

The Metaphysical Concept Of The Dayak Kanayatn People In Terms Of *Sabaya Diri*' Based On The Philosophy Of Gabriel Marcel

Romanus Piter

BINUS University, Indonesia

romanus.piter@binus.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to explain the metaphysical concept contained in the term *Sabaya Diri*' in the Dayak Kanayatn community in West Kalimantan. *Sabaya Diri*' is a human recognition of the existence of others as part of oneself that should not be hurt, hated, or belittled. The perspective used in this study is the concept of Metaphysics of Hope from the French philosopher Gabriel Marcel. The method used in this study is a qualitative study method with a literature review. The author collected data on Gabriel Marcel's thoughts, both physical and digital sources. Meanwhile, the idea of *Sabaya Diri*' was elaborated from the author's meaning as a native Dayak Kanayatn. This study found that the term *Sabaya Diri*' contains three elements of affirmation of the existence of others as the human self itself. The first, fellow Dayaks are the most solid recognition of *Sabaya Diri*' because of the similarity of ethnicity. The second, non-Dayak tribes are *Sabaya Diri*' because they are dignified and noble humans. The third, the natural environment is *Sabaya Diri*' because of the closeness of the Dayak people's relationality to the universe.

Keywords: Dayak Kanayatn, Hope, Intersubjective, Relationality, *Sabaya Diri*'.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan konsep metafisika yang terdapat dalam istilah *Sabaya Diri*' pada masyarakat Dayak Kanayatn di Kalimantan Barat. *Sabaya Diri*' merupakan pengakuan manusia atas keberadaan orang lain sebagai bagian dari diri sendiri yang tidak boleh disakiti, dimusuhi dan direndahkan. Perspektif yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah konsep Metafisika Harapan dari filsuf asal Prancis yakni Gabriel Marcel. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode studi kualitatif dengan kajian pustaka. Penulis mengumpulkan data-data literatur pemikiran Gabriel Marcel baik sumber secara fisik maupun digital. Sementara gagasan tentang *Sabaya Diri*' dielaborasi dari pemaknaan Penulis sebagai orang asli Dayak Kanayatn. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa di dalam istilah *Sabaya Diri*' terkandung tiga unsur afirmasi keberadaan yang lain sebagai diri manusia itu sendiri. Pertama, sesama orang Dayak adalah pengakuan *Sabaya Diri*' paling solid karena kesamaan suku. Kedua, suku non-Dayak adalah *Sabaya Diri*' karena merupakan manusia yang bermartabat mulia. Ketiga, lingkungan alam adalah *Sabaya Diri*' karena kedekatan relasionalitas orang Dayak dengan alam semesta.

Kata kunci: Dayak Kanayatn, Harapan, Intersubyektif, Relasionalitas, *Sabaya Diri*'.

Introduction

Within the cultures and customs of Indonesia's ethnic groups and communities, there are various forms of local wisdom. It is called local wisdom because the culture and customs contain the meaning and values of the community's life wisdom. *Sabaya Diri*' can be said to be the local wisdom of the Dayak Kanayatn people in West Kalimantan. Local wisdom is a philosophy that lives in the hearts of the community in the form of wisdom about life, way of life, and traditional rites. The meaning of this local wisdom is hidden in the form of rituals of respect or traditional ceremonies, as well as wise expressions (Riyanto, 2018). Local wisdom can also be understood as ideas belonging to the local community that are wise, full of wisdom, and have good values that are embedded and followed by its members (Irmayani et al., 2021). Local wisdom is often referred to as local genius, a set of cultural characteristics of significant value to humans, acquired from their daily experiences, in the form of cultural elements that are sustainable and able to withstand the onslaught of external cultures (Bahri et al., 2018; Bahri & Lestari, 2020, 2022). These definitions emphasize that the term *Sabaya Diri*' is a form of local wisdom.

This study aims to explain the metaphysical concept contained in the term *Sabaya Diri*'. The perspective used to explore this metaphysical concept is Gabriel Marcel's thinking through the metaphysics of hope. The study of the local wisdom of the Dayak Kanayatn people using Gabriel Marcel's thinking is new, as far as the author knows.

Several people have studied phenomena and events in Indonesia using Gabriel Marcel's perspective. In 2014, Henrika wrote an article entitled "*Pluralitas dan Perdamaian: Ketika aku dan Engkau adalah Kita*" (Henrika, 2014). This article offers an insight into how Gabriel Marcel's thinking can illuminate the idea of achieving peace and unity in Indonesia's multicultural society.

