

**THE HEGEMONY IMPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE  
RESISTANCE OF *WETU TELU* SASAKNESE ETHNIC GROUP  
AT BAYAN DISTRICT, NORTH LOMBOK REGENCY**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research is entitled “The Hegemony Imposed by the Government and the Resistance of *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group at Bayan District, North Lombok”. The interaction between the government and the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* community at Bayan District has resulted in differences in views, ideas, and behaviors leading to friction and refusal or opposition from the community.

This research is focused on 1) how has the hegemony imposed by the government upon the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group residing at Bayan District, North Lombok Regency taken place? 2) what has been done by the people of the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* Ethnic Group residing at Bayan Distrik, North Lombok to resist to the hegemony imposed by the government upon them? and 3) what are the effects and meanings of the hegemony imposed by the government and the resistance of the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group on the multicultural community life at Bayan District, North Lombok Regency?

The data needed were collected by interview, observation, and documentation and were descriptively, qualitatively and interpretatively analyzed. The theories used to give answers to the problems formulated above are the theory of hegemony (Gramsci), the theory of deconstruction (Jacques Derrida), and the theory of discourse (Foucault).

The results show that the hegemony imposed by the government has taken place in a number of particular aspects such as the religious aspect, socio political aspect, cultural aspect and educational aspect. Being marginalized and being not free in developing their tradition and culture, the people of *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group residing at Bayan District, North Lombok Regency, have been responsible for their resistance to the government and the followers Islam *Waktu Lima*. The resistance has been shown by avoiding, refusing and even opposing what is considered not in accordance with their tradition and culture.

One of the effects of the hegemony imposed by the government and the resistance made by the people of the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group residing at Bayan District is that there has been imbalanced communication between the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima* (which collaborates with the government) and the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group residing at Bayan District leading to a social conflict. The other effects have been that such a social conflict has disturbed the social life of the

community, has led to a paradox of cultural preservation, and has narrowed the power of the Wetu Telu Sasaknese Ethnic Group residing at Bayan District. From the meaning point of view, what has taken place at Bayan District has philosophical and multicultural meaning as well as the meanings of struggle for identity, cultural preservation and dynamism.

**Key word:** the government, hegemony, *Wetu Telu* of *Sasaknese* Ethnic Group, marginalized and resistance

## **Background**

Lombok is a small island which is located in West *Nusa Tenggara* Province and is inhabited by an aboriginal Sasaknese group. Before Islam was introduced, the Sasaknese people believed in the souls of their ancestors and the sacred things, and offered offerings on the sacred graves.

Islam was introduced to Lombok Island in the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century by the *mubalig* (preachers) from Java, *Bugis* and *Makassar*. The introduction of Islam has resulted in a syncretism. It is this syncretism which has made the followers of Islam classified into two; they are the followers of *Islam Wetu Telu* and the followers of *Islam Waktu Lima*. *Islam Waktu Telu* is the mixture of the traditional belief (the ancestor's belief) and *Islam Waktu Lima* which has Al-Quran and Hadist as the references.

From the colonial era to the independence era, such a difference seemed to be made bigger. During the independence era, the followers of *Islam Wetu Telu* was marginalized and under pressure. The reason is that the other parties (the government and the followers of *Islam Waktu Lima*) considered that the followers of *Islam Wetu Telu* were not the followers of Islam.

During the New Order, the position of the followers of *Islam Waktu Lima* was getting stronger, as they collaborated with the government. With the strength they had, they oppressed the traditional teachings of *Islam Wetu Telu* which was considered to contradict the real teachings of Islam. However, the followers of *Islam Wetu Telu* still believe that their belief has given them blessings and enthusiasm to survive and that it contains moral messages from their ancestors.

Such a condition has inspired the government to create some strategies how to avoid the traditions and customs which are related to the *Islam Wetu Telu* carried out by the *Sasaknese* Ethnic Group residing at *Bayan* District from growing because it has been considered to contradict the real teachings. Such a difference in insight and understanding has led to the resistance made by the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese ethnic group residing at *Bayan* District, North Lombok Regency to the hegemony imposed by the government.

## Discussion

The hegemony imposed by the government upon the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* Ethnic Group residing at Bayan District, North Lombok Regency, includes a number of particular aspects such as religious ideological, socio political, socio cultural and educational aspects.

