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PINAH LAMAN: THE CONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY WITHIN THE MENTUKA DAYAK OF WEST KALIMANTAN

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ABSTRACT

For the Mentuka Dayak tribe, Pinah Laman is a change in ethnic and religious identity. Pinah Laman in the Mentuka Dayak community is perceived as a cultural space for community members who convert to a particular religion. Generally, religious conversion occurs in this society from Catholicism to Islam. The new identity is given by the term 'Sinan.' But on the other hand, the Sinan identity has its own meaning. Sinan is a new identity given to those who have converted to another religion. Because of this Pinah Laman custom, they do not get their tribal rights, such as: performing the Mentuka Dayak traditional ceremonies. This article aims to explore the construction of a new identity from the construction process of religious identity, which involves custom. In addition, this article also explains the form of religious identity construction that occurs among the Mentuka Dayak tribe and the new converts who experience it. Religious conversion is inseparable from the driving factors for the emergence of a new identity and the implications of constructing a new identity due to the conversion process. This article was compiled from the results of research using the ethnographic method. The results of this research show that Pinah Laman is a conversion process of a Christian or Catholic Dayak to Islam. This impacts the social sanctions one receives from one's social group. For the Mentuka Dayak people, when someone decides to change his religion, he must be willing to give up his Dayak ethnicity. One of the social effects felt by a new convert in the Dayak tribe is that he will be given a nickname or term 'Sinan.' Based on the results of this research, the term Sinan has a negative connotation. This is because those who change their religion are ultimately not given the freedom to practice Dayak customs as usual.

Keyword: Pinah Laman; Construction; Religious and Ethnic Identity; The Mentuka Dayak

INTRODUCTION

The construction of a new religious identity after *Pinah Laman* occurs among the Mentuka Dayak tribe. The conversion of ethnic identity accompanies this construction of religious identity. *Pinah Laman* in the Mentuka Dayak community¹ is perceived as a cultural space for community members who convert to another religion (religious conversion). Generally, religious conversion occurs in this society from Catholicism to Islam.² The converts (people who change their religion) in this custom will be required to renounce their Dayak traditions and Catholicism. A new identity, *Sinan*³, is then given to them. However, the *Sinan* identity has other meanings beyond the meaning of the conversation. Even though they have left Catholicism, because of this *Pinah Laman* custom, *Sinan* still receives the opportunity to build relationships with other family members and the community.

The Dayaks in West Kalimantan are predominantly Catholics while the Malays are Muslims. (Abdillah, 2012; Akil, 1994; Albab, 2018; Martinus et al., n.d.; Muhrotien, 2012; Muhtifah, 2013; Qodir, 2018; Riwut & Riwut, 2007; Yuswanto, 2021) The religious conversion among the Dayaks in West Kalimantan gives rise to a new identity which is generally referred to as *Senganan* (Atok, 2017; Barter, 2014; binti Bolhasan, 2019; Duile, 2017; Erni, n.d.; Halim et al., 2019, 2021; Khair & Zaki, 2018; Kustini & Pusat Litbang Kehidupan Beragama (Indonesia), 2010; Misrita & No, 2016; Nugraha, 2018; Sellato, 2021; Sulaiman et al., n.d.; Susanti, 2015; Tanasaldy, 2012; Utami, 2022; Yusriadi, 2019). The religious conversion among the Dayaks of West Kalimantan is unique because they leave their customs and daily life practice as Dayak people. This conversion is also called *turun Melayu* [becoming Malay]. (Lathifah, 2018a, 2018b). The two ethnic identities, Dayak and Malay, have developed according to the times. (Andriana, 2011; Nugraha, 2018; Yusriadi, 2018; Prasojo, 2008). Based on these views, this research found new construction of identity among the Dayaks, specifically among the Mentuka Dayak tribe. Changes in identity related to culture are also found among the Karo Batak who convert to Islam (Amin et al., 2019; Kipp, 1995; Kumbara & Anom, 2008; Mujiburrahman, 2001; Nurohman & Gunawan, 2019; Rumahuru, 2020; Sugiatno, 2016). These changes are also the case with religious conversion among the Sasak ethnic group (David Harnish, 2021; Kumbara & Anom, 2008). Religious conversion associated with ethnic identity is directly or indirectly related because it

¹ Mentuka Dayak refers to the Dayak sub-tribe in West Kalimantan that generally live in Sekadau Regency, West Kalimantan. They are synonymous with Catholicism.

² Hereinafter, members of the Mentuka Dayak tribe who will convert to Islam will be referred to as *convert*.

³ *Sinan* is a distinctive term in the Mentuka Dayak tribe to refer to the Dayaks who have changed religion from Catholicism to Islam.

involves a separate psycho-spiritual side (Hironimus, 2022; Iyadurai, 2014; Prof. Dr. H. Kurnial Ilahi et al., 2017).

