



Fish and Rice: The Position of Food and Religion for Ngaju Dayak Indonesia

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Abstract: Food plays an urgent tool in understanding religious life. In Many religious believers, food has a unique position and is a key instrument for attributing humans with religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism. However, the generalizability of much published research on the same issue has not deeply focus on intersection between food, religion, and indigenous experience especially on specific certain food such fish or rice. This paper explores how food provides the most fruitful resource for understanding religious and Ngaju Dayak indigenous Indonesia. Driven by ethnographic work, this paper argues that food is strongly influencing the establishment of the social configuration of the Ngaju Dayak community due to their natural character that lives along with the peasant mode of production and river producer. Moreover, food and religion Ngaju Dayak, particularly fish and rice position reclaiming sacred space, the liberation of faith, a symbol of affection, and filling the empty space to create strong motivation where religion legitimates action. Fish and rice also become a symbol of identity construction that depart from the same consciousness that rice and its trajectory share feelings of belongingness from how rice has been distributed and consumed mainly in the religiosity circle.

Keywords: Rice, Fish, Ngaju Dayak, Indigenous, Food and Religion, and Anthropology of Islam.

1. INTRODUCTION

Food is the most essential element to ensure the sustenance of human life. (Nestle 2013, 1) Food demand has led to massive agricultural expansion. (Benhin 2006, 9) Without food, 30 million human population could have died of starvation during the outbreak of food crisis in 2019. (Crush and Si 2020, 150) Food availability allows entrepreneurs to develop the large-scale businesses in food production that drives consumer choice. (Clark 1998, 639) Food scarcity may result in malnutrition with long-term health consequences and thus a good insight on food inspires us to produce food science and technology. (Schut 2009, 2) Thus, numerous reasons contribute to why human always strive for food, and why food always relates to many walks of life.

Humans need a proper meal to attain an ideal and healthy body weight, and they also need religious belief to improve psychological well-being. Adequate intake of food nutrients maintains bodily function but, at the same time, humans are never free from spiritual starvation. Michael Schut suggested that food evokes spiritual nourishment. (Schut 2009, 2) Thus far, the same also applies for religion, since healthy body generates a consciousness that serves as a doorway to reach the aspect of spirituality, including the mystical experience, Divine manifestation. (French 1905, 703) Most religions have their

own religious dietary laws and the ethics of eating. (Gretel 2018, 2) For Christians, food can serve as a holy practice for Christ, (Spiritual Formation Revealed Around the Table 2020, 13) while for Muslims, it can lead to faith and generate a philosophical system. (Rouse and Hoskins 2004, 228) On this basis, there has been a widely held belief on the correlation between food and religion.

Food and religion have attracted the attention of many researchers in many fields. Most researchers investigated food and religion on the aspect of ethical compliance, (Doggett & Halteman 2016, 1) religious law, (Raman 2014, 968) the commodification of religious thought of food, (Arikan and Bloom 2019, 1) and a broad spectrum of cultural aspects. (Hajovsky 2018, 501) On the other hand, this paper examines how the correlation between food and religion through the life of Ngaju Dayak Rungan in the Village of Petuk Ketimpun, District of Jekan Raya, Palang Karaya, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. Ngaju Dayak Rungan was selected as the research object due to the unique intersection between the practice of food and religion in the community, particularly pertaining rice and fish. Rice and fish play a vital role in the community since these two staple foods indicate the acculturation between two great religious traditions: Hindu Kaharingan, and Islam.

This paper is structured in four sections. The first section presents theoretical discussion of food and religion. The next section provides an overview of the life of Dayak Ketimpun as the stepping stone to the following section. The third section explains food and religion on the social and religious life of Ngaju Rungan, and the last section deliberates on the affirmation of food and religion as a source of identity construction and provides conclusion. Furthermore, this paper also analyses the intertwining relation between religion and food, particularly on fish and rice that bear a direct causal relationship as a way to further explore the social and religious aspect of Ngaju Dayak Rungan.

