AGUKNG MAGICALITY IN BALALA' RITUAL:
DAYAK KANAYATN CIVIC CULTURE AS A FORM OF PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Christanto Syam1*, Yudhistira Oscar Olendo2, Zakarias Aria Widyatama Putra3
1,2,3Universitas Tanjungpura, Pontianak, Indonesia
*christanto.syam@fkip.untan.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to know the agukng magicity in Balala’ ritual of Dayak Kanayatnese. Agukng in Balala’ ritual have rhythm elements, mean and value, and could be seen in symbolic mean. The method for research agukng in Balala’ ritual was qualitative form. The source of data collection were agukng sound and the attitude of Balala’ ritual practicioner and submitted with observation technique, interviews, and documentary study. The research findings showed that Balala’ ritual have rhythm elements, which were beat and accent that summarized in one rhythm pattern. From symbolic mean, agukng showed bravery symbol, hope, and happiness for the success of Balala’ ritual. Agukng in Balala’ ritual or lockdown was implemented to resist or prevent pandemic virus COVID19 or known as Corona virus that functioned as connecting communication media between people and Awa Pama or ancestor. With this, agukng in the balala’ ritual implicitly conveys an attitude that is worth togetherness in the Dayak Kanayatn community so that they consciously and jointly build a better civilization.

Keywords: Agukng, Balala’ Ritual, Covid-19 Virus, Dayak Kanayatn
INTRODUCTION

Agukng is a musical instrument belonging to the Dayak Kanayatn community similar to gong played by beating or beating (Olendo, 2020, p. 174). Agukng or other terms call it gong is included in the type of idiophone instruments (Sunarto & Renaldus Afoan Elu, 2018, p. 123). The people of Dayak Kanayatn regarded Agukng as a symbol of honour for its owners, so that not everyone could possess it, except the superior or the noble; the representation of the symbol is drawn in the size of the grand. (Olendo et al., 2022, p. 506). Gong is played only by certain people, in other words not only people can play gong, as a tool used in accompanying certain rituals, like the rituals of the Balala.’ When the majesty is overthrown by the ignorance of people when accompanied by the ritual of Balala’, then there will be a certain effect like the failure to attain the magical aspects contained in the magic. The person who is given special authority to take over is Panabah Agukng.

It is not forbidden to do so in any place, nor is it permitted to do it only when accompanying the Balala ritual or as a sign of an accident to a particular family in a village, also used to accompany the customary ceremony of death. When a high priest is banned, it is considered a violation of local customs Olendo et al. (2014, p. 2) because the highest priest is considered to be a marker of the continuation of the ritual. The functioning of the majesty in the ritual process also confirms that the tabun and the resonance of the Majesty sends to the sacred atmosphere which contains the meaning of the magical powers (Olendo et al., 2023, p. 39). Therefore, the lat music is denied because of its central function in a ceremony (Balala’). For it is said, “If you don’t play with it, then there will be no magic in you; for you are the mediator between men and the spirits of the fathers” (Olendo, 2021, p. 29). Thus, becoming a unique attraction of the great existence in the sphere of society Dayak Kanayatn by bringing unity to the Creator through the instrument of music. Starting with the way of playing and the position of playing, it puts the great position as a magical instrumentation that needs to be consciously and worthy to play it. The way it is adjusted with the birama to the specific motif of the canvas is a particular Kanayatn Dayak. For example, a 4/4 birama on the motif of Ka’ Bawakng's.

Balala is a kind of ritual to perform abstinence or temptation to leave the house within a certain time limit performed by the Dayak (Kanayatn) tribe in Western Kalimantan. When the ban (lala’) is violated, it will get the sangsi from the customary administrator. The ritual of Balala’ is carried out by the people of Dayak (Kanayatn) who are domiciled in several districts that are in Landak district, Mempawah District, Bengkayang District, and Kubu Raya District. The implementation of the Balala ritual is carried out to reject or defeat the viruses that are spreading the pandemic of Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) or known
by the cloud community as the Corona virus. Various phenomena to combat COVID-19 are also applied in various areas with the same context and thought that the corona as the sanctuary. (Khusna, 2022, p. 722; Rafiliah, 2021, p. 17; Vedanti, 2020, p. 92). Each region has a way in its own tradition to beg the Creator to end the COVID-19 virus.

