

Micro, Macro, and Meta-Cosmos of Keduk Beji Ritual: Harmonising the "Un-/Living" Creatures

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Abstract

The process of how Javanese life worksin harmony with these three core relationships namely: human relations (microcosm), relationship with nature (macrocosm), and relationship with God (metacosm)is the main focus of this study. The people of Tawun District, Ngasreman, Ngawi, East Java,as the object of this study are likely to offer so much understanding, and indeed provide still, today, a harmonious concept of livingmanifested in the ritual ceremony of *Keduk Beji* (English: Beji scoop). This study then examines howthe construction of microcosm, macrocosm, and metacosm among Tawunpeople'sritual tradition of *Keduk Beji* sput to work. The constructions are built upon the need for continuity and harmony in life. For the conclusion, this article's preliminary result of the three relationships is centered on the relationship of metacosm as the last objectives of mankind before dealing withthe death. To fully support this field research article, a qualitative method is used to fully comprehend the analysis.

Keywords: Microcosm, Macrocosm, Metacosm, Harmony, Keduk Beji

Introduction

This article tries to draw back to let us review about Javanese ritual in the areas of anthropological concern. The names of Radcliffe-Brown in his sociological sort or of Malinowski with his social-psychological sort are the names that tend to dominate the theoretical discussions of how religion role has its part in society. Back in 1948 with Malinowski's classic Magic, Science and Religionwith its emphasis on the essence of intimate security through religion in the face of natural eventuality and in 1947 with Durkheim's The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life emphasizing the way in which the social structure of a community is fortified and preserved through some ritualistic and mythic symbolic representation.

In a further concept of symbolic representation, in 1966 Geertz with his famous article-Religion as a Cultural System offer a pedagogical significance of symbolic for cultural analysis. His analysis model to religion provide an oft-quoted definition that religion is

(1) A system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.

Referring critique on Geertz's symbols which cast it in merely producing ideology, Asad emphasizes his race from ideology to production which appears in 1993 with his Geneologies of Religion: Discipline and the Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam. His "practice orientation" in theory had overtaken the former paradigm. Asad puts it:

... the formation of what we have here called "symbols" (complexes, concepts) is conditioned by the social relations in which the growing child is involved in which other symbols (speech and significant movements) are crucial. The conditions (discursive and nondiscursive) that explain how symbols come to be constructed, and how some of them are established as natural or authoritative as opposed to others, then become an important object of anthropological inquiry. (1993:31).

A parallel shift from meaning to practice beside what Asad has clarified, a touchstone for practice theory of Pierre Bourdieu's *Outline of Theory of Practice*, the English translation version in 1977, gives a sense of practice signifying some changing strategic ways where people grab a symbolic repertoire and refashion it -theconcept of embodiment between discipline and practice, between mind and body. In terms of the study of the interrelation between human and God or simply put the study of religion, Bourdieu can help us jump our thinking of a theory of practice into a particular form of understanding "belief" which leads to "practice" in the form of "ritual." This shift would be equivalent in treating religious life as more than just timeless set of cultural assumptions.¹

Putting Bourdieu theory of practice can be tantamount in treating ritual of tradition as an inherited form of a series of habits and values passed down from one generation to the next. The values inherited usually contain moral values which are fine-tuned to the needs of a society. It is stated that cultural values of the past (the intangible heritages) come from local cultures that exist in a country, include here: traditions, folklores and legends, mother tongues, oral histories, creativities (dance, song and drama performance), adaptability and uniqueness of a local community³. These local geniusare believed capable of connecting the three important elements in life: God, man, and nature.

As an agrarian society, Javanesepeople are still a lot depending on the nature in their own perspective ways. And for this reason, nature to Javanese is regarded as a living-partner needs acting on certain moral principles from God. Javanese people persist in a reciprocal relationship with the universe they inhabit. The Java community has a unique characteristic way of life whose reality leads to the formation of the unity between the real nature, society, and the nature of which is considered sacred. Additionally, nature is used as a symbol of expression of a great power that determines the life of humankind⁴. Therefore, as the people whose life rest on nature, Javanese shall reward the nature through various forms of traditional ceremonies.

Most of the Javanesepeople believe that their lives will never be separated from a series of traditional ceremonies. This is done with the intention to counteract the adverse effects of any unseen forces that would endanger human survival. By running certain traditional ceremonies, it is expected that perpetrators of the ceremony will be always in a state of health, safe, and abundant blessings. Humans have the opportunity to keep their life through capabilities, at least with prayer by pleading with God to help for better life. Nevertheless, there are still more efforts characterized by values which are derived from the primitive beliefs as well as those derived from Hinduism⁵. Javanese public belief about the spirit and the magic power has started since prehistoric times. At that time, the ancestors of the Javanese had assumed that all objects around him have a soul and all that move are considered alive and havemagical power, there are with good or with bad character⁶. This assumption led the Javanese people to acknowledge the existence of the most powerful and strongestspirit. Therefore, to maintain good relations with the spirits, Javanese people always held traditional ceremonies. The fundamental purpose is to avoid humans from evil spirits or humans with evil spirits. For some traditional ceremonies, more importantly, the rite of any attempted resuscitation signifies any contacts and communicates with spirits.

