

# **Vocabulary associated with maize and rice**

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## ABSTRACT

Maize and rice are rich areas of vocabulary in many Indonesian languages. This paper outlines several areas to investigate, including varieties of maize and rice, parts of the plant, their cultivation including stages of growth, harvesting and harvest taboos, storage, and ways of preparing these grains for human consumption.

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## VERSION HISTORY

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# Vocabulary associated with maize and rice

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## 1 Maize

This article is a companion article to “Grain Crops in Indonesia” (Sulang Language Data and Working Papers: Topics in Lexicography, no. 9). As explained in that article, maize, commonly called corn in North American English, is a New World grain crop that first entered Indonesia during the period of European contact and exploration. The Malay and Indonesian term for maize is *jagung*. I have yet to find any information about the origin or etymology of this term.<sup>1</sup> Presumably it entered Malay and other languages of western Indonesia when maize was first introduced to that area, perhaps as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### 1.1 The term for maize in local languages

Many local languages in Indonesia have a term for maize. There are several possible sources for this term.

- Some languages have a term related to or borrowed from the Malay term *jagung*.
- In other local languages, the term for maize is derived from the term for Job’s tears.<sup>2</sup> When maize was introduced, the people called it a kind of Job’s tears, probably because the maize plant and the Job’s tears plant are somewhat similar in appearance.
- In other local languages, the term for maize may be derived from a term for millet, some other plant, a place name, or may be of unknown origin.

### 1.2 General terms associated with maize

Maize is grown in dry fields, not paddies. Farmers in some areas of Indonesia plant maize and rice in the same fields; in such areas some terms, ceremonies and beliefs associated with dry field agriculture concern both rice and maize.

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<sup>1</sup> Several scholars have commented on the terms *jawawut* ‘millet,’ *jawaras* ‘sorghum’ and *Jawa* ‘Java,’ speculating that they may all be derived from or related to the Pali term *jawa* ‘barley, millet,’ which they think was borrowed into languages of western Indonesia by early trade with India. To their speculations I add the Malay term *jagung* ‘maize.’ Could the initial *ja-* of *jagung* be related to the initial *jawa-* of *jawawut* and *jawaras* and *Jawa*? Specifically, is it possible that *jagung* originates from the compound *jawa* + *agung*?

<sup>2</sup> For information about the grain crop called Job’s tears (*Coix lacryma-jobi*), see section 2 of the article “Grain Crops in Indonesia.”

Areas where maize has been grown for several generations will probably have developed some special vocabulary associated with maize. Here are some lists and categories of things to investigate if you are doing research in an area where maize is a common crop. I give the Indonesian terms as well where I know them.

In local languages where maize is an important crop there may be terms for

- a field where maize is planted (*ladang jagung*), or where rice and maize are planted together (*ladang*);
- a dibble stick (*tugal*) and the act of planting maize or other crops with a dibble stick (*menugal*, from the root *tugal*);
- harvesting maize, e.g., by yanking the ears of grain off of the plant;
- shucking maize, i.e., removing the husk from the ears of corn;
- shelling maize, i.e., removing the dry kernels from the cob;
- racks, bins or granaries where maize is stored (*lumbung jagung*).

### 1.3 Parts of the maize plant

The maize plant has the typical parts that most plants have, i.e., leaves (*daun*), roots (*akar*) and a stem or stalk (*tangkai*).<sup>3</sup> The stem has joints or nodes (*buku*) and internodes (the portion of stem between the nodes) (*ruas*). The maize plant also has some more specialized parts.<sup>4</sup> These include:

- the cob (*tongkol*) on which the grains grow;
- the husk or shucks (*kulit jagung*, or *selupat jagung*), i.e., multiple leaf-like layers surrounding the cob;
- the corn silk (*rambut jagung*), i.e., the pollen receptors of the female flowers, resembling a tuft of hairs emerging from the end of the cob;
- the tassel (*malai jagung*), i.e., the pollen-producing male flowers at the apex of the plant.

Languages that use classifiers for counting may have a classifier for counting cobs of maize, such as the American English ‘an ear of corn,’ or the Uma *hampaku goa* ‘one.oblong.thing maize.’

