

The Ideology Behind the Power Relations of *Punggawa-Sawi* in Bajo Ethnic Fishermen in North Tiworo, West Muna Regency

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Abstract

The power relations that arise in the life of Bajo ethnic fishermen are predominantly influenced by the ideology practiced by the superior group, *punggawa* to control *sawi* as an inferior group. The purpose of this study is to analyze the ideology behind the power relations of *punggawa-sawi* in Bajo ethnic fishermen in North Tiworo. The method used was a qualitative approach with data collection techniques namely observation, interview and document study. The results of the study showed that the ideology of power, the ideology of capitalism, and the ideology of religiosity are the ideologies that cause the existence of power relations of *punggawa* to *sawi*. The ideologies are used by *punggawa* to lead, control and manage the social, economic, political and cultural life of *sawi* fishermen to get the maximum profit while fulfilling all the interests and desires of *punggawa*.

Keywords: Ideology, Power, Capitalism, Religiosity, *Punggawa*, *Sawi*

1. Introduction

Bajo ethnic groups recognize the sea as they know themselves. Bajo people love the sea because it is considered as part of their lives so it cannot be separated from the sea. One of the most basic reasons for this is the belief that their ancestors came from the sea, lived in the sea, and as sea rulers (*mbombonga di lao*). Thus, the sea provides livelihood, goodness, health, disease and the sea also protects it from disaster (Trisnadi, 2002: 37).

The daily life of Bajo ethnic group in North Tiworo in relation to the social, economic and cultural systems is classified as still very traditional. Traditional systems that are formed largely depend on the rules or norms of social, cultural and economic relations that grow in every action. Traditional traditions and customs are maintained so as to make it easier for bourgeois groups to easily enter and control them. The effect of this is the creation of the social relations system for *punggawa* and *sawi*. The social relation between *punggawa-sawi* in Bajo ethnic fishing community in North Tiworo formed a patron-client bond which at the beginning was the purpose of the relationship between *punggawa* and *sawi* in fishing and sharing the fishing results balanced and fulfilled a sense of justice between the two.

Mattulada (1986: 34) sees the past patron-client relationship as an institution that functions to maintain the collective order and social and economic security for its members. In life on the boat, according to him, there is no clear difference in status and role between *punggawa* and *sawi*. However, the entry of modernization of fisheries since the second half of the 1970s indirectly created a differentiation of the role of work in cooperative organizations that strengthened capitalism. The difference in the profit sharing system in turn affects the reduction of income portion of each group member in relation of *punggawa* and *sawi*.

Along with the development of globalism and capitalism, *punggawa* began to recognize the trading system with traders from outside the Bajo ethnic group. The result is that *punggawa* begins to carry out capitalist practices and power by establishing relations outside the Bajo ethnic group. *Punggawa* as a capital owner with the ability tried to master *sawi* fishermen to always work hard with the aim of getting greater profits while always being able to meet the needs of the market which from time to time continues to increase. In addition, *sawi* fishermen are required to be loyal and obedient by following the rules set by *punggawa* even though they are aware of their detriment.

The entry of globalization and capitalization has changed the social relations between *punggawa* and *sawi* as superior and inferior bond. Trading systems of fish, sea cucumbers, crabs, squid, shellfish and seaweed are

managed entirely by *punggawa* by utilizing *sawi* as labor. For the sake of fulfilling the growing market needs, it takes a lot of *sawi* fishermen. This phenomenon proves that Bajo ethnic society in North Tiworo is able to carry out socio-economic mobility through business expansion towards modern production by practicing the capitalism ideology applied by *punggawa* against *sawi*. The capitalism system practiced by *punggawa* in utilizing *sawi* is not only limited to the socio-economic aspects, but to the fundamental aspects of *sawi*'s life like the religious system. The situation is described by (Kumbara, et al, 2016: 3) that the flow of globalization and modernization has led the ideology of capitalism and materialistic rationalism to transformation not only in the socio-cultural and economic aspects, but also the system of diversity of society.

A change or shift in the pattern of patron-client relations between *punggawa* and *sawi* in Bajo ethnic in North Tiworo, potentially cause some problems. For example, the distribution of capital and uneven income, poverty that continues to occur, and even has the potential to cause conflict between interest groups. If it is ignored, it will cause disharmony between Bajo ethnic groups of *punggawa* and *sawi*. In line with this, Scott (1993: 91-92) states that patron-client relationships originate from the giving of goods or services in various forms that are very useful or needed by one party, and the party that receives the goods or services is obliged to reciprocate the gift.