Traditional ceremony as for the study of tradition does not merely mean as myth, its function in a wider scope does not only provide an important entertainment but also reinforce traditional values of goodness, life, fertility, and also sanctification. In addition to that, traditional ceremony also serves characteristically to strengthen the bonds of solidarity among its society members. From that particular view, traditional ceremony then has functions for social, cultural, and religious need⁷. And this Javanese locals' performance namely *Sedekah Bumi* (Eng.: earth alms tradition) reflects the interconnection between traditional ceremony and its functions in a harmonious way⁸. This *Sedekah Bumi* cult may be interpreted as an attempt to give alms to the earth which essentially address God, The Almighty. Franz Magnis Suseno, his focal concern with the Javanese ethics, tell about the essence of carrying out some Javanese local traditions such as *Sedekah Bumi*, *Suroan*, which is a kind of being grateful for Lord blessing in some specific moments and conditions. It is

found in Sedekah Bumi procession—aritual overture of slametanas one of many parts of spiritual means in overcoming tangible or intangible forms of locals crisis as well as an attempt in bringing in blessings. Slametanin term of ritual has touted the core and mystique of a Kejawentradition that become a vehicle of symbolic tender request to God9. The Slametan process of worshipping involves the spirit of the ancestors which is considered to have magical powersamong their family members; moreover, Slametan serves as a means of exalt, honor and commemoration of the spirit of the ancestors 10. Slametan is a form of manifestation of the indigeneous culture of Java in the kinds of diverse symbols, sacred offerings, and some certain magical spells. For this kind of purposive behavior, Slametanas a ritual process means to promote harmony of life of every people begins with the before-birth and until the after-deathlife cycle.

Based on the above argumentation, it is understood that Javanese is a peoplewho really appreciate tradition, and one of the tradition that is believed to bring blessings is Sedekah Bumi. Javanese concern over Sedekah Bumi tradition lead them into the capacity of carrying out the ritual as their self-reflective criticism about social and religiocultural values. The people of Tawun (Ngawi, East Java) for instance with their concept of Sedekah Bumi manifested in Keduk Beji tradition is the entire focus of this article to tell about the wonderful way among the three nitty-gittyinter-relations.

The terminology of this *Keduk Beji*ritual derived from two local Javanese lexiconsnamely: *Keduk*which means scoop (draining/cleaning) and *Beji*which means reservoirs. The form of processing the tradition is a matter of reflection of a historical context backed in the era when Raden Lodrojoyo (Locals King) whom is believed to have sacrificed his life for the sake of the residents around the Tawun Spring. Besides aiming to drain,this tradition also has a purpose to clean the *Beji* source of any dirts. By doing that, the locals have at least two basic intentions that subjects them in doing the ceremony, there are locals' beliefs and assumptions of the surrounding population life-continuity which highly affected by the locals antidisrespectfulness in the presence of harmony among the three fundamental points of life: macro-, micro- and metacosm.

Keduk Bejitradition for Tawun people had been a kind of harmonious liaison: between human liaison (microcosm), people liaison with life-giving nature (macrocosm), and between man and his Creator liaison (metacosm). These three core relations reflect changes not only in the image but, more important, in the structure of the local society and the values surrounding life. In order to maintain the harmony of the three concerning life in general, Tawun society beliefs are onto God's love and the need to harmonize with the nature for the benefit of humankind life.

Knowing how important and fun Keduk Beji ceremony is for the locals surrounding Tawun makesin about three to four thousands of people hold hands every year and a people-circle around the Tawun reservoir. The

ceremony is performed once a year at *Seloso Kliwon* (Tuesday *Kliwon*, a Javanese numerological system) right after the rice harvest, or right after the death of teak trees. The crucial part of *Keduk Beji* ceremony is its ritual– toshow what process of embodiment of gratitude packaged in a form of *Slametan*. What is then referred to here as *Slametan* for gratitude embodiment still prevailed especially when Geertz reviewed it consisting of interference, spirit, and human life. Its practicalitydoes not treatindifferently from one individual to another. That is, the implementation of the *Slametan* for all persons is equal¹¹.

This study will discuss how the construction of microcosm (Jagad Cilik, the little universe), macrocosm (Jagad Gede, the big universe), and metacosm (Gusti Allah, The Almighty) be implemented in traditional ceremony, Keduk Beji. For further research study, what these Keduk Beji beneficial rolesdoin stabilizing the relationships between people, nature, and God-the Almighty are to be comprehensively studied too. In what purposive agenda this Keduk Beji ceremony has that it must beheld every year, is also part of the the main focus of this study. Those some questions are to be studied comprehensively in relation to the understanding of Javanese ritual manifested in the traditional ceremony of Keduk Beji.

Methodology

This study main data are drawn from participantory observation studies of a particular groups of people with their traditional ceremony. ¹²Time was spent observing the surrounding area of Tawun, getting involved with locals' activities, interviewing some elders in several intensive local rituals. Moreover, 103 locals were interviewed at the same time of conducting the *Keduk Beji* ritual. Interviews and discussions in Tawun were conducted in *kulonan* local Javanese (part of Southeast Javanese). In both fieldwork settings, notes were taken into account during and immediately after the interview or observation (in a form of video and photo), and daily field journals were kept. In some appropriate moments, formal Javanese interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed in a moment of writing down the data. The study analysis in this paper is mainly based on reading in the culture, religion, and other academic literature, on material from the local tradition, especially newspaper articles, and on an inductively derived set of key concepts that commonly arose in interviews and observations. ¹³

The Condition of Tawun Villagers

This ritual ceremony of *Keduk Beji* holdsonce a year in the local village of Tawun, Kasreman District, Ngawi, East Java. The place to hold the ceremonyis around the spring Tawun-one of the most attractive tourism resort in East Java. Itsgeographical location is at seven kilometers east of the town of Ngawi. The place'sogled views indicate few certain most appealing looks, namely: Tawun natural flow of ground water, forest with shady trees, and a pool inhabited by dozens of turtles. In the same location, inside the

Spring Tawun, there are four types of tourism options that are packed in one location, such as: an artificial lake with paddles for rental, a swimming pool, a playground for children, and an entertainment stage. By looking at those beautiful grounds' facilities, the support provided by the locals over the surrounding place is the provision of food stalls with a relatively affordable price.

