

DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN SUNDANE SOCIETY: BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN CIREUNDEU TRADITIONAL VILLAGE, CIMAHI

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the dynamics of social change within the Cireundeu Traditional Village community in Cimahi, a Sundanese community that maintains tradition amidst modernity. This village is known for its cassava-based food security system (*rasi*) and Sundanese *Wiwitan* traditional values, which are still practiced in social life. The research used a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design through non-participatory field observation, visual documentation, and literature review. The results show that modernization in the form of urbanization, digital technology, and cultural tourism activities does not erase tradition but rather encourages a process of selective adaptation and value negotiation. Core traditions such as *rasi* consumption and ritual practices are maintained, while non-essential aspects are adapted to contemporary needs. These findings indicate that social change in the Cireundeu Traditional Village is non-linear and represents a form of localized modernity, where cultural identity is reproduced through contextual adaptation mechanisms.

Keywords: Cireundeu, Indigenous People, Local Wisdom, Modernity, Social Change.

A. INTRODUCTION

Social change refers to the transformation of social structures, values, norms, and interaction patterns within a society due to modernization, urbanization, and technological development (Martono, 2016) and (Sztompka, 2020). From a modern perspective, traditional societies experience integration with broader economic and technological systems (Giddens, 1990). This process not only impacts changes in social institutions but also encourages social mobility and the transformation of cultural values from previously communal to more rational and individualistic (Sukmana et al., 2025).

Indigenous communities are often perceived as static entities closed to change due to their strong attachment to traditional value systems and practices (Kusno, 2023). However, recent research shows that indigenous communities are not completely closed to change but are capable of selectively adapting to modernity (Sztompka, 2020) and (Koentjaraningrat, 2015). This adaptation does not mean the loss of cultural identity, but rather a process of reinterpreting values within a changing social context (Melia & Mesra, 2025).

Developments in information and communication technology have also played a significant role in changing patterns of social interaction in Indonesian society. Digitalization influences how communities build social relationships and maintain cultural identity (Nasrullah, 2022) and (Castells, 2015). In the context of indigenous communities, technology is often used as a medium for cultural documentation and promotion, not merely as an agent of global cultural homogenization (Rayhan, 2025).

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In the Sundanese context, this dynamic is evident in the Cireundeu Traditional Village community in Cimahi City. This village is known for upholding Sundanese Wiwitan beliefs and a cassava-based food security system (*rasi*) as the community's collective identity (Mubarok, 2023). Despite being located in an urban environment with high levels of social mobility and technological penetration, the Cireundeu community maintains its traditional social structure through deliberation forums, cultural rituals, and traditional values education within the family (Al-Hadad et al., 2025).

Theoretically, modernization theory explains that modernization does not always lead to the disintegration of tradition, but can instead give rise to forms of cultural hybridity through a process of structural adaptation (Sztompka, 2020). In practice, indigenous communities like Cireundeu demonstrate patterns of selective adaptation to modernity, including the use of digital technology to promote indigenous culture and tourism. This confirms that social change occurs through a complex negotiation process between local cultural resilience and the penetration of modern values (Fitri et al., 2025).

Thus, social change in indigenous communities is neither linear nor homogeneous, but rather occurs through a dialectical process between tradition and modernity, producing new social configurations without losing the core of the community's cultural identity.

Research Gap

Several studies have examined the Cireundeu Traditional Village from various perspectives, particularly regarding social structure, the Sunda Wiwitan belief system, and local wisdom in cassava-based food security (*rasi*) (Adnan, 2023) and (Permana, 2023). These studies generally emphasize descriptive-cultural aspects and the preservation of tradition as a form of resilience of indigenous community identity amidst the tide of modernization.

However, most previous research has focused on an inventory of cultural values and ritual practices without in-depth analysis of the dynamics of social change occurring in the community's daily interactions with modern structures such as formal education, digital technology, job mobility, and the urban economic system. Furthermore, previous studies tended to use a documentary approach and literature review, thus failing to fully describe the social negotiation processes that occur through the empirical experiences of indigenous communities themselves.

Yet, social change is understood not only through cultural preservation, but also through the negotiation of values between tradition and modernity (Sztompka, 2020) and (Giddens A., 1991). This requires an in-depth field research approach through interviews and participant observation to capture social realities contextually.