The issues examined in this article are: the Dayak people who convert from Catholicism to Islam are alienated, for example: living outside of the Mentuka Dayak tribe means they cannot live with or be close to their family anymore and do not get an inheritance. Even though those who have converted (*Pinah Laman*) still identify themselves as Dayak, the social impact built in the Mentuka Dayak tribe is that those who have left the Catholic religion are no longer accepted as members of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. The reason is that those who have left Catholicism can no longer practice their ancestors' customs. This is also intended to distinguish between the Dayak people, who live in the upper reaches of the river, and the Malays, who live in the coastal areas. Other implications of this 'alienation' include not eating pork, drinking liquor, and dressing in traditional clothing (for women). From the point of view of the Catholic religion, the Catholic Church provides freedom of religion and does not give a specific label or designation for those who leave Catholicism (Halawa, 2022).

This article seeks to explore the construction of a new identity lost when someone has practiced *Pinah Laman*. The construction of this new identity includes the construction of religious identity, which involves custom. The author perceives that the problem of changing ethnic identity related to religious identity can trigger behavior of intolerance or cut off relations with other family members and the community in their hometown. The construction of a new identity among the Mentuka Dayaks needs to be examined in depth because people who change their religion and ethnic identity have new views on life in line with their new religious teachings and new customs. This can trigger conflict with each other, in which Catholicism and Islam have different patterns or ways of life, as is the case with the lifestyle of the Dayaks and Malays in West Kalimantan. This article describes the form of construction of religious identity that occurred among the Dayak Mentuka and the converts⁴ who experienced it. Religious conversion cannot be separated from the driving factors for the emergence of a new identity and the implications of constructing a new identity due to the conversion process.

This article was compiled from the research results using the ethnographic method. The data were collected for approximately 3 (three) months in Nanga Mahap District, Sekadau Regency, using participant observation, in-depth interviews, and Guided Group Discussions. The data sources for this research were the converts, traditional leaders, and community leaders. This research

⁴ *Convert* is the word used in this article to refer to *Sinan*.

found that there is new construction of religious identity in the practice of religious conversion among the Mentuka Dayak tribe in the context of spiritual life, namely *Sinan*. In particular, this research was carried out in the Lembah Beringin. Lembah Beringin is part of the Outer Mentuka, but for customs and social life, there is no difference from the Inner Mentuka people. In Lembah Beringin, the term *Sinan* is also found. *Sinan* in this place has a culture that is almost similar to that of the Mentuka Dayak people because they are also Mentuka Dayak people.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF *PINAH LAMAN*

The term *Pinah Laman* is a custom given to the Mentuka Dayaks, who will convert from Catholicism to Islam. Meanwhile, the term *Sinan* is an identity given to the Mentuka Dayaks who have converted to Islam. In addition, *Sinan* is a direct effect or social sanction given by Mentuka Dayaks to subjects who have converted from Catholicism to Islam. In other areas or Dayak tribes, the term *Sinan* is also known as *Senganan*. The Mentuka Dayak tribe is divided into two regions: Mentuka Dalam [Inner Mentuka] and Mentuka Luar [Outer mentuka]. The designations of the Inner and Outer regions indicate that the area is close to a 'lump' of land from the Majapahit Kingdom, which is recognized as the pioneer in the emergence of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. The religious, social condition of the Lembah Beringin hamlet⁵ and Tanjung Melati⁶ has an attachment between two different religions, namely Islam and Catholicism. Regarding inter-religious tolerance, people in the two hamlets are like brothers and sisters. When the researcher visited a funeral in Tanjung Melati, the people present were not only from Tanjung Melati, but the *Sinan* people who come from the Lembah Banyan also came and participated in the funeral ceremony and traditional events at the funeral home. It is the same case with religious holidays. The tolerance between the two hamlets is excellent and shows that the habit of living together in mutual respect is still going well.

Carrying out the traditions of the Mentuka Dayak ancestors in Lembah Beringin is inevitable for the people, especially in mystical matters such as *berobat* [traditional healing],⁷ with no exception for those who are *Sinan*. This

⁵ Lembah Beringin is a location where the Mentuka Dayaks who have converted to Islam (*Sinan*) live. There are several places of worship for Muslims but no place of worship for the Catholics.

⁶ Tanjung Melati or better known as Dusun Soruk is the home of the Outer Mentuka Dayak tribe. This village [hamlet] is synonymous with Catholicism. There are several places of worship for Catholics but no place of worship for the Muslims.

⁷ The term *berobat* [traditional healing] in West Kalimantan has a connotation of mystical matters, such as treatment using the help of invisible beings, borrowing terms that are

is quite common in Lembah Beringin Village. An informant stated: “In Lembah Beringin there are many shamans, even more than those in Soruk. They (*Sinan*) still go to shamans and still give offerings. I also once accompanied a friend to see a shaman and look for medicinal herbs in the forest. At that time the plate we brought with us was empty. The *Sinan* shaman recited some mantra, and suddenly there appeared the bark, flowers, and seeds we were looking for.” (Selin, Personal Communication, 10 October 2021). A brief description of the conditions for traditional healing above is common in West Kalimantan in general. Traditional items are needed for the treatment itself, which are difficult to find now. These rare items can be replaced with money as gratitude or a substitute for the service a person does to prepare the items. One of the same customs practiced today is the custom of *Sinan* religious conversion in Lembah Beringin. The *Sinan* people in Lembah Beringin also practice *Pinah Laman*, which is practiced by the Mentuka Dayaks. Interestingly, when the individual *Pinah Laman* was issued according to custom, the two village chiefs and customary leaders from each hamlet were present to witness the *Pinah Laman* event. *Pinah Laman* is a common thing known to the Dayak Mentuka and *Sinan*.

