

## PERSPECTIVE OF THE COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY OF THE SUNDA WIWITAN MOVEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN SOCIAL ACTION

By

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### ABSTRACT

The perspective of the communication philosophy about the Sunda Wiwitan Movement is a social movement that develops in the Sundanese Society of West Java, Indonesia. The movement has a unique and profound philosophical perspective of communication about natural life, and spirituality. This research aims to explore the philosophical perspective of communication of the Sundanese Wiwitan Movement and its implications in social action. The research method used is a case study with a qualitative approach. The results of the study show that the Sunda Wiwitan Movement has a holistic and integrative communication philosophical perspective, which emphasizes the importance of harmony with nature and spirituality. The implication from this philosophical perspective is that social action is oriented towards environmental sustainability, social justice, and community development. This research contributes to the understanding of social movements and the underlying philosophies, as well as their implications in social action.

**Keywords:** Perspective of Communication Philosophy, Sunda Wiwitan Movement, Social Action, Harmony with Nature and Spirituality.

## PANDANGAN FILOSOFIS TENTANG KOMUNIKASI DALAM GERAKAN SUNDA WIWITAN DAN IMPLIKASINYA BAGI TINDAKAN SOSIAL

### ABSTRAK

Perspektif filosofis komunikasi Gerakan Sunda Wiwitan yang berkembang dalam masyarakat Sunda, Jawa Barat, Indonesia. Gerakan ini memiliki perspektif filosofis yang unik dan mendalam tentang kehidupan, alam, dan spiritualitas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi perspektif filosofis komunikasi Gerakan Sunda Wiwitan dan implikasinya bagi tindakan sosial. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi kasus dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Gerakan Sunda Wiwitan memiliki perspektif filosofis komunikasi yang holistik dan integratif, yang menekankan pentingnya harmoni dengan alam dan spiritualitas. Hal ini mencakup keberlanjutan lingkungan, keadilan sosial, dan pengembangan komunitas. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman tentang gerakan sosial dan filosofi dasarnya, serta implikasinya bagi aksi sosial.

**Kata kunci:** Perspektif filosofis komunikasi, Gerakan Sunda Wiwitan, Aksi sosial, Harmoni dengan alam, Spiritualitas

## INTRODUCTION

In the people of West Java, there is an activity that has become a local culture and is still embraced by the community, namely the Sunda Wiwitan Movement. This movement is a social movement that develops in the Sundanese community of West Java, Indonesia. Have a unique and profound philosophical perspective on life, nature and spirituality. In recent decades, the movement has come under the attention of many researchers and social practitioners due to its potential in promoting environmental sustainability and social justice.

In Gengegeng village, Salam Village, Pesawahan District, Purwakarta, West Java, there is a "Bumi Baraya" Community with social activities that integrate agriculture, plantations, and livestock by utilizing natural sources of livelihood combined with the Sunda Wiwitan Movement as a spirit and philosophy of communication in achieving the goal of fulfilling the living needs of farmer groups.

Communities, farmer groups and communities carry out their life activities with livelihoods that rely on gardens, rice fields, livestock and the surrounding environment, inseparable from the beliefs that are embraced by using local traditions, customs and culture that are believed and lived from the heritage of their ancestors; will facilitate and produce the fulfillment of daily needs.

Because the tradition is so strong, recognized as part of the spirituality of life and social activities that are preserved, the Sunda Wiwitan Movement is considered to be able to develop the nuances of local culture with various changes that remain wise for the community. Especially people who are obedient to the Sunda Wiwitan Movement adhere to the values and outlook of life passed down by their ancestors. Whatever religion is the belief of the people of Purwakarta teaches that everything related to their lifestyle should not or should not be changed.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The physiological perspective of communication is an approach that studies how the communication process is influenced by physiological factors, such as an individual's physical, emotional, and psychological condition. There are relevant communication theory

perspectives, including: Psychological Perspectives; Looks at communication as a process that is influenced by psychological factors, such as perception, motivation and emotions. Interactional Perspectives; Views communication as a process of interaction between individuals that influence each other. Pragmatic Perspective; view communication as a process that aims to achieve a specific goal. (B. Aubrey Fisher, 1986)