2. METHOD

This research presents a two-year ethnographic study conducted from 2020 to 2021 in Petuk Ketimpun, a village within the Kleurahan Ketimpun area of Palangka Raya City, Central Kalimantan. The data collection methodology employed participant observation, wherein the researcher immersed themselves in the daily lives of the fishermen of Petuk Ketimpun during the field research period. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with selected informants, identified using purposive sampling. The interviews

incorporated structured, semi-structured, and unstructured techniques to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the subjects. Additionally, the researcher conducted thorough observations of community phenomena and supplemented this with supporting documentation and a review of relevant literature. The collected data were then organized into thematic categories, which allowed for subsequent triangulation. Finally, the analysis was conducted using descriptive methods to provide a nuanced interpretation of the findings.

3. RESEARCH RESULT

Food and Religion, an intertwining relation

There has been a broadly shared view of the close relation between food and religion. The centuries-old classical religious traditions have deemed food as the primary reason to send down Adam and Eve to Earth. (Annisa 2020, 1) Food symbolizes heaven (Bailey, 2017, p. 3; Blankenhorn & Bernhard, 2021, p. 8; Phillips, 2016, p. 13) or the torments of hellfire, (Newton 2015, 5) social religious class division, and memories of religiosity. Food has been written throughout the historical journey of the world's religious belief. Food serves as an offering to God, and the practice of food sharing spreads religious values be it as a means of unity, or even a source of religious conflict. (Ratcliffe et al 2018, 3) In his critical investigation of the correlation between food and religion, Cohen held that once food is expounded with religion, it often ends up in a paradigm shift and a modification of viewpoint. Religion can change the way people view food with all the authority attached to it. Together with religion, the materiality of food can be incarnated as a sacred, the essence of divinity, as well as religious symbolism.

In American Protestantism, food tradition serves as an important part of a Holy Communion meal, while the real implementation of the correlation between food and religion lies in a bottle of wine. In Scotland, wine has become the substantial part of the religious sermon for the congregation, since the Prebisterian priest stated that “wine” not only warms the stomach but has warmed the cold heart of Christ”. (Haase 2016, 12) Similarly, the ancestral traditions of the Jews and their connection to food made the Jews famous for their amazing and healthy dishes. Ansky articulated that more than three thousand of Jewish identity is resulted from the culinary diversity of their food offerings. For instance, Israeli Jews are well known for their banquets served in their homes and restaurants. Their appreciation on food is marked by the weekly celebration of extravagant cuisine that varies from one house to another. (Ansky 2012, 6)

The historical record of Islam is also closely tied to the existence of food. The correlation between food and Islam is dated back at least to the year 500-1300 AD. Throughout history, most of Islamic empires have displayed exceptionally diverse cuisine. The Islamic Caliphate of Abbasid in Baghdad, for instance, was well-known for its Mediterranean cuisine, especially mazza (mezze or meze), which means appetizers, and has become a shining star among foodies. (Editorial Team 2013, 15) In addition, in 1226, the first book on Muslim cuisine was written in Baghdad. Another close tie between Islamic tradition and food is widely seen during the month of Ramadan, when Muslims fast for a whole month and celebrate the end of the month-long dawn-to-sunset fasting of Ramadan with fast breaking festival of Eid- al-Fitr. On the pivotal moment of this globally sanctified religious holiday, specially made diverse cuisine is prepared. Apart from the culinary celebration as a form of food appreciation in Islamic tradition, Islam has set Islamic dietary laws and restrictions that represents Muslim's obedience to Divine law.

Christian tradition is also renowned for its food appreciation through the serving of bread and wine during the Sunday Mass to symbolize the body and blood of Jesus. In a similar vein, the Hua people of Papua New Guinea believe that a single man should not eat green leafy vegetables, picked by another man's wife, because it has the essence of nu (something pernicious and harmful). (Cohen 2021, 1)