Balala’ can also be said to be a tradition in the culture of Dayak Kanayatn because this balala’ has been implemented and passed down in succession from one generation to the next. Balala’ said tradition, it is in line with the opinion (Peursen, 2007, p. 97) that tradition can be translated by the inheritance or succession of norms, customs, rules, treasures. Although there are contradictions about tradition with mystical objectivity, yet (Hurgonje, 2007, p. 217) the clue about old traditions that conform to the norms and properties remains justified and is not a stream of deviations. Even Popper, the social theorist, acknowledges that social functions are more important than traditions, but the assumption that entities live in evolving traditions assumes irregularities in thinking and acting (Beckstein, 2017, p. 491). Based on the above exhibition, then formulated the problem into the formula of the question: “How is Magisity Agukng in the Ritual of Balala’ in the Society of Dayak Kanayatn?”

As for the purpose of the study of magisity in the ballal ritual is to know and describe the magic power of the instrument of music in the balal ritual in the people of Dayak Kanayatn. Agukng in the ballala ritual is a representation in the music culture of the Dayak Kanayatn community and does not belong to any other society. It is in accordance with the opinion (Artistiana, 2010, p. 77) that, “The traditional music that flourishes in Nusantara is the work of the local community.”; the work also conforms to the ecology of local community environment for the filling of the raw material of traditional musical instruments (Spiller, 2004, p. 5). Agukng in the ballala ritual is a traditional musical instrument that was born, grown, and developed in the Dayak Kanayatn community. It becomes important to know that the national music designation (popular or traditional music of various countries) cannot be produced by ordinary composers, but is inherited among people from generation to generation by becoming a recognition (Morgenstern, 2021, p. 9).

METHOD

The study of Agukng’s Magisity in the Balala ritual in the Dayak Kanayatn society is designed by means of a descriptive method; it is said that it is descriptif because the resolution of Aguka’s magisity is revealed not using quantities of numbers but written words (Subandi, 2011, p. 175), and the form of research is qualitative; where the character of qualitatives is to explain a fact or a real condition (balala’) with the study of interpretation (magisity) scientifically (Fadli,
The research was carried out in Samalantan Prefecture, Bengkayang District, West Kalimantan, about 30 km away from the town of Bangkayang which is the capital of the district. The source of this research data is obtained from the noise of the music player in the ballala ritual. The subject of this study is the community of Dayak Kanayatn in Samalantan who perform the Balala rituals. While the object of the research is the medium used as the execution of the Ballala’s ritual.

The researchers observe the agukng in detail, thoroughly, and carefully, especially when the agugng sounds are played so that it produces its own magicity. These things relate to statements (Lexy J, 1991), researchers should do careful, detailed, and in-depth observations of prominent factors. The depth of the observation of the great sound is observed repeatedly until the event of magicity is fully discovered (Darlington & Scott, 2002, p. 77). After the observation of agukng sounds it is necessary to make a brief explanation of the findings of ambiguity in magisity through in-depth interviews conducted by the community of Dayak Kanayatn in Samalantan. The conversation was not rigid, but flowed according to the moment of the magical events and after them (Rachmawati, 2007, p. 37).