Changes that occur in *punggawa-sawi* relationship because the relationship between them hangs in relations that are not balanced or unfair in the distribution of income. The binding of this norm relationship is more determined by its function and role of *punggawa* as the main character for all *sawi* who is employed by binding them to loans for money, household goods, and protection or willingness to prepare assistance when needed. The characteristics and behavior of the relationship between social norms of *punggawa* and *sawi* determines the level of relations among Bajo ethnic groups in North Tiworo. In principle, *Sawi* prefer to work with their own relatives rather than having to be governed by others. But it is not realized that the "*spirit of capitalism*" of *punggawa* groups can harm the *sawi* group not only in social relations, but also economically. Based on that, it is important to study the ideology behind the power relations of *punggawa-sawi* in Bajo ethnic fishermen in North Tiworo, West Muna Regency.

2. Research Methods

This study used a qualitative approach. Qualitative approaches have important characteristics that lie in meaning, message, process, and the absence of distance between subject and object of research that is open and scientific (Ratna, 2009: 48). This research was conducted in Bero Village, Mandike Village, Santigi Village, Santiri Village, Tasipi Village, Tiga Village and Tondasi Village, North Tiworo District, West Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province.

The Sources of data in this study are primary data sources and secondary data sources with the determination of informants using purposive and snowball techniques. Data collection uses observation, interview, and document study techniques. The collected data were analyzed in qualitative descriptive.

3. Results and Discussion

Ideology is a rationale or idea that underlies logical thinking which then makes the idea as a guide in *life* in accordance with the ideas and thoughts. The word ideology can be considered as a broad vision and a way of looking at things. In general, ideology as a collection of ideas, basic ideas, and beliefs that is systematic and provides direction and goals to be achieved in the national life of a nation and state (Budiman, 1996: 21). Ideology is an attempt to define the meaning and world view that supports the ruler and maps of meaning which, although it looks like universal truth, but actually are historically specific understandings, envelop and perpetuate the power of social groups (Barker, 2005: 515). Helmut (1980: 110) gives three explanations about ideology. First, ideology is an expression of human dogmatic thought (reflection on distorted reality). Second, the doctrine of world views (e.g the ideology of the proletariat, capitalism, etc.). Third, as a science, ideology aims to build a system of knowledge.

Ideology is the glue of social relations that brings community members together by applying values with collectively agreed upon norms. Domination of strengths and relationships are reflected in the power of words and discourses. The social meaning of ideology is also constructed in discourse so that solidarity and solidity are maintained (Thompson, 2003: 18). Dijk in (Helmut, 1980: 109) states that ideology is a system and a basis for socio-political knowledge of a group. Ideology is able to organize group behavior which consists of overall opinions arranged schematically about relevant social issues. Based on this definition, a Marxist thinker who is often associated with the concept of ideology, Louis Althusser, argued that ideology is actually a mechanism by which elite groups impose interests and beliefs on the masses in a society (Lewis, 2008: 398). In this study, found three ideologies that exist behind the power relation between *punggawa* and *sawi* in Bajo ethnic fishermen in North Tiworo, namely the ideology of power, the ideology of capitalism and the ideology of religiosity. For more details described as follows.

3.1 Ideology of Power

The Ideology of Power is the ability of a person or group of people to infuse influence on others so that action is in accordance with their wishes and desires. In Bajo ethnic social system in North Tiworo, *Punggawa* is present as a capital owner who is able to regulate and control the social and economic life of *sawi*. In an effort to perpetuate its influence, *punggawa* lends some capital to *saw* fishermen in the form of money and also prepares all equipment and necessities in the form of production equipment that cannot be provided by *sawi* with various conditions and regulations that must be obeyed when given or loaned to a *sawi*.

