

Social construction of *ndudut mantu* engagement tradition in Centhini society District Lamongan

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Abstract

This research reveal about *ndudut mantu* one of engagement tradition in Centhini society Lamongan District East Java. This tradition is quite different from the general tradition because in this *ndudut mantu* tradition, only the woman who do the proposal to the man. This is consider a rare tradition given that the society has a strong religious background. Therefore, through the approach of Peter L. Berger regarding social construction and J.W. Ajaiwala regarding the social definition, it is expected that this research will be able to reveal the reason why this tradition still carried out, especially in the community of Centini Village, Lamongan, East Java.

Keywords: East Java, engagement, Lamongan, *ndudut mantu*, social construction

Introduction

Marriage is a union between men and women who form new families in order to be able to continue the descendants of the previous family. Besides, the aims of marriage is to clarify and legitimate male and female relations that are legitimate according to the religion and the law. Marriage in general is to prevent unwanted things between men and women that can cause disgrace to each family. According to Indonesian dictionary (KBBI), the word marriage is a contract of marriage that is carried out in accordance with the provisions of religious laws and teachings. In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia no. 1 of 1974 also explains marriage, is an inner and outer bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family based on the One Godhead (KBBI 2016).

In conducting a marriage, it does not happen directly between men and women just like that. There is a long process that is finally agreed upon to do a legal marriage according to religion and law. The process includes the introductions between men and women or dating, then asks for approval from the two families concerned, hosting, engagement and finally making a contract as proof of the validity of men and women as husband and wife. Proposal is an after dating process and is interpreted as a closed association of two individuals who aim to marry (Narwoko & Suyanto 2004) . The function of the proposal is to test the adequateness, it is hoped that it will not threaten the future marriage. The society calls this proposal as engagement. This engagement is to ask the men or the women to be their significant other as husband and wife to form a new family in a marriage (Narwoko & Suyanto 2004). The proposal or engagement is a culture created by humans and takes place continuously carried out by humans themselves. In this discussion the focus will be on immaterial culture which includes customs, language, science and so on.

Method

The research method used here focuses on social construction in the tradition of *ndudut mantu* engagement proposal by the Lamongan community, especially Centini Village. The selection of social settings in Centini Village, Laren Lamongan Subdistrict is because this village is one of the villages in Lamongan that still carries out the *ndudut mantu* tradition, even though this village is considered as a religious area. This research uses social construction theory by Peter L Berger (1990) in analysing the exist reality as well as local cultural concept by J.W Ajawaila to see the social definition paradigm. This research has become interesting, seeing that the *ndudut mantu* tradition is done only in certain areas in Lamongan, especially in the Village of Centini which is a fairly developed village. In addition, the level of education and mobility of the people are quite high as well as their religious knowledge, yet still carry out the traditions left by the former ancestors and continue to be reproduced until now. The focus of this research are as followed. First, how does the society of Centhini Village construct *ndudut mantu* tradition?. Second, What has caused the *ndudut mantu* tradition maintained and held by the people of Centini Village?.

In this research, the researcher uses social definition paradigm which seeing informant as a valid subject as well as using the analysis of Peter L Berger's social construction theory and also the concept of local culture by J.W Ajawaila. In addition, given that the level of education and mobility of the society are high as well as their religious knowledge, yet still carried out ancestral heritage traditions, the study took Centini Village, Laren Lamongan as the social setting. The focus of the research is on the *ndudut mantu* tradition of the society in Centini Village. Therefore, the analysis of this study focuses on the individual construction in interpreting the *ndudut mantu* tradition which held by Centini Village Society Laren Subdistrict Lamongan Regency. According to the contemporary Sociology book, Margaret M Poloma explains the there are three stages of Berger's social construction such as: externalization or adjustment to the sociocultural world as a product of the human world. The second is Objectivation, which is social interaction in an intersebjektif world institutionalized or experienced an institutionalization process and the third is Internalization namely individuals identify themselves with social institutions or social organizations where individuals become members (Poloma 2004).

In the context of Centini Society, externalisation step has been done in the early stage regarding the value of *ndudut mantu* tradition which socialised by the local community indirectly. While on the objectification step, the individual person try to interact with their socio-culture world. On the objectification step, the social reality is as if outside the human body which form a objective reality therefore it seems like there are two kind of reality that are subjective self reality and objective reality which is outside the human body. These two realities form intersubjective networks through institutional or institutional processes. Institutional process is a process of building awareness into action. In the institutionalisation process, the values which become the guidelines in interpreting actions have become an integral part so that what is realized is what is done. In the objectification stage, the people of Centini Village who have received information from the environment, such as the neighbours around their place of residence regarding the *ndudut mantu* tradition, begin to bind their self to the values that have been planted by comparing comparisons of the surrounding environment consciously to be able to determine the actions that must be taken, for instance to carry out this *ndudut mantu* tradition to not. The third step is internalisation, i.e. identification in the socio-cultural world. Internalization is an individual process of identifying oneself in its socio-cultural world. Internalization is a withdrawal moment of social reality in oneself or social reality into subjective reality. Social reality is in human beings and in that way the human self will be identified in the socio-cultural world. In this stage, the community of Centini Village can already know what they will do with these two considerations. So that the actions they performed were pure self-awareness without the influence of other people. So when the community carries out the *ndudut mantu* tradition, it has come from within the community. The social construction theory in the current study is

