

# Social Construction Rituals of Nuju Jerami Orang *Lom* Bangka Indonesia

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**Abstract**—The social construction of ritual Nuju Jerami as a form of gratitude for the success of rice harvest in indigenous communities Orang Lom Bangka needs to be questioned. Some previous research findings suggest that the ritual Nuju Jerami is a period of time for the Lom community to restart a new field for rice growing, a means of strengthening the kinship system, and a symbol of traditional identity. Based on the results of the study showed that the rhythm of Nuju Jerami has been constructed in two ways. First, the ritual Nuju Jerami is constructed as an field of intersection between the social exchange system and the exchange of political interests: the repayment of customary forest tenure by the corporation of oil palm plantations. Network connections and funding of funds for the implementation of Nuju Jerami from corporations reinforce these findings. Second, the construction of modernity culture accelerates the process of transforming subsistence values into the orientation of materialist values. The cultural values of nuju jerami are being stripped away and replaced with the values of commercially-oriented materialism to the extent of entertainment and meaningless celebrations. The social construction of Nuju Jerami needs to be placed in an effort to counter the construction of the interests of the land and the unfairness of modernity as well as to build cultural awareness by institutionalizing Nuju Jerami based on community development.

**Keywords**—social construction, Nuju Jerami, orang lom, resistance

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Lom tribe is known as the first group to inhabit Bangka Island. They survive from growing rice, pepper, rubber and crops on the sidelines of the garden. The habit of planting rice fields is inherited from ancestors. Rice fields that produce brown rice have their own meaning for the Lom people. Brown rice is a symbol that unites the self with the spirit of the ancestors [1]. In Lom's view, the success of harvesting brown rice is inseparable from ancestral intervention. Ancestors are considered to be involved in maintaining and caring for the grown rice grown. Self-attachment with ancestors that is constantly nurtured, then considered necessary to be perpetuated in a special ritual. That special ritual is known as Nuju Jerami. Nuju Jerami is an expression of gratitude to the ancestors of Lom after the rice harvest is finished.

Over time, the tradition of Nuju Jerami began to change meaning. The initial meaning of straw is an expression of

measurement and kinship [2]. Seen from the Nuju Jerami procession, which begins with rice mash accompanied by spellings, also interspersed with dambus dances and pencak silat attractions, and ends with the handover of brown rice to related figures such as village heads, sub-district heads, and so on. After the ritual ended, the Lom indigenous people enlivened them by exchanging greetings with relatives. Symbolizing the identity of the Lom people as the guardians of collectivity is visibly thick inside. After the presence of tin and especially the post-New Order palm oil the meaning of Nuju Jerami began to be oriented towards the values of materialism covered by shared economic practices. Expansion of oil palm plantations owned by private companies has changed the traditional landscapes that were previously used for farming. This reality can threaten the sustainability of the Lom people.

This paper intends to construct the meaning of Nuju Jerami from the meaning of transcendental and collectivity rituals to the meaning of the values of economic materialism. The social construction of materialism is to be criticized and bring about a new construction of the meaning of Nuju Jerami as a spirit of resistance to land tenure inequality. This paper uses Peter L Berger's view of social construction as 'reality' and 'knowledge' [3]. Nuju Jerami in Pejam Hamlet is used as the object of this research, considering that most of the Lom people have been integrated into the PT Gunung Pelawan Sawit (PT GPL) oil palm pattern since 2007.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study which aims to describe in detail about the tradition of Nuju Jerami for the Lom Bangka Tribe of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province. Through this approach, it will be explored how Lom's knowledge and perceptions of old practices and meanings are in a new form. To produce the data acquisition, this study uses data collection techniques through interviews, namely collecting information and information about the variety of local knowledge in the implementation of the tradition of Nuju Jerami. The selection of informants was done by purposive sampling. The interviews were conducted with traditional leaders and village heads/cadres. Observation of participants was carried out along with the interview to see firsthand the ritual

process of the straw to be interpreted. Document analysis is used as comparative data.