In general, the correlation between food and religion can be classified into the followings: firstly, food and religion as seen from the cultural aspect. Margaret Visser once posited that food is closely related with cultural aspect. A slight alteration to some aspects of food serving, including eating patterns may lead to changes in the widely held culture, although it is undeniable that the changes can lead to both positive and negative aspects. (Visser 1999, 117) In this line, Jordan Kleiman discovered that human identity is shaped by the way we eat and prepare our food. Human preference for local cuisine allows better access to the nature and maintains the biodiversity of food security while preserving local culture. In contrast, the consumption of global cuisine, which is widely practiced around the world, has changed the old traditions and access to less sustainable jobs because of the many ecological, social, economic, geopolitical, cultural, and moral costs and sacrifices to make. (Kleiman 2009, 400) Harry Golden asserted that "no eating, no meeting", to indicate that food unites everyone with different backgrounds into the same unit of identity. (Hanchett 2005, 97) In fact, when the food lovers who stand on the racial bias of the skin colors in the United States eat the same food at the same table, the differences will melt. This is also the case in the Sub-Saharan region that a large

celebration of food on a huge plate, where everyone sits on a par, will remove the compartmentalized social identities between the rich and the poor, and merge them into one communal identity. (Freeman 2006, 102)

Second, food and religion in its relation to food security. The facet of food security and religion, reveals the ideas for philanthropic movements and the religious laws towards food security. Religion is often the strongest driving force to carry out the generally accepted social ethics, especially if it under the name of religion (Salonen 2018, 3) Religious teaching has called for the action to maintain food security to ensure that everyone has the access to healthy, safe and, nutritious food. This means that food security is about sharing and caring, the ability to obtain food but also about the quality of the food nutrients for humans' health. The teachings of Islam, Judaism (Jacobs 2021, 169), and Buddhism have clearly stipulated this need.

Third, food and religion in the aspect of law. While the previous point has mentioned some aspects of religious law, this part focuses on various religious scriptures on the ethics of eating and food preparation. This religious tenet is born from the assumption that a healthy body helps religious adherents to perform their religious worship. Orthodox Buddhism regulates three important points that adherents must understand and avoid, namely: 1) unneeded food, (ayoga) 2) wrong use of food (mittiyāyoga), and 3) excessive food (atiyoga). In addition, Buddhist adherents are also required to comply with the teachings to eat gradually and to avoid excessiveness, not to eat solid food in the afternoon, and to eat soft foods. (Hewamanage 2016, 23) Instead of collecting various rules about the ethics of eating in religious traditions, this section highlights how these sacred rules are bombarded by criticism against tradition and the latest knowledge.

The Jewish theological teachings necessitate kosher (Rosenthal 1997, 951) and terefah, which serve as the reason for prohibiting the consumption of certain types of food, such as shellfish, crabs, shrimp, and frogs. However, in 1883, the Hebrew student union in Cincinnati, Ohio, reversed this sacred claim in the Bible by labeling it as a myth by hosting the largest public banquet. (Kleiman 2009, 1) Similar to the predecessor's religion, the restriction on pork consumption due to the halal food regulation (Havinga, 2010, p. 241) in Islamic law has been a target of criticism to weaken its legitimacy.

For Marvin Harris', the restriction against pork consumption originates from the revelations' context and location. Raising pigs in areas of an Arabian Peninsula with difficult access to fresh water is a disadvantage for the Arabians since pigs constantly

require water to moisten their bodies and to rinse the genesis of pig impurity because they always dwell in unclean locations. It was assumed that pigs would only cover themselves with their own urine if they were dehydrated. Furthermore, Marvin emphasized that breeding pigs would only generate problems since, according to Harris viewpoint as aforementioned, there is an implied potential, if illat (a reason) as the basis for the ban of pigs did not exist. (Harris 1989, 109)

Fourth, food and religion as part of development and political agenda. The frequently appearing question deals with the way to understand food and religion in the contextual part of the development and political discourses. The inclusion of the issue of food and religion in the aspiration for development and political factor begins with the outbreak of global hunger that afflicts various countries with different degree and intensity. (Mills 1959,146; Monaghan 2009, 76; Bizikova 2017, 2) Food insecurity is not a single-rooted problem. (Rosegrant and Cline 2003, 1917; Conceição and Mendoza 2009, 1159) Many government sectors have shared their concern over this problem, in their mitigation attempt, which received massive media coverage in media reports, advertisements, flyers, and street billboards. (Suwarjo and Hanani 2016, 13)