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<sup>3</sup> In some local languages, however, a maize plant is classified as a “tree” and so its stalk is not referred to by the local term for “stem/stalk” but the local term for “tree/trunk.”

<sup>4</sup> See also Iryawati (2010:9) for specialized Indonesian botanical vocabulary regarding corn plants.

## 1.4 Terms for varieties of maize

Some languages have terms for different varieties of maize. For example, Uma farmers talk about *goa' pulu* 'glutinous maize,' *goa' roke* 'wrinkled maize,' *goa' langka* 'screw-pine maize,' *goa' taba* 'ti-plant maize,' etc.

## 1.5 Terms associated with stages of growth of maize

In areas where maize is a common crop, farmers may have a set of terms to refer to the various stages of growth of the maize in their fields. For example, Uma farmers use colorful idioms to talk about how their maize crop is growing.

- Maize that has just sprouted is described as *pani' nyoko* 'preying mantis wings' because the tiny leaves resemble the wings of that insect.
- Later the young maize plant is described as *hampowungaa* 'a flower bouquet' because it is about the size and shape of a bouquet of flowers that an Uma woman would traditionally tuck into her skirtband.
- When the maize is taller, it is said to be *hampomesakua ana* 'a child's spear-hurling' because it is about the height that a child would hurl a spear.

And there are several more terms referring to later stages of growth up to maturation and harvest.

## 1.6 Terms associated with preparing and cooking maize:

There may be terms in the local language for the various ways to cook maize and for foods prepared from maize. Here are some of the ways that I have observed people cooking maize in Indonesia.

- Baby corn (maize harvested while the ears are very immature), also called corniettes or in Indonesian *jagung semi*, are added to other vegetable dishes.
- Immature maize can be cooked on the cob by removing the husks and then boiling it or by roasting it over coals.
- Immature maize can also be boiled or roasted over a fire without removing all of the husks.
- Very immature maize can be grated to make a mush, mixed with grated coconut, shallots, or other flavoring ingredients, poured into a bamboo tube and cooked by leaning it against a fire. This produces a heavy cornbread-like cake. In some places the mixture is wrapped back in the husks. The packets are then tied and boiled.
- Mature maize kernels can be soaked and boiled until soft, and then eaten (English: *hominy*; I don't know a term for this in Indonesian). Sometimes mineral quicklime

(*kapur*) is added to the water during in the soaking process. The caustic solution softens and dissolves the outer shell.

- Mature maize can be ground (*digiling*) using a mechanical mill (*gilingan*) or pounded (*ditumbuk*) to crack the kernels into small pieces. Cracked maize (*jagung tumbuk* or *beras jagung*) or milled maize (*jagung yang digiling*) can be used as chicken feed or cooked in water and fed to pigs. It can also be used as human food, though I personally have never seen people eat maize like this in Indonesia.<sup>5</sup>
- Cracked maize kernels can be mixed with rice and cooked in water to produce a rice-maize mixture (*nasi jagung*). In some parts of Indonesian this is considered inferior food, eaten when rice is in short supply.

In some areas of Indonesia, a smooth stone is placed in the bottom of a rice mortar when pounding maize kernels. The maize kernels are put into the mortar on top of the stone and pounded with a pestle. The stone makes it easier to break up the maize kernels. There may be a term for this stone, and for the process of pounding maize in a mortar and pestle with such a stone in it.

## 2 Rice

The noble has a shirt of only one layer.  
The slave has a shirt of many layers.

The hidden meaning of this Uma riddle is: rice and maize. In Uma culture, as in many cultures in western and central Indonesia, rice is the principal food—the noble—and maize is of lesser importance—the slave.

The Indonesian term for rice as a plant is *padi*, a reflex of the reconstructed protoform \*pajey. Some scholars think that \*pajey goes back to Proto Austronesian (PAN). This would mean that the Austronesian-speaking peoples who migrated from Formosa to insular Southeast Asia already grew rice and took it with them on their migrations. Other scholars believe that these earliest Austronesian settlers from Formosa did not bring rice with them, but rather that rice was introduced somewhat later but still early on. In either case, rice has been a grain crop in Indonesia for thousands of years.