When the researcher collected data about *Sinan*'s life, it was illustrated that the *Sinan* tradition has the same culture or customs as the Mentuka Dayak tribe in Tanjung Melati. The thing that distinguishes it is everyday items that are replaced with money. This is in line with the healing rituals described earlier in this section. Acceptance of *Salobar*⁸ or a joint agreement with the indigenous people indicating that the Dayak individual had converted to *Sinan* was welcomed by the *Temenggung Adat* [customary leader] of Lembah Beringin, and they continued with the *Pinah Laman* practiced by the *Sinan* people. Living together in a community in terms of unity in the management of Lembah Beringin Village does not make the Mentuka Dayaks change their religion. The new converts that we met knew Islam outside the Lembah Beringin Village. They are not afraid to change their faith because they know that by completing *Pinah Laman*, they can achieve their goal of conversion.

A convert believes that outside the Mentuka Dayaks territory, he found a religion that suits his identity, namely Islam. This is in line with the view of Lewis Rambo, who reported that the convert has goals to achieve, has future orientation, and is motivated when deciding to do a *Pinah Laman*. The experience of living in society has led the convert to find a new religion and

generally the same as activities related to shamanism.

⁸ *Salobar* is a statement or decision made by a customary council member or traditional leader declaring that a convert can become a *Sinan* and has been 'alienated' from the culture or customs of the Mentuka Dayak tribe.

provide a new path in life. *Pinah Laman* really affects the convert to strive for a better life. The fact that a Dayak individual who converts to another religion is still accepted by his family makes *Pinah Laman*, which at first looks difficult, become less complicated. The data collected during the research showed that the new convert lacked a profound understanding of the implications of *Sinan's* identity, which should live a life according to the teachings of Islam properly. This is reflected in *Sinan's* behavior, drinking liquor and eating pork during traditional events and private moments. (Rico and Unyil, Personal Communication, 17 March 2021)

The people in Lembah Beringin and Tanjung Melati have a similar social structure. A new life for the recent convert in Lembah Beringin as a new place to practice Islam's teachings is an appropriate description. Second, the traditional adat elders, both in Tanjung Melati and Lembah Beringin, mutually accepted those who do *Pinah Laman*, which shows that these two hamlets have solid connections or relations with each other. From the observation data collected in this research, we saw that these two hamlets' lives were going well. During religious holidays, they visited each other, and even during traditional events, they invited each other. In other words, the *Sinans*, who have new life goals by the new religion, have a place to accomplish their life goals and are protected by the customs of their respective hamlets.

“yang setau aku tih kesamaan adat atau ritual adat di Lembah Beringin tuk sama tamah yang ada di soruk nun, ... sistem kepengurusan adat a sama jak am, dituk pun ada gak pengurus adat a, missal a yak dituk ada gak tamongokng adat a, adat gak segala menteri-menteri adat a. tamah segala proses ngalaksana adat a yak sama jak am. Cuma yang di Soruk yak ada segala yang nama mangkok adat, babi, tuak a piak jak am. Jolu yak yang nyadi pokok adat a tih. Macam di Lembah Beringin tuk semua adat yang macam di Sotuk yak ganti tamah duit jak, misik istilah macam di Soruk yak ya. Apai jak jolu adat a yang di Lembah Beringin tuk samua di ganti tamah duit jak am. Ngalaksana a tih totap sama jak am yak a.” (Herianto, Personal Communication, 10 oktober 2021)

Meaning:

“as far as I know, the customs or rituals in Lembah Beringin are the same as those in Soruk, ... the conventional management system is the same, here we also have adat traditional elders, for example there is a *Temenggung Adat* [customary chief], there are also adat ministers. And the process of carrying out the custom is still the same, it's just like in Soruk, the custom is traditional bowls, pork, rice wine and the like, there must be something that serves as the main component of the

custom. Whereas in Lembah Beringin there is no such thing, here all the customs handed to the traditional elders are replaced with money, there are no other types, like in Soruk. ... all the violations of customary law in Lembah Beringin shall be replaced with money. The adat procession remains the same.”

