *Indang* texts are filled with satire, analogies, allusions, allegories, metaphors, and aphorisms – with modern themes. As a performing art genre, *indang* is a fusion of literature, music, and “dance”.

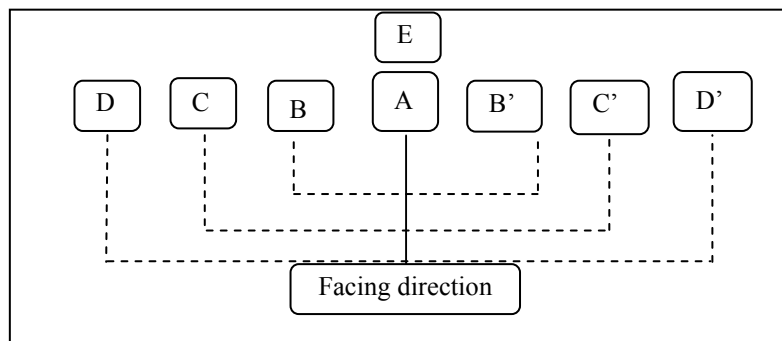
A performance of *indang* is presented in group form, with each group comprising 8 players, all men. Seven of the players are called *anak indang*, the other is known as the *tukang dikia*, and all sit cross-legged in a row. Asril explains that the *anak indang* are all the players who sit cross-legged in a row at the front with their legs touching. They include the *tukang aliah* (*alih*)/*tukang karang*; *tukang apik* (*apit*); *tukang pangga* (*penggal*); and the *tukang palang* (*pelang*) - (Asril, interview 2017). They all function as singers, *rapa'i* players, and “dancers”. In addition, each has a specific role in accordance with their strata as *indang* players, as outlined below.

The *tukang aliah/tukang karang* sits in the middle of all of the *indang* players and his role is: **first**, as the main assistant to the *tukang dikia* in composing the story; **second**, to give a cue to the other *anak indang* when the performance is about to begin; **three**, to begin and end the performance; **fourth**, to determine the rhythmic patterns of the *rapa'i – pola darap* or interlocking patterns; **fifth**, to change songs and determine the body movements. In an open interview with Asril, he explained that:

“...the cues are given by flicking or rapping the *rapa'i*; if the other players have failed to follow a signal properly, the *tukang aliah* will flick the *rapa'i* until his command is understood. For example, if the *anak indang* are not sitting tidily in a straight line, or the *sidak* (rattan that is fitted between the resonator and the membrane to amplify the sound or tune the instrument) is not adjusted properly, the *tukang aliah* gives a signal for the other players to correct the problem. He also gives commands to the *anak indang* about what they need to do during the performance. Therefore, the player who has the role of the *tukang aliah* must be a person who already has a high level of skill in *indang* performance (Asril, interview, November 2017).

The position of the *tukang aliah/tukang karang* is in the middle of the *anak indang*. The *tukang apik* (*apit*) are the two players who sit on either side of (*mengapit*) the *tukang aliah*. One of the *tukang apik* plays variations on the sounds of the *rapa'i* played by the *tukang aliah*, while the other plays variations on the patterns played by the first *tukang apik*. The *tukang pangga* sit to the left and right of the *tukang apik*. Their role is to follow the patterns of the second *tukang apik*. The *tukang palang* sit on the far right and far left of the group. Their patterns match those of the second *tukang apik*. The *tukang dikia* is the main figure in an *indang* performance; he sits directly behind the *tukang aliah* and is the solo singer who presents stories about the prophet or the characteristics of God, accompanied by the *anak indang*. For a clearer picture of the layout in an *indang* performance, see the diagram below.

