
**REPRESENTATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ON DAYAK MALI SONG;
*TINGETLAH***

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ABSTRACT

Poetry is one of the many cultural traditions of the Dayak Mali ethnic group, which has been passed down for generations. These poems are conveyed through songs, rhymes, and spells. This paper aims to examine and interpret the meaning of each verse in a song called Tingetlah, written in the Dayak Mali language. The song represents the lives of the Dayak Mali people living in rural areas in the hinterlands of West Kalimantan. Each stanza of the song expresses the challenges faced by small communities that are increasingly marginalized, with traditional ways of life being eroded by modern development. The language used in the lyrics conveys the sorrow and lamentation of these communities, as they struggle to survive within their limited means.

Keyword: *Civil Society, Dayak Mali, Tingetlah Song*

ABSTRAK

Syair merupakan salah satu tradisi budaya dari kelompok etnis Dayak Mali yang telah ada turun-temurun. Sajak demi sajak ini disampaikan melalui lagu, sajak, dan mantra. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menguji dan menafsirkan makna setiap bait dalam lagu yang disebut Tingetlah, yang ditulis dalam bahasa Dayak Mali. Lagu ini mewakili kehidupan orang-orang Dayak Mali yang tinggal di daerah pedesaan di pedalaman Kalimantan Barat. Setiap bait dari lagu tersebut mengungkapkan tantangan yang dihadapi oleh masyarakat kecil yang semakin terpinggirkan, dengan cara hidup tradisional yang terkikis oleh pembangunan modern. Bahasa yang digunakan dalam lirik menyampaikan kesedihan dan keluhan dari masyarakat tersebut, karena mereka berjuang untuk bertahan hidup dalam keterbatasan yang

mereka miliki.

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| INFORMASI ARTIKEL |
| <i>Sejarah Artikel</i> : |
| Diterima : 01 Juni 2023 |
| Disetujui : 01 September 2023 |
| Alamat Email: nikodemusn@umrah.ac.id Correspondence Author: Nikodemus Niko |
| ISSN (PRINT) : 1412 – 1411 ISSN (ONLINE) : 2722-7057 https://doi.org/10.47753/jms.v22i2.49 |

Kata Kunci: Masyarakat Sipil, Dayak
Mali, Lagu *Tingetlah*

INTRODUCTION

The Dayak Mali is a sub-ethnic group of the Dayak people residing in West Kalimantan, specifically along the inland peninsula of the Balai sub-district in the Sanggau district. Known for their rich customs and cultures, the Dayak Mali community has preserved their traditional ways of life, including the use of poetry and song as a means of conveying messages. The local wisdom of the Dayak Mali, like other ethnic groups, includes their mother tongue, which serves as a crucial tool for communication and the transmission of their cultural heritage across generations. Arina, Sutama, and Asi (2016) aptly describe culture as a nurturing mother who cares for her offspring, highlighting its importance in preserving the Dayak Mali's unique identity and way of life.

With the advent of globalization, rural communities have undergone a transformation towards a more modern way of life. This shift is characterized by changes in their social systems, including the adoption of modern farming practices. Although these changes have had a significant impact on rural communities, some still continue to preserve their traditional way of life. This is evident in the Balai sub-district, where the Dayak Mali community continues to uphold their cultural heritage despite the influence of modernization.

From the start of 2015, the economic state of rural communities in West Kalimantan has been in decline, primarily due to the sharp drop in rubber prices. This

negative impact is a direct result of globalization, which has affected the Dayak Mali community since the Orde Baru era. Unfortunately, despite the hopes for economic recovery, the situation has deteriorated further, leaving the public without any means to predict or overcome the limitations in their economic field.

On the contrary, Kariya and Rappleye (2010) revealed in their article titled "The Twisted, Unintended Impact of Globalization on Japanese Education" that rural communities in Japan experienced a positive impact from globalization. They noted that the distinctive features of the Japanese school-to-work-transition paradigm and "Japanese employment customs" mediated the effects of economic globalization during the 1980s, leading to a rapid and significant change in the 1990s. As a result, the economy in Japanese society improved across all levels, including the lower segments of society. The benefits of globalization were felt by individuals from all walks of life in Japan, indicating the overall success of the economic recovery process.

The local community's anguish over the economic situation was palpable, as they struggled to cope with the drastic fall in rubber prices to Rp.4,000 per kilogram, alongside a simultaneous increase in the cost of household goods and groceries (sembako). The resulting imbalance was reflected in the poignant Dayak Mali song called "Tingetlah," which was composed by Marsito (2015). In the current conditions, it takes 2.5 kilograms of rubber to purchase a

kilogram of rice, which inevitably leads to the emergence of new impoverished communities in West Kalimantan. Consequently, many rubber farmers have decided to shift to alternative business ventures (kalbar.prokal.co, 2015) to sustain their livelihoods.