In 2023, Wulan Kusuma Wardani and Radea Yuli A. Hambali wrote an article entitled "*Makna Metafisika Kebersamaan Gabriel Marcel dan Hubungannya dengan Kerukunan Umat Beragama di Indonesia*" (Wardani & Hambali, 2023). This research, which uses qualitative methods, focuses more on efforts to realize tolerance and peace in Indonesia. Still in 2023, Pius Pandor, Videlis Gon, and Hyronimus Ario Domingus published an article entitled "*Réis, Ruis, Raés, Raos: Frames of Intersubjective Relations of Manggarai People (Philosophical Studies Based on Gabriel Marcel's Concept of Intersubjectivity)*" (Pandor et al., 2023). This article attempts to understand and examine the culture of *réis, ruis, raés, raos* using Gabriel Marcel's concept of intersubjectivity. The results of the study show that *réis, ruis, raés, raos* are the intersubjective relational frames of the Manggarai people.

In 2024, Ignatius Aprilianto Sutejo, in his final assignment, wrote a scientific paper entitled "*Konsep Relasi Intersubjektif dalam Filsafat Eksistensialisme Gabriel Marcel: Sebuah Analisis Terhadap Tragedi Pembantaian Tujuh Jenderal dalam Kasus G30S PKI*" (Sutejo, 2024). This paper focuses on the use of Marcel's concept of intersubjectivity to criticize the acts of violence in the G30S PKI case and emphasizes that Marcel's concept of intersubjectivity is very relevant in criticizing the cases of violence in the G30S PKI incident.

Meanwhile, Romanus Piter and Armada Riyanto wrote an article in the same year entitled "*Memahami Sila Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*" *Pancasila dalam Perspektif Filsafat Gabriel Marcel*" (Piter & Riyanto, 2024). This article once again has nothing to do with the local wisdom of the Dayak Kanayatn people, but instead uses Gabriel Marcel's thoughts as a scalpel to understand the ideology of Pancasila, especially the first principle. Abraham Pakpahan, in the same year, also wrote an article entitled "*Berit sebagai Bentuk Cinta Tuhan yang Mengikat kepada Manusia dalam Perspektif Gabriel Marcel*" (Pakpahan, 2024). This article focuses more on a specific language in the Bible from Gabriel Marcel's perspective. This discussion will not be explored in this study.

The most recent study was conducted by Yonesmus Rikardus Turut and Armada Riyanto in 2025 with an article entitled "*Penderitaan sebagai Pengalaman Eksistensial dalam Konsep Manusia Partisipan Menurut Gabriel Marcel*" (Turut & Riyanto, 2025). The focus of this article itself is to explore Gabriel Marcel's thoughts on suffering as an existential experience that involves human participation in facing the realities of life. This article itself finds that through participation, human suffering can be understood not only as a personal burden, but also as an opportunity to strengthen more human relationships and achieve a deeper understanding of the meaning of life and human existence in the world.

The above research findings confirm that this discussion is a new topic. Therefore, this study ultimately seeks to explain the metaphysical concept contained in the term *Sabaya Diri*' in the Dayak Kanayatn community in West Kalimantan. These findings are crucial for exploring the philosophical-metaphysical values contained in the local wisdom of the Dayak Kanayatn community.

Theoretical Review

Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy that discusses the question of being or existence (Mustansyir, 1997). The term metaphysics comes from the Greek word *meta ta physika*, which can be interpreted as something that is behind or behind physical objects (Jaroszyński, 2013). As the first philosopher to discuss metaphysical issues, Aristotle himself did not use the term metaphysics, but instead he used the term *proto philosophia* (first philosophy). This first philosophy contains a description of something that is behind physical phenomena such as movement, change, life, and death. Therefore, metaphysics can be defined as the study or thinking about the *deepest nature* (ultimate nature) of the reality or existence of physical objects.

Aristotle mentions several terms whose meaning is equivalent to metaphysics, namely, first philosophy, knowledge of cause, the study of Being as Being, the study of *Ousia* (Being), and the study of the eternal and immovable (Gill, 2005; Judson, 2023).