In religious ideological aspect, the hegemony imposed has been in the form of some attempts made by the government to make the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* implement the teachings of Islam as included in the Holy Books of *Al-Quran* and *Hadist*. With the power it has and by collaborating with the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima*, the government could fade and eliminate the customs and traditions related to Islam *Wetu Telu* performed by the Sasaknese ethnic group residing at Bayan District. The reason was that it was considered to contradict the real teachings of Islam. In addition, the government's ideology was also implemented in the form of the construction of Islam *Waktu Lima* Mosques with the objective that the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* would not address their prayers at the old Mosques any longer. They were made to address their prayers at *Waktu Lima* Mosques because the old ones were considered not to match what was ideally needed to make them ideal holy places. In the *dakwah* (religious proselytizing) delivered, it was insisted that it was important to refer to the true and real teachings of Islam.

In socio political aspect, the hegemony imposed by the government was in the form of controlling the land owned by the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* residing at Bayan District which was then used as the land of transmigration especially for the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima*. In this manner, the government could extend and spread the Islam orthodoxy at the area where the followers of *Wetu Telu* live, that is, in Bayan District. Islam *Waktu Lima* Mosques, Madrasah schools and *pondok pesantren* (school for Koranic Studies for children and young people, most of whom are boarders). The attempts made by the government to empower the religious leaders (known as *Tuan Guru*) in delivering *dakwah Islamiyah* (Islamiyah religious proselytizing) finally narrowed the movements of the traditional leaders of Islam *Wetu Telu*, meaning that the identity of their community was threatened. In socio cultural aspect, the government used the old mosques, the traditional costumes, the traditional ceremonies as tourist

attractions as well as *Perisean* and *Gegeruk* Dances as the arts of Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara Province.

In educational aspect, the hegemony was imposed by sending the traditional leaders and the government civil servants coming from the community of Islam *Wetu Telu* living at Bayan District to the training programs and by building *madrasah* schools and *pondok pesantren* close to the governmental offices so that their security and sustainability could be maintained. It was also intended to inform to the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* living at Bayan District that it was important for them to understand Islam totally.

The resistance of the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* to the ideological domination of the government which collaborated with the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima* was shown by their refusal of the political discourse of the government. Such a refusal was realized by tightening the customary rules and regulations and revitalizing and maintaining the belief inherited from their ancestors and by avoiding their leaders known as *Kyai Keagungan (Penghulu, Lebe, Ketib and Mudim)* from communicating too much with outsiders. They could only communicate within the *kampu* (the area where the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* and their leaders usually met). Their resistance was also shown by refusing the assistance in the form of mosque construction, not attending *shalat Jumat* (ritual prayers performed on Fridays) and *pengajian* at the mosque.

The social political resistance was shown by throwing something at their mosques to express that they did not agree with what had been done by the government to control their land and to give it to the followers of *Islam Waktu Lima*. In addition, they did not agree with the content of the *dakwah* delivered by the preachers (*Tuan Guru*) who were the followers of *Islam Waktu Lima* or orthodox Islam either. The religious and traditional leaders of Islam *Wetu Telu* at *Bayan* District was made so deeply disturbed that there was no harmonious relationship between them and *Tuan Gurus* or *Ustads* (Islamic teachers). Therefore, they were not welcome by the community of *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese ethnic group at Bayan District. Socio culturally, their resistance was shown by protesting that they were not involved in the competition of the local traditional costumes.

With regard to educational aspect, the resistance was shown by the refusal given by the traditional leaders and the government civil servants who were followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* not to attend the training program in which the participants were trained to be preachers and *Jemaah Tabliq*. The resistance was also shown by their refusal of *madrasah* schools or *pondok pesantren*. They showed this by not sending their children to these types of schools which were considered to give lessons related to Islam orthodoxy and to contradict the tradition and culture inherited from their ancestors.

The effects of the hegemony imposed by the government and the resistance shown by the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* at *Bayan* District were that they socially affected the community, they were responsible for the paradox of cultural preservation, and they narrowed the power of the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese ethnic group at *Bayan* District. In addition, the politics of power performed by the government by collaborating with the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima* led to a disharmony in the community.

To give meanings to the attempts made by the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese ethnic group living at *Bayan* District, a struggle was needed to maintain their collective identity. In this manner, they would have a self identity and the government and the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima* would be aware that they should appreciate the customs, the traditions, and the belief of the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* living at *Bayan* District. In addition, an understanding that a culture was the form of appreciation and creativity of the community of *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese ethnic group living at *Bayan* District needed to be maintained and preserved by its community. When activities were done and rituals were performed at the old mosques, the government and the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima* should not interfere with them provided what was done was within the human limitations so that the meaning of cultural preservation could be provided.

