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SEMIOTICS: AGRICULTURAL CULTURE IN THE OJUNG TRADITION IN BONDOWOSO

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is one of the countries with diverse cultural arts. Bondowoso Regency is geographically surrounded by forests, with most people working as farm laborers or casual daily laborers with uncertain incomes. The agricultural culture rooted in the value should serve to harmonize or synchronize the human fund lam. Bondowoso has an ojung tradition that, based on foklor analysis, has various social functions of agricultural culture, which is one of the characteristics that distinguish it from other agricultural cultures in Java. Based on field observations, Bondowoso Regency has several arts or traditions related to agricultural culture, one of which is the Ojung tradition. The Ojung tradition is a tradition with nuances of agility, self-defense, and religion. The players will whip each other using rattan without using any body protection. This research aims to recall the culture that exists in several regions, especially Bondowoso Regency itself, as well as to produce products and increase the knowledge of the community, youth, and students about the original culture in Bondowoso Regency. This writing method uses descriptive. The descriptive method is a method that aims to describe or give an overview of the object under study through data or samples that have been collected as is without analyzing and making conclusions that apply to the public. Discussion 1).Ojung Tradition. 2). Bondowoso Agricultural Culture: The Glory and Uniqueness of the Fertile Land. 3) The Semiotics of Ojung Tradition: The Meaning and Symbolism Behind Cultural Rituals. Conclusion Based on the semiotic approach, agricultural culture in the Ojung tradition in Bondowoso Regency can be interpreted through signs that represent the values, norms, and identity of the local community. Semiotics views culture as a symbolic system consisting of interconnected signs.

KEYWORDS: Semiotics, Agricultural Culture, Ojung Tradition & Bondowoso Regency

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian society consists of various ethnic groups that live within the scope of their respective cultures (culture area). This diverse culture shows that Indonesian society is a plural society (plural societies), namely a society that is arranged and divided into sub- systems that stand alone and are related to primordial ties. The plurality of Indonesian society is marked by the existence of ethnic

groups that have their own ways of life (traditions) or cultures that apply in the society of their own ethnic groups. Each ethnic group has its own order concerning the arrangements in its group, namely as a held norm. (Sumarto, 2019).

The norms in question are like the cultural traditions of tribal groups that are always implied in the life of their respective groups. For example, terms of address, marriage rites, farming and even in all aspects of group life there are norms that govern and apply widely in the group. In addition, the condition of a society that is no longer isolated by region or territory where individuals can mix and mingle with other individuals has also created relationships between ethnicities with different cultures that have indirectly formed or created acculturation between different ethnicities. This has encouraged changes in society, both regarding the order of life and traditional culture as a demand for universal norms of life. (Kistanto, 2017).

Changes in society can be about social values, social norms, patterns of behavior, social institutions, layers in society (social stratification), and power or authority. This is the impact of contact between different ethnic groups to seek harmony and integration between groups as well as the occurrence of social change that cannot be stopped from developing. This pattern of behavior is not only related to social arrangements but also applies to nature. The natural culture that was once a heritage continues to shift with the times. In its development, these cultures become norms and even customs that directly form a harmonious authority with nature. (Maulana, 2021).

Indonesia is an agrarian country this can be seen from the agricultural system that has been cultivated since ancient times. (Soediono, 1989). It is evident that Indonesia has always depended on agriculture. Some of these agricultural products can still be found in several regions in Indonesia. Agricultural culture is one that is depicted very majority in Indonesian society. The form of identity is clear, even the procession of this rite is many at various points, of course in agrarian areas. Java is largely an agrarian region, with some research evidence of the emergence of an agricultural culture that varies widely and whose value has survived until now, one of which is in the Bondowoso region. Bondowoso as one of the regions in East Java Province has potential cultural heritage from various eras: megalithic, Hindu-Buddhist, colonial, and the struggle to defend Indonesian independence. (Suprpta, 2020). This cultural splendor then bequeaths historical value about various lines of life, one of which is about agricultural culture.

Bondowoso district is geographically surrounded by forests, with the majority of the community working as farm laborers or casual daily laborers with uncertain income. The agricultural culture that has taken root in the valleys is supposed to harmonize or synchronize the people of the valleys. Bondowoso has an ojung tradition that, based on folklor analysis, has various socio-cultural functions, which are distinct from other agricultural cultures in Java. Socio-culturally, the people of Bondowoso have a very close relationship in agricultural and irrigation activities. Mutual cooperation among farmers is practiced in irrigation management activities, especially in the maintenance and repair of

irrigation networks. The values of agricultural cooperation are also shown in ritual ceremonies at the farm level. In fact, this cooperation activity involves mothers or farm women, namely in the preparation of organizing religious ceremonies until the end of the activity. (Pradana et al., 2020). Agricultural ritual activities are based on the steps of rice cultivation, starting from obtaining water, land preparation, seedling, transplantation to harvesting and storing harvested rice. Ojung is a cultural activity that is in the position of obtaining water. The historical narrative of ojung is very valuable for the current generation, given that the agricultural conditions of the Bondowoso community are far different from what was expected by the predecessor cultural communities.