In general, metaphysical problems can be classified into three main parts, namely ontology (general metaphysics), cosmology (science of nature), and anthropology (science of humans). (a) Ontological problems, for example: What is meant by existence? How is existence classified? (b) Cosmological problems (nature), problems related to the origin, development and structure of nature. For example: What kind of order exists in nature? What is the nature of cause and effect relationships? What are space and time? (c) Anthropological problems (humans), for example: What is the relationship between body and soul? Do humans have free will or not?

In this article, the metaphysical concept used is Gabriel Marcel's perspective. Here, we will see how Gabriel Marcel's perspective helps provide a complex explanation of the term *Sabaya Diri'* in the Dayak Kanayatn community.

Methodology

The research method used in this study is qualitative, in the form of descriptive and interpretative methods based on relevant literature or libraries. The approach used in this study is a library study approach to Gabriel Marcel's thoughts. This research method is carried out through the following stages, namely collecting and examining various literature needed according to the theme being worked on, such as several books, e-books, journals, manuscripts, and articles obtained from libraries and the internet, and supported by observations and direct experiences in the author's own life as a person from the Dayak Kanayatn tribe. The collected data are then philosophically relevant, namely the metaphysical concept contained in the term *Sabaya Diri'* with Gabriel Marcel's thoughts.

Result And Discussion

Tribe of the Dayak Kanayatn

The Dayak Kanayatn tribe is a Dayak subtribe belonging to the Klemantan ethnic group. The Dayak Kanayatn tribe can be said to be the largest Dayak ethnic group in West Kalimantan. The Dayak Kanayatn tribe can be found in various regions in West Kalimantan, such as Landak Regency, Kubu Raya Regency, Mempawah Regency, Sambas Regency, Bengkayang Regency, Singkawang City and Pontianak City. The majority of the Dayak Kanayatn tribe live in Landak Regency, known as the *ba ahe* or *ba nana'* people, because their language name is *ahe* meaning "what" or *nana'* meaning "nothing" (Piter, 2023, 2024). The main livelihood of the Dayak Kanayatn people is farming and rice fields (Kwirinus & Yuniarto, 2023; Rahmawati, 2012). In addition, the Dayak Kanayatn people also tap rubber as a legacy of the Dutch plantation tradition. This further emphasizes the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the Dayak Kanayatn people, namely their close relationship with nature. However, recently, the Dayak Kanayatn people have become quite active in cultivating palm oil plantations, working in mining, and other occupations.

Definition of *Sabaya Diri'*

Sabaya Diri' is a term familiar to the Dayak Kanayatn people. It literally means "our fellow Dayak." It generally refers to an expression that states that other Dayaks, especially those from the same subtribe, are part of the Dayak community. Because they are fellow Dayaks, those considered *Sabaya Diri'* should not be harmed, cheated, or belittled. It's not uncommon for people to be overjoyed and proud to meet their fellow Dayaks in spontaneous encounters at markets or similar places, and in their travels.

The term *Sabaya Diri'* can also serve as a medium for reconciliation between groups in conflict. People typically recognize that their opponents are "fellow citizens" who should be protected and safeguarded. The term *Sabaya Diri'* has become a form of identity with profound and profound value for the Dayak Kanayatn people. Through this term, people can build stronger solidarity with one another.

Philosophy of Gabriel Marcel

The Philosophical Method of Gabriel Marcel

One of the most impressive aspects of Gabriel Marcel's philosophical thought is his philosophical method. Marcel's philosophical method is the understanding of experience and thought (Marcel, 1960a, 1960b). This method allows us to understand that experience and thought are two realities that exist within Marcel himself. This means that when Marcel refers to experience, he is referring to himself as a playwright or music composer. Similarly, when Marcel refers to thought, he is referring to himself as a philosopher. Philosophy (thought) and a drama or music composer (experience) are two realities of life that must be dialogued and opened to discussion for the sake of human life itself.

To arrive at the aims and methods of his philosophy, we need to begin with a question: why does Marcel appear as a philosopher and simultaneously as a playwright or music composer? This question holds a hidden meaning. Drama and philosophy are not two separate activities, but rather a close unity in a person's soul, in this case, Marcel's own. Within Marcel, there is a close unity between philosophy and the art of drama, because both have the same goal: understanding who humans really are. Drama greatly helps humans to approach the concrete circumstances of life.

The relationship between drama and philosophy (the relationship between experience and thought) becomes immediately clear when we consider Marcel's statement: Thought is initially in experience, and the presence of philosophy is to transmit experience into thought. Drama (experience) can be a special means to mediate thought (philosophy) in human life in a concrete way.