an approach material in analyzing reality and digging deeper into the *ndudut mantu* tradition the community of Centini Village which is different from the engagement tradition held by the community in general. In addition to the construction theory of Peter L. Berger (1990), this study also uses the concept of local culture, local culture is a culture that is characteristic of a particular nation or region that distinguishes an area from other regions. Local culture is defined as the local values of community cultivation from an area formed naturally through the learning process from time to time and passed down from generation to generation. Those cultures can be traditions, customs, mindset and also art. Every local culture will develop in each of their respective regions. According to J.W Ajawaila, local culture is a cultural characteristic of a local community group. So that each region has its own culture and becomes a differentiator between one region and another. The culture develops and carries out continuously by a community in order to preserve and to regenerate to the next generation.

The Research Result and Discussion

This study focuses on the custom and tradition which becomes the hallmark of Centini Village Laren Subdistrict Lamongan Regency. This village has a unique engagement tradition and of the characteristic or local culture in this village. According to J.W Ajawaila, Local culture is a cultural characteristic of a local community group or a the original culture of a particular group (Siafirah & Prasanti 2016). The manifestation of local culture can be an ancestral heritage, values that determine the actions of a community and others. Likewise, engagement tradition is also a man made culture which continuously implemented by the community.

There is an engagement tradition from the woman family to the man family as a prove that the woman choose the man as her husband in Lamongan. However, this kind of tradition only applies in Lamongan and its surrounding. The engagement tradition called *ndudut mantu* or *ndudut* or generally called *gemblongan* in Lamongan. This tradition is carried out by the female family on the male family, and is carried out continuously until now. In this case, the one who has to practiced *ndudut* to the male family is the female family and not necessarily the female directly. The main position of each family is the intermediary function of the large community. As a personal liaison with a larger social structure. According to Goode J William, a society will not be able to survive if the various needs are not met, one of which is in the marriage process, especially at the application stage (Goode 2002).

The local society usually get married with the local people from the same area who never get out of the area in order to held this tradition. Although the people of Centini Village interact with other people from different area in their daily life, but when it comes to marriage they prefer to marry the people from the same area. Every partners will eventually performs this *ndudut* tradition and willing to do it without any coercion from others. This is not different with the general engagement tradition, there are already prospective partners who will propose. In terms of choosing the partners, the society of Centini Village has specific criteria so that the tradition can be carried out, that is, men must come from the Village of Centini or the village around the area of the Village of Centini. It is not uncommon to find a spouse who is a husband or a man from an area outside the village of Centini even outside of Laren and Tuban Subdistricts, in this case the *ndudut mantu* tradition can still be performed because it still has the same tradition so that the *ndudut mantu* tradition can be accepted outside of Centini Village. Therefore, sometimes there is a mate selection for both the man and the woman in order to get the partners from the same area so that *ndudut mantu* tradition can still be perform. However, some of the partners do not do this selection process but instead they will look for their own partner from the same area so that they can do this tradition.

The *ndudut mantu* tradition was an ancient tradition from the royal era and still performs until now amidst the rapid development of the times. According to cultural records of Lamongan

Regency, *ndudut* tradition carried out to recall and commemorate the events that occurred during the old kingdom (Winoto 2012). The incident occurred between King Wirasaba's daughter (now Kertosono) and the son of the Lamongan Regent at that time. This is the reason why the people still performs *ndudut mantu* tradition until now, so the society will not forget the old times. Even though it has been done for a long time but the *ndudut mantu* tradition does not have big differences compare to the old times. Almost all of the traditional processes are still carried out in the same way, the difference is the innate (*gawan*) which brought by the people. Even so, the people of Centini Village continue to carry out the *ndudut mantu* tradition for every partners who will get married even though they are in the midst of an increasingly developed and developing age. Beside this tradition, the people of Centini Village also still perform the general engagement practice where the man has to propose to the woman family.

Research social setting

The research regarding the construction of *ndudut mantu* tradition in the Centini Village Society conducted in Centini Village Laren Subdistrict Lamongan Regency. There are several reasons why this research is performed. One of the reason is because Centini is one of the village which still performs *ndudut mantu* tradition nowadays. Unlike the other villages in Lamongan, Centini is a village with a fairly good religious background. In Islamic religion in particular, men is the leader who will lead first, but when it comes to proposal and engagement it is the women who propose at the first place. In addition to religion, Centini Village is one of advanced village in terms of education and has more advanced thoughts but still carries out and maintains the *ndudut mantu* tradition. In addition, the community of Centini is also a community with high mobility, it is proved by many of its population who work and study in the city and outside the island.