Below I give a list of some terms associated with rice that may be found in areas where rice is the principal crop. These lists are not exhaustive, merely suggestive. If you are working in an area where rice is important, these lists may give you ideas of some areas to investigate. I give the Indonesian term if I know it; I have gleaned these terms from *Kamus Besar*, Wilkinson's Malay-English Dictionary, and my own experience in

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<sup>5</sup> Milled maize, called cornmeal in North American English, can be used to make cornbread. It can also be cooked in water to produce a kind of porridge, which in the USA is called corn meal mush or grits. I have not observed either of these methods of cooking maize in Indonesia.

Sulawesi. Remember that each area of Indonesia has its own brand of Indonesian or local Malay and so is likely to have different terms for some of these things.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.1 Terms for parts of the rice plant

As with many plants of the grass family, the rice plant has roots (*akar*), leaves (*daun*), stems (*tangkai*), and nodes (*buku*) on the stems. The stems are hollow between the nodes. The rice seeds or grains grow on a loose branching cluster of stems at the tip, called a panicle. The Indonesian term *bulir* refers to this cluster of grains.

Many Indonesian languages will have terms for:

- the rice plant itself, and the rice crop still in the field (Indonesian uses the term *padi* for both of these);
- rice grains after being separated from the plant (*gabah*);
- rice after the hull has been removed (*beras*);
- tiny bits of broken rice grains (*melukut*, *menir*, or *pecahan beras*);
- rice cooked in water (*nasi*).

The rice grains (*butir padi*, or *biji padi* in some local Malays) are enveloped in a hull (*kulit padi*, called *sekam* after it has been removed). The hull of most varieties of rice is covered with tiny hairs (*miang*).

After harvest, the stem of the rice plant is left in the field or paddy as straw or stubble (*jerami*). There is also the upper portion of the rice plant that is discarded after the grains are removed (*malai padi*, or *merang*).

## 2.2 Varieties of rice

Some varieties of rice are glutinous rice (*padi ketan*, or *padi pulut*). When glutinous rice is cooked the grains become ‘sticky’ (*berpulut*).

Some varieties of rice grow best in paddies (*padi sawah*), some in dry fields (*padi ladang*, or *padi huma*). Depending on the variety, grains of rice can be white, off-white, reddish, brownish, purplish, or almost black. There may be terms in the local language for specific varieties of rice. For example, some Uma terms for specific varieties of rice include *pae konta* ‘sugar-palm-fruit rice,’ *pae lana* ‘oil rice,’ *pae nete* ‘tiny rice,’ *pae*

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<sup>6</sup> If readers can supply Indonesian terms other than the ones I have here, not only for rice terminology but for maize or other grains in Indonesia, please let me know (michael underscore martens at wycliffe dot net). If there is sufficient response, perhaps I will make these terms available to other readers at a later time.

*ntolamoa* ‘ghost rice,’ *pae pimpi* ‘reed rice,’ *pae tingkaloko* ‘lesser-coucal rice,’ *pae ui* ‘rattan rice,’ and many other terms that are even more difficult to translate into English.

### 2.3 Concepts and terms associated with the rice agriculture

This section covers some concepts and terms that apply to rice agriculture in general; it may apply to rice farming in paddies, in dry fields, or both.

- Among some people groups in Indonesia the positions of certain constellations in the night sky, e.g., the Pleiades (*bintang puyuh*, *bintang kartika*)<sup>7</sup> and Orion’s Belt (*belantik*), are used to indicate the proper time for planting rice.<sup>8</sup>
- There may be terms for traditional methods for indicating favorable times or days for planting.
- There may be terms or titles for the people who perform various roles in planting or harvesting, e.g. the ‘expert gardener,’ the ‘forerunner,’ the ‘pacesetter,’ etc.
- There are sometimes terms for special activities or ceremonies associated with certain times in the agricultural cycle, e.g., planting the first seeds or seedlings, harvesting the first heads of grain, placing the first of the harvested rice in the granary.
- There may be terms for group work in rice fields/paddies, e.g.,:
  - a group of people working in one another's field/paddy in turn;
  - working a field/paddy in common;
  - working in someone’s field/paddy for wages;
  - hiring people to work for wages in one’s field/paddy.
- There may be terms for:
  - various kinds of huts or watchtowers built in a rice field/paddy;
  - various kinds of fences built around a field/paddy, or fences put along paths within a field/paddy to prop up the rice;

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<sup>7</sup> I have also heard the term *bintang tujuh*.