The rampant issues of food insecurity in the tradition of developmentalism have caused the world's elites to take turns to exert their influence on countries facing food insecurity even at their ideological point. These countries are known as the world's food regime. Those who adhere to developmentalism conventionally emphasize the importance of industrial cooperation and the production sector (agriculture). To ensure the flow of dependent system, they suggest dependence on food exports. As a result, they are constantly related with political-economic linkages that contribute to the hegemonic regime. From here, political haggling for rules to create a favorable atmosphere for the accumulation regime and its normalization efforts, as well as its success, takes place. (McMichael 2020, 12)

Postmodern philosophers and neo-empiricism do not completely grasp the big vision of the global food regime's authority. They discovered that every country or location has the potential to develop a local food regime with distinct regional characteristics. Workers, for example, can dominate the food regime in rural regions due to revolt and transmigration. Other regimes that might emerge include environmental businesses that hijack the language of food security in order to compel people to pay attention to the environment. (McMichael 2020, 20–21)

Amidst these debates, religion becomes a political movement when its believers

drive it towards the same level. A book titled “Theology of Liberation” was written by Gustavo Gutierrez and has been adopted by some of the Churches in Brazil, El-Savador, Chili, and Argentina. As a new name for a political movement and a spirit of Catholics, theology of liberation turned a finger on the motion to contradict the poverty by providing free food for the poor. (Gutierrez 1988, 10; Priyatmono 2020, 28) As a result, food and religion as political aspect can demonstrate the socio-political aspect, and thus create conceptualization of distinctive identities between Us and Them (Warjio and Kusmanto 2015, 50), to create the demarcation line between religious community, and to build the classification of foreigners. (Freidenreich 2014, 5; Reinhart 2015, 385)

Drowning into Rural Space Amidst the Urban Space

Cities and all of its aspects have been heavily discussed in many studies on social sciences. Such studies on this topic generally address a wide array of urban life with a primary concern on the tough and rough city life. (Karp et al., 2015, 13) The city in its complete sense, is a geographic plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theater of social action, and an aesthetic symbol of collective unity. The city fosters art and is art; the city creates the theater and is the theater for social dramas. (Mumford 1937, 59) From a beautiful dream, the wealthiest people in the world live in the city and attracted many people to travel to big cities, to experience the culture, and to choose to stay there.

Urbanization that draws villagers to flock into cities and causes an increasing city population and settlement is a common social phenomenon. (Berry et al., 2015, 2) People moving from villages to cities in search for jobs are normally low-skilled workers with low-income and they can only afford to live in the suburbs. Most of them decide to transform vacant land in the urban areas into a suburban farm, live in their strongly rooted tradition, and build a rural space in that city. (Widjaja 2013, 2) The rural space amidst the urban city life, in this context, is generally referred to as city kampung (kampung Kota) in architectural studies. Peter explained that kampung has a complex meaning regarding its widespread use in different local languages, traditions, and historicity. (Peter J. M. Nas et al., 2008, 646) City kampung can be defined as a segmented place of life in cities inhabited by the living standard and conservative cultural people. (Widjaja 2013, 2) Romadhon outlined in his book that cities in many areas, including Indonesia, were sometimes built by the old story of cultural power and by the acceleration of the colonial expansion, as is the Katimpun. (Ramadhon, 2020, 11)

Petuk Katimpun is one of the first sub-districts founded along with the establishment

of Palangka Raya in 1964.(Pemkot Palangka Raya, 2016, 2021) Although President Soekarno permitted the establishment of Palangka city after the Independence of Indonesia, many Dayak leaders in Central Kalimantan have been willing to create their own independent region since the alliance between Banjar sultanate and colonial power in 1787. (Riwut, 2015, 25) Although Katimpun and its urban identity turned into an area with an old-fashion romance, the residency and social circumstances have not changed much in decades. Ijai, in his statement, called Katimpun as a village because the highways in this area were newly constructed in 2016-2017. Instead of utilizing land vehicle as the main transportation, the indigenous community of Katimpun prefer traditional boat and river as the most reliable means of transportation. For many years, they rarely met people out of Katimpun who also lived as the underprivileged community. They maintained the practice of traditional custom, the conventional way of faith, and some of the Kaharingan local wisdom. Despite their avoidance of contact with the outsiders, the unavoidable challenges of modernity kept approaching innumerable aspects of their lives and environments. (Ijai, 2020)