Tawun village topographies are structurally divided into ten hamlets with six different nomenclatures, namely: Tawun village 1 to Tawun village 4, Mencon village, Beton village, Bugel village, Konten village, Pucang village, and Dari village. The area of Tawun village is relative to several other villages closed to Tawun, among others, Kiyonten village which is at the north of the Tawun village, Lego Kulon village is at east of the village of south Kartoharjo, and at the west is the village of Karang Tengah Prandon. The main accessible roadto visit Tawun is through the paved surface which is easily accessed by any motor vehicles, the two-wheeled vehicles and the four-wheeled one. Only one problem remains for the cars to drive for it is a narrow crossroad.



Figure 1. A pool filled with turtles (located inside Tawun)

As a tourism resort, Tawun in its famously tourist bathing place is full of big shady trees. However, when it is seen more closely, Tawun presents more about its naturalbeauty-theconsecutive sidelines with large tree roots emerge from natural wilderness of growth which give an appealing look for the foreign tourists. Beside its natural beauty, Tawun is famous with *Keduk beji*ceremony which is still well preserved by the locals until today. This reasons of beauty omehow makes people's income keeps increasing. Residents take advantage of the Tawun tourism resort to sell food, motorcycle taxi, and some other local and traditional trading services.

The area size of Tawun Village is about 518 816 ha with a population of over 4000 inhabitants. Most of the livelihoods of Tawun people are in the agricultural sector.

Table 1. Number of Tawun villagers

No.	Description	Amount
1.	Number of men	2.383 inhabitants
2.	Number of women	2.159 inhabitants
3.	The total number of male and female	4.542 inhabitants
4.	Number of heads of family	1.485 inhabitants
5.	Population density	9 inhabitants per km

(Source: Profile of Tawun Village, 2014)

Table 2. Types of livelihood of the Tawun village

No.	Emmployment Type	Male	Female
1.	Farmer	979	156
2.	Hodge	583	358
3.	Civil servants	16	9
4.	Migrant workers	3	
5.	Craftsmen for domestic industry	21	46
6.	Small traders	43	39
7.	Private Nurse		4
8.	Retired police / army	1	,
9.	Police / army	4	,
10.	Not working	733	1547
Total		2.383	2.159

(Source: Profile of Tawun Village, 2014)

The table above informs that most of the villagers still depend their lives persistenceon the natural resources at Tawun through farming activities. Therefore, Tawun villagers in expressing gratitude to God who has bestowed wealth, a water source that irrigates the agricultural lands, is through the ceremony of *Keduk beji*. Tawun Villagers believe that they need to preserve the natural surroundings due tobasic humans greater dependence on the environment benefit. In farming for instance, the ritual *Sedekah Bumi* is a manifestation of being grateful to what the people have after the harvest and to the future better harvest. The concept of sharing to the surrounding and to the people of Tawun helps maintain good relations among each other. Helping others in their needs strengthen how life values work. The beliefs over Islam and Hindu-Buddhist values of life are set to Tawun people's every almost daily activities. One local elder in Tawun ever said regarding how people should live with their life: "Yen mung urip kuwi ra cukup. Wong urip kuwi

kudu rukun, corone ngatasi seng elek lan sing apik. Nek pengen ngerti apikmu lan elekmu, kudu nduwe wong liyo. (Eng: Just living is not enough. One should have harmony in life, the way to treat goodeness and badness. One should have others to see what's inside us.)"

The Origins of Keduk Beji Ritual

It has been stated earlier that the two particular times of holding the ritual of Keduk Bejiare in the harvest time and in the death of oak trees. The reasons for the two times chosen by the locals for celebrating the ceremony are: in the time of harvesting, Tawun people is in the gratitude moment of God's care while in the death of oak trees, some said that it indicates that it is the time for a rebirth. According to the Tawun people beliefs, this ritual is a form of mystical traditional ceremonies that are not only entertaining but also containing the values of good moral. One of the good teaching tought in a ritual scoop Beji is the doctrine of charity-remen sodagoh. The concept of alms within Sedekah Bumi is a form of gratitude for all the blessings received. The gratitude is one of the human feelings and is seen as the core essence of human life. That is, there would be no life if the flavor was not there. In mystical and practical belief, the taste is described as a feeling of depth intuitive owned by everyone. An ideal gratitude involves four elements in human namely; heart, words, thoughts and actions. Synchronously and compact (not hypocritical) involves the mentioned four elements¹⁴. It is stated that the Javanese emphasis is on flavor rather than on reason, sense, or the instruments to understand the phenomenal world and worldly affairs. Such rationality can not reveal the nature of the world phenomena, it rather can only be captured with feeling of a private intuition¹⁵. Therefore, Javanese is known for being happy to convey the feeling of gratitude through ceremonies.