Informants determination

Determination of informants in this study uses purposive with predetermined criteria, considering that majority of all the people of Centini Village know and do the *ndudut mantu* tradition, so that it is difficult to determine other informants, outside the village, while the criteria for informants are as followed. First, the men will be pressed in the *ndudut mantu* tradition. Second, the woman will propose the men in the *ndudut mantu* tradition. Third, the woman parents or the family will do the *ndudut mantu* tradition. From these criteria, it is expected to be able to provide information about the construction of the *ndudut mantu* tradition in the community of Centini Village. In determining the informants, the researchers not only pegged to subject informants, but also supplemented with supporting or non-subject informants, who would later be expected to add an explanation of the social construction of the *ndudut mantu* tradition. The number of subject informants as many as five people and non-subject informants as many as three people.

Community construction on *ndudut mantu* tradition in Centini Village Laren Lamongan District in the social construction theory of Peter L Berger and Thomas Luckmann paradigm

Margaret M Paloma explains the three stages of Berger's social construction in the contemporary Sociology i.e: First, externalizing or adjusting to the sociocultural world as a product of the human world. Second is objectivation, which is a social interaction in an intersebjektif world which is institutionalized or experienced an institutionalization process and the third is Internalization where individuals identify themselves with social institutions or social organizations where individuals become members (Poloma 2008). The following are the three dialectical stages of social construction: First, the Stage of Extalization of the Centini Village Community in Constructing the Ndudut Mantu Engagement Tradition. In this research, the externalization stage occurs when the community is in an environment that always performs the *ndudut mantu* tradition in the marriage process. So that these values are seen and followed by the community in general, both children and individuals who are old enough to get married. In the externalization stage the role of the closest environment to the

informant such as the social environment where the family lives is very influential on what is absorbed by the informant itself. In this study, the stage of externalization is the first stage when informants get the information from the environment where they live. For instance, a 50 years old woman who finds out about the *ndudut mantu* tradition from her parents, even though she didn't get the information directly, but she has done the tradition on her engagement. But in this case parents do not have an overly important role in carrying out the *ndudut mantu* tradition, this happens because parents only have a role in carrying out the tradition without telling directly what the tradition is and why they should do it. Apart from parents, socialization was also obtained from the neighborhood around his residence who has seen this tradition held at the first place.

In this externalization stage, which plays an important role in providing socialization is the environment around the residence. The environment around the residence has more important role in conducting socialization compare to parents. This happens because the people who are ready to get married will eventually learn from the former people who did the *ndudut mantu* tradition. As with the two female informants in this study, they got socialization from the neighborhood around the neighborhood, from neighbors who first carried out the *ndudut mantu* tradition. Because the parents do not provide more information related to the *ndudut mantu* tradition, the informants learn more from the surrounding environment who have already performed the tradition. In fact, there is no scientific or avid information regarding this tradition, most of the people do it to preserve the tradition and because all of the people around the area performs it. The men informant in this research said that he got the information regarding this tradition from the neighbourhood and because all of his families and relatives performed it beforehand.

Like the male informant who has a high level of education who gets socialization regarding this tradition from the surrounding and witness it directly, there is an urge to get to now and better understanding the tradition. The informant look for another alternative and dig information from the respective older people around his area. He did this because he wanted to know how this *ndudut mantu* tradition has been done. so that at this stage the informants recognized the rules regarding the *ndudut mantu* tradition in his neighborhood without questioning and arguing that it was related to the practice of the *ndudut mantu* tradition in the Centini village. The informants only follow and execute a rule and habit that has lasted for a long time in their objective world and only follows these rules and habits objectively because they have not been able to reject or accept directly with their subjective awareness. This is because the individual does not have the ability to change and even rejects the traditional habit of application because before he is born the tradition has already existed, so that the individual unconsciously follows what has become reality and habits in his environment. Especially in the family which of course can affect how individuals reach out to the *ndudut mantu* tradition.

Second, the Objectivation Stage of the Centini Village Society in Constructing the *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition. At this stage, the people of Centini Village who have received previous socializations regarding the tradition of the *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition, begin to familiarize themselves with the values that have been instilled by the family and the surrounding environment with comparisons from outside the environment consciously to be able to determine what actions to take. whether to perform the tradition or not. This comparison influence the people act in general. The values that have been socialized before must have been applied by the environment before the informants existed, these values have been inherited and justified by the family institutions and the surrounding community regarding *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition.