The results of conversations in an interview scheme that has been filled (the researchers understand) have finally carried out a process of condensation in which the results of recorded and written conversations are transformed into the focus and subversion of the content of magicity in balala’ and its association with COVID-19 (Miles & Huberman, 2014). Drawing conclusions then questioning the truth of the ballala ritual procession, the grand artifacts, the magicity, and the hopes of the people. The conclusions that have been stated, then need to be confirmed to related sources such as indigenous figures, culturists, and anthropologists so that the answers to the magicity of balala’ revealed authentically in the triangulation of sources (Creswell, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ritual Balala’

Balala’ is a customary belief owned and believed by the Dayak Kanayatn community. Rinding, Ikot (2006) explains the understanding and rules in the execution of the Balala ritual’, that is Balala means the time of fasting, and it is strictly forbidden to peel the grass, to cut down trees, which in the customary language of the slaughter and slaughter of animals whose nature produces blood, to go to the fields, to travel to the homes of people not to spend the night, and the stranger not to stay the night in the village that holds the ritual of Balala (Rinding, Ikot, 2006).
In the Balala ritual there is also a customary sanction if there is a society that violates the rules that have been agreed upon. This is in line with the opinion (Rinding, Ikot, 2006) that states that “when violating the prescribed provisions, then will be subjected to customary sanctions.” If this balala’ is violated, the person who violates the rules must be ready to accept what has been violated according to the customary law in force.

1. Balala’ Nagari/Tamakng
2. Balala’ Uma
3. Balala’ Buah

The type of Balala is carried out in the form of involvement or efforts of the community of Dayak Kanayatn in preventing Covid-19. This is the Balala’ Nagari or Balala’ Tamakng. The Balala ritual carried on by the community is the same as the involvement of the society of the dayak Kanyatn in anticipating or preventing the COVID-19 or is widely known by the term Lockdown. The Balala ritual has a structure or arrangement that consists of, the beginning part, the core part and the closing part or the end part. It is consistent with what is proposed by (Morgan & Game, 1992) that within a ritual there is always the beginning, the main part, and the end or the conclusion part.”

The first part of the Balala ritual, which is the preparation phase in which customary figures begin to prepare places, instruments, dishes, and various customary needs as equipment for the course of the balala ritual. Around the ancient man there are a number of monuments from several Binua, sesaji, and customary equipment for the course of the Balala ritual. The procession of the early stages of the service. The core part of the process of performing the balala ritual is the process that is carried out over three days. It is explained Rinding, Ikot (2006) that “the people held the custom of balala’ (panting) three days and three nights that starts with going Ka’Panyugu, Kadiaman, place of mercy ai’ Earth to bapade to the ruler of heaven and earth with all its contents”.

Figure 1. The process of initiating the Balala ritual
During these three days, the Dayak Kanayatn community that was carrying out the ritual of the balala ‘is standing, which means it is forbidden to go out of the house, and do all the activities inside the house or better known as the term stay at home (di rumah aja). Nevertheless, with the exception of the medical personnel, and the police and the TNI, they can carry out public service activities as usual. The same applies to people who are not performing or are not practicing the Balala’s rituals.

The purpose of carrying out the Balala ritual is very important to the people of Dayak Kanayatn because they are able to combat or prevent the outbreak of diseases like the Covid-19 pandemic that is taking place today. (Februari 2020). In carrying out the ritual of balala, the people of Dayak Kanayatn build solidarity with each other with the system and gather customary figures like, Timanggong from several Binua that are in Landak district. The gotong-royong system is also seen in the ballala ritual shown in terms of preparation and financing of its implementation, namely by financing independently or collectively between citizens in particular the village of Caokng, Landak district. This is explained in a quotation from the media newspaper Tribun Pontianak which writes that “specifically the balala ceremony’ actually becomes the media uniting indigenous people in the village of Caokng, because in its implementation it is collected funding independently by the citizens”.

