

Against in Loyalty:

Politics of Identity and the Arts of Resistance among *Suku Ana kRawa* in Penyengat, Siak, Riau Province

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A. Background

AnakRawatribe or is also called *AsliAnakRawatribe* (or *Asli* tribe in abbreviation) is one of the indigenous people in Riau, besides Sakai tribe at Bengkalis, TalangMamaktribe at Indragiri Hulu, Petalangantribe at Pelalawan, Akittribe at KepulauanMeranti, and Bonaitribes at Indragiri Hilir. Naturally, indigenous people in Indonesia or in all over the world, at least, face two groups that always push their agendas: state and corporate. *AnakRawatribe* in Penyengat also faces this condition. State, by the reason of civilization and modernization, push them to change social, cultural, and their identity. They usually live nomadically at jungles and river. But, by the state, they pushed to stay in one place. In nature, they are indigenous religion believer (animism and dynamism), but then they being force to become one of religions believer that is legalized by state. Today, at school, *AnakRawatribe's* students study specific religions, although in their daily live they is not the believer of the religion.

At the same time, *AnakRawa* tribe also facing repressive conditions, at least, from three companies which are operate in their area. The three companies are RAPP (April Group) which is focus in the plantation industry, Petro channel operating in the mining and oil and gas sectors, as well as Triomas FDI focusing on palm oil plantations. These three industries have an impact on narrowing *AnakRawa's* living space. Hunting, mixing medicine, and fishing that they used to do as their living livelihood, slowly but sure, can not be done because the forest and the land has belong to the company's concession area. They are dealing with a system of market economy which is totally new for them. Modernization and the crowd of industry activities at Penyengat make them losing their living space and culture identity.

This paper will explore forms of resistance that AnakRawa's tribe do towards state and corporation. The explanation is starting with thesis that the routine repression they faced forces them to make response strategies about outsiders. Although, at a particular degree, they accept agendas from outsiders, basically their acceptance is a kind of resistance. I want to show that identity strengthening that they do in these few years is one of the resistance strategies against outsiders. Through this explanation, I want to show how the loyalty, which is showed in daily behavior of the community, in fact is representing resistance towards the domination of super-ordinate group: state and corporate. In other to systemize explanation, this article divided into five sub-chapter, that is introduction, Penyengat and ethnography setting, religion conversion as form of resistance, resistance message in self-mentioning, corporate and against in loyalty, and conclusion.

B. Penyengat and ethnography setting

AnakRawatribe is settles in Penyengatvillage, one of sub-district in Sungai Apit district Riau province. This 52.000 ha village is about 63 km far from district main town and about 196 km from Pekanbaru, the center of Riau government. From Pekanbaru, it's about 4 hours needed to get to this village using personal transportation with a speed about 60-100 k/h. If using public transport it will be needed 5 or 6 hours to get to this village. Previously, the only access to the village is the river and sea transportation. The access using land transport is only start about two years.

Based on district monograph, rural population of the village is 305 heads of household or about 1.250 souls (Monographs District, 2011). More than 90 percent of the ethnic is AnakRawa tribe, the rest divided between ethnic Malays, Javanese, Ambon, Batak, and Papua. My informants at Penyengat tell me that their adventure arena also includes the Kampar River in Pelalawan and Tapung in Siak rivers. But, since the residential relocation program from

government in the early 1980s, most of them have settled in the Penyengat village. This settlement was built at Tanjung Pal, a sub-district which is now become the center of the village government.

The residential relocation program is one of the leading treatments from the government to modernize them. A political construction after independence of Indonesia is always identified them as isolated communities, remote indigenous communities or isolated tribes. They are placed outside the orbit of civilization. Along with this program, government facilitating number of empowerment programs to transform them to the condition that is perceived as modern society or civilization society. However, there are a lot of people considered that the relocation as a part of state strategy to make exploitation of natural resources at the region more easily. This can be seen with the issuance of Hak Penguasaan Hutan (HPH), Hutan Tanaman Industri (HTI), oil palm plantation and exploitation of oil and gas in their neighborhood. The exploitation of natural resources is eliminating their access to the area that was originally a cruising arena in their economic needs.