Based on this description, there is a research gap in the study of social change in the Cireundeu indigenous community, particularly those based on empirical field data and focusing on the interaction between tradition and modernity. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by using a qualitative field approach through in-depth interviews and direct observation to analyze how social change is negotiated, internalized, and reproduced in the daily lives of the Cireundeu indigenous community.

This study analyzes the forms of social change occurring in the Cireundeu indigenous community, identifies the mechanisms of negotiation between tradition and modernity in the community's social life, and explains the social adaptation strategies that enable the indigenous community to maintain its collective identity in an urban environment.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Change

Social change can be understood as a shift in social life patterns that affects the structure, institutions, relationships, and culture within a society, and does not always move in a straight line or uniformly across aspects. The key phrase: change can occur at the micro level (daily practices), meso (organizations/communities), and macro (rules and order), and each level influences the others (Fauzi, 2024). Within this framework, change is not synonymous with the “loss of tradition,” but can take the form of value reformulation, institutional adjustments, or shifts in the symbolic meaning of old practices. Sztompka also emphasizes the importance of viewing change as a historical process triggered by a combination of internal (community dynamics) and external (urbanization, economics, technology) factors. Therefore, the study of indigenous communities living in urban spaces is best read as a series of adaptations and negotiations, rather than a rigid “traditional vs. modern” dichotomy (Hudiana, 2023). Indicators:

- Changes in daily social practices (consumption patterns, work, interactions, rituals).
- Changes in norms and values (what is considered "obligatory," "permissible," "inappropriate").
- Changes in community institutions (deliberative mechanisms, customary authority, role allocation).
- Changes in social relations (solidarity, external networks, conflict/compromise).
- Changes in cultural symbols and meanings (symbolic functions, identity narratives, traditional legitimacy).

Reflexive Modernity and Self-Projection

Late modernity can be understood as a phase in which social life is increasingly characterized by uncertainty, accelerated change, and an “openness of choice” in how people construct their lives. In this situation, identity is not treated as something “one-size-fits-all,” but as a reflexive project in which people continually interpret themselves through experience, new information, and social interactions (Kinasih, 2024). Giddens emphasizes that modern mechanisms (e.g., media, expert knowledge, formal institutions) shape life practices, but individuals/communities retain the agency to choose, negotiate, and reconfigure meaning. Therefore, change within indigenous communities can be read as a strategy to maintain “biographical continuity” and a sense of ontological security, while adapting to urban and technological demands. This theory is relevant when explaining why certain elements are symbolically maintained, while simultaneously making their practices more flexible according to context (Sutopo, 2022). Indicators:

- Actor reflexivity (how communities reassess traditions and decide what to retain/change).
- Identity narratives (how “we” are defined and differentiated from “outsiders”).
- Risk management strategies (responses to pressures of urbanization, economics, and generational change).
- Lifestyle transformations (consumption patterns, education, mobility, technological preferences).
- Continuity–discontinuity of practices (what is sacred/core vs. what is adaptive/peripheral).

Glocalization

Glocalization explains that globalization does not automatically homogenize cultures, but rather often results in a creative encounter between global and local elements, giving rise to hybrid forms. In this process, the “local” is not a passive object, but an active actor that selects, interprets, and “localizes” modern elements to align with local values. Robertson

emphasizes the productive tension between homogenization and heterogenization: some aspects become more similar (e.g., technology/promotional formats), but meanings and practices remain distinctly local. This framework is particularly well-suited to understanding indigenous communities interacting with tourism, social media, and the creative economy without losing core symbols of their identity. With glocalization, social change can be mapped as the “localization of modernity”: the modern enters, but is filtered through customary logic, community authority, and the need for cultural legitimacy. Indicators:

- Hybrid forms (traditional practices packaged in modern formats: digital promotions, tourism, events).
- Local selection (community criteria for accepting/rejecting external elements).
- Reframing meaning (modernity is used to strengthen, not replace, customary legitimacy).
- Cross-actor networks (relations with government, tourists, creative communities, media).
- Controlled commodification (the boundary between "culture as identity" and "culture as economic attraction").