The production tools that *punggawa* gives to *sawi* in the process change into a form of legitimacy of *punggawa* against their *sawi* that is bonding and controlling the *sawi*. *Sawi* fishermen in North Tiworo in carrying out the sale activities of their catches from the sea, are always based on control according to the rules determined by *punggawa* as the owner of capital and means of production as a result of the consequences of borrowing capital and production equipment borrowed by *sawi*. On the other hand, the *sawi* will be more careful in selling with other *punggawa* in order to maintain the trust of their *punggawa* who lend them capital. Even almost all *sawi* fishermen justify any treatment from *punggawa* toward them. *Sawi* fishermen never have enough strength to fight *punggawa*.

Through mastering fishing tools technology, *punggawa* play an important role in strengthening their position as superior. This power makes *punggawa* have a clear and definite control system to assert their power in front of *sawi*. Bajo ethnic fishermen in Tiworo Utara really depend on the technology and accept all changes that are determined by *punggawa*. Absolute trust in *punggawa* as the owner of the power that rests on capital is able to influence the activity of *sawi* in fishing and this is used by *punggawa* to get the maximum profit. A *punggawa* plays an important role in the process of collecting marine resources and all parts of the production management of fishermen's catches.

The existence of *Punggawa* and *sawi* is basically an inseparable series, both in economic, social and political aspects. As a form of participation and realization of *sawi*'s compliance to *punggawa*, then each catch of the sea is never sold to the other *punggawa*, and *sawi* never moves and serves the other *punggawa*. *Punggawa* as the owner of power and capital can maintain their power to expedite their business by forming a power network with other *punggawa* and outside merchants so that it is increasingly binding on *sawi*'s life as a whole so they can not do anything against the influence of their *punggawa*'s authority. Therefore, *sawi* with all the abilities they have is directed to continuously fulfill all the needs and interests of *punggawa*. The lack of knowledge and ownership of sea-fishing technology tools owned by *sawi* causes them to get worse and easily controlled by *punggawa*.

Punggawa as the holder of the highest power control in the structure of the fishermen's work becomes more existent. Their direct relationship with outside merchants becomes a force of power that continues to hijack *sawi* for the sake of their interests and profits. In the siege of power from various relations built by *punggawa*, the position of *sawi* became dependent and helpless.

3.2 Ideology of Capitalism

The ideology of capitalism is a tool to facilitate the achievement of the interests of *punggawa* in controlling aspects of the production of Bajo ethnic fishermen in North Tiworo. This ideology of capitalism controls the economic life of *sawi*'s fishermen; this is done by *punggawa* by building a trading network with traders from outside such as from Java and Surabaya. In the impetus of this capitalist ideology, *punggawa* applies a system in accordance with their will and desire to gain profit. To achieve this, *punggawa* carried out mastery of important aspects in the life of *sawi*'s fisherman. One of them is by utilizing the poverty of *sawi* family by lending money to help overcome its economic difficulties.

Capital is a natural obstacle for *sawi*'s fishermen in terms of starting their business as a fisherman. The *sawi* who borrows money will be bound by the conditions set by *punggawa* to control the sale of the catches of *sawi* fishermen. *Punggawa* as the owner of the capital has the right to buy every catch of *sawi* based on price the *punggawa* sets. This shows that the power of the *punggawa*'s capital becomes a very effective tool in regulating and controlling *sawi*. The pattern of loan repayments is made in installments taken from each sale results from *sawi* to *punggawa*. If a *sawi* wants the debt to be paid off quickly, there will be a bigger price cut and certainly will be very detrimental to *sawi*.

In carrying out market capitalization, the big *punggawa* creates small *punggawa* under his control by giving capital and then distributing it on other islands in North Tiworo to recruit fishermen to be his *sawi*. The fishermen who lack capital to carry out their fishing activities, will accept the offer with the consequence that all the results of their catches cannot be sold to others. The marine catches collected by the small *punggawa* are then handed over to the big *punggawa* and then distributed to outside traders.

Punggawa is a supplier of business capital and financial assistance who is very instrumental in determining the activity of *sawi* fishermen. In this case, it is placing *sawi* as an inferior group and *punggawa* as a superior group that controls *sawi*'s life. In addition, the function of *punggawa* who becomes a distributor of fishermen's catches makes his role and status stronger in intervening and exploiting the income sources of *sawi*.