Keduk Beji tradition arises from the belief of what the surrounding people of Tawun believe about Spring Tawun historical moment. It tells heroically about the sacrificial of Raden Lodrojoyo as a proof of his love to the farmers. In his book entitled "Cerita Rakyat Ngawi Jawa Timur," Wiratmoko tells the echt of Keduk Beji tradition¹⁶. It is said that in the 15th century in the area Kasreman, a wanderer named Ki Ageng Tawun found a spring at the surrounding community called the Sendang Tawun (Spring Tawun). Ki Ageng Tawun had two sons named Raden Lodrojoyo and Raden Hascaryo. Raden Raden Hascaryo studied from Sinorowito, the son of Sultan Pajang. He decided to join together to serve in the Sultanate Pajang Raden Sinorowito. Ki Ageng Tawun give Raden Hascaryo a powerful and mystical heirloom that can make Sultanate Pajang reap victories under his leadership against the kingdom of Blambangan.

Another story from Raden Lodrojoyo is quite different from his brother. In his everyday living, Raden Lodrojoyo is very concerned about poor people or farmers. On Thursday *Kliwon*, Raden Lodrojoyo expressed a tender

intention to Ki Ageng Tawun so sacredly. He wanted to do *matirto*. *Matirto* is the act of penance or imprisoned by soaking in water or also called *tapa kungkum*. By submerginghis entire body inside the spring water, his intention isto make the spring water located higher than the paddy of the local residents fall its water down the rice fields. Ki Ageng Tawun with his alleviotary manner approve such good intention.

Promptly at seven on one Foriday evening, Raden Lodrojoyo went to Spring Tawun. It was suddenly heard there a catastrophic sound of explosion. A huge wave of water came down to the ground of paddy farm. Hearing the sound, Ki Ageng Tawun assisted by localsto continue to seek Raden Lodrojoyo up to the spring until Tuesday *Kliwon*, but he was hard to fiund, and the local society found none. Until Sendang Tawun was drained, Raden Lodrojoyo was not found. In order to appreciate the sacrifice of Raden Lodrojoyo helping the locals' need, on that day–Tuesday *Kliwon* people around the spring committed themselves to commemorate the day as the day for cleaning the spring which is then known as *Keduk Beji* tradition.

The Implementation of Keduk Beji Ritual



Figure 2. Ritual of Keduk Beji

This *Keduk Beji*Ritual has been going on for generations and still preserved until today. Before the day of the *Keduk Beji* ritual begin, there are some rituals to be performed, including:

1. The Procession of Thursday Kliwon

Nyadaranritual is quite commonfor the Javanese in relation to the death of a family member. For the locals of Tawun, in a Javanese system of numerology, Thursday Kliwon is the appropriate date to start for the Nyadranritual. The village chief and the caretaker must account for the ritual, in doing the prayer and the offerings for the local ancestors. The chief starts with the initial procession before Nyadran begin which is cleaning the graves of the ancestors prior to his duty on sending a prayer to the locals ancestors.

In the process, to solemnly manage the ritual the chief assisted by the local elders even the local headmen in situating the condition. The praying process is started right after some consecutive ceremonies of cleaning the graves and the environments. Modhen (the pray chief) begins the pray using Javanese local language and hoping for better conditions for all locals' life activities. Some various offerings are set. Praying and offering are the two main points for sharing goodness among the locals. According to the chief, praying is a spiritual matter that is delivered to the one whom we love with the help of God while the offerings are purposively intended for, in terms of gratitude, the local society. There are some cemeteries to be visisted for praying, the first cemetery destination is Nyi Ageng Tetawang, the mother of Eang Lodrojoyo. The second cemetery destination for prayer procession is Ki Ageng Metawun, the father of Eang Lodorojoyo. The two cemeteries are adjacent but there is separate land on the hill forKi Ageng Metawun cemetery. The march procession for prayer continues to visit the third cemetery which is Eang Lodrojoyo, the son of Ki Ageng Metawun and Nyi Ageng Tetawang. The cemetery of Eang Lodrojovo is so close to where Keduk Beji is located and next to it is the assembly hall. Paseban is a form of grand meeting hall which has been served as a place for discussing any various localsproblems. There, stated a lot of statues.

2. The Procession of Friday Wage

Following a Friday Wageas the day when the official diver set up the right time for cleaning the Beji by immersing his body deep inside the Beji (scoop), the locals are ready with the offerings. The ritual is Kenduren. Together the residents bring food (for blessing) from the house to the cemetery. This event takes place at Hamlet 1, the biggest part of Tawun district and the central of the ceremony. Kendurenritual is intended to deliver a pray for the ancestral spirits around the tomb of Ageng Sentono Tawun. In the Friday Wage ritual, modhen prays while burning the incense. This ritual has a goal to maintain the safety of local residents and to facilitate them in achieving food and clothing processes further in the future. So far, they have met with success by bringing an abundant supply of food and clothing.

3. The Procession of Saturday Pahing and Sunday Pon

On Saturday *Pahing* and Sunday *Pon* the ritual of *Gugur Gunung* (Mount Autumn) is a voluntary work that drives the local residents and village officials to do *gotong-royong* (a term for local mutual cooperation) to clean up the area around the Beji. This mutual cooperation is to fix trenches which is not feasible and also to clean the gutters which slow the water flow. The ditch or the road ditch water is to irrigate their rice fields sourced from the Spring Beji.