**Agukng Rhythm Patterns in the Balala’ Ritual**

Agukng is a rhythmic musical instrument belonging to the idiophone group. (von Hornbostel & Sachs, 1961, p. 14) which makes the classification of musical instruments according to the physical aspects and sources of sound that "idiophone includes a group of musical instrument where the sound produced comes from the vibration of the body of the instrument." The way to play the grand is to be beaten or struck with a wooden medium that is shaped in this way and its ends are wrapped in rubber. In this great game, special skills are required to produce a good sound. (Lee, 2023). Agukng is one of the traditional musical instruments of Dayak Kanayatn. This is in line with the view (Miden, 1997) that states that "the musical instruments that exist in the West Kalimantan are Soleng that is blown, gadobokng, agukng and dau that is struck or beaten, and sape' that is punched."

Rhythm is the sequence or sequence of movements that form the basic element in music, the sounds in music forming the rhythm, for example the length and shortness of the sounds produced. (Vuust et al., 2009). A rhythm is a repetition of patterns of certain sounds. The rhythm produced by the agukng in the balala’ ritual is an expression transmitted to the ancestors through the media of the instrument of the music. The rhythmic patterns played in the Balala ritual
are static/constant or monotonous. It’s kind of boring, because putting the great magicity in this ballala ritual is not to work against the rhythm patterns with specifically drawn game techniques and not to be dynamic, but the great magic is seen or appears in the change of atmosphere at the time the great is played repeatedly continuously. It is in line with the results of an interview with Girokng on March 30, 2020, that: “It’s just like this There’s no such thing as a big man who’s got a lot to do with it.

**Here’s The Exhibition of Form Patterns of Agukng Rhythm In The Balala Ritual:**

1. **Beat**
   The basics of rhythm are beats. Beats are the rhythms of music played fast, moderate, or slow. This is in line with (Benward & Saker, 2008) which states that “tempo is the speed of rhythm in music.” The Agukng played when performing this ballad ritual is played with the Vivace (156-176 bpm) tempo which means fast and agile or in the philosophical realm contains hope and principle in music.

![Figure 2. Music Notation of Agukng Balala’](image)

2. **Accent**
   The accent in music is the pressure or movement by producing sounds louder than ever before. Agukng in the balala ritual is the only musical instrument played in the ballala ritual that is played with the same rhythm pattern repeatedly, but has a different accent on certain parts, for example, on the first part of the beat in that rhythmic pattern.

**Significance of Agukng in the Balala Ritual**

In digging into the meaning in this chapter must be understood symbolically anything that is contained in the ritual of balala. The symbolic meaning is the signs that are contained within the symbol itself can be symbols, icons, colors and so on representing something to be conveyed. The meaning in music is the emotional expression of the people of Dayak Kanayatn in carrying out the balala ritual. Hield & Price (2018) suggests that “the meaning and music as an emotional resource.” The great meaning contained in the balala ritual is a hope for the people of Dayak Kanayatn in an effort to prevent the spread of the recent pandemic of Covid-19 marked by the greatest scourge. It is in line with
Rahimah et al. (2019, p. 53) that “the meaning contained is a good hope for those who perform customary ceremonies.”

Sound can also be called a means of communication or a medium of communication between humans and ancestors under certain conditions. (Jazuli, 2014) argues that art (in this case traditional music) is positioned as a medium of communication between man and man, man and nature, human and the Creator. Further (Irawati, 2014, p. 72) states that “music is meant as a means of horizontal and vertical communication in a ritual ceremony.” From this explanation, it is clear that the agukng in the ballala ritual has a function as a medium of communication and has a meaning that can give good hope to the people of Dayak Kanayatn.

The meaning in music can be seen from the form of music, the sound produced in relation to one with the other (Green, 2006, p. 103). Agukng has the greatest sound character and as a musical instrument that has magical powers. According to (Morgan & Game, 1992) “Gong has magical powers and magical influences to treat things, to change thoughts or emotions”. Moreover, Morgan and Game refer to gong instruments as sensible musical instruments and have magical power.