Social movements are a concept that has been widely studied in sociology and political science. According to the theory of social movements, this movement can be understood as a collective process that aims to change the existing social and political structure.<sup>3)</sup> In the context of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement, the physiological perspective of communication that underlies this movement can be understood as a condition that will more or less affect the maintenance of tribal identity and of course religion or belief. Therefore, in accordance with the problems described above, the focus of the research raised is how the communication philosophy of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement in the implementation of community social actions, especially the "Bumi Baraya" Community of Gengegeleng village, Salem Purwakarta Village, West Java. (Booklet, Griya Kawan Kita, 2011, Sonata Salvatora Foundation, Jakarta)

Implications in Social Action refer to the consequences or impacts arising from a social action or decision. Social actions can have broad and complex implications, both positive and negative, and can have an impact on individuals, groups or society as a whole. A theory that is relevant to the implications in social action, especially in practicing religion or people's beliefs about the Sunda Wiwitan Movement, is the religious theory of Emile Durkheim. According to Durkheim, religion originated from the members of society itself. That religion is the embodiment of *collective consciousness*, although there is always another embodiment.

Collective consciousness (*Collective Conciusness*) according to Durkheim has two properties, namely *external* and *constraint*. The *external* nature included in it is the collective consciousness that is outside the consciousness of the individual human being and what enters into the individual in its manifestation are moral rules, religious rules, good and bad rules. Noble and noble and so on. These rules will remain even if the individuals concerned no longer exist. Meanwhile, in the nature of *constraint*, the collective consciousness has a coercive power over individuals. Violations committed by members of the community against the collective consciousness will result in punitive sanctions against the members of the community

concerned, or it can be said that the collective consciousness is a consensus of the members of the community that regulates social relations among the members of the community concerned. (Durkheim, E., 1959, *The Elementary Forms of the Relegated Life*, [1912])

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive type. This study aims to describe the data obtained from the informants. Descriptive research aims to collect information in actual and detailed detail, identify problems, make comparisons and evaluations, determine what others are doing in the face of similar problems and learn from their experiences to establish plans and decisions for the future.

The locations chosen are in Purwakarta and Jakarta, namely more precisely in Gengegeng village, Salem Village, Pesawahan District, Purwakarta, West Java Province. The reason for choosing the research location in Salem Village is because it is a village where there is a "Bumi Baraya" Community with members who are still original with their culture, religion and social life. Meanwhile, Jakarta is a place where community members work to support their lives.

This study uses purposive techniques in determining relevant subjects or informants. Purposive is a way of taking research subjects with special criteria and situations. This study seeks to find the characteristics of each informant, namely the obstacles and obstacles carried out, as well as the influence of other cultures and religions on the existence of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement. Then, the criteria for informants in this case is to migrate for more than two months. Because, two months is considered a long enough time for members of the "Bumi Baraya" community to live in their place of residence, as well as the age of over 15 years because, apart from that age, there are those who have been married and then changed their place of residence and some choose to work in the city.

This study used data collection techniques with in-depth interviews. The data was obtained and then analyzed using the data analysis technique by Huberman and Miles which consisted of three things, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. (Muhammad, Idrus, 2009, *Social Science Research Methods with Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Second Edition, Jakarta: Erlangga. Pages 146-147).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The philosophical perspective of communication of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement is a process of conveying messages in the social movement that developed in the Sundanese Community, West Java, Indonesia. This Greakan has a unique and profound philosophical perspective on life, nature, and spirituality. Some aspects of the philosophical perspective of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement are:

- a. Sundanese cosmology; The Sunda Wiwitan movement has a unique cosmology, which is the belief that the universe has a harmonious and interrelated structure. This cosmology is based on the belief that there is a close relationship between man, nature and God. (Atjeh, A. 1985, Sundanese Cosmology, Bandung Pustaka, Bandung). The results of the study in the perspective of Communication Philosophy in Sundanese Cosmology and the Sunda Wiwitan Movement are: viewing the universe as a harmonious and interrelated system. The Sunda Wiwitan movement understands this cosmology as a framework for understanding between humans, nature and God and has an important role in communication in a *holistic* and *integrative* process, involving all aspects of life.
- b. Concept of Time and Space; The Sunda Wiwitan movement has a more *cyclical* and *holistic* concept of time and space, i.e. time and space are seen as part of the entire universe. (Eliade, M. (1959), The Secret and The Profane, Harper and Row, New York) The movement is inseparable, and has an important role in understanding the relationship between humans, nature and God which has significant implications in communication. These implications include: *communication is contextual*; communication is seen as a process that occurs in a specific context of time and space. *Relationship-oriented communication*; Communication is seen as a way to understand and maintain the relationship between humans, nature and time. This perspective understands communication as a process that occurs in a specific space and time, and has significant implications for human communication with the universe.
- c. Spirituality and nature; in the Sunda Wiwitan Movement in this case has a strong and deep spirituality, namely the belief that there is a close relationship between humans