<sup>8</sup> David Mead, personal communication. The knowledge of how to use the stars to determine the proper season for planting is fast dying out in Indonesia due to the use of printed calendars, and also to the introduction of commercial varieties of rice with shorter growing seasons.



- the parts of a field/paddy, e.g. the place where planting begins may be considered the ‘head’ of the field/paddy, the place where planting is finished its ‘bottom’;
- various kinds of baskets, e.g., baskets for holding rice grains to be planted, baskets strapped to one’s waist to put rice in during harvesting, baskets with carrying straps to carry heavy loads of harvested rice.

## 2.4 Terms associated with growing rice in a paddy

In areas where rice is grown in paddies, i.e., irrigated fields, there may be terms for:

- the paddy itself (*sawah*);
- dikes in a paddy (*pematang*);
- tunnels and waterways in paddy dikes;
- constructing new paddies (*mencetak sawah*, or *membuka sawah baru*);
- preparing the soil in paddies before planting (This can be done using hoes, or by driving water buffalo around the paddy to stomp in the mud; sometimes the water buffalo are made to drag a wooden implement to churn up the mud.);
- regulating the water in paddies by opening and closing the tunnels or waterways;
- rice seedling bed or sprouting plot, i.e., small area in paddy where rice is allowed to sprout and grow before transplanting into the paddies (*pesemaian* or *persemaian*, from the root *semai*);
- scatter rice seeds in seedling bed (*menghambur*);
- rice seedlings (*semai padi*, or *bibit padi*);
- uprooting rice seedlings to transplant to the paddy (*mencabut*);
- planting seedlings in the paddy (*menanam*, from the root *tanam*);
- weeding the paddy;
- various weeds that grow in rice paddies, e.g., hippo grass,<sup>9</sup> duckweed;<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Hippo grass (*Echinochloa stagnina*), or creeping paddy weed, is a plant that grows in swampy areas like rice paddies, and that resembles rice. I have seen the Indonesian term *rumpuk kumpai*, and the Malay term *padi burung* (i.e., *padi burung* “bird rice”) used for it on Internet sites, but have not found those terms in either *Kamus Besar* or Wilkinson 1959.

- various bugs, minnows, tadpoles, etc., that grow in rice paddies (The Umas use a sieve to catch these little critters, cook them and eat them.).

## 2.5 Terms associated with growing rice in dry fields

In areas where rice is grown in unirrigated fields, there may be terms for:

- swidden, i.e., dry (unirrigated) fields, where rice, sometimes along with maize, is grown (*huma*, *ladang* or *kebun*, depending on the local variety of Indonesian);
- slashing and burning off a section of forest or brushland to clear it for agriculture (There may be terms for chopping trees with an axe, slashing undergrowth with machetes, burning off of the slashed area after it has dried, re-burning of areas that did not burn well in the main burnoff, etc.);
- certain trees or plants, which if found in a section of forest to be cleared, are considered to be beneficial or ‘medicinal’ for the coming rice crop;
- dibble stick, i.e., a stick sharpened on one end used to poke holes in the ground to plant seeds (*tugal*, *tongkat*);
- planting with a dibble stick (*menugal*, from the root *tugal*);
- chopping or removing weeds (*menyiangi*, from the root *siang*; or *merumputi*, from the root *rumput*) with a hoe (*cangkul*, or *pacul*) or a sickle-like tool (*arit*);
- smaller plots of land in which supplemental, non-rice crops are planted (*kebun kecil*, *tegal*);
- supplemental crops that are planted in addition to rice (*palawija*).

There may be omens (Indonesian: *alamat*, *pertanda*) associated with the opening of a new field; that is, certain events that occur during the slashing or burning of the forest are considered predictions or harbingers of good fortune or bad fortune concerning the coming crop. For example, in Uma culture if the people slashing a section of forest to make a new field see a cuscus, it is a bad omen for it means that the area will not burn off well and therefore the field will be infested with weeds.