The present paper aims to interpret the significance of each word in the song *Tingetlah*, which reflects the collective experience of the Dayak community, particularly the adverse effects of globalization. However, it is noteworthy that the impact of globalization has not been uniformly felt by all sub-ethnic groups of the Dayak, as is evident in the case of the Dayak Mali community. Despite the significant changes brought about by globalization, the traditional societal structure of the Dayak Mali community remains largely unchanged. Nonetheless, there has been a gradual shift away from traditional values and customs towards more progressive ones, ultimately affecting the local community's culture and way of life.

Traditionally, music played a crucial role in the Dayak community's life. *Sape*, a musical instrument, accompanied mystical ceremonies and rituals such as healing practices and *ngayau* dance performances. *Sape* was also played during entertainment events, ceremonial offerings, and *Talima* performances, which were ancient poems (Putra, Aminulloh, & Dewi, 2015). Meanwhile, the Dayak Mali community still preserves their cultural traditions through some of their traditional rituals. Dayak and other indigenous groups who employ traditional knowledge in land use and cultural evolution have developed strategies

for creating new techniques and ideologies in times of necessity (Crevello, 2004). Nevertheless, the Dayak culture's indigenous knowledge and values continue to play a vital role in all aspects of their lives.

RESEARCH METHODS

In order to analyze and interpret data from a literary work, a qualitative method based on library research was utilized in this study. The data collection technique employed was documentation, which involves gathering data from documents, literature, and media archives, including data from the internet, in written form. The primary data source for this study was the song *Tingetlah*, created by Ayai Marsito. The writing focus was narrowed to concentrate on obtaining relevant information related to the research questions. The research focus of this study was to provide a description of the meaning behind the song *Tingetlah*, which serves as a representation of the Dayak Mali Community as a civil society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Life Philosophy of Dayak's Community as Civil Society

According to Talcott Parsons (as cited in Mustafa, 2008), society plays a crucial role in the formation of human civilization. The society is composed of interdependent institutions, with each institution carrying out specific tasks to maintain and enhance the stability and development of the community. Likewise, the Dayak Mali community is built on strong kinship ties among its members.

The Dayak ethnic group is an indigenous population residing on the island of Borneo. They have practiced a nomadic way of life, which involves hunting and gathering, for thousands of years before adopting a more settled way of living. Despite entering into modern times, the Dayak ethnic communities have continued to uphold their ancestral customs and traditions. Hence, the Dayak ethnic group is often depicted as a community that is closely connected to nature.

The Dayak Mali community's kinship structure is unique, with family relations often present within a village. As a civil society, they have established a system of governance within their communities. The concept of civil society is no longer viewed as a rigid construct but instead should be integrated into the policymaking process of the government. The Dayak community ought to be included in the government's sustainability agenda, which is consistent with the values of Pancasila philosophy, Indonesia's national ideology.

The Dayak community's perspective on life can be summarized in three statements: (1) Adil ka' Talino, meaning fairness among fellow human beings, (2) bacuramin ka' saruga, meaning belief in the afterlife, and (3) basengat ka 'Jubata, which acknowledges the supremacy of God (Seli et al., 2010). Adil ka' Talino emphasizes the importance of treating each other fairly, as human beings are considered the noblest creation of God. Bacuramin ka' saruga reflects the Dayak community's belief in the concept of heaven

and the idea that fairness towards others is a way to attain it.

The Dayak people, known for living in harmony with nature, have accumulated a vast knowledge of the natural environment across several generations, leading to their deep respect for it (Haque, 2010). Their belief in life after death, which they refer to as Subayatn, is reflected in their view of relying on God, expressed as Basengat ka 'Jubata. This worldview entails that the human's fate, whether alive or dead, rests solely in the hands of God, as the Dayak people believe that Jubata has predetermined the course of human life.

The philosophy of life of the Dayak Mali community can be expressed through the following statement: "Betabe'k ka 'Jubata, betabe'k ka' mensia, betabe'k ka' buah nalang'k," which translates to glorifying God Almighty, showing respect for fellow humans, and respecting the universe. This statement highlights the importance of expressing gratitude within the Dayak Mali community, as they recognize the interconnectedness of all aspects of life, including spiritual, social, and environmental factors (Niko, 2017).

To show reverence for God Almighty as the creator of the universe and its contents, the Dayak Mali community believes in "Betabe' ka' Jubata." This signifies that God is the ultimate authority of both human beings and the universe. "Betabe'k ka' mensia" is also important, which means respecting and showing mutual respect to fellow human beings regardless of their

ethnicity, religion, or any other distinguishing factor. Therefore, leaders play an important role in maintaining social equity. According to Rais (2012), the perception of the community towards a leader is crucial in managing social harmony, as observed in East Kalimantan.