The adat procession which the two Chiefs of the Villages attended is a reflection of inter-religious tolerance as well as inter-cultural tolerance. *Pinah Laman* does not alienate someone from their family or hometown. The demographic condition of West Kalimantan, which has a wide area with further development in each region, has brought a new mindset to the Mentuka Dayak community. Therefore, the Mentuka Dayak people who know a new world have new hopes too. This is manifested in their intention to change their way of life that suits them. It also happens in religious life. Those who know Islam because they study outside their hometown and feel Islam is suitable for them self-consciously declare to do *Pinah Laman*. The *Pinah Laman*, which was done by a new convert outside the territory of the Dayak Mentuka tribe, was described that outside their place of birth, they found something that moved them to have a different life with new habits. The Mentuka Dayak tribe has a religious lifestyle by the teachings of the Catholic religion, which are different from the teachings of Islam. This difference could generate new thoughts; one will do *Pinah Laman* because of the motivation to get a new and suitable life. In other words, *Pinah Laman* is also driven by inspiration, hope, orientation, and something related to one's conscience. We believe that the identity of *Sinan* is given to the Mentuka Dayak tribe. Even though a *Sinan* himself does not want to use the term. *Pinah Laman* occurs not only because of one's wish but because others make him interested and want to know more. This is not a form of the collectivity of various figures, but there is usually one figure who becomes a role model for him to change his religion. (Ritzer & Smart, 2012)

THE CONSTRUCTION OF *SINAN* IDENTITY

The construction of *Sinan* identity, particularly, had yet to be obtained during this research. Literature on *Sinan* is scarce because it is only found among the Mentuka Dayak tribe. The construction of *Sinan* identity needs to be viewed from the two designations for the two major tribes in Kalimantan, namely the Dayak and the Malay.

“In general, it can be said that the term *Dayak* is used to name non-Muslims who live in the interior of Kalimantan. This term was given by the Malays on the coast of Borneo, which means mountain. (Andriana,

2011; Mananta, n.d.; Riwut et al., 2003) This term is related to the word *Malay*, which is a term for people who come from the Malay area and speak Malay and live on the coast of Kalimantan and are Muslim.”

The construction of *Sinan* identity occurs when a Dayak embraces Islam. This is in line with the general view that the Dayaks are Christians or Catholics because those who later embrace Islam are no longer called Dayaks. Some call them *Senganan* or refer to them as “becoming Malay.” (Fatmawati, 2007) The term *Sinan* was used by Grandpa Akim, who reported as follows:

“Sinan ce naodant ka nya Melayu ce odant Bahasa saik se Sinan. Bahasa joman saik se, Bahasa Sinan ce Bahasa joman muntuh. Nya Melayu mpoda nya Dayak to kan nya doih. Nya doih to kan joman nyamuntuh saik se, nya doih to kan kayodeh monai nik tamikng sungi. Nya nik uut sungi to kan nya Dayak. Nya Melayu kan kant e se nya nik monai nik piking. Totap nik doih, nik tunu tona. Kan bala angok, banatakng ce nik piking. Nya doih ngan nik piking. Nya Melayu nik piking kan ideh uleh nsia bayunupm mpah ka Duyung ...Sinan to odant panggilan e mom.” (Akim, Personal Communication, 11 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

“Sinan refers to the Malays; formerly the word that was used [to call them] was Sinan. It was an old word. The word Sinan was [derived from] the old language. The Malays referred to the Dayaks as the Darat people. The Dayaks didn't live on the riverside; where those living on the upriver side were the Dayaks. The Malays were riverine people. According to the legend, riverine people couldn't live in the water in ancient times. [They] lived on land, on the ground. All fish and animals were in the water. Darat people lived in the water, too. The Malays couldn't swim like dugongs... Sinan was their nickname.”

Grandpa Akim stated that the term *Sinan* is a nickname. The old language (among the Mentuka Dayak tribe) referred to the Malays as *Sinan* people, which can also be interpreted as those (Mentuka Dayaks) who embraced the Malay religion, namely Islam. This is related to the disagreement regarding the view that in the past, the Dayak people were called Darat people because they did not live on the riverside, while the Malays were said to live in the (river) water. According to Grandpa Akim, this is incorrect because the Malays can't live in the water as humans cannot live in the water like dugongs.

The interview with Grandpa Akim shed light on a unique expression in the terms *Darat* people and “water” people. In particular, the term *Sinan* is given

explicitly as a nickname only for Dayak Muslim people. The *Temenggung* of Tanjung Melati said:

“deent ce tintikng ka Sinan lamp Bahasa Mentuka, mungkin basa Indonesia e ce ngutan. Nik asli e deent ce saik se kan nya Dayak manto ce ikunt e Dayak, Bahasa Islam e Mualaf. Ikunt e ncela ...padahal sabonar e odup e ce ikunt e Dayak tapi Sinan. Tapi padai nyonsik hal nik mpah manto dah kotui manto ce biasa mom, padai nya Dayak ngan nya Sinan sabonar e bujoi agama mom ngan pamakant e jak baloikng tapi gik cukup kuat nahan modup basama nik bake.”(Temenggung Adat Tanjung Melati, FGD II, 15 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

“They are referred to as *Sinan* in the Mentuka language, possibly *ngutan* in the Indonesian language. Originally they used to be Dayaks, but now they are no longer Dayaks; in Islamic terms they are called *Mualaf* [convert]. We don't criticize... A person like that is just an assumption on his part that he is a Dayak when he is no longer one but a *Sinan*. But seeing things like this is normal so far because the Dayaks and the *Sinans* are only different in religion and food but still hold fast to tolerance.”