4. The Procession of Senin Wage

On Monday Wage, the locals manufacture of Gunungan (an artificial mountain filled with kinds of foods) as the offerings is the initial indicator for the Keduk Beji ritual to begin. There are various ornaments towering the Gunungan, starts from banana stems until some local traditional foods. If the Gunungan is set ready, the ritual os the Spring Cleanliness will soon begin. By the late afternoon, along with the village chief and the official diver together shares bath as a sign of the opening of a shared-bath in Beji. After the two representatives finish their duty, all local residents are allowed to bathe together. The duration of soaking residents in Spring Beji is unspecified, but it depends on their endurance respectively.



Figure 6. Gunungan

5. The Procession of Tuesday Kliwonasthe peak event of the Keduk Beji ritual

This traditional event of *Keduk Beji* is the event everyone will never miss out. The entire civil locals and local district governments come to join the tradition cleaning up the *Sendang* (Spring). Before taking part of the *Keduk Beji* ritual many things have to be set ready by the locals, starting from installing *janur* (coconat leaves creativity) in the Beji location, cooking for offerings, preparing diving equipment, and the other things necessary for the ritual. Of all the dishes that had been made by the cook of the village, they should not be sampled or tasted only after ritual. The belief over this small thing refers to or exposes to bad things that may happen. *Keduk Beji* ritual begins in the morning and ends late in the evening. The schedule of the list of the rituals are as follows:

Table 3. The schedule of Keduk Beji ritual

At 04.00 – 05.00 am	Offerings March of the head's village house to <i>Keduk Beji</i> source
At 05.15 - 06.00 am	Larung Wedus Kendit (floating the sheep)

At 06.00 – 10.00 am	The locals cleanse the spring
At 10.00 – 12.00 am	Preparation of the diver master
At 12.00 – 13.00 pm	Dance Kecetan with Gamelan
At 13.00 – Finish	Tasyakuran(thanksgiving ceremony)

The ritual procession begins with gamelan musical orchestra using Tayub or Gamyong (a kind of local musical instrument) played by some active players to produce a wonderful sound combined with melodious sound song by some sinden (women who used to accompany this gamelan orchestra). While gamelan Tayub reverberating, the two official divers start immersing and cleaning Tuk or Tawun Spring, hundreds of men-followers join inside the spring pool. It is hard to imagine a spring with its wideness of about 20 x 30 meters filled with hundreds of men. Suddenly the area of Tawun spring is either full of rubbish or just foliated with it when the process of doing kecetan (hit water surface using a small stick of about 3 cmin wide) makes the ceremony become so crowded.

Kecetan is interpreted as a symbol of the war games between a senopati (an ancient Javanese capten of war) and a soldier. Harmony of the sound-hit in kecetan following the sinden song voices create a unique dancing song that would be hard to explain in words. The natural sound of kecetan combined with the sound beauty of the two sinden shows how the condition of the war backed in the king historical era. More than that, the mud bath in kecetan is believed by Tawun village residents as a symbol to cleanse the body from a sin implying not only to clean the body, but also to eliminate all the problems being experienced. In a matter of bio-medicine, people believe that the mud components from the Spring Tawun can make the participants stay young and healthy.





Figure 4 (Kiri). Wedus Kendhit (local balck and white

Figure 3 (Kanan). Kecetan Dance

After cleaning the pool, the two earlier divers who are thetrue descendantsof the previous divers family start diving into the pool while carrying a jar of *badhek* water (or *tape*water is a fermentated paddy water) that is regarded as a holy water. In order to get into the water spring inside the cave, the appointed divers must procede a specific ritual incantation accompanied by burning incense. This prayer is a requirement to entry into the spring area. This process name is *mbukak*, a Javanese local Tawun means to open the springas a water source.



Figure 5. Juru Silem

The need to open a way out of the water spring to flow out of the cave logically refers to the water consumption for the locals. Once the spring is clean from the rubbish, and the water flow from the inside cave spring is open, the natural process of changing the dirty water to the clean onefully on account of the locals clean water daily consumptions. The logical sense of doing this *Keduk Beji* ceremony lies in the replacement and the storage of the jug at water source centered inside the cave. If the water jug is filled with clean water, the need for better consumption in irrigating the agricultural land, the river, and the parks will be beneficial and more

profitable. As rivers are a blessing for an agricultural land and prosperity.





Figure 6. dan 7. Sesajen (Offerings)

When it talks about the offerings as a traditional ritual, the locals of Tawun doing this is to provide variety of natural foods, the foods as blessing from God to share with fellow participants. Before the kecetan dance starts, the offerings must be set ready to float at the top of the spring and to round from the South, the West, the North and to the East edge of the spring. The musical sound of Javanese gamelan follows the circle-round process. The offerings components consist of 30 different kinds of Javanese food, namely: jadah (misbegotten), jenang (porridge), rengginang (sticky rice crackers), lembeng, tembe, bananas, coconuts, flowers, and local chicken eggs, etc. This variety of food symbolizes the gift from God to be delivered to the others. In terms of varity of food, one genetic science of goat colored like a zebra, black and white, is toasted for the offering. The locals name this genetic science of goat weduskendit (belly goat with black and white lines). The process of toasting the goat places next to the water spring. Before slaughtering, the goat must be bathed in Beji scoop and be rotated three times. This must be done for the cleanliness of the goat and the dry before toasting.