C. Religion Conversion as Form of Resistance

At the end of 1980's, all of Anak Rawa tribe at Penyengat is animism believer (a kind of indigenous religion). Indigenous religion is the main identity of their belief. But, nowadays, majority of Anak Rawa tribe statically note as one of legal religion follower. In other hand, at the same time, factually they still practice their indigenous religion. They said that they converse to one of legal religion as a strategy to deal with state regulation that is only recognize six religions.

Their acquaintance with the legal state religion is not really last long. Islam and Christianity were introduced around the 1980's as residential relocation program. A pastor

named Gea informs that HKBP Church (Batak Christian Protestant Harajoan) was built in the 1980's. Catholicism was introduced to them about a decade ago. Panthekosta church was built in eight years ago. It is has not found yet a description of the initial presence of Buddhism, though certainly the introduction of AnakRawa's tribe with religion much earlier. When censuses of population "requires" local religions noted as one of the legal religion, they prefer to be recorded as Buddhist, although in reality they are still believer of local religions.

The presence of new religions can be accepted easily though with varying degrees of acceptance. Buddhism gets the most revenue, followed by Christians, both Protestant and Catholic. Islam received the least. There are only a dozen heads of household of AnakRawain Penyengat which are Muslim. The rest of Islam believer were supplied from migrants who already reside in the village. Based on district monograph in 2011, about 41.53 percent of the population is reported as Christian (both Protestant and Catholic), followed by 33.71 percent is Buddhist, Islam etc. at 8.79 percent, and local religions (animism and dynamism) of 7.66 percent. But, people need to be careful in reading the data about believer of native religions and beliefs. Since the majority of indigenous people factually are believer of local religions, the official government data always shows the opposite.

Local religious is reserved by regulation is can not be denied. But, AnakRawa's tribe is always discriminated due to the local religion they profess. While in the Penyengat, I found a student that her participation as competition delegation in district level was canceled because the committee requires each delegate must have a birth certificate. Meanwhile, the parents of the student are not able to show her birth certificate because they were done in customary marriages. My informants tell me that, in order to get a marriage certificate from the civil registry office, a person must have pocketed the marriage letter issued by religious authority, Christian, Buddhism, or Islam. This means that they do weddings in the name of religion. It is often found, when faced difficulty taking care of the civil administration—such

as citizen cards, marriage certificate, or birth certificate for children—as they still the believer of indigenous religion, the option available is to write the name of one of the legal religion in the identity of their population, although in fact they are not necessarily believes in the principles of the religion’s teachings.

During fieldwork, I often find in a household made up of many religions, although these numbers will never be found in the data published by the government. Navid, an officer in the village census records, say uniformity of religion in the family—although sometimes in fact did not like that—is done to facilitate the processing of administration in government offices. Orang Asli quite accommodate and tolerant of one’s option to convert into one of the legalstate religion, though only a few of them are actually based on the desire to run new religious beliefs. This phenomenon needs to be understood as a way of “losers” to express resistance against state repression. Their “on paper” could have followed government regulations by claiming to be believer of one of the legal religion, but “in the field” they remain religious beliefs.

One thing needs to be added here is thatAnakRawa’s tribe trend toconverting to Buddhism, Protestantism, or Katotik, and only a few among them who choose to convert to Islam is no coincidence. In a conversation, Mr. Kade told me that the reason of AnakRawa tribe prefers to convert on Buddhist, Protestant or Catholic, because these three religionsdo not prohibit someone to eat pork. This is different with what they perceive from Islam as a religion which expressly forbids its believer to consume pork. In my opinion, this option is, on the one hand,shows the degree of urgency of pig inAnakRawa’s cosmology culture, not only for consumption but also as part of their identity. But, on the other hand,it also shows that conversion to one religion remains within limits that can guarantee continuity of tradition and identity. Thisphenomenon is also showing the importance of identity in the community. These forms of resistance are carried out in order to maintain the identity of the AnakRawa’s

tribe.