In addition to capital issues, there are other central problems that are often faced by *sawi* that is borrowing capital to meet the needs of household when entering the tide season. This means that the sea season does not last all the time, so that the results obtained are also small, such as in the tide season and in moonlight season (*tilla wulan*). In the uncertainty and risk of the crisis, often makes *sawi* shackled by the amount of operational costs incurred every time *sawi* go to sea and even experience losses. To overcome these difficult times, there are no other choices that *sawi* have besides must borrow some money to *punggawa* whatever the risk.

The existence of *punggawa* is felt to be very beneficial for *sawi* in overcoming difficulties. Bajo ethnic society who seems consumptive, make them unable to regulate their financial condition. In their daily life, if they get a lot of catches, then their expenses will increase according to the money they have at that time. This then makes them do not have saving that is sufficient to solve various kinds of debt and their daily needs properly.

The ideology of capitalism applied by *punggawa* in fisheries business is firmly rooted in the socio-economic life of *sawi* fishermen. The capitalism system curbs *sawi* into a model of debts that never breaks which has an impact on the low purchase price set by *punggawa*. In addition, the creation of a market monopoly by *punggawa* makes *sawi* have no other choice in selling their catches to their *punggawa*. The power of capital in the capitalist ideology run by *punggawa* makes *punggawa* have the power that is able to move and influence the aspects of the social and economic life of *sawi* family.

Punggawa people understand the substance needs of *sawi* people, making it easier to create *sawi* dependence on them. In this condition, *punggawa* people usually play a role so that *sawi* will continue to depend on them by offering additional capital loans to *sawi*. For example, by offering to buy or borrow new equipment. In addition, *punggawa* will continue to try to make their *sawi* to remain bound by various means such as offering new capital loans to develop equipment or offering services to buy the needs of *sawi* household, so that *sawi* has a relationship tied to *punggawa*.

In such a situation, *punggawa* get benefits because the more the *sawi* debt, the longer the repayment process will and cause the sales price to remain in the control of *punggawa* and multiply the profit. In addition, another strategy adopted by *punggawa* is to create an emotional bond of kinship by giving gifts to *sawi* on every major day such as Idul Fitri and Idul Adha. This implies that even if *sawi* people have paid off their capital loan, they will not replace the *punggawa* because they assume that their relationship is not only limited to the capital lender but also has become a family who can provide assistance when needed.

Behind the various ways which *punggawa* usually do is actually only business oriented. The main purpose of *punggawa* is to get personal benefits through the fishing catches of *sawi* that is sold to *punggawa* in accordance with the initial agreement. Meanwhile, the problem of capital loans is not questioned by *punggawa*, because fixed capital can be paid through the deduction of sales of catches. Therefore, the ideology of capital applied by *punggawa* will not provide welfare to *sawi*. The power of the *punggawa*'s capital has turned into a power relations system that is able to control *sawi*'s life.

The ideology of capitalism directs the way of thinking and acting the owners of capital to always master and conquer *sawi* activities by mastering the production system to get the maximum profit. *Sawi* helplessness in dealing with *punggawa* hegemony is caused more by the lack of capital and knowledge. These conditions make *sawi* cannot open network access to larger outside traders. On the contrary, *sawi* can only rely on the supply of demand and the giving from their *punggawa*. This condition keeps the existence of the ideology of capitalism in socio-cultural life, of Bajo ethnic especially for *sawi*'s life.

In the interests of capitalism, *punggawa* expand their business activities by utilizing various weaknesses of *sawi*. The strategy applied to strengthen its existence is by applying capital loans. Capital is an instrument to create *sawi* dependence to *punggawa*. Capital is the main weapon for perpetuating *punggawa*'s capitalism ideology. Through this pattern, *punggawa* play a role in determining the market price for *sawi*. The ideology of capitalism finally goes in the same direction and only gives benefits to *punggawa*.

3.3 Ideology of Religiosity

The beliefs of Bajo ethnic towards the supernatural beings who control the sea, do not cause any concern for them to continue fishing. When going to sea activities, Bajo fishermen actually glorify sea dwellers who they usually call grandmothers in the sea such as *bombonga ma dilao*, *mbo janggo*, *mbo tambirah*, *mbo dunggah* as guards

during the fishing. The mention of this name is always hidden and changed to grandmother because the sacredness should not be named. This is believed to be a belief that if the mention is wrong it can offend the dwellers of the sea so that it can bring bad things. Any activity carried out in the sea is always preceded by various rituals, both before going to sea and after going to sea.