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<sup>10</sup> Duckweed (genus *Lemna*) is one of the tiniest flowering plants in the world. When duckweed grows in rice paddies, masses of these tiny plants cover the surface like a solid green layer. Uma farmers say that duckweed does no harm to the rice. The Indonesian term *kiambang* may be a generic term for such water plants, though Wilkinson 1959 says it refers to *Pistia stratiotes*, i.e., water lettuce. On the Internet I have found Indonesian terms *lumut itik* and *gulma itik*, which may refer to duckweed, but I am not certain.

## 2.6 Terms describing the stages of growth of rice

Some languages have terms to describe the stages of growth of the rice plant, e.g., sprouting, very young, half grown, full height, flowering, half-formed grains, full-formed but soft grains, almost ripe, ripe, over-ripe.

Wilkinson's Malay-English dictionary lists several terms for the stages of rice growth:

- when plant tapers: *padi menirus*;
- when plant begins to swell: *padi bunting*;
- when swelling is marked: *padi bunting besar*;
- when ear shoots out: *padi buahnya memanah*; *padi tinjau-meninjau*;
- when whole field is covered with blossoms: *padi mengapar*;
- when ears bend under weight of grain: *padi tundok kakak*;
- when the green color loses its brightness: *padi layu-layuan*;
- when the leaves begin to yellow: *padi kuning*;
- when the unripe grain is just edible (as *peringgi*): *padi panggang peringgi*;
- when the unripe grain is edible (as *emping*): *padi peremping*; *padi pengemping*;
- when the grain is ripe: *padi masak*;
- when it is overripe: *padi kukok*; *padi ranap*; *padi kerukut*.<sup>11</sup>

Some of these Malay terms are not in the *Kamus Besar*, and so may not be used in Indonesian. But Wilkinson's list is a good example of the categories one may find in a local language in a rice-farming community in Indonesia.

## 2.7 Terms associated with pests that bother rice

- The Indonesian term *hama* is a generic term for pests that bother rice; it is primarily used of insects or diseases, but sometimes also used of rodents or other animals that destroy the rice before it can be harvested.
- Insects that bother rice include the *walang sangit*, also called *cenangau*. *Walang* is a generic term for various kinds of stinkbugs (order Pentatomidae) and plant-sucking insects (order Alydidae).

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<sup>11</sup> Adapted from Wilkinson (1959), s.v. "padi."

- Birds that eat the ripening grain and therefore are considered pests are called *burung pipit* in Indonesian, a generic term that include several species of munia and other bird species as well.
- Farmers scare away birds by various means. For example,
  - they hurl small rocks or mud pellets at the birds with slingshots (*umban*, *katapel*) or other devices;
  - they build bird-scaring devices (*pengusir burung*, *penggarah burung*) of various types. These include scarecrow-like devices, pieces of cloth or plastic that are blown by the wind, long poles that swing when a rope is pulled, propellers turned by the wind that drive a noise-making device (*kitiran angin*, *kincir angin*), and water-powered noise-making devices.
- There are various diseases that affect rice.
- After rice is harvested and hulled, it can be infected by weevils (*bubuk beras*), or can become musty or moldy.

## 2.8 Terms associated with harvesting and storing rice

The activity of harvesting in Indonesian is *menuai* (from the root *tuai*) or *memanen* (from the root *panen*). In some languages there are terms for

- early harvesting, i.e., picking the heads of grain that ripen early;
- normal harvesting;
- late harvesting (*panen susulan*), i.e., picking or gleaning any grain that is left after the main harvest.

Rice can be harvested by cutting off the upper seed-bearing portion of the plant with a rice knife (*ani-ani*), or by cutting the plant near the middle of the stem using a sickle (*sabit*). When using a rice knife, the rice stems are severed one at a time. When using a sickle, the stems of several plants are grasped with one hand and then cut in one stroke with the sickle in the other hand.

As rice is harvested, the severed stalks are bundled together for ease of handling. There may be terms for various sizes of bundles or sheaves of rice. For example in Kulisusu (David Mead, personal communication) there are these terms:

- *mokungku* ‘a small bundle of rice, consisting of about ten stalks’;
- *iu* ‘a medium-sized bundle of rice consisting of two or three *mokungku* tied together, or about 20-30 stalks of grain altogether’;

- *boke* ‘a sheaf of rice.’