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design (Yin, 2018). This approach was chosen to understand the dynamics of social change in the specific context of the Cireundeu Traditional Village in Cimahi City, an indigenous community located in an urban environment.

This research is based on direct field observations conducted by the researcher through visits to the Cireundeu Traditional Village, supported by visual documentation and relevant literature. This approach allows the researcher to capture social practices, cultural symbols, and forms of community interaction with modernity contextually.

Therefore, this research does not attempt statistical generalizations, but rather provides an in-depth understanding of the process of adaptation of tradition to modernity within a specific indigenous community.

Data collection technique

Research data was collected through three main techniques:

a. Field Observation (Non-Participatory)

Researchers conducted direct observations of:

- 1) Physical conditions and the village environment
- 2) Daily community activities
- 3) The practice of consuming rice as a symbol of food security
- 4) Social interactions in the context of cultural visits and communal activities

Observations were conducted in a non-participatory manner, where researchers were not involved in customary structures, but rather observed social dynamics naturally.

b. Documentation

Documentation includes:

- 1) Photos of the village environment
- 2) Visual documentation of cultural practices
- 3) Field notes during the visit
- 4) Publication materials or written information available on-site. Documentation includes:

This documentation functions as visual primary data as well as a triangulation tool for literature discussing the Cireundeu Traditional Village.

c. Literature Study

To strengthen the analysis, this study uses literature studies from the latest scientific journals, books, and academic publications regarding:

Journals, books, and academic publications regarding:

- 1) Social change
- 2) Modernity and indigenous communities
- 3) Cultural resilience
- 4) Study of the Cireundeu Traditional Village

Literature study is used as an analytical framework to interpret field observation findings.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques with an interactive model (Miles, 2014) which includes:

- a. Data Reduction: Observational and documented data are selected based on their relevance to the research focus, namely the dynamics of social change and the negotiation of tradition and modernity.
- b. Data Display: Data are presented in the form of descriptive-analytical narratives to demonstrate patterns of interaction between customary values and modern practices.
- c. Conclusion Drawing: Conclusions are drawn by linking field findings to the theoretical framework of social change and reflexive modernity.

Data Validity

Data validity was carried out through triangulation of sources and methods (Lincoln, 1985), to maintain the validity and credibility of the research, the following was carried out:

- a. Source triangulation, by comparing field observations and academic literature.
- b. Method triangulation, through the use of observation and documentation.
- c. In-depth contextual description (thick description) so readers can assess the transferability of the findings to other indigenous contexts.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

General description of Cireunde Traditional Village

Based on field observations conducted by researchers, the Cireunde Traditional Village is an indigenous community located within the administrative area of Cimahi City and surrounded by urban areas. Physically, this village is not isolated, but rather integrated with the city environment, marked by adequate road access and the presence of electricity and internet networks.

Most residents' houses use modern materials such as walls and tiled roofs, but some symbolic cultural elements are still maintained, particularly in spaces used for traditional activities and rituals.

Observational findings indicate that cultural identity is no longer solely manifested in traditional architecture, but rather is more strongly expressed in social practices and the community's value system.

Food Security as Cultural Identity

One characteristic of the Cireunde Traditional Village is the consumption of rasi (cassava rice) as a staple food. Based on researchers' observations and field documentation, the production and consumption of rasi still occurs and serves as a symbol of the community's collective identity.

However, in daily practice, flexibility in consumption is evident. Some residents also consume rice under certain circumstances, particularly in interactions outside the community. This suggests that the rasi (rice) is not merely maintained as a form of absolute resistance to

rice, but rather as a symbol of cultural identity and resilience. This finding indicates selective adaptation in traditional food practices.

Interaction with Modernity

Observations show that almost all homes have access to electricity and modern communication devices such as smartphones. Furthermore, the village also welcomes educational and cultural tourism. The promotion of culture through social media and tourism activities demonstrates that the community is not closed off from modernity. Instead, they utilize modernity as a means to expand cultural existence. However, this modernization has not eliminated traditional ritual practices, which continue to be held periodically. Traditional activities remain a collective space that strengthens community social solidarity.