The following procession is the massive seizure of *Gunungan Lanang* and *Gunungan Wadon*(the terms symbolize two kinds of different mountain sexes, boy and girl). The meaning of this offering is the locals overwhelmed feeling with gratitude for God help, and the villagers guards who have been keeping the spring Tawun clean and well-maintained. Beside the seizure's mystical belief of gratitude, the fun ceremony is there too for everyone who can manage to get part of the *Gunungan*food components and to gain blessings and salvation for the coming year. The traditional ceremony was closed by the action of citizens who took water from the spring Tawun to drink or to bathe. The water is believed to give a blessing to their lives, such as health and fortune generosity because of the natural and hygienic biological component.

In spite of all rituals and ceremonies, carrying out *Keduk Beji* tradition requires a not small sums of money. The village head of Tawun, Pramudianto said that in order to do *nguri-nguri* (English: conservation) for the spring, the need to prepare full-covered all the cost for *Keduk Beji* ceremony, the minimum cost takes around 10 million. The amount of money is part of a donation from non-governmental sources as well as from financial support of the Department of Tourism, Ngawi. There has no been any indication of any lack of financial support. The success of the tradition has nevertheless been accumulated from the locals' series of their moral values. The locals still believe that somehow the success of the ceremony comes from the supernatural power, God. That belief, in relation to the locals life, has motivated them to sustain the moral and religio-cultural values. These values that have put them into a better life as a society member of Tawun district are the key concept of their better life.

The Concept of Micro-Cosm in the Keduk Beji Ritual

It has been discussed earlier that for Javanesethe interaction in this world is divided into several relationship cores which are microcosm (*jagad cilik*) and macrocosm (*jagad gede*). Macrocosm in Javanese spirituality is as natural as birth, while the human body is defined as a microcosm. If the body is the microcosm, the universe is the macrocosm. The inter-relation of metacosm is understood as an interaction that already existed between beings and God. All that exists in the body if it is not functioning well will be repatriated to universe. The process of returning the active substance will be like forming the body into shapes, as well as the balancing process between microcosm and macrocosm itself. The union between the body, the universe, and the Creator (God) is similar to the process of letting something go, of freeing one self, of filling our minds with consciousness and sincerity¹⁷.

When compared with other creatures, humans show very unique characteristics which are different in terms of dimensions, aspects, structures, things, nature, and activities. However, in some particular aspects humans are also faced with the fact that the level of their existence seemed to have in common with other creatures in the universe. Basically there are two fundamental differences between humans and other creatures. The first is that human being is the totality, while other creatures are part of the totality. Human nature manifests the entire macrocosm, while other creatures manifest partly to the exclusion of other properties. Man was created in God's image, while other creatures are just some shape and configuration of the qualities of God¹⁸. The second fundamental difference is that creatures other than humans have definite lines and never deviate from it. Constrained paths are limited by the limited quality that manifest it. In contrast, humans do not have a definitive nature since they manifest their overall ability. Overall these capabilities absolutely can not be defined, because it is synonymous with "not something," neither the quality nor the special qualities. Therefore, man stands in stark contrast with other creatures. Man is the main essence of the mystery and the unknown man¹⁹.

Man (the microcosm) is said to be different from other creatures in the universe (macrocosm) because humans reflect God's attributes. If in the perspective of spiritual cosmology, a cosmos is divided into two levels, namely the spiritual cosmos (spiritual nature) and the physical cosmos (natural materials). Thehuman world (microcosm) contains also the counterpart, the two elements of the human personality, the soul (spiritual) and the body (physical). People's spiritual form spiritual harmony of relationships with the natural as part of the cosmos, and the human body form a natural harmony of relationships with the physical cosmos. The associations that can be made in relation to the realities are much more complicated which include everything, such as harmony between the physical format of humans and their spiritual format. Thus, the properties and characteristics of the spiritual nature are in harmony with the material realm, and the world of the human

soul is also in harmony with its physical characteristics. These relationships would also by itself be in harmony with God.

Humans are required to maintain harmony in relation with their cosmological part, where humans areas the central role. The first alignment to be pursued in human harmony is the harmony within himself which includes the harmony in the spiritual structure as the locus of all his efforts. Harmony and spiritual balance is also needed, at least to realize the soul or spiritual superiority of man over the bodythat will lead the power of the soul to control body movements. If it is associated with other forms of analogical relationships in the cosmos, which are applicable both in the physical world and in the spiritual world, in the form of top-down relationship or active-receptive intercourse, then in man there are also forms of relationship.

Microcosm interaction involves one individual with another individual in any relationship related. It shows that human nature is social.

Humans need to interact with each other, even with the ancestors. The central role of human beings in the cosmos implies that only man that determines the harmony at a time of cosmos chaos. Harmony and chaos of the cosmos can be realized after human create or build harmony or chaos of the spiritual world within him. Human spiritual world includes somethings that structurally control the functions of active-receptive in the current topdown relationship. Everything will work harmoniously if the structure can be maintained in accordance with the nature of creation, or vice versa.

For the local people of Tawun, one form of interaction among people can be found in the ceremony and the ritual of *Keduk Beji*. The ritual is to balance the relationship among local community members. S respondent responds about *Keduk Beji* ceremony as a mean to strengthen the relationships among the villagers of Tawun:

Everyone will for sure gather in the process of *Keduk Beji*, still helps each other even when one duty is over. When a person is preparing the offerings, another person is making the *Gunungan*. If the person who deals with the offerings finishes his duty, he will be happy to help the one who has the duty with the *Gunungan*. To support the success of the ceremony, everyone must solidify to prevent bad things to happen(interview at 2^{nd} of June).

