
Oral Traditions in Dayak Ma'anyan Rituals: An Anthropological Study

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ABSTRACT

The Dayak people have a long history of relying on oral traditions to pass on their knowledge, beliefs and customs from one generation to the next. The aim of this research is to determine and inform the form and function of the Dayak Ma'anyan oral tradition, so that this tradition can be used as a reference for the Dayak community in Central Kalimantan. This research uses a descriptive qualitative methodology that describes the uniqueness of the oral traditions of the Dayak Ma'anyan tribe by looking at form and function as an analytical tool. The findings of this research show that in the oral tradition of the Dayak Ma'anyan tribe's medical practices, basically in curing or dealing with a particular disease, *tabit* or *lasang* is generally treated, not only the biological aspects of the patient, but also the socio-cultural and spiritual aspects. Likewise, the oral tradition in the singing of *Tinga Janyawai* and *Laisomena*; *Kuriding* music as a traditional musical instrument typical of the *Bakumpai* Dayak tribe of Kalimantan and Dayak Ma'nyaan dances such as the *dadas* dance and other dances. Meanwhile, rituals in Maanyan Dayak society are associated with magical acts and the cult of ancestors as religious acts.

Keywords: Implementation, Oral Tradition, Dayak Ma'anyan Ritual, and Anthropological Studies

I. Introduction

Oral traditions play a vital role in preserving the cultural heritage and identity of indigenous communities around the world. One such community that has rich oral traditions is the Dayak Ma'anyan people in Barito, central Kalimantan (Himmi et al., 2014). These oral traditions are deeply intertwined with their rituals, particularly in the context of their traditional healing practices. The Dayak Ma'anyan people have a long history of relying on oral traditions to pass down their knowledge, beliefs, and customs from one generation to the next.

The Kaharingan tribe, in its Hindu belief as one of the spread tribes in Indonesia, has in the past developed a traditional system of health care or medicine that is popularly called village medicine and its medical practitioners are

called tabit or khirit, (*dukun*). Until now, despite the rapid advancement of medical science and technology, the role and existence of village medicine as an alternative resource is still functional in tribal societies. The impact of progress in all areas, especially in the field of health, has raised the problem of conversion of medicine in some of the people of Dayak Kalimantan Central. In the past, almost all kinds of diseases relied on traditional medicine or village medicine through the services of tabit or bakery, because generally there are no magicians let alone doctors in the area. Until now, the benefits of traditional medicine can still be felt by the community, because the tribal community has a belief that the caterpillar, and the forest are still thought to be able to build a connection with the spirit world so that the community is avoided from a disease. (tim penulis, 2006: 22). This condition occurs according to various groups because this village medicine besides being considered still socially functional and cheaper, also quite effective in curing various diseases or groups of diseases. In the tribe of the deceased, in the treatment of a disease suffered, its implementation begins with the rituals of treatment carried out in the home of the sick or can also be performed in the place of the sanctuary or the forest (healing/healing) (Sukiada Kadek, 2015).

The objective of this anthropological study conducted in 1984 was to document and understand the oral traditions within the Dayak Ma'anyan rituals. The study aimed to shed light on the significance of these oral traditions in maintaining their cultural practices and beliefs amidst external influences such as deforestation and the spread of aggressive religion. The research project documented various aspects of the Dayak Ma'anyan culture, including daily life in households, clan dynamics, and the cult of the dead. One of the key findings of the study was the central role of oral traditions in Dayak Ma'anyan rituals.

These rituals encompassed various aspects of the Dayak Ma'anyan people's lives, including their spiritual beliefs, social interactions, and healing practices. The Dayak Ma'anyan people believe that their ancestors, spirits, and the natural world have a profound impact on their well-being and livelihood. To maintain harmony and balance, they perform rituals that include oral recitations of myths, legends, and ancestral stories. These oral narratives serve as a means of connecting with their past, reinforcing their cultural identity, and transmitting important

knowledge to future generations. Oral traditions also play a crucial role in the Dayak Ma'anyan healing practices, known as mobolong. Mobolong is considered the most significant cultural identity of the Dayak Ma'anyan people, setting them apart from outsiders. Through structured interviews with traditional healers, known as Tau valia, the study gathered valuable information about the indigenous knowledge of herbal treatment in medicinal and healing practices (Himmi et al., 2014).