Non-Linear Social Change

The findings of this study indicate that social change in the Cireundeu Traditional Village is not destructive to tradition, but rather exhibits a non-linear pattern of change (Sztompka, 2020). Modernization does not replace customary systems, but interacts adaptively with local values.

This aligns with the perspective of reflexive modernity, which views society as an active agent in responding to change, not a passive object of globalization.

Modernity as a Means of Cultural Reproduction

Instead of eroding identity, digital technology and tourism function as media for cultural reproduction. Traditions such as the consumption of traditional foods and the practice of traditional rituals gain new legitimacy through public exposure and educational activities.

Thus, modernity in the Cireundeu context can be understood as "localized modernity in Cireundeu," that is, the integration of global elements without losing their local foundations (Giddens A., 1991).

Negotiating Tradition and Contemporary Needs

The changes that have occurred demonstrate a negotiation between economic needs, education, and social mobility and a commitment to traditional values. Traditions are maintained in their core aspects (beliefs, rituals, and food symbols), while non-essential aspects undergo adjustments. This process demonstrates that indigenous communities are not static, but dynamic and contextual.

E. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the dynamics of social change in the Cireundeu Traditional Village, Cimahi, demonstrate a pattern of transformation that is adaptive and reflexive, rather than disintegrative. Modernization in the form of urbanization, the penetration of digital technology, and integration with urban economic systems does not eliminate the value structures and cultural identities of indigenous communities. Instead, modernity is selectively negotiated through social mechanisms that allow for the preservation of core traditions while simultaneously adapting to contemporary needs.

Observational findings indicate that the cultural identity of the Cireundeu community is more strongly manifested in social practices such as the consumption of rasi as a symbol of food security and the performance of traditional rituals than in physical or architectural forms. Furthermore, the use of communication technology and involvement in cultural tourism activities demonstrate that the community is not closed to change but rather integrates modern elements as a means of cultural reproduction.

Thus, social change in the Cireundeu Traditional Village does not proceed linearly toward the homogenization of modern culture, but rather forms a pattern of localized modernity, where tradition remains the foundation of social legitimacy while undergoing contextual reinterpretation.

Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this study strengthens the critique of the classical modernization perspective, which tends to view social change as a unidirectional process toward full rationalization and secularization. These findings align with the reflexive modernity approach, which positions communities as active actors in interpreting and managing social change.

This study also contributes to the sociology of indigenous communities by demonstrating that urban indigenous communities cannot be understood through a binary traditional-modern dichotomy. Instead, a process of cultural hybridization occurs that allows for the integration of modern technology and economics without eliminating collective value structures.

The concept of "localized modernity" in the Cireundeu context enriches the discourse on non-linear social change, where selective adaptation becomes a primary strategy for maintaining cultural identity amidst the pressures of globalization.

Practical Implications

Practically, the results of this study have several implications:

For local governments, strengthening cultural preservation policies needs to be directed at supporting social practices and community value systems, rather than simply focusing on symbols or physical cultural infrastructure. For indigenous communities, the use of digital technology as a medium for documenting and promoting culture can continue to be developed as a strategy to strengthen collective identity while simultaneously improving economic well-being. For cultural tourism management, a participatory approach is required to ensure that cultural commodification does not displace core values and customary authority.

Research Limitations

This research is limited by its data collection methods, which are based on field observation and documentation, without in-depth interviews or longitudinal studies. Therefore, the findings are contextual and not intended to be broadly generalized to all indigenous communities in Indonesia.

Furthermore, the limited observation period does not fully capture the dynamics of social change over a long period of time. Intergenerational interactions have not been analyzed in depth through an ethnographic approach.

Acknowledging these limitations is essential to maintaining the objectivity and academic integrity of this research.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the research findings and limitations, several recommendations can be made:

Further research is recommended to use an in-depth ethnographic approach or longitudinal studies to understand the dynamics of social change more comprehensively. A comparative study between the Cireundeu Traditional Village and other Sundanese indigenous communities could provide a broader perspective on patterns of adaptation to modernity. Quantitative research on the younger generation's perceptions of cultural identity and modernization could complement the existing qualitative findings. Further studies on the economic impact of cultural tourism on indigenous social structures are also a potential area of research.

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