II. WRITING METHOD

This writing method uses descriptive. Descriptive method is a method that aims to describe or give an overview of the object under study through data or samples that have been collected as is without analyzing and making conclusions that apply to the public. In other words, descriptive analytical research takes problems or focuses on problems as they are when the research is carried out, the results of which are then processed and analyzed to draw conclusions. (Sugiyono. 2010).

III. DISCUSSION

A. Ojung Tradition

Pandalungan is a region that has a unique and interesting cultural wealth. One of the traditions that has become an integral part of the daily life of the people in Pandalungan is the Ojung Tradition. The Ojung tradition is not just entertainment, but also plays an important role in strengthening cultural identity and preserving ancestral heritage. The Ojung tradition in Pandalungan is believed to have existed since ancient times and continues to be preserved today. This tradition involves the performance of a traditional Madurese martial art known as "Pencak Dor". Pencak Dor is a martial art that combines dance movements, music, and bravery in combat. Through the Ojung Tradition, the Pandalungan people maintain and strengthen their social relationships and enrich their cultural life. (Raditya, 2022).

The Ojung tradition is also a means of teaching the values of togetherness, solidarity and courage to the younger generation. Pandalungan youth are taught the importance of mutual help, tolerance, and courage in facing life's challenges. This tradition strengthens close family ties and fosters a spirit of togetherness within the community. In addition, the Ojung Tradition also plays a role in strengthening Pandalungan's cultural identity. Through this tradition, the Pandalungan community can maintain and celebrate their ancestral heritage. The Ojung tradition is a way to boast their cultural wealth in the eyes of the world and maintain the uniqueness of Madurese culture from the increasingly massive influence of globalization. It also strengthens the relationship between the surrounding villages, as every year, the villages invite each other to participate in the Ojung Tradition performance, creating strong relationships and strengthening solidarity between them. (Abbas, 2017).

In this modern era, maintaining and preserving cultural traditions is becoming increasingly important. The Ojung tradition in the Pandalungan community is an example of how communities can maintain and strengthen their cultural heritage. This tradition is not only an integral part of daily life, but also a source of pride and identity for the Pandalungan community. By continuing to preserve the Ojung Tradition, the Pandalungan community can ensure that their cultural heritage will remain alive and recognized by future generations. This tradition is also a symbol of togetherness, courage, and solidarity within the Pandalungan community. Through the Ojung Tradition, the Pandalungan people can strengthen their identity and make a meaningful contribution to maintaining Madura's rich culture. (Nur, 2016).

The existence of Ojung culture in Bondowoso, East Java, remains strong and continues to this day. Ojung culture is one of the traditions still practiced by the Osing tribe who inhabit the Bondowoso region. It is an expression of the Bondowoso community's gratitude to God for the crops obtained, especially ahead of the rice harvest season, and is held annually in January or February. Prior to Ojung, the Bondowoso community works together to clean the fields and plant rice. This preparation involves various equipment such as traditional farming tools, traditional musical instruments, and traditional decorations. On the day of Ojung, the entire community gathers at a predetermined place, wearing traditional clothing with pride, and adorning themselves with traditional jewelry and carrying traditional musical instruments.

The event begins with prayers and songs, led by traditional leaders or local religious figures. Afterwards, the Bondowoso community performs the traditional "Ojung" dance, which is beautiful and distinctive, depicting daily life and gratitude for the crops. Ojung is also enlivened by various traditional games, such as the pinang climbing competition, cracker eating competition, and tug-of-war competition. Traditional foods such as corn rice, lodeh vegetables, and other processed produce are served in this event.

The Ojung tradition in Bondowoso is not only a harvest celebration, but also a means to strengthen social ties between community members. Through this tradition, they build togetherness, work together, and maintain their cultural heritage. Despite changing times and modernization, the people of Bondowoso remain committed to maintaining and preserving the Ojung tradition as an integral part of their cultural identity. Ojung culture is an asset that must be maintained and preserved for future generations to enjoy. By continuing to celebrate this tradition, the people of Bondowoso ensure that their values of togetherness, gratitude and cultural identity are kept alive and passed on to the next generation.