D. Resistance Message in Self-Mentioning

Identity is believed to be something inherent in the nation, a community or even a person. Sometimes identity is only one imagination of certain circles of people or communities outside them (Maunanti, 2004:23-31). Because, as said by Joel S Kahn, what is become a culture, which is considered as the identity of a particular community, is part of the process of the previous cultures were constructed. It is not solely so, there is also a dynamic linkage and interaction between construct and context (Kahn, 1995:129).

Anak Rawa tribe has its own pattern in shaping representation about themselves. In daily conversations, Anak Rawa tribe always called them selves as “we”, although in Indonesian language word “we” is refer to plural pronoun. Word “we”—in Malay communities—is considered more polite than “I”. This word is always replaced by word “I”, although this word is more formal impressed. The using of word “we” for individual “self” is implies the strong communality or solidarity.

For “others” which are not considered as a part of Anak Rawa tribe, though they are close, is used “our people”, for example “our Javanese people”, “our Batak people”, etc. In this case, the term “our people” is refers to “other peoples” or people outside their community. In other hand, word “our people” is also shows an effort to “hug” them into their interaction scope. The term “our people” is never be used to Anak Rawa’s tribe members. It shows that this term is only for them who are outsiders. The using of “our people Malays”, “our people Jambi”, “our people Javanese”, “our people Islam”, etc is still used in the situation that they are arguing.

They show their negotiation with various powers from outside in forming a narration about their identity. Government, anthropologist, and also culturist are also contributing in

building representation about their identity. Legal construct of New Era government to Reformation Era is portrait them as isolated and uneducation ethnic. Based on Navid, the majority of Orang Asliis refuses that construction, although there are also correct it hiddenly. About naming, Orang Asli also can not be separated from outsider's construction about them. The selection of the name in the official letterhead statements wedlock issued by traditional leaders such as writing: "AnakRawa tribe Marriage Certificate". On the other hand, the government prefers to use Akit tribe to identify the name of this community. According to Mr. Kehong, in terms of self-naming, they sometimes use Akit tribe name to adjust the terms used by the government. Navid said that the use of Akittribe name by government is showing the government's ignorance of the history of the origins of the Orang Asli in Penyengat. According to Navid, Akittribe name is addressed to the original that is using a raft drifting during conflicts named tragedy LancuDarah. While our tribe AnakRawa, said Navid, never washed, so that can not be called Akit tribe.

Resistance against such representations is expressed in the use of the term "indigenous people" in self-identification. In everyday conversation, they call themselves as "authentic/Orang Asli". But the state refused to use it term. Researchers estimate that the rejection of the state to use this term is related to political implications posed this word. When the term Orang Asli contextualised in their authenticity associated with mastery of a particular area, it is contrary to the view that the land, earth and water is state property. Since the term Orang Asliis connected with a matter of geographical environment, of course it is contrary to the desire to control the region.

E. Corporates and Resistance in the Loyalty

Their acquaintance with RAPP began when construction of Futong bridge in 2003. Futongharbour was built as a means of transporting forest products from the Kampar Paninsula. Futong bridges actually is not a marker for beginning operations, because as noted RAPP began operations in Riau in 1995, or about 12 years before the construction of the Port Futong in Penyengat. Before that, the Orang Asli bothered when companies are bagging permit logging devastated forests around them. Some economic resources that lost due to the presence of the company and lead to forest loss roam space in search of economic resources is reduced. Previously, people rely on the forest for hunting pigs, looking resin, gathering firewood, until logging (illegal logging). Hunting pigs is a livelihood that identifies the Penyengatselfhood.