Many indigenous communities, including the Dayak Ma'anyan people, rely on oral traditions to pass down their medicinal knowledge. These traditions include the local names of medicinal plants, their uses, and methods of preparation. The study found that the Dayak Ma'anyan people have a deep understanding of the medicinal properties of various plant species. This knowledge is considered invaluable in their healing practices and is a testament to the wisdom of their ancestors. The significance of oral traditions in the Dayak Ma'anyan rituals extends beyond cultural preservation. It also serves as a form of resistance against external influences that threaten their cultural practices and beliefs. Deforestation and the advance of aggressive religion have been major factors contributing to the disintegration of Dayak culture.

The discovery of oil slicks and continuous deforestation, as mentioned in one of the sources, have had a detrimental impact on the cultural practices of Dayak Ma'anyan people. The rituals and oral traditions of the Dayak Ma'anyan people are not only a means of preserving their cultural heritage but also a form of resistance. The rituals and oral traditions of the Dayak Ma'anyan people are not only a means of preserving their cultural heritage but also a form of resistance against the encroachment of modernization and globalization.

The Dayak Ma'anyan people view their oral traditions as a source of strength and resilience in the face of change, helping them to navigate the challenges of the modern world while holding on to their unique identity. In the rituals of the Dayak Ma'anyan people, oral traditions play a vital role in preserving their cultural heritage and transmitting important knowledge to future generations. These oral traditions serve as a repository of wisdom, encompassing not only healing practices but also the values, beliefs, and history of the Dayak Ma'anyan people.

Through story telling, speech, and song, the Dayak Ma'anyan people pass on their ancestral knowledge of medicinal plants and healing practices. This form of transmission is not only a way to share practical knowledge but also to maintain a deep connection with their ancestors and the natural world. By orally recounting their traditions, the Dayak Ma'anyan people are able to maintain a living link with their history and ancestry. Through these oral traditions, they can ensure that their knowledge of medicinal plants and their uses is passed down to future generations. The importance of oral traditions in the Dayak Ma'anyan rituals cannot be overstated (Asmawati et al., 2018).

II. Discussion

2.1 Dayak Ma'anyan Traditional Healing Practices

In Dayak tribal communities, both those living in rural and urban areas, the belief in health problems caused by a combination of naturalistic and personalistic factors still seems to be very dominant. The Dayak people's continued strong belief in the etiology of health problems in a combination of naturalistic and personalistic powers is a significant motivating factor for the use of traditional medicine as the first and foremost alternative, besides using hospital treatment. For the Dayak people, because illness is seen not only as an individual biological symptom, but viewed as holistically related to nature, humans and God, every health effort carried out does not only use drugs as a means of treatment, but also uses certain rituals, studies or mantras contained in the Sangiang language as part of from that process. Thus, curing or overcoming a particular disease is generally handled by *tabit* or *lasang*, not only the biological aspect of the patient, but also the socio-cultural and spiritual aspects (Nila Riwut, 2003: 325). What makes it interesting to use as study material is that when the government campaigns on public health issues, both in the field of modern health facilities and infrastructure, the Dayak tribe community continues to exist and maintain its traditional medical system (Sukiada Kadek, 2015).

The development of science and technology cannot replace the meaning of traditional medicine. Some people choose traditional medicine which has fewer side effects, which is also related to public beliefs. The Dayak people in North

Barito, namely in Muara Teweh, still use the badewah ritual. Badewah is a traditional healing process by praying to God for health. Badewah is performed to treat irrational illnesses and diseases that will not heal. The Dayak community in Muara Teweh chooses badewah as an alternative treatment solution and is interpreted as a multi-functional and different card by patients. The meaning of choosing traditional medicine is reflected in their goals and expectations. The Dayak tribe believes that if they suffer from illness, before or after going to the doctor or hospital, they also seek alternative treatment such as village medicines and traditional healers (Asmawati et al., 2018). The importance of recognizing and preserving oral traditions in Dayak Ma'anyan rituals as an important aspect of Dayak. As is the case with the use of mantras for various life needs, including self-protection, antidote to poison, healing sick people, catching fish, farming, or for other life needs. The mantra used represents the beliefs and socio-cultural aspects of the Dayak Maanyan community. These beliefs include the following. First, apply oil. Topical oil is believed to have hot properties and can be used to ward off evil spirits; Second, black cloth is believed to protect oneself from the eyes of the jinn; third, needles are believed to protect oneself from pain; fourth, machetes can be used as an antidote to poison; fifth, incense can be used as a medium to invite spirits. Apart from that, from the existing mantras it also appears that the Ma'anyan people believe there are supernatural beings who guard the lake, guard the river, guard the forest or something else. Meanwhile, they believe that human body parts symbolize fate or certain traits. The Dayak Maanyan community believes that purifying the tips of the fingers, sanctifying the soles of the feet, and purifying the ankles using mantras can bring good luck; purifying the knees can prolong life; purifying the throat can bring fame; and cleaning eyelashes can form honest behavior (Rusma Noortyani, 2017).