The *temenggung* of Tanjung Melati hamlet interpreted that the term *Sinan* means *ngutan* (a term of the Mentuka Dayak language), which according to him, is a derivation of the Indonesian language. He explained that this term gives meaning to Dayak people who embrace Islam. His words can be interpreted by referring to the Mentuka Dayak tribe, who are Catholic. If the Mentuka Dayak people are not Catholic (in this case, Muslim), that person is no longer said to be a Dayak. This causes the Mentuka Dayak people who convert to Islam to be called *Sinan* or *Mualaf*. As the *Temenggung* of Tanjung Melati, he did not want the term *convert* to have a negative connotation expressed through his statement that he did not criticize.

The term *Sinan* according to the *Temenggung* of Tanjung Melati Hamlet, is simple. The Dayaks and the *Sinans* have differences in food and religion because, in Tanjung Melati, they hold fast to tolerance between religion and the practice of their tribal customs.

“kalua beda Sinan ngan doih ce memang am. Kalua odup e dah turunt Sinan, odup e dah pinah am. Kalua Melayu ngan Sinan ce odeh ga beda e, kalua nik tintikng Senganan ce nya Melayu katurunt nya Dayak. Kalua Melayu nik asl ice katurunt niti Raja, nik sobut ka Abang. Ce baka e nik sobut ka Melayu. Tapi dah baoh manto ce bacampoi am. Kalua

nya Senganan ce kabangant e nya Dayak. Nik istilah e katurunt Melayu kajoman Raja saik se, ce kona paksa harus turunt. Ce tintikng Sinan.”

Meaning:

“There are, in fact, differences between *Sinan* and *Doih*. If one has become *Sinan*, he has changed to *Sinan*. The difference between *Sinan* and Malay is *odeh*. If you call them *senganan*, they are Malays of Dayak descent. A real Malay is a descendant of a king titled *Abang*. That’s a Malay. But now it’s mixed up. For the *Senganans*, many Dayaks are said to be descended from the Malays because they were forced to convert during the time of the Kings. They are called *Sinan*.”

This is different from the views of other Mentuka Dayak traditional elders, such as the view of the Chief of Pantok Hamlet, which is the center of the Mentuka Dayak customary council. The chief of Dusun Pantok said that *Sinan* is another term for *Senganan* used by the Dayaks. However, the term *Sinan* is typical among the Mentuka Dayak tribe, so there is no equivalent of the term with the Malay designation. This identity transformation is related to cultural displacement. There is no prohibition on changing religion, but there are separate warnings for people who will change religion. If the person concerned already has a firm intention, and has been given a warning that changing faith comes with inevitable consequences. That person will be subject to the custom of changing culture. An informant said:

“padai nsia maah sabonar e ideh tao pinah budaya ce lah kakuatan e. kalau nsia longk nak nokap, odant e to kona adat. Kalau nyamuntuh e ngidah, odup e totap nak barubah, odeh adat e. kalau odup e nokap, maka kona tuntot adat.” (Husin, FGD III, 16 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

“So because our people can’t change culture, that’s strength. If a community member wants to be reckless, that’s what we call it. It’s subject to customary law. If their parents forbid them, but they want to proceed, there is customary law. If they are reckless, they will be prosecuted through customary law.”

The quotation above illustrates that to change religion or culture, parents have a role in guarding or forbidding their children because of the habits practiced in the life of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. However, a person who wants to change religion, in this case in his position as a child, and is determined to do so, will

be prosecuted through customary law. In this case, it is also implied that the risk of religious conversion is the change of Dayak culture to a culture that is not Dayak anymore. In the Focus Group, Discussion held on March 17, 2021, in the Pantok hamlet, there was an in-depth discussion regarding the term *Sinan*, namely:

“kalau dah pinah, sacara identitas niti kaluarga totap, tapi agame loikng. Memang deent ce kalau dah pinah ce odant e Sinan, menurut Bahasa Mentuka e. nik sabut ka Sinan, Sanganan, atau Nyage ce talalu kasar gila bagi deent ce. Deent ce togo narima kona sobut mpah maen. Deent ce lebih ngon al bala odup e ka Melayu.” (Riki, FGD III, 16 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

“if one has changed [religion], his family identity remains the same, but the religion is different. In fact, when they have converted [to another religion], they are called *Sinan* according to the Mentuka language. The designation of *Sinan* or Sanganan or Nyage⁹ is derogatory to them. They may find it difficult to accept that designation; they prefer to introduce themselves as Malays”

Riki, Head of Tanjung Melati Hamlet, argued that the Mentuka Dayaks who had changed their identity, have their family identity unchanged, in the sense that religion had changed. The ethnic identity changed to become Malay because the use of the terms *Sinan*, Sanganan, or Nyage is regarded as derogatory. The converts who live in Tanjung Melati hamlet prefer to use the term Malay as their new identity.

“Melayu ce Bahasa alus e, Bahasa daerah. Nik tintikng nya Dayak Mentuka ce Sinan. Jadi deent nyobut bala odup e Melayu, padai deent ce pinah agama.” (Aket, FGD III, 16 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

“Malay is the appropriate term, the regional language. They call the Mentuka Dayaks *Sinan*. So they call themselves Malays, because they have converted to another religion.”