Bajo ethnic has an order in carrying out their activities as fishermen. Before going to sea, they first perform a ritual called the ritual of repeling bad things to happen (*nyalamak ma dilao*) or avoiding calamity and asking for the salvation and sustenance of the Almighty God during the sea activity. When they don't do fishing activity, they do a ritual called *mole palibu* performed during the moonlight season (*tilla bulan*) as an expression of gratitude for the sustenance and salvation given by the Almighty God to them while at sea.

One of the benefits of the belief is the control of the attitudes and behaviors of Bajo ethnic community in their daily lives, especially when they go to sea. Arbitrary treatment of the sea is believed to bring various calamities to their lives as a result of the punishment from the sea guard. Obedience and adherence to the religious system is utilized by *punggawa* to control the attitude of *sawi* fishermen. The religious system in belief to the sea guard, contributes to strengthen the power and influence of *punggawa*. This is due to the belief that the sea guard can communicate with shaman (*sandro*). Through this *sandro*, *punggawa* entered and gave *their* influence by controlling the *sandro*, the obedience of *sawi* to *sandro* gives impact to *punggawa*.

The belief of *sawi* to the supernatural beings that exist in the sea makes all of their activities more religious by being filled with various understandings and taboos in life (*pamali*). This was then used by *punggawa* to do covert hegemony to fulfill all their demands and interests. Religious values embedded in a *sawi* make it easy to obey and behave as it is without resistance and rebellion. While *punggawa* do not attach importance to these values in their business matter but only pursues profit.

In the social life of Bajo ethnic people who believe in the sea spirits also believe in the ability and knowledge of *sandro*. *Sandro's* duties and responsibilities are to lead traditional rituals and ceremonies. Every pray offered by *sandro* is believed will protect the fishermen from calamity and can bring sustenance as expected. However, if they do not believe the prays from *sandro*, it can result in reduced sustenance, and there will be damage to sea equipment or frequent calamities.

Punggawa who present with their business interests in life of Bajo ethnic community utilize the religious aspect as a space to control *sawi* through *sandro*. The *punggawa* then begin to form a power relations network with the *sandro* to smooth their intentions and interests. *Sandro* is empowered and utilized to control *sawi* so they keep obeying *punggawa*. This power relations network runs smoothly and indirectly makes *sawi's* life getting worse with the level of prosperity of their family that does not experience development every time. The *sawi* people still routinely carry out capital loans and consider the existence of *punggawa* as the helper and savior in their difficulty. The attitude of religiosity that is used by *punggawa* for their business interests places *sawi* in a weak position because they are confronted with *sandro* as a *punggawa* trustee in leading every ritual they do.

In addition, the belief in taboos (*pamali*) in the life of Bajo ethnic has a special meaning and a role that is so important in carrying out their life activities as a fisherman. *Pamali* is run and adhered by Bajo ethnic fishermen and will not be violated, as for example when taking seawater using rice pots, it will cause fishermen can not get any catches at sea. That belief makes Bajo ethnic community have a compliant, obedient and prudent attitude to their fellow human beings and nature. These obedience and compliance make Bajo fishermen in North Tiworo easier to be controlled under the belief and religion systems. Bajo ethnic fishermen are very obedient to the existence of *pamali*, because it is believed that if it is violated, it will experience bad luck and difficulties such as a catch that is not maximal, even for themselves and their possessions. Religious values grow in every fisherman. The belief system that turned into a view of life in *sawi* fishermen then became a tool for *punggawa* in managing the social life of *sawi* culture.

4. Conclusion

An ideology plays an important role in shaping the power relation of *punggawa* to *sawi*, that ideology includes power, capitalism and religiosity. The ideology of power is a tool that is used by *punggawa* to influence and control *sawi* life by way of hegemony to achieve the goals and interests of *punggawa*. Then, the ideology of capitalism applied by *punggawa* by establishing a trading system that places them as the owner of capital, by providing assistance to various kinds of loans to *sawi* with the aim to get the maximum profit without regard to the welfare aspects of the *sawi* family. While the ideology of religiosity is a belief system of Bajo ethnic community that is used by *punggawa* to influence and control the *sawi* attitude so that they are always obedient to *punggawa* by utilizing the existence of *sandro* as a respected person.

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