In the Dayak Mali community's philosophy of life, *Betabe'k ka' buah nalang'k* represents the respect for nature as a creation of God. As such, the Dayak Mali people have always held a deep regard for and worked to preserve the natural environment in which they live. Historically, the Dayak community resided in the Kalimantan region, where their primary livelihood was dryland farming, as noted by Kifli (2007).

The Dayak tribe has been residing in Borneo for several millennia and have implemented systems to manage natural resources and their ecosystem in a sustainable manner. One of the practices they follow is shifting cultivation, also known as slash-and-burn or swidden agriculture. This practice is utilized to cultivate gogo rice, also known as dry land rice, and establish mosaic agroforestry lands with varying ages to manage biodiversity effectively. (Setyawan, 2010)

According to JA's (2015) paper on Religion and Social Culture of The People of West Kalimantan's Playground Island, various social aspects of culture are prevalent on the island, including gotong royong or shared community work. This practice indicates that cooperation is still a significant cultural value in the lives of people in West

Kalimantan, including the Dayak ethnic community.

The Dayak Mali community considers *noreh* (farming) an integral part of their culture, emphasizing continuity and sustainability. They still practice traditional farming techniques that involve shifting fields. The community works together using the *Pengiri* culture (mutual cooperation) when cultivating their fields. Additionally, *noreh* is also performed in rubber plantations, and revenue sharing is implemented among families who do not own a rubber plantation. This approach is grounded in the philosophy of dependence on nature, recognizing that without natural resources, the community's existence will be compromised.

According to Wiati and Angi (2014), the farming system of the Dayak Kenyah *Oma' Longh* community is based on the practices of their ancestors, and the selection of farming locations is determined by the fertility of the forest soil. This system is similar to the cultural practices of the Dayak Mali community, where the selection of farming locations is also based on their local knowledge and wisdom.

Semantic Analysis of *Tingetlah* Song

Ayai Marsito, an art activist from the Balai sub-district, composed the *Tingetlah* song which portrays the traditional way of life and cultural values still upheld by the Dayak Mali community. The song's message also emphasizes the importance of not overlooking rural communities, particularly the Dayak Mali people, and the need for

policymakers at both local and national levels to pay attention to their needs.

In an expression of Dayak cultural elements, Susi's singing beautifully captures the essence of Kondan and Jonggan, which are rare sounds in modern times. Traditionally, these elements were frequently paired with traditional wedding ceremonies. The *Tingetlah* song carries multiple implicit messages in every line of its lyrics. As highlighted in the background, the song presents a critique of the government's inaccessibility to those living in rural areas.

*Saban ari, oh saban ari, Angket nyanak ojo
kesiang, Kereja kanak ari ari ka' kampong
Neng dah pasti tentu kume' ngan motong*

The opening lines of the song *Tingetlah* by Ayai Marsito highlights the daily routine of the Dayak Mali community residing in rural areas. The composer emphasizes their work ethic, as they wake up early in the morning to tap rubber from the garden, also known as "motong'k." This signifies the cultural values instilled in the community that values hard work and productivity, which is reflected in their daily routine.

The Dayak Mali community's livelihoods are closely tied to nature. Women in the community wake up earlier than the rooster's crow to collect water from the river, prepare meals for their families, and then venture into the forests and fields to work. They tap rubber trees and collect wooden branches to bring home for income. By noon, they return home to prepare lunch and tend to household chores. In the afternoon, they work in the fields with their neighbors, practicing the *pengiri* system. They return home by 5

pm to prepare dinner for their families. This routine is repeated daily. Riwut (2011) emphasizes that both men and women in the Dayak community are taught from an early age to prioritize their natural surroundings in their everyday lives.

In addition, the Dayak Mali community also engages in farming activities. The phrase "kereja kanak ari ari ka' kampong, neng dah pasti tentu kume' ngan motong" in the lyrics intends to convey that working in the fields and gardens is a daily routine for the community, although not all members may be engaged in it. While some Dayak Mali people may work in offices or civil services, tapping rubber trees (*kume' ngan motong*) is undoubtedly a job performed by the Dayak Mali community, in addition to other activities.

*Abis ari, beganti ari, Nganilah jaman oh
makin susah, Raga gatah neng ya' tengarap,
Makin ari oh ngani makin murah*

The aforementioned lyrics aim to convey that despite the ongoing process of modernization, the way of life of the Dayak Mali people has remained largely unchanged. While the economic changes brought by modernization have benefited many, the Dayak Mali community's economy has been adversely affected by the declining value of rubber. Since tapping rubber is their primary source of income, the farmers in the Dayak Mali community are engaged in dual agricultural activities. This implies that they work not only in the rice fields but also in rubber plantations.

