

TALES OF TWO CITIES: THE LIFE OF MANGGARAIAN DIASPORA IN MAKASSAR AND SAMARINDA

Ans Prawati Yuliantari¹, Sukapti²

¹Universitas Katolik Indonesia Santu Paulus Ruteng

²Universitas Mulawarman

tia.yuliantari@gmail.com¹, sukaptiregis@gmail.com²

ABSTRACT

This article aims to identify Manggarai culture as an effort of the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar and Samarinda to preserve the relationship with their place of origin. This article's research question is how the Manggarai diaspora uses cultural elements in the two cities to maintain relations with their native culture? The anthropological approach is used to see how the Manggarai diaspora maintains their relationship with Manggarai culture, while identity theory is used to see cultural relations as an effort to maintain Manggarai identity. Primary data was obtained by interviewing five respondents in each city, while secondary data came from journal articles and books that support the research theme. The research shows that the formation of regional organizations, the implementation of traditional ceremonies, and social activities are tools to stay connected to their original culture.

Keywords: diaspora; manggarai; identity; culture

INTRODUCTION

The Manggarai people in the western part of Flores Island have a philosophical view of “do lako do ita”, which can be translated as the more they travel, the more experience they have. This concept encourages them to move out of their territory. Although this concept refers to the search for experience when travelling outside their area, the departure of Manggarai people to various regions in Indonesia can be temporary or permanent.

The philosophical basis intertwined with various other determinants such as; economic conditions, education, acquaintances or family invitations, and information from the media encourage more and more Manggarai people to migrate

outside their villages or villages (BPS Kabupaten Manggarai, 2020). This migration formed the Manggarai diaspora in various cities.

These various determinants cannot be separated from local conditions. Manggarai as a cultural unit is geographically located in the western part of the island of Flores, while regionally, it is divided into three districts, namely Manggarai, West Manggarai, and East Manggarai or described by Deki & Regus (2011) as Manggarai Raya or great Manggarai. The primary sources of income of the three regions are agriculture and plantations. Manufacturing and creative industries are not yet developed, so the types of work of the population are limited. Furthermore, imitations in the education sector also

accompany limited employment opportunities, pushing young people to continue their education outside the island.

The destinations for the Manggarai people to migrate are Sulawesi and Kalimantan. Makassar, as the capital city of East Sulawesi, has historical and cultural ties to Manggarai dating back several centuries, but the city has also been a significant destination for the Manggarai diaspora since the 1960s (Senaman, 2019). Meanwhile, the ease of transportation and the development of the plantation industry in Kalimantan has made Samarinda a new migration destination for the Manggarai people. This city, located in East Kalimantan, attracts agrarian-based job seekers from Manggarai.

Migration outside the region causes them to meet various cultural identities. The encounter, on the one hand, enriches multicultural views but, on the other hand, strengthens the desire to revisit the roots of the original culture. This article attempts to identify the cultural elements used by the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar and Samarinda to stay connected to their area of origin. Identifying cultural elements for maintaining this identity needs to be done as a first step to seeing the concepts that bind the Manggarai diaspora overseas.

To see the various cultural elements used by the Manggarai people in the two cities to connect with their place of origin and identify them, the research question in this article is what the Manggarai diaspora uses cultural elements in the two cities to maintain relations with their native culture?

Based on this identification, it can be seen that the Manggarai

identity is preserved overseas by forming regional organizations, conducting various traditional ceremonies, and carrying out various socio-cultural activities. Activities are carried out regularly or incidentally according to the needs and agreements of their communities.

The Manggarai diaspora overseas has become the object of study by several researchers, including Senaman (2019), who focuses on the life of the Manggarai people in Makassar. Other research is based on popular culture as a representation of the migration of the Manggarai people (Yuliantari, 2020; Yuliantari, Lon, & Widyawati, 2020). Meanwhile, studies on the identity and diaspora of Indonesians in the Philippines, Southeast Asia, Belgium, and Taiwan have been reviewed by experts (Talampas, 2015); (Princess, 2017); (Tan-Cullamar, 1993); (Maglana, 2016); (Wibisono, Legionosuko, & Yuninda, 2017); (Yuniarto, 2016). Likewise, particular ethnic diaspora such as Javanese and Madurese, and Bugis (Prihartono, 2016); (Pujiriyani, 2021); (Sasongko & Wahyuni, 2013); (Mansyur, 2011) (Aulia, Bosra, & Bahri, 2021); (Suwitha, 2016). However, the cultural values of the Manggarai diaspora overseas have never been discussed in several cities. This study needs to be carried out because the behavioural patterns of the Manggarai diaspora overseas can show a pattern of connection with their region or culture of origin.

METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research using an anthropological approach. This approach is needed to see the cultural elements maintained by the Manggarai

diaspora in both cities to stay connected to their cultural roots. In addition, this approach is also suitable for interpreting the cultural symbols chosen by the Manggarai diaspora to maintain their identity overseas.

The primary source of this research is the results of interviews with ten people of the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar and Samarinda. The interview method used is an unstructured and open interview (Creswell, 2016). The method was chosen so that participants could express their views and opinions about diaspora life in Makassar and Samarinda. Secondary sources are obtained through a literature review of journals, books, and newspapers that follow the object of study.

Data analysis begins with data transcription, classification based on themes, reading data, and connecting similar data (p. 263). The last step is data interpretation and article writing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A person or group must have a reason for migrating to a place. One of the basics of migration is the historical connection between the origin of migrants and their destination. Therefore, the study of the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar and Samarinda begins with the historical relationship between the two regions and Manggarai.

The historical relationship between Makassar and Manggarai has existed since the kingdoms of Gowa and Tallo (Toda, 1999). This relationship started with trade (Nur, Purwanto, & Suryo, 2016) to the placement of Makassar trading posts in the Reo and Pota areas in the northern part of Manggarai. This relationship seems to have influenced

the migration path of the Manggarai population to Makassar, which began to thrive in the 1960s (Senaman, 2019).

The results of Senaman's research are also supported by Ali, one of the Manggarai diasporas in Makassar who has decided to return to Manggarai.

“Saat saya ke Makassar tahun 1990-an, telah ada sepupu dan keluarga dari Bapa yang telah tinggal di sana selama beberapa generasi. Merekalah yang menampung saya sebelum saya tinggal di tempat kos untuk bersekolah.” [When I went to Makassar in the 1990s, there were cousins and family from my father who had lived there for generations. They were the ones who accommodated me before I lived in a boarding house to continue my study]

Meanwhile, the relationship between Manggarai and Samarinda only started in the 1990s. The Chairman of IKAMBA, the primordial organization of the Manggarai people in Samarinda, said.

“Kami ke Samarinda tahun 1997. Saat itu industri kayu sedang berkembang pesat di Kalimantan, dilanjutkan dengan maraknya perkebunan kelapa sawit. Kedua industri itu mendorong orang pergi ke Kalimantan karena banyaknya pekerja yang dibutuhkan.” [We went to Samarinda in 1997. At that time the timber industry was growing rapidly in Kalimantan, followed by the proliferation of oil palm plantations. Both industries encourage people to go to Kalimantan because of the

large number of workers needed]

The large number of job opportunities in Makassar, as a feature of a large city, and the large number of workers needed by the timber industry and oil palm plantations in Samarinda in particular and East Kalimantan, in general, have caused Manggarai people to move and look for a job in the area. This vast opportunity is also coupled with the limited employment opportunities in Manggarai. This region with an agrarian economic base does not have an industry that can absorb many workers, while changes in people's lifestyles and economic orientation due to access to communication and globalization cannot be avoided.

The consequence of out-of-region migration is the encounter with different identities. According to Linhard & Parsons (2019) "Belonging or alienation has a fundamental impact on an individual's security, sense of self, and mental and physical health. Furthermore, "identity" has been mainly used in the singular, it should be clear that the term does not stand for a unique and fixed notion but is instead a life-long process of negotiation that in the case of migrants becomes particularly visible and important and at times a matter of life and death. (p. 9)

To quote Nira Yuval-Davis, "[...] these negotiations oftentimes appear in [a] narrative form supporting the idea that "identities are narratives, stories people tell themselves and others about who they are (and who they are not)." (p.8)

Based on the above opinion, the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar and Samarinda undergo a process of identity negotiation regarding their local identity and origin. In this critical

series of negotiation processes, the Manggarai diaspora continues to try to identify itself with its area of origin and, at the same time, adapt to the overseas area. Identification of the area of origin occurs in the Manggarai community, while adaptation efforts are carried out in the face of various identities overseas.