Solidarity of the people became one of the important elements used in maintaining the relationship among community members of Tawun village. S respondent added that all citizens participating *Keduk Beji* ritual have equal footing, no one feels so bossyor evenrich. No one feels older to simply treat young ages arbitrarily. S respondent continues that in *Keduk Beji* ritual all citizens are consciously willing to invest time and energy to assist others in the preparation of the event. All elements of the society respect each other. If

there are people who do not support the event and impede its implementation, the misfortune then will befall him (interview at 2nd of June).

One local of Tawun resident is willingly to donate his blessing for the sake of *Keduk Beji* ritual success every year. The one who does not want to tell his name always put aside some of his possessions to donate for implementing *Keduk Beji* tradition. F respondent stated that he donated part of his property for the execution of the *Keduk Beji* ritual as a form of charity to others:

Should anybody have ever been given with blessing, one must give a thanks offering. One of the ways to give a thanks offering is by doing *sodaqoh* (Arab word means charity). I used to give food though not many but it is within my means. But thanks God I still can share some to my friends and neighbor. It's only a year, no big deal (interview at 4th of June).

The concept of sharing with the relatives and neighbors among Tawun residents is part of a carefulness. It is considered as one better way of conveying gratitude for the blessings after receiving better goods during a year. Through charity, the locals hope to evoke other communities' responses as well as to convey a sense of gratitude to God. Moreover, for G respondent, charity is not merely an expression of gratitude alone, but it is also a purification of one's own assets. By sharing a portion of property to another person, the person's life expectancy is reaching to some unknwon degree more than what the person expect to happen. In addition to that, G respondent believe that through alms giving in *Keduk Beji* ritual someone can get rid of his bad luck(interview at 4th of June).

A careful consideration in determining the exact date of the *Keduk Beji* ritual and what must be prepared with it appears to be a kind of deliberation. W respondent stated that the Tawun villagers always hold a meeting to determine the day and what it must be prepared in the implementation of the ceremony:

There used to be an invitation at the district office. We always set the agreements about the day, the *gunungan*, the offerings, the rundown of the ceremonies from one night to another night and if we meet a disagreement we had better discuss it in a better way, without any possible conflict arise (wawancara tanggal 4 Juni 2016).

The process of deliberation is very important in resolving any disputes among the villagers of Tawun. A relationship of mutual understanding and of mutual respect among citizens mean to address the problems being faced. Each individual has understandings which are similar to the barriers and the obstacles that would togetherbe resolved if heprovide a conversation and sit together.

It has been discussed earlier that as a human, we interact with each other's microcosms. This kind of interaction with microcosm happens to the

Tawun villagers in relation to *Keduk Beji* tradition which is still preserved today. The relationship is maintained through positive behaviors, such as: mutual respect, mutual cooperation, mutual help, sacrifice, consultation, and charity. Some of these behaviors applied in the interaction amongthe Tawun locals to maintain harmony of social relations in the Tawun village.

By keeping the harmony, the expected welfare will be there.

The Concept of Macro-Cosm in the Keduk Beji Ritual

There are values to help human beings interact with their microcosm as well as their macrocosm. This interaction is the relationship between humans and nature. Javanese is regarded as one of the tribes which are very close to nature. They, especially the peasants in the countryside, in doing their job as a farmer, are quite familiar with the rhythms of nature to determine their agricultural good factors, such as day and night, rainy season and dry season, etc. The Javanese believe that there is a magical power to control nature, these forces appear clearly in times of disaster. Therefore, various rituals and ceremonies are done in an effort to avoid the disaster that comes from nature as well as a sense of gratitude to nature that has provided so many blessings in their lives.

This universe can be said as an existence or a subject, namely the earth and everything on it, the sky with its whole contains therein, and the macrocosm of the universe as a whole. If the definition of macrocosm is what it is, then this can be seen as patterns, traits, trends and roles as subject. In other words, the universe is a "living creature" with its characteristic temperaments attached or living creatures who do revolving and circling in a certain regularity and stability.

For the people of Tawun village, *Keduk Beji* ceremony is one form of a tribute to nature. The existence of nature is vital because most of the populations depend on the nature for their lives need. According to F respondent, *Keduk Beji* ritual is a form of love from the Tawun village to the nature:

The locals of Tawun do love the Beji spring. It is therefore kept, cleaned, and taken care of. This is the main reason to take care of the Beji annually. Never before the locals of Tawun try to break the spring. Everyday the springs have given its life to many locals of Tawun, to irrigate the agricultural land and to send to school our kids from the profit of the agriculture (interview at 4th of June).

It is similar to some degree of what the earlier F respond said, P respondent also agreethat if the locals of Tawun can maintain the harmony of the spirit and the nature the benefit will be for all:

The turtles that live in the spring are sanctified, not even a single local person ever dares to take it. There are hundreds of them. The trees grow

naturally without any particular control condition. The living and the un-living things are kept in good care (interview at 4th of June).