As in the current study, the stage of community orientation in understanding the *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition is always repeated by one family and another family who are ready to marry their children in the surrounding environment. So when a family does not carry out the tradition, it will get a sanction from the community such as gossip and reprimand directed at the family who did not carry out the custom. This is consider a an act of necgelcting the

custom and old culture of Centini Village as a hereditary tradition. With the existence of such sanctions, it is not easy for the people to simply ignore the tradition altogether. It is even more harder because the people around the house will gossip and talk about it over and over again, it is hard and consider a disgrace for the villager to be the centre of attention when they have to meet and interact each other everyday. Therefore, at this stage there is a hesitation for the modern people whether to neglect or perform the tradition because it is consider normal for the people outside the area if they don't willing to do it.

Third, the Internalization Phase of the Centini Village Community in Constructing the *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition. At the internalization stage, the people of the Centini Village internalize the final results of the stages that have been passed, then the community at this stage constructs reality that is in accordance with his mind subjectively. As with the first informant, an elder woman in Centini Village who thought and constructed *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition was a custom of the people from the past and must be carried out by the community today. Likewise, the second female informant who had done the tradition and thought that she will also perform this tradition to her generation as well as to her son who will likely to get married soon because it is a habit and an old tradition that has to be preserved even in the modern era. The same thing also agreed by the man informant who just did *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition from his prospective partner recently. However, for the informant who has a high level of education constructed that *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition is an unnecessary tradition, it is the same tradition which perform by the society in general. The differences of *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition and other engagement tradition is in its background. The subjective meaning will differ between individuals because in the internalization stage, the actions taken have returned to the individual themselves.

The *ndudut mantu* tradition does in the Centini Village is based on the concept of local culture by J.W Ajawaila

The study of Social Construction of the *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition in the Community of Centini Village, Laren Lamongan Subdistrict, uses to explain the development of this tradition which is continuously developed, produced, and learned as local culture. Since we can easily find and witness this tradition nowadays in Centini Village Laren Subdistrict Lamongan Regency, this tradition consider as a local culture. Although according to other people, this tradition performs throughout Lamongan City, but in fact this tradition specialty is in Centini Village. The process of *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition is still the same and there is no big difference compare to the old era. The reason why this tradition is preserved because the society still hold the value of this culture and think that it is necessary to teach it to the next generation over practice. In addition, because the local people mindset and typification that when the Centini people do not do this tradition will consider rare and that is why people still do it to prevent the stigma. The typification will occur are gossiping, complaining and warning for the people of Centini Village who do not do this tradition.

Apart from the typification above, there is an advantage of doing this tradition that is why people are voluntarily do this tradition eventually. The benefit of *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition is that the groom and the bride can do the wedding faster. The bride do not have to worry about the wedding expenses because the groom have to cover up all the bill and expenses according to the tradition. If the bride will live with the groom after the marriage, then the groom have to responsible will all of the expenses. This is consider one of the benefit of *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition. As for the groom, the benefit he gets from this tradition is that he does not need to do the proposal or hunt the prospective wife for him. It is because the groom can simply ignore, reject or refuse the bride proposal if he doesn't willing to get married with the bride. It usually happens during matchmaking process. Although during this time they seems like being forced but both the groom and the bride has their own way to decide whether they are a good match or not through the friendship relation before they decide to get married. However, this friendship process happens after the *Ndudut Mantu* Tradition being done. Sometimes, both the groom and the bride were already know and like each other and then both of their parents will perform the tradition. At this stage, the matchmaking process will not necessary

and they can go on to determining the wedding day. The society of Centini Village will get the benefit simultaneously through this tradition by giving a socialisation for the men and women who is willing to get married. The society held the socialisation through the social interaction for instance through the neighbourhood, surrounding and sometimes parents even though this is a rare thing to do. Aside than that, the typification by the society strengthen the existence of this tradition since it will be considered a flaw or infringement if a Centini people or their generation abide or neglect this tradition.

However, there is a huge possibility that this kind of tradition will vanish as the time goes by. For instance, the higher the education and the economic level of someone, their mindset will be broader and that's why they will eventually leave this kind of tradition. Some of them think that this tradition is not an important thing that matter and consider as a manifestation of wasting time. Modern people tend to be more practical and simpler. But, even though many of the people think that way, they will still perform this tradition in order to respecting the elder and for the sake of cultural perseverance.

Conclusion

From the expalantion above, there is a preposition which is in line with the research question as followed. First, the woman who did Ndudut Mantu Tradition to the man family consider that this tradition is necessary because their parents did that in the past. Second, a man with high level of education thinks that this tradition is unnecessary and it is the same with the tradition in general. Third, a woman who does Ndudut Mantu Tradition to the man family preserve the tradition because of the avoided typification and the benefit she will get afterwards. Fourth, a man with a high level of education thinks that Ndudut Mantu Tradition will eventually disappear because of the time and because there will be no socialisation to the next generation.

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