4. DISCUSSION

From The Serving Plates To Social Configuration: Food For Social Religious Position In Ngaju Dayak

For most of Dayak Ketimpun, life as fisherfolk is not merely considered as a livelihood, but it is a way of life. Fisheries are more about the attempt to ensure that the serving plates of the family plates are full of food for today and tomorrow. They depend for their livelihood ultimately on the Rungan river as they obtain food from the nature's generosity and suffer from seasonal alteration. (Diegus, 1997, 23) High demand on fish consumption has driven overfishing practice along Rungan River. Even though there is no specific data confirming the issue of exploitation, they believe that the depletion of fish stocks from year to year is attributed to the overexploitation that constantly occurs from time to time. Nowadays, they experience the condition that Svein et al. described as standing on the uncertain economy and social future.(Jentoft and Davis, 2008, 356) In general, fisherfolk can represent a status, a cultural dimension, (Ginkel, 2001, 177; Pollnac and Carmo, 1980, 12) a class, (Bort, 2008, 233) an economy (Davis, 1984, 1), a marginalized, (Poggie, 1980, 20) communality, (Clay and Olson, 2007, 27) and a competition. (Durrenberger and Palsson, 1988, 531) Svein et al. argued that since the time of Theocritus, fisherfolk has been living in an impoverished and marginalized

condition,(Jentoft & Eide, 2011, pp. 4–14) but in Kerala, fisherfolk communities can generate their income for national economic development. (Ramachandran, 2021, p. 1) In a similar context, the historiography of Scotland from written sources revealed that Scotland's fisheries heritage trail that set their tourist to walk onto the past, like language, arouse the memory of fishing tradition, and a diaspora of family heritage, since the end of the Ice age.(Nadel-Klein, 2020, pp. 183–184) Despite the multifaceted-meanings of fisheries, for Ngaju Dayak Rungan, fisherfolk , it serves as a compulsion to fill in their plates with food.

For the breadwinner, a mother, and a family member definitely have an essential role in sharing the burden in fisheries. It may generate distinctive human behavior and a reason to create social configuration. (Papaioannou, 2017, 1) In 2020, Rungan fisherfolk have occasionally used various means and ways to catch fish. They sought for the best fish catching technique with their capability to perform their duty. They worked together to guard the fishing area on a patrol boat to look for fisherfolk who use fish poisons to stun fish. It is commonplace for them to fight against each other in a combat over fishing territory. They lead the life all about food, the fulfillment of primary needs, and a fundamental source of life.

When an activity of gathering food has exceeded the limit of human endurance, it turns into a nightmare. These fisherfolk undergo mixed feelings, ranging from panic, fear, rage, and anxiety that spread in their vein. They need psychological stability and spiritual emotion to control the uncertainty.(Asma, 2018, p. 9) They need a system of believe or at least a new replacement for the old ideological set --a sense-- because system of believe is a mental representation and positive assessment of a meaningful information.(Gilbert, 1991, 107; Harris, 2005, 12; Fillman,2010, 952) It should be a supportive manifestation to oppose oppression because pain is the reason to bring out the key to find a religious belief.(Boer, 2013, p. 9; Negri, 2009, p. 14) This path leads them to seek ways to find a religious belief.

Pertaining the laws of nature, Hobbes theorized that human life is a continuous tragedy. For Ngaju Dayak Rungan, religion can lessen the extent of tragedy in their life. Religion is likely to preserve a mighty power in every single part of drama in their life. (Batson & Stocks, 2004, p. 141; Ellwood, 1913, p. 293) Every part of their daily routine is constantly in line with religious aspects, including food production, distribution, and consumption.