The Transition From Existence to Being

Concrete philosophical reflection can be said to be a transition from human existence through the objective world and towards or referring to transcendent being (C. A. de F. da Silva & Riva, 2017; Negomireanu, 2013). For Marcel, someone who goes through this way or path of reflection does not need to be Christian. Our question: What is existence? For Marcel, existence is the opposite of objectivity. Existence can never be objectified. Existence is the concrete experience of "I" as a subject in the world. In other words, existence is the whole complex that includes all concrete factors that mark the life of "I". Marcel said that concrete philosophical reflection can be said to be a transition from human existence through the objective world and towards transcendent being (Gerber, 1969). Or we could say that existence "I" must lead to Being.

In subsequent philosophical reflection, the transition is marked by a phase of awe, reflection, and exploration. For Marcel, philosophy begins with awe or wonder that is existential, not rational, let alone scientific (Gerber, 1969). We begin to wonder about reality, especially about ourselves, and more specifically about incarnation, meaning the situation of "I" as a bodily being intertwined with the cosmos. However, mere awe does not yet constitute philosophy. Reflection is an essential phase in philosophy. It is inappropriate to contrast reflection with life, thus creating a dilemma. Marcel firmly rejects rationalism, but that does not mean he sides with anti-intellectualism. According to him, in reflection we must distinguish two stages: first reflection and second reflection.

The first reflection has the following characteristics: abstract, analytical, objective, universal, and verifiable (Marcel, 1960a). This reflection takes place in science. However, philosophy should not stop there. This first reflection also plays a role in philosophy, but it is not its endpoint.

The second reflection does not objectify but takes place based on participation or takes place in an atmosphere of contemplation. The second reflection does not speak of objects but of presence. The second reflection does not prioritize a logical approach, but strives for a dialogical approach. This second reflection takes place in the context of the "person." Only through this path can philosophy reach the true Being, which is hidden from "objective thought" (Marcel, 1960a).

The third reflection is exploration. In this phase, "I" acknowledge that "I" participate in Being. Here, "I" freely accept the reality in which "I" find myself, including "myself." Now we better understand how Marcel departed from life and ultimately returned to it. He also once said that someone who goes through this path of reflection need not become a Christian because Marcel believed that a concrete/real philosophy magnetically leads to a Christian life. For Marcel, "Being" is an essential agreement between Christianity and humanity.

The Difference Between Problematic and Mysterious

For Marcel, there is a fundamental distinction between the problematic and the mysterious. A problem is something that "I" raise, an objective problem in which "I" am not involved. A mystery is something in which "I" am involved, and this essence is imperfect. This mystery is not simply a limitation in knowledge. In Marcel's philosophy, two distinctions are presented in understanding new perspectives. A problem refers to a problem presented to "me" from the outside. A problem has an "objective" connotation: "I" myself am not involved. A problem can be solved, until it finally disappears as a problem. In general, it can be said that problems can be found at the level of logical and mathematical thinking, clear thinking and technical thinking (Gerber, 1969; Godfrey, 1987; Palenčar, 2017). The same is true of mysteries.

Marcel argues that mysteries are never posed to "me" objectively. The mystery is not in front of or outside "me," but within "me," or more precisely, "I" myself am part of the mystery. A mystery involves "me." Asking about a mystery simultaneously means asking about "me." Mysteries cannot be solved. For Marcel, thought cannot exhaust or eliminate a mystery. However, mystery is also not the same as "the incomprehensible" (Stratton-Lake, 2017). Mystery transcends the capacity of thought not because of its darkness, but because of its light (Gerber, 1969). Some examples of mysteries presented in our discussion are freedom, spirit, and the meaning of life. According to Marcel, the most fundamental mystery is the mystery of Being.

The Metaphysics of Hope

Loyalty is central to intersubjective relationships between humans. Loyalty, according to Marcel, is being in the presence of another person (C. A. de F. da Silva & Riva, 2017; Gerber, 1969; Godfrey, 1987; Grassi, 2020; Negomireanu, 2013). Loyalty is not merely constancy or being rooted in a transcendent reality (E. G. Silva, 2005). But loyalty is more than constancy, understood as persistence in achieving goals. Loyalty involves being present to others.

One of the keywords to describe human relationships with others is presence. According to Marcel, the mystery of Being cannot be fully understood unless it is examined from the perspective of intersubjectivity, meaning the relationship between humans. “Being” always means “Being together” (Grassi, 2020). The term “presence” does not mean being in the same place. It should not be understood “objectively,” applying the categories of space and time, but rather as the self-direction of one person to another. It can be said that presence is the encounter of “I” and “Thou.”