The data obtained are then analyzed with the aim of simplifying data into a form that is easier to read and interpret. In this study based on inductive analysis. This analysis is carried out based on field observations or empirical experience based on data obtained from interviews and participatory observations, then compiled field facts and then drawn conclusions.

### III. RESULTS

#### A. *Nuju Jerami and Transcendental Meanings*

The Nuju Jerami tradition has existed since the time of the ancestors of the Lom people inhabiting the Mapur region. It is not known exactly when this tradition began to be practiced. Information recorded, the tradition of Nuju Jerami that is held every thirteenth day of the month which coincides with the full moon (according to the Chinese calendar) and in the seventeenth day of the month in Pejam Hamlet. The philosophy of the Nuju Jerami is essentially a form of gratitude for the success of their harvest, namely the harvest of red rice which is celebrated by inviting relatives, relatives and neighbors to visit the house to eat together with cooked rice along with a variety of side dishes [2]. At the peak of the event was presented the dambus or Malay measles dance from Pejam area which was played by several music players and some dancers. The performance was also complemented by performances of village martial arts using a kind of wooden sticks and wooden swords. The movements were so rhythmic and mystical, adjusting to the beat of the drums and gongs, the beaten gong was made of brass and hundreds of years old, while the drum was made of langur skin / a type of black ape

Nuju Jerami is a period of time for the people of Lom to start replanting, which is to open new fields or new land to grow crops, such as brown rice, vegetables, nuts and others [1], [2]. Usually before or after this traditional ceremony is held, a small meeting between tribal elders or adat leaders is held to look for some delegates to go to a place that is considered sacred in finding some kind of 'clue' about the season or natural conditions for the next year which will affect the results their fields and lives, and also at the same time illustrate what will happen to the Lom people in the next year, for example the plague, prosperity, community environment and weather. This sacred place is quite far from the coast of Pejam and is taken for about three hours on foot. This place is named as the place "Akek Antak's foot" which is located on the beach.

The symbolic meaning of Nuju Jerami for the Lom indigenous people according to Iskandar Zulkarnain [4] is: first, as the process of defining themselves as a group of humans. How to define or enforce oneself through various activities such as planting rice fields and gardening indicates that the most important part of the Lom group or community is the effort to realize each other through their activities and interpret what their actions really mean. The habits of the Lom people in Pejam who still survive today are to establish a subsistence culture by producing or farming to meet their

daily needs by involving all elements of the family as agricultural production labor with shifting cultivation patterns. This kinship system characterizes an unpretentious group and interactions between friends are based on symbolic systems that determine different attitudes and behaviors between blood relations, marital relationships, and off spring [5].

*Second*, the formation of the identity of the Lom through Nuju Jerami is a process of evolving and evolving, where each individual's actions will be formed by considering other entities or people. Other entities can be in the form of natural or forest and their supporting ecosystems. The shifting cultivation pattern and the "beume" tradition that perpetuates subsistence patterns and ends with nuju straw is a series of traditional Lom cultural cycles and the meaning of the forest. Lom people know the term customary forest or forest ban. This type of forest is customarily protected and must not be disturbed or exploited at all, especially damaged, because it is considered as a protector from disturbances caused by nature. The actions of Orang Lom which are reflected through the tradition of Nuju Jerami representing the protection of other entities such as forests, water, trees, flora and fauna and future regeneration interests confirm a form of assertive interaction, a spirit of partiality and submission to natural cosmology.

*Third*, confirms the meaning of normative transactions. The normative transaction process begins with the formation of a magical culture that is applied in the ritual nuju straw unity consisting of dambus art, measles dance, pencak silat, mantras and myths that accumulate to and form a distinguishing cultural structure with culture or other existing entities. The construction of distinguishing features between the culture of the Lom people and outside the Lom people confirms the special characteristics that can strengthen the existence of the self or group.