It is not only played, but it can influence the imagination and encouragement as well as the communication media in the ballal ritual. Moreover, it is believed to be a connection between the people of Dayak Kanayatn, nature, and the ancestors or worshippers, where at the time it was played to call or greet Awa Pama to be present and ask for assistance that serves to keep the safety and refuse the protection of the villages or areas carried out in the balala ritual. This is the belief and hope of the people that is still held to this day.

The rhythm that is produced when it is played in the preparation or opening of this balala ritual, means the readiness and courage of the people of Dayak Kanayatn in the face of a challenge. It’s shown as the willingness of the people not to go out of the house and do all the activities inside the house alone and follow the rules. The same is true of the agukng rhythm played when the ballala ritual procession has been completed, pointing out that the Dayak Kanayatn community has been able and obedient to the rules that are not permitted during the balala ritual. Then, the rhythmic pattern played at the time of the balala ritual shows the character of the Dayak Kanayatn community that it never gives up or is desperate in the face of a problem, for example, in this Covid-19 pandemic. The people of Dayak Kanayatn also have a culture of isolating themselves in their own houses, namely Balala’ or lockdown, in the form of local wisdom that is owned by the people of dayak kanayatn.
**Perspective of Civic Culture in the Ritual of Balala' and Agukng**

The people of Dayak Kanayatn have diverse cultures, one of which is the form of ballala rituals and traditional instruments of great music. The culture of the people of Dayak Kanayatn that embodies local wisdom is portrayed as a common guideline and forms an identity of its own. (Mahardika & Darmawan, 2016, p. 23). COVID-19 was conducted by the people of Dayak Kanayatn simultaneously as well as through the mass media as a message of hope that the voice of prayer of magical nature to the Creator presented moral values in the idea of the local community as civic culture (Feriandi, 2017, p. 181). The community of Dayak Kanayatn in the ballala ritual presents a variety of its own citizenship built on the culture formed in it (Almond & Verba, 1963). Through agukng as the media is expected to be one of the conditions of the ritual carrier. Thus, this compact form of society is part of civic culture so that the ritual identity of the Balala and the Agukng is symbolically embedded by the Dayak Kanayatn community.

Balala' rituals and agukng musical instruments as alternatives and media to ward off COVID-19 are also interpreted as a joint policy not only in the community but also government policy holders. This creates a link between civic culture and political culture where the Indonesian character contained in civic culture is carried by political actors to reflect their behavior as representatives of the people in the context of social, political, economic, and especially cultural development (Feriandi, 2017, p. 177). The idea of political culture is also expressed in (Foster, 1982) where political culture is a collection of values and beliefs that are carried out deeply in political and government activities in a society. Like the political culture of the Dayak Kanayatn community in Ongkol Padang Village (Toton, 2015, p. 18) which has the characteristics of kaula political culture, namely: 1) the community has awareness and enthusiasm for the political system, especially in output politics; 2) the community is aware of government authority; 3) the community is obedient to government policies; and 4) the community accepts decisions that cannot be disputed. Kanayatn people morally citizenship still believe that cultural values manifested in behavior can present civic culture and political culture as one attitude of support and one voice.

**CONCLUSION**

Agukng is a musical instrument similar to the gong that is owned by the Dayak Kanayatn community, played by beating or beating using a stitching instrument with a basic material of wood that is formed in such a way and its ends are wrapped in rubber and serve as an accompaniment in the ballad ritual.

Seeing the significance and value of the great in the rituals of the balala, it can be seen that the great is not just played, but is believed to influence the
imagination and stimulation and the communication media in the ritual of the ballala. This is the belief and hope of the people of Dayak Kanayatn that is still held to this day. Seeing symbolically, agukng is a symbol of courage, hope and happiness for the people of Dayak Kanayatn in carrying out the rituals of balala. There is a shared hope that eventually forms a civic culture that becomes the identity of the Dayak Kanayatn community.

REFERENCES


https://doi.org/10.36418/jii.v1i7.211