Marcel understands that the terms “I” and “Thou” are intended to indicate that fellow human beings appear to “me” precisely as fellow human beings (Joseph & Yoshiy, 2022). A fellow human being is present to “me” when he is more than an individual; when “I” truly make contact with him as a person. This “presence” can be realized, even though we are far apart in space. Presence is realized in a special way in love (Piter & Riyanto, 2024). Here I and You reach the level of “We.” At the level of We, I and You are elevated into a new unity that cannot be separated into two parts (Henrika, 2014; Wardani & Hambali, 2023). Thus, togetherness arises.

In further research, Marcel emphasized that this togetherness, by its very nature, must continue. Therefore, the experience of love also includes the “I” binding itself and remaining faithful (fidelity). This faithfulness is called “creative faithfulness” (C. A. de F. da Silva & Riva, 2017; Godfrey, 1987; Henrika, 2014; Negomireanu, 2013). Loyalty is central to intersubjective relationships. Loyalty involves being present for another person. Loyalty involves unconditional commitment and being available for another person. The act of loyalty to another is understood as humility. Loyalty is also an offering of ourselves to others. Loyalty is experienced as a heart beyond the limits of our own egocentricity. Thus, loyalty leads us to have greater faith in the absolute, God.

Marcel provides hope. He saw that philosophical reflection on the presence of others leads us to the presence of a special “other”, namely God (Godfrey, 1987). A presence imbued with loyalty actually leads us to know God better. Loyalty is part of faith. In faith, we will find the possibility and assurance of our faithfulness. Marcel once said that “I” was guided or led to Being from the beginning and “I” became full as a human being in unity with other people and God (Maharani, 2012; Taso, 2024).

The Metaphysical Idea of *Sabaya Diri*’

The metaphysical concept of *Sabaya Diri*’ has three important points based on the thinking of Gabriel Marcel. Marcel emphasized that humans cannot fully recognize themselves without relating to others. Because it is in relationships with others that they become truly human. Marcel also emphasized that this relationship must be characterized by total openness and self-surrender. “I” and “Thou” must be willing to open themselves to knowing and being known (Marcel, 1960a, 1960b). Here, what is called “presence” occurs, namely the presence of the true “I” and the true “Thou.” The pinnacle of this relationship is love. In love, my presence calls on “You”—and vice versa—to unite as “We.” At the level of “We,” “I” and “You” become a complete and indivisible whole. Thus, a truly communicative communion emerges as the most perfect form of presence.

The three key points in question are as follows. The first, among Dayaks, the most solid recognition of *Sabaya Diri*’ is due to their shared ethnicity. This first point emphasizes that when Dayak Kanayatn meet each other, a concept is immediately established that transcends the Dayak themselves, embracing the very strong bond and unity inherent in the term *Sabaya Diri*’. When this term is used, whether they initially know each other or not, fellow Dayak Kanayatn can easily and seamlessly blend in and mingle with each other.

The second, non-Dayak people are considered *Sabaya Diri*’ because they are people of noble dignity. This second point emphasizes that the Dayak Kanayatn people are very friendly to everyone. This demonstrates that the Dayak Kanayatn have established a transcendent relationship with other tribes, thus avoiding suspicion, anxiety, and fear. This section also emphasizes that the Dayak people can accept anyone as long as they are *Sabaya Diri*’, or people of tradition and culture.

The third, the natural environment is considered *Sabaya Diri*’ because of the close relational relationship between the Dayak people and the universe. As an agrarian society, this third point emphasizes that the Dayak Kanayatn people already have a metaphysical relationship between humans and the universe. This has a positive impact on preserving nature and the environment, making it more beautiful. Furthermore, everyone should not exploit nature irresponsibly, but should act according to their needs and responsibly.

Conclusion

Sabaya Diri' is called local wisdom because it is a culture and term that contains the meaning and values of the wisdom of life of the Dayak Kanayatn community in West Kalimantan. As local wisdom, *Sabaya Diri*' contains and has a metaphysical concept, namely, *Sabaya Diri*' is the most solid recognition because of the similarity of tribes, *Sabaya Diri*' to glorify dignified humans and the natural environment is *Sabaya Diri*' because of the close relationality of the Dayak people with the universe.

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