One way to embrace the identity of origin overseas can be done through several cultural elements that connect them to their hometown. These cultural elements can be in the form of customs that are still practised overseas, the creation of primordial organizations, sports or artistic performances that display regional uniqueness, and the use of language in the family or communication in groups. Based on the results of identification in the field, the cultural elements used by the Manggarai diaspora to stay connected to their hometowns are; first, forming regional organizations such as IKAMBA (West Manggarai Family Association) in Samarinda. This organization was founded in the 2000s but initially only consisted of people from Manggarai who came from West Manggarai. It is only in 2020 that every Manggarai in Samarinda can become a member of this organization. Dilan said it.

"Kami bergabung dalam IKAMBA sebagai organisasi persaudaraan orang Manggarai. Meskipun namanya Ikatan Keluarga Manggarai Barat tetapi anggotanya terdiri dari orang-orang Manggarai yang berasal dari dua kabupaten lainnya [...] hanya organisasi ini yang aktif di Samarinda, jadi kami bergabung ke dalamnya." ["We are members of IKAMBA as a brotherly organization of the

Manggaraian people. Even though it is called the West Manggarai Family Association, its members consist of Manggarai people from two other districts [...] only this organization is active in Samarinda, so we joined it.]

Although IKAMBA refers to one area, West Manggarai, the organization's membership comes from two other districts. Meanwhile, regional organizations in Makassar are more in the form of sub-district-based organizations e.g. Kerukunan Rahong Utara Sulawesi Selatan or Rahong Utara Community in East Sulawesi as Tarsi put it,

“Organisasi orang Manggarai di sini bukan per kabupaten, tetapi per kecamatan. Jadi ada organisasi dari berbagai kecamatan [yang berasal] dari tiga kabupaten [di wilayah Flores bagian Barat]. Tiap organisasi kekeluargaan itu membantu anggota yang berasal dari wilayahnya.” [The Manggaraian organizations here are not per district, but per sub-district. So there are organizations from various sub-districts [from] three districts [in the western part of Flores]. Each organization helps members who come from its territory.]

It follows the results of Arda Saniman's research (2019), which says that the Manggarai people in Makassar form regional organizations based on their original sub-district area. These organizations are open and managed in the sense of familiarity.

Another method used by the diaspora Manggarai to remember their native culture is conducting various traditional ceremonies. Ceremonies

that are often carried out are *cear cumpe* (giving a name for a newborn baby), *kumpul kope* (collecting donations in the form of money for family or neighbours who need financial support), and *pesta sekolah* (a party intended to collect provisions for a student who will continue his education).

Cear cumpe (giving a name for a newborn baby) is still maintained in Manggarai families who have children overseas. This naming ceremony invites members of their groups as thanksgiving and strengthens brotherhood. Guests send gifts or donations to the host as a congratulation on the birth of their child.

Other events carried out by the Manggarai diaspora overseas are collecting donations in the form of money for families or neighbours who need financial support. There has been a shift in meaning from the *kope* gathering overseas, in this case in Makassar, where the event was initially intended to provide financial assistance for people who are about to get married, then turned into a fundraising event for various activities. Today's collection of *kope* is also intended to help students' children who need money to finish their studies or take final exams at the undergraduate level. Even though this activity is more suitable to be called *pesta sekola* (a party intended to collect provisions for a student who will continue his education), in reality, most of the Manggarai diaspora call it a *kope* gathering. However, the Manggarai diaspora in Samarinda continues to hold school party ceremonies with the same functions as in Manggarai. They run *kope* gatherings and school parties in their groups.