and nature. This spirituality is based on the belief that nature has sacred power and can provide inspiration and knowledge to humans. (Stuart, 2013, Teaching and Practice. Bandung: Sndanese Culture Centre.). From a communication perspective, the Movement has a unique and profound philosophical perspective on life, nature, and spirituality. Communication is seen as a way to understand a process in which *man is seen as part of nature, and nature is seen as a manifestation of God.*

- d. Harmony with nature; The Sunda Wiwitan movement has a very important concept of harmony with nature. This concept is based on the belief that humans must live in harmony with nature and must not destroy it. Harmony with nature can be achieved through sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. (ibid Sundanese, 2013)

The principles of harmony with nature in the perspective of the communication philosophy of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement carried out by the people of Gengegeng village, Salem Village, are: *Respect nature*: humans must respect nature and not take actions that can damage it. *Managing nature wisely*: humans must manage nature wisely and responsibly. *Respect biodiversity*: humans must respect biodiversity and not take actions that could damage it and not take actions that could threaten the survival of other species.

### **1. Implications for Social Action of the Early Sundanese Movement Based on the Exterior**

*Exterior* This can be seen in actions that are very reflected in religious rituals or ceremonies. These actions are very contrasting or very visible in the implementation of religious activities. They don't care about the obstacles or obstacles they just face to perform their rituals, their traditions. As expressed by Emile Durkheim about the origin of religion is from society itself.8) So that without any orders or demands from anyone, those who are doing Sunda Wiwitan are willing to carry out all the commandments according to their self-awareness. It is not due to coercion from any party. This is also shown by informants who are willing to perform rituals or ceremonies to get closer to their God, even though there are many obstacles experienced both from the economy, work, and risks that must be taken to support their lives. The informant also hopes that there will be an awareness, which will continue to exist in every member of the community. The proof is that from generation to generation this

awareness will continue to exist and be sustainable, the goal of which is to be able to continue the Sunda Wiwitan Movement.

## **2. Implications for Social Action of the Early Sundanese Movement Based on Constraint**

*Constraint* did not show any fear on the part of the informants, because the informant thought that the punishment received must exist, and that the punishment was considered to be very detrimental to his life. However, all of this is different from the awareness possessed by the informants. *Constraint* that they show more than an oath "*The Seven Ancestors*" and still maintain the mandate given by their ancestors to be able to make followers or community members. Those who are religious with the Sunda Wiwitan Movement will continue to remember, and it is more about the commemoration and identity that must be held by the members of the community of Gengegeng village, Salem village.

In some people who still hold fast to the legacy of their ancestors, the Sunda Wiwitan Movement has a very sacred place in their lives, which aims to carry out worship rituals that are carried out rather to get instructions or "wangsit" or whispers from their Lord, and to carry out activities that should be done. The sacred place here is called "titipan", which is in the form of a protected forest which is a sacred place for the people and communities of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement.

The form of existence according to Durkheim's statement is that when people are involved in religious ceremonies, their awareness of *Collective Consciousness* getting stronger. After religious ceremonies, the sacred atmosphere will be brought into daily life, by carrying out work in the rice fields, in the garden, livestock and so on. They respect and take care of nature, plants, plants that will produce food for their life needs. This was also shown by members of the "Bumi Baraya" community who became informants. Despite their status as members of the community who work in the city, it does not discourage them from gaining enthusiasm and participation in every Sunda Wiwitan Movement. This is because it has become a responsibility and obligation that should be done, and has become a separate awareness for every member of the community.