As a forementioned, food and religion are closely related. The application of food as

a sign of religious representation is inseparable from religious doctrine. (D'Haene et al, 2021, 1) Religion has set a pertinent thought in various circumstances. It is common for Ngaju Dayak Rungan to make a small religious offering of traditional or modern food to the river. This is a little way of making sacrifice in order to receive the blessing of God before they go fishing. By doing this, they hope they can have a miraculous catch of fish and they will be protected from any harm. For some of Ngaju Dayak Rungan, the religious offering also serves as a vow (nazar) to God and to a water prophet (Nabi Air), or to patahu (a guardian soul). For some of them, they got the idea of vow from Islamic tradition and some of them also seek it as generated from the acculturation between Islamic and Hindu Kaharingan tradition.

The small offering can take the form of two small bottles of cola, one rooster, flower, and wafer. They use food as an expression of piety, and a part of worship in mediating between the past, the present, and the future. The ritual of making food offering connects young generation with their ancestor by shortening the gap of time, space, real world, and mythical world. Thus, food can create a strong motivation and build an empty space, (Ideas, 2018) where religion legitimates action. (Fourier, 1857, p. 2)

In 2019, during the uncontrolled and frantic spread of Covid-19, some of Ngaju Dayak Rungan considered it as a call to return to religious path. Thus, they made a manyanggar lewu ceremony to purify the earth and to achieve a harmonious and well-being state and prevent them from any kinds of misfortune. (Salendra, 2017, 57) In addition, they also did a ritual of tolak bala to go against calamities. Both manyanggar lewa and tolak bala offered food like an expensive cow for some purposes, including as a way to show mutual respect, to differentiate position, to legate tradition, and to define the meaning of a family. (Sibal, 2018, p. 10908) Food reclaims sacred place during and after ritual. Food offering serves as remembrance, voice of hope, healing, and symbol of affection

Finding Brotherhood In Rice And Fish: Reclaiming Ways Of Identity Construction

Multifaceted contexts must be addressed to discuss identity construction of Ngaju Dayak Rungan. This paper began by how rice and fish can drive a movement and interaction, how the interaction can create a sense of brotherhood, and how this process can produce a hybrid identity. Fish has a considerable value for their life. A great catch of fish is worth selling, and the money helps them to pursue education for their children, fulfilling their daily needs for food, and buying new home furniture.

It is like a strange episode when fish hunting can lead Ngaju Rungan fisherfolk to

drift to another place out of their territory, while others are strongly attracted to explore Rungan River to catch some fresh fish. Ngaju Rungan fisherfolk frequently walk along the swampy part of Rungan River bank. It is not uncommon that during the fish hunting, unfamiliar fisherfolk confront their activity by fishing right in front of or even behind their homes. Yet, what is known is that Rungan River is a wild resource, which is always open to public. No wonder that some strangers who consider fishing as a hobby, instead of as livelihood, may freely access their territory.

The movement of fish highly determines the entry and exit of fisherfolk of the Rungan river of the Ketimpun. This consequently leads to an awkward situation and a mismatch between Dayak Ngaju Rungan and the outsiders. It is common that the activity of fish hunting drives them to make friend with a stranger unintentionally. It is likely that fish hunting in the river generates some shared common sense of identical identity as fisherfolk. The communal fish hunting allows an exchange of information through some short conversation that reveals many similarities. These fisherfolk happen to share the same passion, story of life, a dream to realize, and the same religious reference.

In addition to fish, rice, also serves as a staple food for most of people and some animals. (Tribunnews, 2018; Tierney, 1994) An old Chinese proverb “talk does not cook rice”, indicates the significance of “rice” as an integral part of daily life and marks that rice is a powerful imagery. (Pedersen et al., 2005, 20) Almost all rice-consuming population is greatly aware on the quality of rice based on its smell or taste. (Ohnuki-Tierney, 1994, p. 13) A large number of Dayak Ngaju Rungan communities also rely on rice. In classical period they are a non-paddy farming community comparing current situation, since their soil is not effective for rice production historically. To suffice their daily needs, they obtain the rice supply from the Banjar traders who paddle their boat along the river every weekend from the South area to the Central part of Kalimantan. During a time of disruption, (Collier et al., 1973, p. 37) when there are no river traders nearby, this community will go to the nearest traditional market.