Dayak Ma'anyan culture (mindset, behavior patterns, and lifestyle) is reflected in the language used and the proverbs that appear in acts of communication. Proverbs have the power/power to educate, move the soul, shape attitudes, character and human character, to obtain what is revealed and radiated within oneself, and have the power as social control. The data for this study are utterances in Dayak contained in the texts of the Ma'anyan Dayak proverbs. The

next analysis is the classification of data based on the form of structural aspects based on its constituent elements, the functional relationships between its constituent elements. Analysis of the proverbs in the Maanyan Dayak language contains advice, satire, praise, and diplomatic language which is often used in traditional ceremonies. The proverbs of the Dayak Ma'anyan in this study reveal many things about the behavior of the people. Among these are the behavior of the Dayak people towards the universe, towards their fellow human beings, and the attitudes and personalities of the people. (Basori et al., 2023).

2.2 Dayak Ma'nyaan Songs, Music and Dances

2.2.1 Tinga Janyawai and Laisomena Singing

The existence of folk singing in the Dayak Maanyan community is inseparable from its attachment to the implementation of customary ceremonies. In addition to being a means of entertainment, this song can also be used as a means to convey a moral message and also tell the history of their ancestors in the past. The use of these two songs is known to have differences because the song Tinga Janyawai is usually sung in various customary ceremonies and the ordinary people sing it as a means of entertainment. While the song Laisomena is a song sung by a balian dadas when performing a healing ritual. Even so, these two songs seem to have similarities, namely telling the story of the separation of Patih and Uria and their family members to their desired territory because the kingdom of Nansarunai has fallen into the hands of the enemy, known as the event of Nansarunai usak Java. In addition to the parting, Dayak Maanyan ancestors also parted ways with Dayak Maanyan relatives from Tane Punei Lului in the group there was Laisomena, who married Prince Engko, the fourth child of King Nansarunai. In addition, in this customary song contains values and moral teachings to always shoulder to shoulder helping fellow Maanyan people in accordance with the ability and position in society. The presence of these two songs in the Dayak Maanyan community, of course, has a function. In addition to serving as entertainment, this song can also be used as a means in inheriting the noble values of the Dayak Maanyan community. This inheritance is of course necessary to be able to be the knowledge of the younger generation, both cultural,

moral, and historical knowledge. In addition, by introducing this song, it is hoped that the younger generation can know the meaning of the vocabulary used in the lyrics of the song so as to enrich the treasures of regional language knowledge (Diman, 2020).

2.2.2 Kurinding Music

Kuriding is a traditional musical instrument typical of the Bakumpai Dayak tribe of Kalimantan. The origin of this musical instrument was played to ward off wild animals. This function is proven based on a story about Datu tiger who swallowed a kuriding and then the kuriding broke in his mouth so he swallowed it and Datu tiger died, so that the offspring of tigers or other animals are afraid to hear Kuriding's voice, let alone approach it. So if a baby is sleeping in a swing, a Kuriding is placed on top of it so that wild animals don't dare approach it. The Bakumpai tribe is one of the Dayak Marabahan tribes, Barito Kuala Regency, South Kalimantan. Ulu Benteng Village is located on the coast of the Barito River. 1) The musical composition of Kuriding consists of three forms which form a single unit, namely sieve, artisan, and sabulu tinjau. In between the compositions there are songs in the form of rhymes. Kuriding music is played as an ensemble. 2) The function of Kuriding music was originally played to ward off wild animals, but apart from that, kuriding also has a function in the community of its owners both individually and socially, namely as an emotional expression, aesthetic pleasure, a means of entertainment, a support for social integration, and an accompaniment to dance. (Maryanto et al., 2014).

2.2.3 Dadas Dance

The social life in community are bound by rules, and norms that as the regulation life together, kind rules that source of religion study that growth up and develop in community because it is agreement together especially tradition low and culture. The kind of life and grade, the members of a religious community Hindu Kaharingan the ethnic group of Dayak Lawangan in be married long for a child as the next generation and as the implementation of ritual for their forfather. Based on the belief of the members of a religious community of Hindu Kaharingan

the ethnic group of Dayak Lawangan the new birth is not get to contaminated from out side of the world and he or she needs to cleance by ritual Balian Palas Bidan. So He or She cleance birth and spiritual. The furthermore the data are collected throw observation, interview, and documentation get to wed the how analysis technic, by the manner of data mereduction, serve,and conclusion. The result of this research about comprehension of shape, function, and meaning of Balian Palas Bidan that be performance with the sacral dance and the sound of gamelan, and cleansing the mean and infrastructure of ritual. The function of it is clean or cleansing the baby or child, mother, and midwife so free from pali pulan/cuntaka of the birth effect. They have function to maintain cleaniliness the harmony of connection of the human with the God, the human with the human, The human with environment. So the mother of the baby and midwife always in healthy and spiritual.(Edung, 2019).