In carrying out their existence as community members who will still obey the Sunda Wiwitan Movement and be in the city of Jakarta, they still maintain their identity values by performing rituals as a community of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement in various ways. Even though the conditions and circumstances in the city of Jakarta are less supportive, they still choose to perform rituals as much as possible, compared to their role in the city of Jakarta or being in the city area. All of this is believed and must be done for the welfare of individuals, the Sunda Wiwitan Movement community and the people of Gengegeleng, Salem village in general.

### **3. The implications of the social actions of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement especially in the context of environmental sustainability and social justice**

In the practices carried out, namely:

- a. Environmental Conservation; The Sunda Wiwitan Movement through informants of community members "Bumi Baraya", has a strong commitment to preserve the environment by maintaining the balance of nature. This is reflected in sustainable and *environmentally friendly* practices, such as organic farming, and the use of renewable energy. (interview with members of the "Bumi Baraya" Community, 2002) These implications include: *Reduction of chemical use*: The Sunda Wiwitan movement encourages the reduction of chemical use in daily life to reduce negative impacts on the environment. Meanwhile, *the use of renewable energy*: members of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement community encourage the use of energy such as solar energy and wind energy to reduce dependence on fossil energy. *Effective waste management*: done with effective waste management through recycling and waste reduction. The movements that have been carried out related to environmental conservation have effective and positive strategies for environmental health, namely in reducing pollution, increasing public awareness and developing sustainable community members.
- b. Social justice: members of the Sunda Wiwitan Movement community also have a commitment to social justice and equality. This is reflected in efforts to *improve people's welfare* and *reduce social inequality* (Participatory observation, 2022).

This movement has a strong commitment to social justice and equality, which is shown by fostering *public awareness* to understand the relationship between society and power. These implications include: strengthening marginalized communities, through education and training to increase their awareness and ability to fight for their rights. *Economic empowerment*: has been carried out by members of the "Bumi Baraya" community as informants who stated that the development of small and medium enterprises by selling rice fields, gardens and livestock as well as other processing of agricultural products, can be an effort to increase their income and welfare. *Community development*; Carried out by informants of community members with social justice actions such as cooperation (collaboration) with the government or the private sector and other organizations through activities to manage natural resources and develop the local economy, it affects the development of the abilities of community members and communities. In addition, the Sunda Wiwitan Movement encourages the *preservation of culture*; especially Sundanese culture. This is reflected in efforts to promote local language, art, and culture, including the development of cultural education such as organizing or participating in cultural arts performance festivals, and exhibitions of Sundanese culture and literature. (interview with community members "Bumi Baraya", 2022) The movement has an effective strategy for cultural preservation and a significant positive impact. According to the informant it was said: "we want to ensure that our People have equal access to natural resources and economic opportunities". In addition, it was conveyed: "we believe that environmental preservation and social justice are two things that cannot be separated. We want to ensure that our activities are not only sustainable, but also fair and equal for all parties". The implications of social action in the Sunda Wiwitan Movement can be understood as an effort to preserve the environment, social justice, community empowerment and cultural preservation. This movement has a strong commitment to improving the welfare of the community and maintaining the balance of nature.

## CONCLUSION



The philosophy of communication is carried out in several ways, and has different stages in each member of the "Bumi Baraya" community, and the community, as well as its understanding. This condition can be seen from several statements about beliefs or religion and social actions carried out in carrying out the Sunda Wiwitan Movement, which differs from one informant to another. In addition, the understanding that is understood is only the core of belief, that in communication the true is to carry out the philosophy of a close relationship between humans, nature and God. To view the universe as a harmonious and interconnected system. (Study et al., 2024) The Sunda Wiwitan Movement is also a movement that leads to beliefs, including the religion adhered to, of course, its preservation must be maintained so that it is not easily lost and not easily displaced by its existence. The methods carried out by Gengegeng village, Salem Purwakarta village are to maintain and maintain the mandate that has been conveyed in the form of "pikukuh karuhun" and the readings in the ritual are held by both community members who are in their place of origin and community members who are in Jakarta or urban areas. These social actions are oriented towards environmental sustainability, social justice and community development. In the presentation of the members of the "Bumi Baraya" community: The Sunda Wiwitan Movement is not only about preserving the environment, but also about social justice and equality, that environmental preservation and social justice are two things that cannot be separated. They want activities to be not only sustainable, but also fair for all parties.

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