Diagram 1. Seating position of the *anak indang*

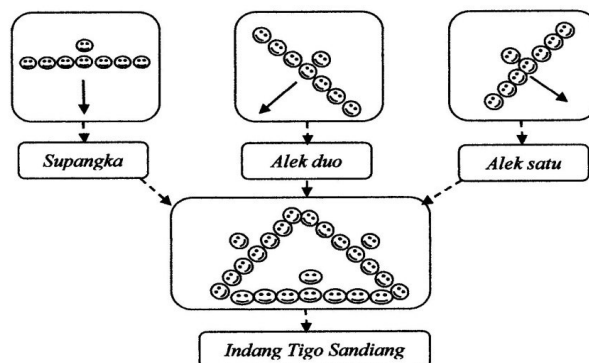


Notes:

- A : *Tukang Aliah*
- B : *Tukang Apik*
- B' : *Tukang Apik/Tukang Darak*
- C – C' : *Tukang Pangga*
- D – D' : *Tukang Kalang*
- E : *Tukang Dikia*

A single performance of *indang* involves three groups, known as the *supangka* (host *indang* group), *alek duo* (second guest), and *alek satu* (first guest). In a performance, the seating position – direction in which the players face – indicates which group they belong to. The formulation of three directions is what is known as *indang tigo sandiang*, as shown in the diagram below.

Diagram 2. Facing direction and seating position of *anak indang* (Asril, perfected by Andar 2017)



*Indang tigo sandiang* packaged in the form of a performing art is performed by groups of young men – 7 *anak indang* and 1 *tukang dikia*, each of whom holds a *rapa'i*. Andar Indra Sastra writes as follows:

“To the followers of *tarekat* Syattariyah in Minangkabau, the paradigm associated with the symbol or number 7 (seven) is part of the religious teachings to which they adhere, which includes the attributes known as *ma'ani*, or the 7 (seven) characteristics of God that are found in human beings. In addition, it is common place for followers of *tarekat* Syattariyah to commemorate – or mystify – death days, such as *manigo hari* (commemorating the third day), *manujuah hari* (commemorating the seventh day), and *maduo kali tujuh* (commemorating the ‘two times seventh’ day – or the 14<sup>th</sup> day), after a person’s death. Other phenomena that are related to the concept of the number 7 (seven) are the use of *aia tujuh munsajik* (water of seven mosques), *kasiak tujuh muaro* (sand from seven estuaries), *banang tujuh ragam* (seven kinds of yarn) and so on, which are used in “the specialized knowledge of shamanism”. Meanwhile, the aesthetics of the performance of *indang* also uses the number 7 (seven) and multiples thereof. The players (*anak indang*) consist of 7 (seven) people, performances last for 14 nights (2 x 7), and are given by 21 *indang* groups, and are described by the people of Pariaman as *tujuh kali naiak indang* (seven times *naiak indang*). In terms of its ontological dimension, this phenomenon is interesting to discuss when connected with the tasawwuf *wujudyyah* teachings institutionalized by *tarekat* Syattariyah in Minangkabau. The basis of the tasawwuf *wujudyyah* teachings is the religious doctrine which tasawwuf leaders call the knowledge of *martabat nan tujuh* (Sastra: 2017: 4).”

The form of *indang tigo sandiang*, which is performed by 7 *anak indang*, is always associated with the views and philosophy of the highly religious Pariaman community. This religiosity is combined with mystical elements that originate from the *pengajian tarekat* – the tasawwuf teachings of *tarekat* Syattariyah.

The performance venue for *indang* has always been well arranged, beginning in the *surau*, then moving to the courtyard outside the *surau* and other outdoor spaces. Nowadays performances are held on a special stage called the *laga-laga*. Asril states that the *laga-laga* is a kind of rectangular-shaped stage or arena without walls; the floor is made from lengths of bamboo that are held together with rope made from plant roots to form an area of 6 x 8 meters (Asril, interview, 2017). In terms of the performance venue, the journey of *indang* can be seen quite clearly in how it has moved from the *surau* to the domain of performing arts and is now performed on a special stage – *laga-laga*.