2.3 Dayak Manyan Rituals

Myth and ritual are understood as two things that cannot be separated from one another. The relationship between the two can be transformed in the form of positional relations which show a network of relations between figures and events, domains and characters in a model. Given the importance of myths and rituals in forming the structure of the mind of the Ma'anyan Dayak tribe, it is interesting to present an analysis with regard to syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations in the Ma'anyan Dayak traditional marriage ceremony. The purpose of this study was to gain knowledge about myths, the meaning of myths, and their relation to rituals performed by the Maanyan Paju Ten Dayak community. The data collection technique was carried out by hermeneutic reading. Data analysis was carried out by structural analysis, semiotic analysis and content analysis guided by the Levi-Struss structural approach strategy. The results of the analysis of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations show that myth in naliwakas is a Ma'anyan human dialectic with social reality that contains the framework of a religious system which in the past or present has been or is being applied as religious truth. The rituals that are performed basically represent the arrangement of symbols that are objectified in myths. On the other hand, ceremonies in the Maanyan Dayak community are associated with magical acts and the cult of the ancestors as religious acts. Rituals

that reveal historical and social relations by referring to mystical notions within the framework of constitutive rituals, in this way the traditional wedding ceremony becomes distinctive. Furthermore, the meaning associated with this relationship is nothing but purification and protection which is called factive ritual. (Isti Prihatini at all, (2023).

The tradition of ngokoi okan perentehu is carried out by the Lawangan Dayak community. According to Durasid (1990: 47) states that the Barito group is divided into three subgroups, namely West Barito, which consists of the Kahayan and Dohoi languages, East Barito which consists of the Maanyan language and the Lawangan-Dusun Deyah subgroup (which is separated into the Lawangan and Dusun Deyah languages), and Barito-Mahakam, here represented by the Tunjung language. Lawangan language speakers live in the East Barito administrative district and its surroundings. This study focuses on the Dayak sub-tribe studied, namely the Lawangan Dayak ethnic community who live in Bantai Karau Village, Dusun Tengah District, East Barito Regency, Central Kalimantan who have the Kaharingan belief or are widely known in Central Kalimantan as Kaharingan Hindus. The ngokoi okan perentuhu tradition is one of the ritual activities carried out at the beginning of the first rice harvest. This activity has long been carried out by farmers who live in Bantai Karau Village because it is believed to have religious values and is a form of expression of gratitude to the universe in the hope that the next harvest will produce abundant results and not experience crop failure. The practice of the ngokoi okan perentehu tradition contains values, norms and beliefs that function as guidelines that provide orientation to the life of the Lawangan Dayak community, namely: first, the ngokoi okan perentuhu tradition is one of the ritual activities carried out at the beginning of every first rice harvest. This activity has long been carried out by farmers who live in Bantai Karau Village as a form of expression of gratitude and hope to the universe and ancestors. Respect for Jo'us Tuha Allah Tala, ancestors and the universe means reminding humans of their existence and that they must always behave according to guidance, treat the universe wisely, maintain harmonious relationships with each other and their ancestors. Second, the tradition of ngokoi okan perentuhu has been passed down

from generation to generation so it is a cultural construction related to the beliefs they adhere to and functions to this day. (L. Sigai, 2018).

V. Conclusion

The Dayak people have a long history of relying on oral traditions to pass on their knowledge, beliefs and customs from one generation to the next. First, in the Medical Practice of the Manyan Dayak Tribe, basically in curing or dealing with a particular disease generally what is treated by tabit or lasang, is not only the biological aspect of the patient, but also the socio-cultural and spiritual aspects. Second, Chanting, there are Tinga Janyawai and Laisomena Chanting; Music, there is Kuriding music as a traditional musical instrument typical of the Bakumpai Dayak tribe of Kalimantan and Dayak Ma'nyaan dances such as the dadas dance and other dances. Meanwhile, rituals in Maanyan Dayak society are associated with magical acts and the cult of ancestors as religious acts.

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