B. Bondowoso's Agricultural Culture: The Glory and Uniqueness of the Fertile Land.

The agricultural culture in Bondowoso is one of the valuable and unique assets of the local community. Located in East Java, Bondowoso has a strong agricultural tradition, not only as a source of livelihood but also as an important part of the community's identity and daily life. Agriculture in

Bondowoso is supported by fertile soil and a conducive climate, allowing the community to grow a variety of crops such as rice, corn, green beans, cassava, and vegetables. These agricultural products are not only for their own needs but also sold as a source of income. One of the uniqueness of the agricultural culture in Bondowoso is the use of traditional tools in farming. Despite the development of modern agricultural technology, the people of Bondowoso still maintain the use of traditional tools such as hoes, sickles and mortar. They believe that these traditional tools have spiritual power and respect their ancestors who have used these tools since ancient times. The agricultural culture in Bondowoso is also characterized by the tradition of gotong royong. People help each other in planting, fertilizing, and harvesting crops. Gotong royong is not only a form of cooperation for better results, but also a means of strengthening social relations between neighbors and families. Traditional ceremonies are also an integral part of Bondowoso's agricultural culture. These ceremonies are held before and after the planting season, as an expression of gratitude to God Almighty and to ask for blessings for a bountiful harvest. In this ceremony, the community chants prayers, dances and performs special rituals led by traditional leaders or local religious figures. (Sishidiyati et al., 2022).

Bondowoso's agricultural culture is also reflected in the diversity of crops produced. In addition to rice, the people of Bondowoso also produce a variety of vegetables such as kale, spinach, mustard greens, and long beans. These crops are not only used for daily consumption but are also sold in local markets and outside the region. Despite the changing times and modernization, the people of Bondowoso still maintain and preserve their agricultural culture. They realize the importance of maintaining fertile soil and caring for the environment to maintain agricultural sustainability. The community also continues to develop environmentally friendly farming techniques and adapt to the development of modern agricultural technology. (Nisa & Handayani, 2019).

Bondowoso's agricultural culture reflects the glory and uniqueness of the local community. Through this culture, they maintain the values of cooperation, local wisdom and environmental sustainability. It is important to preserve this agricultural culture so that it can be enjoyed by future generations and strengthen the sustainability and welfare of the Bondowoso community.

C. The Semiotics of Ojung Tradition: The Meaning and Symbolism Behind Cultural Rituals

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbolism contained in a culture or cultural ritual. (Ulinuha et al., 2018). In the Ojung Bondowoso tradition, there are many signs and symbolism that convey important meanings and messages to the local community. First, the gunungan or tumpeng in the Ojung Bondowoso tradition symbolizes the abundance and success of the harvest given by God. The gunungan reflects the symbolism of life and sustainability, given the importance of the harvest in the lives of the people of Bondowoso.

Secondly, the traditional clothing and jewelry used in the Bondowoso Ojung procession have a deep meaning in Bondowoso culture. Traditional clothing symbolizes beauty, strength, and fertility, while jewelry is a symbol of elegance and honor in living tradition and social life.

Third, the movements and dances in the Ojung Bondowoso tradition also have their own symbolism. The dance movements depict joy, enthusiasm, and gratitude, as well as depicting the agricultural process and the community's hard work in cultivating the land and planting rice.

Fourth, the music and musical instruments used, such as drums, angklung and gamelan, symbolize the beauty and local wisdom of Bondowoso culture. These musical instruments are used to accompany the dance and unite the participants in the ritual. In semiotics, it is also important to understand the social context and situation in the Bondowoso Ojung tradition. The tradition is not only a means of expressing gratitude and harvest abundance, but also a venue for strengthening social relations and unity among community members.

By understanding semiotics in the Bondowoso Ojung tradition, we can more deeply appreciate the meaning and symbolism contained in the signs of this ritual. (Ali et al., 2022). Ojung Bondowoso tradition has important values such as gratitude, unity, and sustainability that are taught to the younger generation, so that this tradition can continue to live and develop in maintaining the local wisdom and culture of Bondowoso.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on a semiotic approach, agricultural culture in the Ojung tradition in Bondowoso Regency can be interpreted through signs that represent the values, norms, and identity of the local community. Semiotics views culture as a symbolic system consisting of interconnected signs. Firstly, the signs in Ojung agricultural culture reflect the values held by the local community. For example, the use of land as the main source of life and livelihood shows respect for nature and sustainability. In addition, signs such as traditional farming tools like hoes and sickles can reflect the value of hard work, perseverance, and togetherness in working in the fields. Secondly, signs in Ojung agricultural culture also reflect the norms followed by the community. For example, the rules governing the division of land and planting times show the importance of cooperation and order in agricultural activities. In addition, signs such as the planting of rice through certain rituals also reflect the religious norms and spirituality held by the Ojung community. Thirdly, Ojung agricultural culture also has signs that reflect the identity of the local community. For example, the traditional clothing used when working in the fields, such as sarongs and songkok heads, are signs of ethnic identity and pride in their cultural heritage. In addition, signs such as songs or chants sung while working in the fields also reflect the uniqueness of Ojung culture. In conclusion, through a semiotic approach, agricultural culture in the Ojung tradition in Bondowoso Regency can be understood through signs that represent the values, norms, and identity of the local community. These signs reflect respect for nature, hard work, cooperation, order, religion, and ethnic identity. With an understanding of semiotics, we can better understand and appreciate the richness of agricultural culture in the Ojung tradition.

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