According to Aket excerpted from the discussion above, the Malay term for the convert is a subtle designation in the regional language. The correct term

⁹ The term Nyage is a Muslim Dayak term in the Nanga Mahap area. This term is a term that has a negative connotation or has a rough accent when spoken among the Mentuka Dayak tribe.

is *Sinan* because it comes from the Mentuka language. The term Malay is used after a religious conversion.

“deent ce nik pinah niti suku Dayak Mentuka biasa e ce lebih panatik niti nya nik asli e. waktu ulang tahun dah babeda am. Deent ce mincakng bala panyantak dodup mom. Ntah padai onih deent ce. Maka e Senganan atau Sinan ce budaya, ciri khas nya Dayak ce dah ayap am. Pas dah pinah agama deent ce dah tarikat ongan ajaran agama Islam.” (Husin, FGD III, 16 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

“those who change religion in the Mentuka Dayak tribe usually become more fanatical than they originally were. During the birthday party, they were different.¹⁰ They brought their utensils. I don’t know why. So Senganan or *Sinan* is a culture; their Dayak characteristics are gone. When they have changed religion, they are bound by the teachings of Islam.”

Bang Jiman was not interested in discussing the use of the terms. He prefers to invite the FGD forum to discuss the conversion issue. The converts usually become more fanatical than they were initially. In other words, converts are more passionate than those born Muslim. For example, the converts’ life also changes in the designation of different birthday. When they return home, they bring their own utensil. This is in line with Pak Husin’s statement in the previous section. Bang Jiman also did not understand why this happened. This change in lifestyle makes the converts lose their identity. It would be difficult to call them Dayaks because the teachings of Islam bind them.

“Kalau odup e gulokng, balome Islam to nak pinah agama ka nya Dayak, baoh manto kalua dah lamat-lamat ce obu agik, ce odeh adat e ... kalua dah pinah ka Melayu, deent ce ikunt e Dayak agik ... ce kan dah ntigal agama to odeh adat e, kalua kayodeh adat e, adat e gik odeh ... kalua odeh nik bapinah-pinah, kona adat nipu agama. Odup e nak nyaga kabagos agama e.” (Jiman, FGD III, 16 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

“if he wants it, we Muslims want to convert to the Dayak religion; now it’s been a long time since they’ve run away again; there’s customary

¹⁰ The difference in the year among the Mentuka Dayak tribe is based on the calculation of the Hijri year and Leap year. A customary council member of the Mentuka Dayak tribe views that a person’s age or the birthday of a *Sinan* based on the Hijri year calculation.

law for that... when they become Malay, they're not Dayak anymore... leaving religion requires customary law, if there is no customary law, this religion is useless... no longer Dayak, then after renouncing religion, the customary law is still there... if someone changes religion back and forth, he will be subject to customary law for cheating religion. It will keep the religion clean.”

Grandpa Akim's statement emphasized Pinah Laman's position related to ethnic identity. If the Mentuka Dayak people want to “jump the fence,” they have lost their customs as Dayak people. If the person is half-hearted in making his choice, then the customary practice will be useless because the Mentuka Dayak tribe's customs cannot be separated from their religion (Catholicism). If he changes religion, he will be subject to even more severe customs for toying with faith.

Pinah Laman brings changes in ethnic identity for the convert. In collecting data regarding this change, it was assumed that the use of the word *Sinan* for the Mentuka Dayak convert was not final because there were two conflicting parties. One party accepted the term *Sinan* because they believed that the word *Sinan* was the correct term for a convert with various supporting reasons, and one party did not use the term *Sinan* for specific reasons. “In West Kalimantan, if a Dayak converts to Islam, he tends to reject his identity as a Dayak and is considered Malay. In West Kalimantan, a Malay does not have to be someone of Malay ethnicity because a Dayak who embraces Islam also becomes a Malay... A Dayak who later converts to Islam no longer calls himself a Dayak but a Malay and no longer uses the Dayak language but Malay.”(John Bamba, 2008)

The Dayak identity that is lost and becomes *Sinan* is the identity given by the traditional elders of the Mentuka Dayak tribe and the Mentuka Dayak community. However, the converts still regard themselves as Muslim Dayak. They do not want to give up their Dayak identity even though society says otherwise. Generally, society finds it difficult to accept them as Dayak because the *Sinan* are far more fanatical about implementing Islamic teachings than the Muslims themselves. For example, when the *Sinan* return home, they bring their cutlery and cooking utensils. They do not want to use their family's cutlery and cooking utensils even despite being made available to them. Families respect them by providing a separate table or place for Muslim families. But in reality, they always bring their cooking utensils and cutlery. Even though this is difficult for the family and society to accept, over time, the family and community inevitably take the habit of the *Sinan* to maintain a good relationship.