Another activity that shows identity and connection with hometown in the Manggarai diaspora in both cities is the implementation of cultural activities and sports. In Samarinda and Makassar, the Manggarai community organizes Caci activities (physical fights between men using traditional Manggarai clothes and tools). Caci activities or Caci dance performances are carried out at certain events, such as the celebration of independence every August, as well as events to commemorate essential days in the area where they live. The Caci show, which is mass in nature, attracts diaspora residents to be involved in it. Likewise, football matches are an effort to strengthen relations between Manggarai residents in Samarinda and Makassar. The football match that has been going on for years in Makassar is the Komodo Cup in Makassar. According to Senaman (Senaman 2019), this football match is the primary node of the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar. Various sub-district-based organizations sent their representatives to the competition. The enthusiasm of the Manggarai people was so great that the Makassar city government paid particular attention to it. Besides that, the match was held for several days using a large stadium for its implementation.

Meanwhile, in contrast to the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar, the football participant groups in Samarinda are based on their domicile area. The football team that competes in Samarinda consists of Manggarai people who come from various sub-districts in their place of origin but work in the same district in South Kalimantan. So, their teams are based on the name of the district, sub-district, or plantation area where they live.

Most of the Manggarai people who migrated to Makassar and Samarinda are couples, although some are married residents or migrants from other islands. Migrants of the same culture, in social gatherings or events that do not involve other parties, always use the Manggarai language. Likewise, direct communication is always done in the Manggarai language. The use of this language is due for two reasons. First, tribal language shows closeness, intimacy, and a sense of kinship overseas. Communicating in one language creates a deep sense of familiarity and unity. Second is the use of the Manggarai language in an ethnic association as a marker of identity that distinguishes it from other ethnic groups in the environment with various identities.

Meanwhile, families from two tribes usually use the Manggarai language in a limited way to members of the same ethnic group living in their homes. Other family members, such as wives or children, use Indonesian. Nevertheless, the Manggarai diaspora still introduces their homeland through stories or the involvement of family members in events held by the overseas Manggarai community.

Apart from similarities in cultural elements used from the place of origin, there are also differences between the Manggarai diaspora in Makassar and Samarinda. This difference can be seen in the Reis concept, which is recognized by the Manggarai diaspora in Samarinda. Reis is a greeting to fellow Manggarai residents through various activities. Reis becomes a cultural bond that distinguishes their identity from the various identities found overseas and a common thread that connects them with their home region. Reis's concept

makes the identity negotiations passed by diaspora overseas easier to accept. The sense of security from being a part of a particular identity strengthens the negotiation of the various identities around it.

The Manggarai people in Makassar do not implicitly state that they have a particular concept that connects them to their place of origin; however, the formation of various regional-based organizations or the implementation of traditional ceremonies and the development of indigenous cultures overseas with the establishment of art studios explains the process of attaching the identity of the original culture. Through community meetings and the implementation of sports competitions, they show their original identity in the Makassar community, which consists of various ethnic groups. The number of community members and the larger scale of activities compared to the diaspora in Samarinda indicates the strength of their identity negotiation with other ethnic groups in Makassar.

CONCLUSION

The Manggarai diaspora in Samarinda and Makassar maintain their relations to their land of origin by using various means, namely establishing regional organizations, maintaining customs in their communities, organizing sports and cultural activities, and communicating using the Manggarai language. Through these various means, they also try to maintain the identity of Manggarai with various identities overseas.

REFERENCE

- Aulia, E. A., Bosra, M., & Bahri. (2021). *Diaspora : Studi Tentang Peran Sosial Ekonomi Dan Politik Suku Bugis di Kabupaten Indragiri Hilir, 1998-2018. Attoriolog Jurnal Pemikiran Kesenjajaran dan Pendidikan Sejarah* 19 (2), 86-97.
- BPS Kabupaten Manggarai. (2020). *Manggarai dalam Angka tahun 2020*. Ruteng: Pemerintah Kabupaten Manggarai.
- Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research Design: Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Campuran*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Deki, K. T., & Regus, M. (2011). *Gereja Menyapa Manggarai*. Jakarta: Pharresia Institute.
- Linhard, T., & Parsons, T. H. (2019). Introduction: How does Migration Take Place? In T. Linhard, & T. H. Parsons, *Mapping Migration, Identity, and Space* (pp. 1-20). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan
- Maglana, M. C. (2016). Understanding Identity and Diaspora: The Case of The Sama-Bajau of Maritime Southeast Asia. *Jurnal Sejarah Citra Lekha* 1 (2), 71-80.
- Mansyur. (2011). *Diaspora Suku Bugis dan Terbentuknya Identitas To-Ugi' Di Wilayah Tanah Bumbu, Residensi Borneo Bagian Selatan Dan Timur, Tahun 1900-1942. Jurnal Sejarah CITRA LEKHA, XVI (2), 67-82.*
- Nur, N., Purwanto, B., & Suryo, D. (2016). *Perdagangan Dan*