#### B. *The Social Construction of Nuju Jerami*

Does the transcendental meaning still survive? In fact, there is a gap which then gives rise to contradictions. Contradictions surfaced in several ways. *First*, there are symptoms of commodification of the tradition of Nuju Jerami. Commodification can be seen from the process of changing normative values to use value and exchange rate orientations. The unique and unique cultural values behind Nuju Jerami represent the identity, collectivity, and existence of an indigenous entity that should be reflected in a clear and firm policy formulation. On the contrary, the fact shows that the cultural values towards straw began to be stripped away and replaced with the values of commercially oriented materialism limited to entertainment and celebration that were empty of meaning. One of the reasons is when the Lom people began to recognize money as an exchange tool. Changes in livelihoods from gardening to palm oil income from the PT GPL partnership pattern obtained Rp.2,000,000, - every month, is a transaction or choice of a divided transaction, where funds (money) replace the promise of one party involved in the exchange or exchange promise with service or negotiation and compromise. This exchange occurred because the existence

of PT GPL with the palm oil commodity did not get a severe rejection from the Lom community in Pejam. As compensation, network connections and funding for the implementation of straw are made easier. Compensation, there are restrictions on the space for traditional appearance of straw (using gongs, measles dance, dambus) on one side, and on the other hand open space for modern art performances (band music). In essence, the existence of the goal of straw depends on how much the role of the sponsor in funding all the activities inherent in it.

*Second*, institutional construction and formal organizations that govern cultural order. Over time, the tradition of the nuju thatched in the indigenous community of Orang Lom has been recognized as the Intangible Cultural Heritage (WBTH) of the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands in 2015. In fact with recognition, Nuju Jerami will not and should not be allowed to be swallowed up by modernity. He should bolt and surpass cultural transformation that drives the normative awareness of every human being through the development of development and empowerment in rural or inland areas that are more humanistic, reassuring and bringing prosperity. After recognition, the cultural order does not move towards the pendulum of change. Customary institutions run static. Formal official (bureaucratic) related institutions do not play a significant role in changing the social image of Lom People. Institutionalization of Nuju Jerami is only limited to discourse that mingles with other interests that are considered rational and mutually beneficial. Just to formulate a policy or work program, making the tradition of straw as an annual cultural agenda in Pejam Hamlet still seems doubtful and difficult. Even though this policy can open opportunities for cultural tourism destinations that attract travelers.

### C. Nuju Jerami and Resistance

The marginalization of Nuju Jerami culture in Pejam hamlet caused by the construction of modernity culture has actually weakened the existence of rural communities as an independent and sovereign social institution. In order to support a change in the paradigm of cultural development, there is a need for social forces that can institutionalize the goals of Nuju Jerami based on community development. Community development must be practiced by institutionalizing of Nuju Jerami as local knowledge and wisdom local that has been going on for a long time. The aim of Nuju Jerami must be reconstructed into a social institution that can guarantee the continuity of the beume tradition that stands on the basis of supporting the common interests that are carried together.

The Nuju Jerami are not oriented to ceremonial celebrations only, but instead aim to establish mutually

guaranteeing land ownership and management relationships between landowners and landless, so that the two have mutual obligations and moral obligations as value of shared life [6]. According to Peter L Berger social construction is focused on reality and knowledge. The daily life of the Lom people in the past describes real and real reality, signifying that land as a reality that shows a linear identity with the practice of knowledge of farming or planting rice. That way, the construction of identity, the symbolization of land and forests as the breath of life across generations is attached to the rites of straw as a symbol of meaning as well as a symbol of resistance to the unequal order of modernity. Nuju Jerami is an effort to build cultural awareness while fighting the construction of interests which is detrimental to the development of the village community in the future.

### IV. CONCLUSION

The Nuju Jerami tradition as a representation of the local wisdom of the Lom community has existed since the days of ancestors. This tradition appears in various forms by adjusting the dynamics of today's society. If previously this tradition was coupled with the symbols of indigenous religiosity. However, now the symbol is replaced with a more elegant and even formal style. Overcoming this fact it is necessary to develop a strategy in introducing real cultural wealth to the current generation. It is not impossible, precisely the existence of this generation is what determines the existence of the tradition of the Lom people.

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