The *Sinan* identity is full of Islamic religious values, so their religious attitude is seen in their pattern of life. This spiritual attitude is maintained as their identity and personality, causing them to carry out the teachings of the religion they embrace steadily. Such a religious attitude gives rise to excessive obedience and leads to fanaticism. Therefore, the spiritual perspective of an adult tends to be based on the selection of religious teachings that can provide inner peace based on common sense considerations. (Jalaluddin, 2019; Rambo et al., 2014). Fearon's theory was used to construct the *Sinan* identity in three forms: identity legitimacy, identity resistance, and identity projects. (Fearon, 2020; Jalaluddin, 2019) This theory was used to see how the construction of the *Sinan* identity is preserved in the customs of the Mentuka and Dayak tribes and the polemic on the use of the *Sinan* identity in society. The projection of the *Sinan* identity is a symbol of the expression of traditional elders who have experience in *Pinah Laman*.

IDENTITY LEGITIMACY AND RESISTANCE

The first form of Fearon's theory is Identity Legitimacy which the traditional elders of the Mentuka Dayak tribe created. The traditional and customary elders of the Mentuka Dayak tribe in Pantok, Nanga Mahap, and Tanjung Melati address pinah laman in the customary book of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. This *pinah laman* procedure has been "patented" and cannot be contested by anyone. This custom is also used as a guide from one generation to the other. The term *Sinan* used as an identity for the convert from the Mentuka Dayak tribe is a special term given by the customary administrator to the convert. This identity is given without asking for the convert's approval but is automatically accepted by the convert. The term *Sinan* is nothing new among the Mentuka Dayak tribe, but the meaning of *Sinan* has not been adequately understood by the Mentuka Dayak people.

"Odant Sinan ce asal e niti bahasa nya Dayak Mentuka. Ikunt e bahasa baoh tapi niti ine boyak deent ce, ideh kona nangkoingk, atau nangkoingk masyarakat adat Mentuka. ... samua masyarakat Dayak Mentuka samua e dah ngantao Sinan ce odant nik kona nambola ka osih ngan osih baka e. padai nik lamp adat pinah agama, masyarakat ongan kona nunangk ka acara dook dan saogont dook bala pamakant nik dah kona nontangk pelayan kona nampoda yoyi e onih tujuan odeh acara e ce."

Meaning:

"The word *Sinan* comes from the native language of the Mentuka Dayak people. Not a new language but from their ancestors, not artificial or

written by the indigenous Mentuka people. ... all Mentuka Dayak people know that *Sinan* is a title or nickname given to whom and who the person is. Because of the custom of changing religion, the community is invited to a meal. Before eating the dishes provided by the waiter, they are explained the event's purpose." (Husin, FGD III, 16 March 2021)

The second form of this theory is the identity resistance generated by the convert in a position that receives *pinah laman*. Opposition arose when we asked about the convert's identity after *pinah laman* to the convert and the traditional elders of the Tanjung Melati hamlet. Opposition arose when they did not want to be called *Sinan*.

"... *Walaupun balome bapinah, balome totap suku Dayak padai balome katurunt nya Dayak.*" "... *totap Dayak, sukuk an ideh tao nubah.*" (Rosa, Personal Communication, 13 Maret 2021)

"... *kayodeh parubah e. ome totap suku Dayak.*" (Anna, Personal Communication, 13 Maret 2021)

Meaning:

"... even though we change [religioun], we are still Dayak because we are of Dayak descent."

"... still Dayak, ethnicity can't be changed."

"... no changes. I am still a Dayak."

The same thing was stated by Utuy (70 years), who said: "they are still Dayak. In other words, Muslim Dayak." (Utuy, Personal Communication, March 16, 2021) This statement was made because his son had become a *Sinan*. The statement above is part of the resistance on the convert's side and traditional elders that we met. In an in-depth interview, among the conventional elders who said they were still Dayak, they unintentionally said their children had experienced *pinah laman*. This shows that there is a reason why the traditional elders did not give the *Sinan* identity to the convert, despite knowing the consequences of *Pinah Laman*. In interviews and FGDs held in Pantok hamlet, it was explained that the Mentuka Dayaks did not want to experience sadness because some of their tribe members left. They do not wish any Dayak people to go to their Dayakness. We found the same thing in Jenkins' explanation of the meaning of the identity (Jenkins, 2008; Maunati, 2004): The converts consciously recognize the characteristics of the ethnic identity they choose. They do not want to use the term *Sinan* because they know the meaning of *Sinan*, which is no longer Dayak. They do not want to lose their interaction with the Dayak identity. However, in this case, the traditional elders know that

the convert cannot be forced to become a Dayak again.