- Ekonomi Di Sulawesi Selatan, Pada Tahun 1900-an Sampai Dengan 1930-an. *JURNAL ILMU BUDAYA VOL 4 NO 1, Juni 2016*, 617-712.
- Prihartono, W. (2016). Diaspora Etnik Jawa dan Transmisi Bahasa Jawa Antargenerasi di Sumatra Utara. *Ranah 5 (1)*, 33-42.
- Pujiriyani, D. W. (2021). Etnisitas, Budaya Politik dan Realitas 'Ulun Lampung': Dominasi Diaspora Jawa dan Potensi Demokrasi Kosmopolitanisme di Lampung. *Jurnal Sosiologi Nusantara 7 (2)*, 239-252 DOI: [://doi.org/10.33369/jsn.7.2.239-252](https://doi.org/10.33369/jsn.7.2.239-252).
- Putri, R. G. (2017). Peran Diaspora Indonesia-Filipina Selatan (DIFS) Dalam Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Warga Keturunan Indonesia Pemukim (WKIP) di Filipina Selatan. *JISIP-UNJA 1 (1)*, 16 pages.
- Sasongko, Y. A., & Wahyuni, E. S. (2013). Diaspora Madura: Analisis Modal Sosial dalam Usaha Sektor Informal oleh Migran Madura di Kecamatan Tanah Sareal, Kota Bogor, Jawa Barat. *Sodality : Jurnal Sosiologi Pedesaan 1 (1)*, 52-63.
- Senaman, A. (2019). *Diaspora Manggarai di Perantauan (Studi di Kota Metropolitan Makassar)*. Makassar: Fahmis Pustaka.
- Suwitha, I. P. (2016). Islamic Society Diaspora of Bugis Descent in Bali. *International Research Journal of Management, IT & Social Sciences 3 (5)*, 48~58.
- Talampas, R. (2015). Indonesian Diaspora Identity Construction in a Southern Mindanao Border Crossing. *ASIAN STUDIES: Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia 51 (1)*, 130-162.
- Tan-Cullamar, E. (1993). The Indonesian Diaspora and Philippine-Indonesian. *Philippine Studies 41 (1)*, 38-50.
- Toda, D. N. (1999). *Manggarai Mencari Pencerahan Historiografi*. Ende: Nusa Indah.
- Wibisono, M., Legionosuko, T., & Yuninda, E. (2017). Peran Diaspora Indonesia dalam Sistem Pertahanan Negara (Studi Kasus Diaspora Indonesia di Belgia). *Jurnal Prodi Diplomasi Pertahanan 3 (3)*, 61-82.
- Yuliantari, A. P. (2020). Migration and Manggaraian's Cultural Identity as Represented in Manggaraian Rap Songs. *International Journal of Humanity Studies 3 (2)*, 164-177 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24071/ijhs.v3i2.2195>.
- Yuliantari, A. P., Lon, Y. S., & Widyawati, F. (2020). Manggaraian People's Perspective on Migration: A Study of Popular Manggaraian Songs' Lyrics. *Mozaik Humaniora 20 (1)*, 1-11 DOI: [10.20473/mozaik.v20i1.15681](https://doi.org/10.20473/mozaik.v20i1.15681).
- Yuniarto, R. (2016). "Beyond Ethnic Economy": Religiosity, Social Entrepreneurship, and Solidarity. *Makara Hubs-Asia, 20(1)*, 1-14 DOI: [10.7454/mssh.v20i1.3482](https://doi.org/10.7454/mssh.v20i1.3482).