The life history of the AnakRawa tribe is identic with hunting pigs. Their cruising arena is very knowledgeable. Every curve of the river is traced by canoe. TasikMetas, RiverRawa, River Mungkal, and TasikBelat are places that are identical to the arena of pig hunting and fishing activities. Previously, when the forest is still vast, they could easily get a lot of catches. But after the company operates, they narrowed the hunt arena. Not many of those who now rely on the economic resources of the pig trap. Resin and non-timber forest products are also other woods which are now hard to find because most of the area is the area of company. They could no longer freely in and out to find the resin. Obviously this fact is reduces access to economic resources. Currently there are still some people that their daily activities are searching for resin. Most of them are women. In the morning, the women go to the woods to look for amber. They got a few pounds, maybe around 10-20 pounds if lucky. There are middlemen who ready to buy the resin. When this research was conducted, resin prices ranging between Rp. 1500/kg.

Previously, people rely on the strait in front of their village as a place to catch fish. But after the company operated, there are higher traffic intensity and pontoon boats. This condition

is reduces fish catches. Besides that, the more important is that activity of pontoon and boat traffic is the death threat for the canoes of the fishermen. The victim died from a hit by a pontoon boat has happened several times. Society traumatized by the incident. The number of fishermen decreased. Mr. Kehong tells about two years earlier that there are about a hundred heads of families who rely on fishing profession, but in 2011 only a dozen are relying on fishing activity as a source of livelihood. Previously, fishing can be done day and night. Nowadays, people rarely go down to the sea at night. Genesis recently, where a fisherman was hit by a pontoon boat still leaves trauma in the community.

They also complained about the destruction of mangrove forests along the strait due RAPP pontoon parked and leaned into the mangrove trees. They protest against the destruction of mangroves and demand compensation for restoration of mangrove forests. Unfortunately, the company has refused to sue. When the community complaint for damages of the mangrove forests resulting by the company, it is responded by asking the public to calculate the damage, as well as the cost of recovery. The village government records landslide lands and forest restoration plan that the concept takes a long time. Then if assessed with costs estimated at about Rp. 300 million until the completion of the restoration project. However, this proposal has no response from the company. Our informant said that the delegation from the company had come to the village with an envelope containing about 14 million for the village head, but this provision was rejected by the village head firmly.

Indigenous people have its own strategies in expressing resistance against poaching of natural resources in the village: on the one hand, by selectively embracing corporate agendas, while continuing to prepare a strategy of resistance to external domination which narrows their children and grandchildren future. While rejecting the company's presence, for example, some community members are also willing to work at the company. Along with their openness to communicate with the company, they also voiced calumny, critics, and

demonstrations rejected the presence of the company. They attend the organized agricultural training that held by company, but also join NGOs invitations, like Jikalahari and Scale Up, to jointly fight against the corporate strategy. Against the loyalty is the best word to describe the response of AnakRawa tribe against the corporation.

a. Village Meeting and Geocultural Mapping

The story about the efforts of AnakRawa tribe facing corporate domination can be traced since 2004. At that time, they demonstrate the location Futong port development. They protest because the land is shifting the plantation and seized without compensation. Even some temporary shelters belonging to the company dismantled. Besides demonstration, they bring a lawyer to sue for damages, even though until now the effort is to no avail. In 2004, they were demanding access to jobs in companies such as RAPP and Petro Strait.

At the beginning of the construction of Futongport, there are many people involved as casual laborers. The company promises that in early 2000 they will accommodate people as labor mollify the public of the presence of RAPP. But after the construction is completed, and the number of non-permanent employees reduced to the remaining few, they rallies demanding a firm commitment. Demonstration ended clashed and resulted in some members of the public were injured. Although these cases were reported by the police, there is no further investigation.