Like the Dayak Ngaju community in Middle Kalimantan Province, the Dayak Mali people also utilize plants for various purposes

such as food, medicine, cosmetics, and construction materials (Setyowati, Riswan & Susiarti, 2005). The dualism of their way of life, as rice and rubber farmers, has been present since the time of their ancestors and is a representation of earlier civilizations. The cultural traditions, customs, and systems of the Dayak Mali society are deeply rooted in the ways of their predecessors. The song's lyrics aim to convey to the public that the price of rubber, which is a crucial source of livelihood and income for the Dayak Mali community, is continuously decreasing.

The Dayak Mali community's livelihood is heavily dependent on the price of rubber, which unfortunately is declining. This economic disparity between their income and the prices of goods on the market is worsening, leading to poverty in traditional communities. Traditionally, poverty has been viewed as a binary characteristic, where individuals or households are classified as poor or non-poor based on a particular welfare indicator and a predetermined standard. Thus, analyzing poverty requires a comprehensive assessment at two different levels, as emphasized by Wardhana (2010).

Tingetlah, oh tingetlah, Perudip kanak, neng ka kampong, Pengaik kanak teng tanak turun't, Aye sebanding ngan raga laba, Senga nyek ari nganos kereja, ate bingung

The lyrics of the song aim to showcase the way of life of the Dayak Mali community residing in the remote hinterlands. The creator intends to evoke the essence of how the community sustains itself through the economic exploitation of forests and nature. Typically, the community engages in traditional market trade within the confines of their locality. They firmly believe that forests and nature provide them with the

means to survive. This way of life is consistent with the ancestral Dayak community's concept of subsistence through hunting and gathering.

The rural society in the Balai sub-district is primarily facing poverty, low levels of well-being, backwardness, and neglect from both central and local governments. The issue of poverty in this region is not simply due to a cultural inclination towards idleness, but also reflects structural poverty, where the structures and systems are still unfair in terms of economic development, infrastructure, and human resource development for the community.

Dayak Mali women are living in poverty, which restricts their access to education. Niko (2015) argued that in Manang village, Dayak Mali women are illiterate and have limited opportunities for income-generating activities. They are forced to focus on household chores and farming to survive due to poverty. However, income generated from these activities is not enough to meet their daily needs, including basic food, goods, and other necessities. The lyrics of this song aim to encourage the public not to give up and to work hard despite the challenges. The work ethic of the Dayak Mali community is highlighted as a positive example, as any break in work could have negative consequences for the family's well-being.

Tingetlah oh tingetlah, Perudip kanak, neng ka kampong, Kanak Cuma bisa bearap Oh ka manak manak neng bijak, Tolong temeker naseb kanak, neng ka kampong

The final lyrics of this song carry a significant message to policymakers and government officials. In addition to

portraying the overall life of the Dayak Mali community, the songwriter is also conveying the community's expectations and hopes towards national and regional leaders. The rural community is hoping for leaders who are wise, just, and capable of developing the lives of the Dayak Mali people living in the inland villages.

The fundamental principle of national development is the well-being of its citizens, as articulated in the Republic of Indonesia's Social Welfare Law No. 11 of 2009, which defines social welfare as the state of meeting the material, spiritual, and social needs of individuals so that they can live with dignity and develop themselves to fulfill their social responsibilities.

In practice, the Dayak Mali community in certain areas of the Balai sub-district still face poverty despite the presence of natural resources. Their economic conditions are still fragile, and structural factors such as an unfair and inaccessible system can lead to vulnerability among individuals or groups (Suharto, 2009). James Midgley (in Sasono, 1987) defines social welfare as having three main requirements: effective management of social problems, meeting the needs of individuals, and providing maximum social opportunities.

In the current situation, there seems to be a lack of balance between development and welfare, with certain industries like oil and mining companies operating without fully restoring the economic life of the local community. This has resulted in the exploitation of natural resources and damage to the social and natural environment, which is contrary to Johan Galtung's definition of development as an attempt to fulfill basic

human needs without causing harm to the environment (Triyono, 2007). However, the real essence of development may not be perceived equally and fairly by all members of the community.

CONCLUSION

The Dayak Mali community continues to rely on natural resources for their livelihood. This philosophy remains an essential lifeline and cultural element of the Dayak Mali community. The concept of local wisdom is deeply ingrained in the community and is expressed through various mythologies that have become a distinct cultural feature of the local population. As a result, the Dayak Mali ethnic group, along with its sub-ethnic groups, have developed a unique identity.

In order for local cultures to survive, it is important that the younger generation is highly conscious of sustainability. The act of criticizing the government through a song is a means of survival for local communities that are struggling. This type of advocacy should be continued as a theoretical and political action to provide critical voices and appreciation for local cultures. The lyrics of *Tingetlah* serve as a concrete step in protesting the oppression of marginalized and impoverished communities. This statement demands that the central and local governments are aware of recalling the values of the nation's philosophy of "social justice for all the people of Indonesia."

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