After the rice is harvested it is usually threshed, i.e., the grains are removed (*dirontokkan*).<sup>12</sup> The Indonesian verb *mengirik*, from the root *irik*, is usually used of threshing, though the original meaning of this root was probably to ‘tread on’ the rice. If the rice was harvested using a rice knife, the heads of grain are laid on a flat surface and trampled on by workers (*diirik*, or *diinjak*) to remove the grain. If the rice was harvested using a sickle, workers hold bundles of stalks and beat them (*menebahkan*, from the root *tebah*) against a hard surface, causing the grains to fall off.

The rice is usually dried in the sun (*dijemur*), either before it is removed from the plant, or after, or both. It is dried on a large flat area in the sun, e.g., a concrete floor, on mats laid on the ground, or on mats placed on a raised platform.<sup>13</sup>

After the rice is harvested and threshed, but before it is stored, it is winnowed, i.e., the empty hulls (*padi yang hampa*—I don’t know if there is a special term for this in Indonesian) and other unwanted bits of plant material are removed. This process is described by Indonesian term *menampi* (from the root *tampi*).<sup>14</sup> The only way I have seen this done in Indonesia is by slowly pouring the rice from a basket held up high so the grain falls on a mat or floor and the empty hulls and other unwanted material are blown away by the wind.

After the rice has been harvested, threshed, winnowed and properly dried, it can then be stored in bins or granaries (*lumbung*, *gudang padi*).

## 2.9 Terms associated with hulling rice

In modern times mechanical mills (*gilingan*) are used in many parts of Indonesia to remove the rice hull. But the traditional way is by pounding (*menumbuk*, from the root

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<sup>12</sup> In Uma culture, some kinds of glutinous rice are not threshed after harvest to remove the grains from the plant; rather, the grain is stored in sheaves (Indonesian: *berkas*), i.e., bundles of stalks bound together. In contrast, regular or non-glutinous rice is always threshed to remove it from the plant before storage. My guess is that the grains of some kinds of glutinous rice remain firmly attached to the plant even after it is fully ripe and dry, and the grain stores better when left on the plant; in contrast the grains of regular rice easily fall off of the plant once it is fully ripe.

<sup>13</sup> In Uma tradition, field rice is usually dried in the sun by spreading it on mats on the ground, but paddy rice is dried in the sun by spreading it on mats placed on raised platforms. I wondered if this was because the ground near rice paddies tends to be wet, so the rice dries better if put on a platform. But when I asked about this, Umas told me that it was simply tradition, and taboo to dry paddy rice on the ground.

<sup>14</sup> As far as I know, the Indonesian term *menampi* is rather generic, referring to any activity to separate the grain from unwanted material. It refers to both the activity of pouring newly-threshed rice from a basket to let the wind blow away empty hulls. It also refers to the activity of bouncing newly-pounded rice up and down in a winnowing tray (*nyiru*) to separate the freshly de-hulled grains (*beras*) from the hulls. In Uma and many other languages in Indonesia there are separate terms for these two activities. In Uma there is even a third term, referring to the activity of re-winnowing rice to clean it just prior to cooking. If anyone knows Indonesian terms to distinguish these activities, please let me know.

*tumbuk*) the rice in a mortar (*lesung*) and pestle (*alu*). There may be more than one kind of mortar. I have seen upright hourglass-shaped mortars, and several kinds of horizontal, trough-like mortars. There may be names for the various parts of a mortar.

In some local languages there may be terms for the initial pounding of the rice (*menumbuk*) and another term for subsequent pounding or re-pounding of the rice (cf. *menyosoh*, from the root *sosoh*, or *menceruh*, Indonesian verbs that mean to clean or whiten rice by repounding it). There may be terms for rice after it has been pounded and winnowed the first time but some grains still have a hull.<sup>15</sup> There may be a term for these rice grains that still have a hull after being pounded (*antah*).

There may be special terms for putting the rice in the mortar, for stirring it around, and for removing rice from the mortar. There may be a special term for two or more people pounding rice together in the same mortar.

After pounding, the rice must be winnowed to separate the freshly-hulled grains from the hulls. This is done by placing some rice on a tray-like winnowing basket (*nyiru*) and repeatedly tossing it in the air (*menampi*, from the root *tampi*) in such a way that the grains fall back into the basket but the chaff or hulls (*sekam*) are blown away and fall to the ground.