Starting at 2008, the civil society organizations in Pekanbaru, such as Walhi, Jikalahari, Scale Up, cooperation with international NGOs, such as the Forest Peoples Program, advocate civil rights of indigenous people in the Penyengat village. The presences of these NGOs are used by AnakRawa tribe to discuss the problems they face. The social institutions have a program of one to three years to advocate AnakRawa tribe facing corporate presence. Scale Up encourages outsiders to respect civil rights in the use of land in their village. Jikalahari

encourage the involvement of AnakRawa tribe propose Kampar Paninsulanpeat swamp forest area as protected forest. A small gathering at the village level and inter-village meetings in Kampar Paninsula in gathering support and attitude with the presence of the company was held.

In 2009, Scale Up facilitates the mapping of the village to resize and trace the use of space in the past. Of course, the mapped region is time-consuming, even more than one year it can be done successfully. HaryOktavian, Deputy Director of Scale Up, said that mapping is an effort to map the AnakRawa tribe geokultural. Based on the results of this mapping, Anak Rawa tribe successfully move their spatial concept in a concept on paper so that their aspirations related to the management of village spatial can readily known outside parties. It is, of course, very helpful their struggles to face corporate domination.

b. Identity Revitalization and Its Problematic

In the past, AnakRawa tribe has a system of government spiritualthat is the source oftheir management of socio-political life and culture. AnakRawa tribe is known very strong in holding the customs and traditions of their ancestors. Through this institution, they preserve traditional leadership that are often much more authoritative than the formal leadership of the country. But, with the issuance of UU No. 5 tahun1979 on the system of village governance, institutions spiritualwere abolished.The loss of social institutions has impact on political and social life and culture.

Responding to the situation, the elite society of Penyengat village hasinitiative to revitalizedcustomary institutions to strengthen their cultural identity. The elite people believe that they need to unify their view for stronger voice in the fight for their rights. These efforts include initiating festival conducted by tribal customs involving native in various areas in Bengkalis, Pelalawan, Kepulauan Meranti and Siak. Indigenous cultural festival that was first

held in 2009 in the Penyengat village is planned to be performed regularly in different villages of the indigenous population centers.

This phenomenon is an initiative of AnakRawa tribe effort in reconstructing a new narrative about themselves. Have a traditional institution appears to be one way of showing that the AnakRawa tribe really have its own custom structures for the various problems they face today. Perhaps their traditional laws that have been found to back it certainly was not the exact same as the one before, when they were still nomadic life. This law is a relatively new creation—asa response to modernization that often ignores their old customs. Through their efforts to imagine the image of AnakRawa tribe in the future and have different bargaining position is relatively better in the presence of outsiders, both states and corporations. This is one expression of identity politics AnakRawa tribe in order to survive their community in face the ongoing changes massively. Resistance towards repression that they experienced is done to re-strengthening their identity.

F. Conclusions

Explanations above reveals the dominance of the state and corporations to AnakRawa communities ongoing systematic and structured. Starting with the state's efforts to localize their settlement tradition moving into settled housing, removal spiritual government system, pressures to convert into one of the legal state religion in the name of civilization effort, to identity constructions arbitrary of the AnakRawa tribe. Meanwhile, at the other, the presence of large capitalist firms seeking to exploit land and natural resources in this region, without a mechanism involving AnakRawa tribe has disrupted their lives; necessarily reflect the dominance that was working. The presence of these companies had helped change the social structure and culture of their narrow living space.

Pressures and problems of systemic resistance triggered AnakRawa tribe. They developed various ways to strengthen cultural identity and their own identity. Strengthening

identity seems pretty effectively improve the bargaining position to the company. They also build alliances with civil society organizations in Pekanbaru to voice their aspirations related to land use management and spatial planning. They face state and corporate domination through a combination of accommodation and resistance. On the one hand, they resistant to the presence of the company but they also open up the access to economic resources provided by the company. This strategy is considered the most likely made in connection with objective reality AnakRawa tribe community as a group that had been marginalized. Resistance in loyalty, in other words, is a phenomenon which is by James C. Scott called gun of losers (weapon of the weak). This is the way AnakRawa tribe in Penyengat expressed resistance to repression and domination they feel.[]

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