This river trade has enabled multi-layered negotiations between the community and the traders, which eliminate a border and wall between them. The rice distribution increases sociopolitical transformation, including the use of lingua franca (common language), market monopoly, acculturation, marriage, and religious conversion. Rice also drives a demographic transition, population movement, and social hierarchy. (d’Alpoim Guedes, 2011, p. 109) In a positive sense, rice urges the share of similar awareness of being together for long decades. Rice is a legitimate authority of social identity as Muslim

community, and as brothers sharing the same history of life and land ownership.

It is undeniable that Banjar traders are highly aware about the significant influence rice that is more powerful than guns. Those who can control food supply will gain the control (Zurayk & Gough, n.d., p. 1). Banjar traders happen to control the market supply of rice, since they produce rice, and sell the best-known rice in South-Central Kalimantan. (Banjarmasinpost 2013, 2022)

They control the rice market and use Banjar language in their trade transactions. In this stage, many rice buyers are forced to understand and be familiar with Banjar language. It is true that Banjar traders have gained control over almost every level of supply chains in nearly every traditional market. This condition marks a huge beginning, when Banjar language becomes a *lingua franca*. Rice has introduced a social stratification because as the marketer, Banjarese are considered as the rich people. Ngaju Dayak community is well aware about this control and they maintain this power relation by trying to gain control over the governmental sector by working as civil servants. Apart from this, there has been an increasingly fierce competition between the Banjarese and Ngaju Dayak in the governance sector, in addition to the gradually rampant existence of Madurese and Javanese in the modern market today.

Moreover, the frequent intensity of trading interaction has resulted in some marriages across the ethnics or an exchange of religious information. Both cross-ethnics marriages and sharing religious information are known to generate religious conversion. In the case of Ngaju Rungan Ketimpun, fish and rice trade can drive Ngaju Hindu Kaharingan to convert to Islam. In such condition, it takes an objection of some of the old precedence in social agreement, politics, and tradition. Muslim Ngaju Dayak can work as a Demang (a traditional leader in traditional indigenous district) or Mantir Adat (one level under the Demang jurisdiction)(Peraturan Daerah Kabupaten Seruyan Nomor 4 Tahun 2019 Tentang Kelembagaan Adat Dayak, 2019, pp. 5–6) and be involved in many Dayak organization both at the national and regional levels, which gradually transforms the long history of Ngaju Dayak political agenda. Unlike non-Muslim Dayak,(Tsing, 2021, p. 55) converting to Islam, also means a change of many traditional practice of food rituals, since, they are no longer allowed to use pigs for the sacred food offerings using. Although for Muslims, the acculturation of Hindu, Kaharingan, and Islam tradition lasts to this day, in this level, rice and fish have established the temporal identity of Islam Ngaju Dayak Rungan, Petuk Ketimpun known as the hybrid Islam.

To sum up, food and religion in Ngaju Dayak Rungan Ketimpun occupy the entire

levels of food and religion relation and categories. The position of food and religion to ensure food security has ensured the availability of food for Ngaju Rungan. On the one hand, in terms of political aspect, it modifies the structural organization convention. On the other hand, in terms of law and cultural aspect, food and religion change the dietary requirement in religious law perspective and change the way they perpetuate traditional knowledge.

5. CONCLUSION

Many researchers addressing the relation between food and religion commonly share a common sense. They use fairly distinctive approach to understand the relation between food and religion. In a similar vein, this paper aims to solve the puzzle on the relation between food and religion in the life of Ngaju Dayak Rungan Ketimpun. The interactional practice of food and religion is commonplace and as aforementioned, serves an important position both explicitly and implicitly as represented by the correlation between rice and fish and the socio-religious causality of Ngaju Rungan. On this basis, food and religion – or everything that could be used to represent the idea – is widely needed for a further exploration of other diverse areas. Since food and religion are highly related with individual needs, further researches on this issue are expected to gain more insights in the future.

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