The Mentuka Dayak tribe releases the obligation of the convert as a Mentuka Dayak from everything related to the customs of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. A *Sinan* will not be prosecuted if he does not practice the traditions of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. For example, in the case of drinking rice wine at traditional events. Drinking rice wine in the traditional event of the Mentuka Dayak tribe is an obligation for the Mentuka Dayak people. If they do not want to practice this custom, they will receive a separate customary sanction because of their Dayak identity. *Tuak* [rice wine] is an obligation in the traditions of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. Therefore, people who do not drink it will have an issue in terms of ethnic identity. The identity issues above can be found in a *Sinan*. He is free from the custom of drinking rice wine or the like because the Mentuka Dayak tribe already knows the name *Sinan* as a person who has converted to Islam, and they cannot force the *Sinan* to drink rice wine. The Mentuka Dayaks respect Islamic teachings and do not want to ruin the human relationship with God. If the Mentuka Dayaks force the *Sinan* to drink rice wine, then the Mentuka Dayaks themselves will be prosecuted under the customary law by the traditional elders. Rice, wine or the like, and pork is traditional food and drink that must be present in the traditional rituals of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. These two standard items cannot be replaced because they have their essence, especially in the customs of the ancestors of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. If these two traditional items are only served without being consumed by the Mentuka Dayaks, then it can be said that they do not respect the customs of the Mentuka Dayak tribe's ancestors. They understand this as a custom that lives and is preserved for generations.

IDENTITY PROJECT

The third form of this theory is the Identity Project which refers to the conversion in terms of substituting social positions and changing social structure. Sadness because a Dayak individual who renounces his Dayakness does not need to arise because *pinah laman* facilitates or cures the sadness the family and the Mentuka Dayak people feel. Everyday items used to perform the *pinah laman* ceremony have the meaning of replacing the soul, locally known as *kuronkg samongatn*. This shows that one's Dayakness, or the convert's Dakakness, still exists in the village where the convert was born. The convert's Dayakness does not disappear because it is replaced with traditional items; even *Pinah Laman* allows the convert to explore and practice Islamic teachings even better. Changes in the social structure of the *Sinan* in their hometown are no longer a big issue but become a struggle in itself when

they meet with the community. The *Sinan* identity does not appear during a convert's socialization with people. The convert focuses on which identity makes him safe and uses it as needed. The convert we met as a Catholic said he was a Muslim Dayak.

Changes in the social structure of the *Sinan* are in part because they have left their hometown. This is supported by information regarding the difference in the customary fine imposed on the convert from the family of the customary administrator. A convert from a family of traditional elders has to pay a sizeable customary fine to ensure the traditional elders' family is not negligent in guarding his family. Traditional elders, of course, know the history of *pinah laman* very well. Therefore, their family serves as a model of the life of the Mentuka Dayak tribe. If it is found that someone deviates from the customs of the Mentuka Dayak tribe's ancestors, the special customary fine for the family of traditional elders is multiplied. The customary items are given not only to the traditional elders of the Mentuka Dayak tribe but also to other Dayak tribes, such as the Nanga Taman Dayak, Kerabat Dayak, or other Dayak tribes in Nanga Mahap Sub-District. Fearon and Afif expressed the same thing regarding the definition of identity. "Identity is one's feelings about himself, character, and origins. Although it is closer to our more recent understanding of identity than the earlier notions we have alluded to, it is still more descriptive of 'self-image.'" (Fearon & Afif, 2020)

CONCLUSION

The concept of the identity project as *Sinan* has its history based on one's character and origins. The new identity given by the traditional elders was not for nothing. *Sinan* means breaking away from the Dayak tribe by embracing Islam. The new identity as *Sinan* emerges because the teachings of Islam are not by the customs of the Mentuka Dayak ancestors. The self-image of *Sinan*, which is more oriented towards life by the teachings of Islam, should appear in the *Sinan's* life, and the Dayak identity, which is also part of *Sinan's* identity, as reported by a convert, makes their *Sinan* identity ambiguous. The ambiguity lies in *Sinan's* situation, which is incompatible with the Dayak people's pork-eating and rice-wine-drinking habits. *Pinah Laman* is when a Christian or Catholic Dayak converts to Islam. It comes with social sanctions he receives from his social group. For the Mentuka Dayaks, when a person decides to change religion, he must be willing to give up his Dayak ethnicity. These social sanctions include: not living with the Dayak tribe, not being able to attend traditional Dayak ceremonies, and not wearing traditional clothes like a real Dayak (for women). The social effects experienced by those who change

religion in the Dayak tribe are, among others, they are given the nickname or term *Sinan*. Based on the research results, the word *Sinan*, according to the writer, has a negative connotation. This is because those who change religion are ultimately not given the freedom to practice the Dayak customs as usual.

Pinah Laman is a comparison between ethnicity and religion. This process of unification of customs and religion indeed results in a person not being able to use his free will as a human being to choose and determine which religion he should embrace. A Dayak is synonymous with Christianity or Catholicism, just as a Malay with Islam. This certainly hurts religious life due to dualism, where humans can no longer distinguish between custom and religion. The problems and research findings above provide ideas that can minimize social and religious issues arising from the practice of *Pinah Laman*. First, the traditional institutions should separate themselves from or not use the concept of religion in practicing their time-honored traditions; traditional institutions run by conventional leaders should strengthen the tolerance between Mentuka Dayaks and *Sinans* in terms of traditional events. The tolerance values found in the *Pinah Laman* custom is a confluence between ethnicity and religion, which leads readers to pluralism, tolerance, and religious moderation for the sake of building harmony between different nationalities, races, religions, and groups. Religious freedom, based on one's conscience, should serve as the basis that humans are created with freedom.

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