The texts presented are based on current, interesting themes in a way that is communicative with the audience, including customary issues and social phenomena occurring in the community. Asril explains that the theme of the issues offered by the *indang supangka* (the host group) is presented using a style of language that mocks and teases the other competing groups. After the *indang supangka* has finished, the *alek duo* group continues with the performance, answering and asking questions about the issues presented by the *indang supangka* through satire and imagery. Sometimes this group also asks other questions to the *alek satu* group. When the *alek duo* has finished, the *alek satu* then continues the performance, answering and asking more questions about the issues presented by the *indang supangka* as well as answering the questions posed by the *alek duo* group (Asril, interview 2017). This pattern continues over a period of 14 nights and involves 21 *indang* groups from the whole Pariaman community.

The structure of an *indang* performance is as follows: 1) *pambukaan* (introduction), an appeal or call by the *indang* group performing to the other *indang* groups they are competing against; 2) *alilarao*, a short presentation of praises to Allah, the Prophet Muhammad, and his four companions – Abu Bakar, Umar bin Khatab, Usman bin Affan, and Ali bin Abi Thalib; 3) *sambah* (homage), greetings and apologies to the other *indang* groups and the audience members who are present in the performance arena; 4) *rundiangan* (negotiations), presentation of



the issues to be addressed and the various polemics surrounding them; 5) *panutuik* (closing), the end of the performance. According to Asril, this structure only applies to the very first performance, while in subsequent performances there is no *alilarao* section (Asril, interview, 2017).

In general, the *alek* groups do not prepare the theme or their answers beforehand; all their answers are spontaneously packaged in the performance. Debates become heated as the night grows late, and the audience is not only there to enjoy the performance but also to show its reaction directly, either supporting or displaying dislike for the *indang* group performing, depending on how well the *tukang dikia* and *tukang karang* manage to communicate and interact. This is the formulation and concept of *indang tigo sandiang*.

*Indang tigo sandiang* is not only concerned with the “tongue-fu” and verbal skills of the performers through their expression of literature and music; it also includes their ability to perform energetic “dance” movements. In order to make the *indang* performance more dynamic, the movements have developed to become more energetic as the players become more deeply immersed in the performance. In an *indang* performance, there are 4 (four) patterns of movement: (1) *sambah* (giving homage); (2) *antak siku* (pounding the elbows); (3) *nago baranang* (swimming dragon); and (4) *lenggokindang* (swingindang) – see photos below.



Pic 1. Performance of traditional *indang* in the Pariaman community  
(Photo: documentation Surherni 2017)

The photo above shows a traditional *indang* performance. The religious values are represented in the clothes of the players who wear white shirts (*guntieng manih*) and black rimless caps (*kopiah*) to reflect the Islamic nature of the performance.



Pic 2. *Indang* performance by a group of young men  
(Photo: documentation Surherni 2017)



Pic 3. *Indang* performance by a group of young women  
(Photo: documentation Surherni 2017)

Photo 2 shows an *indang* performance in which the players use different coloured shirts with bright accessories and lace. They also wear head-dresses with various designs and different colour combinations in their accessories. Photo 3 shows how *indang* has undergone a transformation to be performed by a group of women in the form of an *indang* dance.

## 5. Conclusion

From a philosophical point of view, the concept of *indang tigo sandiang* in the Pariaman community represents the education system of the *surau*. The education system of the *surau* not only taught about matters of sharia but also about the knowledge of *tarekat*. This included learning about the 20 characteristics of God, the origins of earth and heaven, the origin of the light of Muhammad, studies of the body, and so on. In historical terms, the *surau* played an important role in developing Islam in Minangkabau and in the Pariaman community. The *surau* is closely associated with the art of *indang*, since almost every *surau* had its own *indang* group.