If rice is milled using a mechanical mill, the outer part of the rice grain is removed along with the hull and becomes a powdery substance mixed with some of the loose hull (*dedak*; local Malay in parts of Sulawesi: *konga*); this can be fed to livestock.

## 2.10 Terms associated with cooking rice by boiling it in water

The most common way to cook rice is to boil the hulled grains in a pot of water. Associated with this activity, there may be terms for

- the activity of cooking rice by boiling it (*menanak nasi*, from the root *tanak*);
- excess water in the pot when boiling rice, or water containing rice starch (*air tajin*);
- froth on top of boiling rice (*buih* is a generic word for froth in Indonesian);
- the activity of steaming rice (*mengukus*, from the root *kukus*) to complete the cooking process after the rice has been partially cooked by boiling;
- an unburned crust of rice stuck to the inside of the cooking pot (*kerak*).

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<sup>15</sup> David Mead (personal communication), reports that Mori has three terms for rice in the various stages of being pounded and winnowed: *tombu* ‘pestled rice after the first winnowing, many grains still with the husk on (still has to be pestled and winnowed twice more)’; *tongai* ‘pestled rice after the second winnowing (still has to be pestled and winnowed once more)’; *wea* ‘clean, pestled rice (rice after the third time pestled and winnowed).’ The third term is equivalent to (and cognate with) the Indonesian *beras*.

- a scorched or burned crust of rice stuck to the inside of the cooking pot (*kerak yang gosong/hangus*);
- rice that is undercooked so that the center of each grain is still hard (*nasi detus; nasi yang masih gih*);
- rice that is overcooked.

## 2.11 Terms associated with different foods made with rice

There are many kinds of foods made with rice. Every area has its own specialties. Here are some of the ways to prepare and eat rice that I have observed in Indonesia.

- rice in the field that is picked and hulled by hand and eaten raw;
- rice that is picked before it is fully ripe, boiled still in the hull, dried, and later hulled and cooked;
- rice that is parched or roasted in a hot skillet or wok (*bertih beras, emping*);
- rice, usually glutinous rice, that is soaked in water with yeast and allowed to ferment (*tapai beras, tapai ketan*—the term is pronounced *tape*, with a final glottal stop, in some areas);
- congee, i.e., rice cooked with extra water to make a porridge (*bubur*);
- rice wrapped in a banana leaf and then cooked (*nasi lontong*);
- rice boiled with other foodstuffs mixed in, e.g.,
  - green vegetables,
  - bits of meat,
  - cracked maize (*nasi jagung*),
  - chopped-up tubers, e.g., manioc, taro, sweet potato, yam (*nasi singkong, nasi ubi*, etc. depending on the local dialect of Indonesian/Malay);
- previously cooked rice fried with other ingredients (*nasi goreng*);
- glutinous rice cooked in bamboo with coconut milk or other ingredients (*nasi leman* is one kind; local Malay in parts of Sulawesi: *nasi jaha, nasi jahe*);
- glutinous rice cooked in small packets woven from strips of palm frond leaflets (*ketupat*);

- glutinous rice cooked with coconut and sugar (*wajik*, pronounced *waje* ' in some areas);
- various other kinds of special treats made with rice (often called by the generic term *kue*);
- flour made from pulverized rice (*tepung beras*), used to make various special treats.

## 2.12 Taboos associated with rice

There may be special terms in the local language associated with the following:

- spirit beings that are associated with rice;
- ceremonies that are performed before slashing, burning, or planting a new field, to ensure a good harvest, or gain permission from the spirits, etc.;
- ceremonies that are performed to placate or gain favor from the spirits so that the crop will be successful;
- special 'avoidance language,' i.e., a set of substitute terms used instead of words that are taboo to utter during rice harvest;
- activities or foods that are taboo during rice harvest;
- ceremonies that are performed before harvesting, threshing, storing the grain in granaries, eating the new crop, etc.;
- methods to determine propitious times to store the rice in the granary, e.g., when the tide is high, when the pupils of a cat's eyes are big, etc.;
- taboos concerning mixing paddy rice and field rice, mixing rice from the new crop with rice from old crops, etc.;
- taboos or beliefs associated with spilling rice, brushing away bits of rice with the hand, etc.

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