Such a cultural preservation could improve the relationship between the followers of Islam *Wetu Telu* at *Bayan* District and the government and the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima*. By appreciating the culture of *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese ethnic group at *Bayan* District, tolerance, togetherness and the sense of belonging to one family among the community elements at *Bayan* District, North Lombok Regency would be created. And this would lead to unity. It is also hoped the government and the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima* would not interfere too much with the customs and belief of *Wetu Telu*

Sasaknese ethnic group living at *Bayan* District. The government should respect humanity and keep anthropocentrism away. In other words, the government should not consider that the other parties were not important and that it was not everything or was the most powerful. In this manner, the Lombok great proverb *Patuh Patuh Pacu* would come true. What is meant by this proverb is togetherness, family atmosphere and unity. In addition to the philosophical and multicultural meaning, the creativity of the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* ethnic group at *Bayan* District should be appreciated, respected and be equally treated. From the dynamism taking place, it is important to maintain and preserve the cultures of ethnic groups which beautify and form the national culture.

### **New Findings of the Research**

The new findings of the research are as follows:

1. Theoretically, most of the *Sasaknese* people were not familiar with the differences in religious teachings; however, the implementations were adjusted to different customs and cultures;
2. The differences of what was believed by the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* Ethnic Group from the teachings of Islam and its traditions formed the historical experiences undergone by the community of the *Sasaknese* Ethnic Group in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara.
3. As the central institution, the government should mediate and protect all the community members. However, in reality, the government was not considered to protect and serve the community optimally; consequently, refusal or opposition could not be avoided and this was not in accordance with the concept of multiculturalism.
4. The mission of the *dakwah* delivered by *Tuna Gurus* and their followers in spreading Orthodox Islam scared the religious and traditional leaders of the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* people at *Bayan* District. The reason is that the mission of such *dakwah* was considered a threat on the preservation of the great values already inherited from their ancestors.
5. The meanings which appeared from the hegemony imposed by the government and the resistance of the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* people living at *Bayan* District

were that the meaning of disharmony, the meaning of instability and the meaning of being ironic.

6. The government, as the ruler, played an important role in implementing the power. The government and the followers of Islam *Waktu Lima* should not be anthropocentric that they were the only most important parties and the most powerful. They should maintain togetherness, family atmosphere and unity so that a civilized, nationally moralized multicultural community would be created.

## **Conclusions**

*The first conclusion* is that the hegemony imposed by the government upon the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group at Bayan District, North Lombok Regency, includes a number of particular aspects. They are religious ideological aspect, socio political aspect, socio cultural aspect and educational aspect. In religious ideological aspect, the government suggested that every Muslim should address his/her prayers at any Mosque of Islam *Waktu Lima*. In socio political aspect, the government controlled the land belonging to the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese Ethnic Group at Bayan District and empowered the religious teachers (known as *Tuan Guru/Ustad*) to deliver *Islamiyah dakwah*. In socio cultural aspect, the government preserved the culture of the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* people at Bayan District such as old mosques, traditional houses and arts as tourist attractions. Even their arts were used to represent the arts of West Nusa Tenggara Barat Province. In educational aspect, the traditional leaders and the government civil servants coming from the *Wetu Telu* ethnic group were sent to attend the religious training programs and *madrasah* and *pondok pesantrens* were established.

*The second conclusion* is that the resistance of the *Wetu Telu Sasaknese* people at Bayan District was shown by their refusal of the assistance in the form of rehabilitation of the old mosques, by not attending the pilgrimage to the holy place *Mekkah*, and not addressing their prayers at any mosque. In addition, they did not attend the *sholat* performed at any mosque and if they did, they left the mosque before the *dakwah* was delivered. Their socio cultural resistance was shown by protesting the government that they were not fully involved in any competition of local costumes. In educational aspect, their resistance was shown by refusing to be sent to any training program, by disagreeing

with the establishment of *madrasah* schools or *pondok pesaren* in which the teachings of Orthodox Islam were provided, which, according to them, contracted their tradition and culture.

*The third conclusion* is that the effect of being dominated by the government on the socio community life of the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese people at Bayan District was that they felt less comfortable and less peaceful. Such a domination sharpened the differences in their views in such a way that it would result in disharmony. The Islam orthodoxy and the *Islamiyah dakwah* delivered by *Tuan Gurus/Ustads* would threat their tradition and culture and finally would fade their culture. The meaning obtained by maintaining their tradition and culture was the meaning of struggling for identity. By preserving the culture as the appreciation and creativity of the *Wetu Telu* Sasaknese community at Bayan Distict, the meaning of cultural preservation would be obtained. It is hoped, therefore, that the government should respect the human values highly, in addition to maintaining togetherness, family atmosphere and unity so that a multicultural community as the realization of civilized and nationally moralized human beings would come true.

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