*Indang* groups that represent the education system of the *surau* were the forerunners for the formation of the concept *indang tigo sandiang* – the Pariaman community uses the term *guguih*. In terms of its philosophical aspect, *indang tigo sandiang* originated from three associations or *guguih*, namely *guguih Kulipah Husein*, *guguih Kulipah Mak Amuik*, and *guguih Kulipah Tan Karim*. In a large scale performance (*alek gadang*) of *indang tigo sandiang*, all three *guguih* contest their skills against each other over a period of 14 nights, with a total of 21 *indang* groups taking part. The performance pattern consists of the *supangka* (host group), *alek satu* (first guest), and *alek duo* (second guest). In its performance, *indang tigo sandiang* presents current themes that are topical and interesting, such as customary issues and social phenomena occurring in the community.

## References

- Asril, (1997). “Seni Pertunjukan Indang Pariaman Minangkabau, Pergeseran dari Relegius ke Profan”. *Jurnal Seni Budaya ASKI Padangpanjang*. Volume 1. Number 1, Year 1, 11 March 1997: 35-48.
- Bapayuang, Yos Magek, (2015). *Kamus Baso Minangkabau*. Jakarta: Mutiara Sumber Ilmu.
- Ediwar. 1999. “Perjalanan Kesenian Indang Dari Surau Ke Seni Pertunjukan Rakyat Minangkabau Di Padang Pariaman, Sumatera Barat”. *Thesis*. Performing Arts Study Program, Humanities Department. Yogyakarta: Postgraduate Program Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- , (2016). Rekonstruksi dan Revitalisasi Kesenian Rapa’i Aceh Pasca Sunami. *Resital Jurnal Seni Pertunjukan*, Volume 17 No. 1-April 2016: 30-45.
- Dobbin, Christine, (1992). *Kebangkitan Islam dalam Ekonomi Petani Yang Sedang Berubah*. Translated by Lillian D. Tedjasudhana. Jakarta: Innis.
- Faturahman, Oman, 2008. *Tarekat Syattariyah Di Minangkabau: Teks dan Konteks*. Jakarta: Prenada Media Group.
- (<https://tuntunanshalat.com/13-rukun-rukun-shalat-yang-wajib-diketahui/4> December 2017, 12.00 pm).
- Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 1995. *Edisi Kedua*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Mansur, Fadlil Munawwar, (2017). Interpretation And Overinterpretation Of Ja’far Ibn Hasan Al-Barzanji’s *Mawlid Al-Barzanji*. *Jurnal Humaniora*. Volume 20 Number 3. October 2017: 316-326.
- Nurmalena & Rustiyanti, 2014. Kesenian Indang: Kontinuitas dan Perubahan. *Panggung: Jurnal Ilmiah Seni & Budaya*. Volume 21 Number 3. September 2014: 250-257.
- Piliang, Yasraf Amir, (2003). *Hipersemiotika: Tafsir Cultural Studies Atas Matinya Makna*. Jalasutra: Yogyakarta.

---

Ihalaw, John J.O.I., (2004). *Membangun Teori. Edisi Ketiga Milenium*. Salatiga: Satya Wacana University Press.  
Yahya, Al-Habib Usman bin Abdullah bin, (1996). *Awaludin Sifat Duapuluh*. Jakarta: S.A. Alaydrus.  
Sastra, Andar Indra, 2017. “Dimensi Tasauf Dan Konsep Estetika Seni Pertunjukan Indang Pariaman Minangkabau”. *Seminar Internasional*. Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Padangpanjang, 15 December 2016. In Ruang Rektorat Lantai III ISI Padangpanjang.

**Informants:**

Asril: important figure in Pariaman community, lecturer at ISI Padangpanjang, performing arts critic and observer, and native of Pariaman. As a native of Pariaman, he has a good understanding of *indang* in the Pariaman community.

Desmawardi: important figure in the Pariaman community, lecturer at ISI Padangpanjang, native of Tanah Datar, follower of *tarekat* Naqsyabandiah with an empirical knowledge of the method used for studying religion with an influence of the arts in the education system of the *surau*.