The P respondent's statement asserts that the residents around the Tawun village understand very well that in order to live in harmony with the others they must take care of each other, therefore, they should keep the life existing of the ecosystem. The word *keramat* (sanctified) is one of the sacred rules that must be obeyed by all village residents of Tawun to always do things that are good for both the nature and the spirit. In addition, the village keepsso well the Beji spring Tawun despite having to spend their property and time to pay for the spring upkeep. The F respondent (interview on 4th of June) adds that the residents of the Tawun village always routinely provide tuition around 1,000 rupiahs to 5,000 rupiahs to take care ofthe Sendang Beji. The dues are used to preserve the Sendang Beji and some parts are tohold the *Keduk Beji* ceremony. This contribution will be kept in the locals cashaccount. F respondent has pointed out that *Keduk Beji* must still be held every year. Besides as an effort to preserve the ancestral culture, this ritual is also to establish good relations with the Ruler of nature.

It has been discussed earlier that the Javanese people believe in the unseen forces of the runiverse, the village community of Tawun in particular. The G respondent ensure how that unseen forces is somehow above all the powers:

Human beings are just small creatures. If they are struck by the thunder, they will for sure die and toast. If they are ever struck by tsunami, there will be no place to run for safety. If the mountain ever erupt, sure the human will be a dust. It is therefore human should not be greedy or voracious. It is not adviced to harm the nature, burn it, chop down trees. Must respect the nature keeper. If in case human ever struk by tornado, where will the human hold for safety? To think of that human still depends entirely on nature somehow, how could he harm the nature? (interview on 2nd of June 2016).

The statement of G respondent asserts that human beings are considered weak when being faced with the forces of the nature. As a creature that depends on nature, humans should give a good treatment to nature. Therefore, natural damaging activities should be stopped. The unseen forces of nature remains huge and incomparable. F respondent (interview on 4th of June 2016) states that harmony with nature can be done through rituals as part of the tradition and manifestations of the local values. He considers that the locals are convened in *Keduk Beji* tradition is one better way to honor the magical power of the nature and to gather the locals. If the *Keduk Beji* ceremony is not implemented, the disaster then will befall the locals of Tawun. The disaster can be a failure in the crop or in the harvest as the result of dissatisfaction of the nature. They will also be a lot of people who experience

stress even result in a sudden death. The village community of Tawun believe that the bad causes due to the ungratefulness for the blessings that have been given. It is certainly not good for the survival of all the citizens of Tawun. The locals of Tawun realise of the consequences and therefore take this tradition as not merely an events but further as a precaution, a warning system of the danger that may come. This reason makes the locals of Tawun never forget to hold *Keduk Beji* tradition annually.

The above description illustrates that the Javanese lifes relation always orient to nature and to environment. Such inter-relations are reciprocal and mutual influence. This social interaction is a form of culture in a complex activity where there are certain patterns and rules, for example, in a traditional *Keduk Beji* ceremony. Macrocosm relationship exists with the nature to make people learn to respect nature. *Keduk Beji* tradition is a manifestation of a thanksgiving, therefore, the locals are trying hard to maintain and to preserve the Tawun spring. The main goal has been to establish and to sustain a good inter-relation of viable locals member of Tawun.

The Concept of Meta-cosmos in Keduk Beji Ritual

In human life, culture becomes the norms and rules adopted by a certain group of people. Culture is a very important factor for examining the patterns of behavior of a person or a group of people (tribes) whose orientation revolves around the life of the state, the state of administration, politics, government, law, customs, and norms, also habit to walk, think, do which are then internalized by all members of the public every day, and then confounded with the achievements in the field of civilisation. The Javanese views are strongly influenced by past experiences and concepts of religious mystic. The essence of life to Javanese is seen asaway of showing resignation to the Almighty for a person himslef ever does a mistake. In Javanese culture, the cosmos is life itself. The unity of life is a reflection of material and spiritual meaning, beyond what may appear in the body's sensory system²⁰. Macrocosm, microcosm, and metacosm are the representatives of the universe in which the relationship between humans and the highest power should be managed in good balance.

Metacosmos relationship is the inter-relationship between man and God. The relationship of a person with God is a beyond physical relationship but can trigger the alarm of one's life.²¹ The process of worshipping to God can be manually done with many different ways according to the spiritual understanding of each individual. Javanese can feel the unity with one great strength (*Manunggaling Kawulo Gusti*). God's personality can be a reflection for human traits, namely: love, prosecute, convict, look, listen, create and destroy²². Human beings are considered the most flawless creature if they are far from God guidance: therefore such inter-relationship is indeed needed.

When the Javanese people want to align themselves with God, they must blend themselves with the surroundings they live in. This process is known as nyetepi prataning jagad (set or adjust to the laws of nature, which is composed of conscious as kawulo or servant, and religion)²³. Javanese society believe that God is within themselves, in terms of characteristics and values. Javanese view about God has similarity within its aspect that according to Plato "God is not a reality that is out there but can be found inside". The views above are one characteristic of how Javanese look into the way to appreciate the relationship of a society, and nature²⁴. Javanese in order to performsome religious rituals must first refer it to behavioral concern that can lead him in search of kamusan or deliverance as the final end of all life survival. Thus, locals of Java consider that this world is the place to look for supplies before returning on a more lasting nature.

Most of the locals of Tawun are Muslim who still maintain the tradition of their ancestors. They are classified into adherents of Islam *Kejawen*. Its characteristics refer to how the Muslim Locals of Tawun calls God with *Gusti Allah*. The two words of *Gusti* and *Allah* are combining two of different ethnolanguages: Javanese and Arabic. *Gusti* said in Javanese term means a highlevel rank person who isfully respected, upheld, and expected to provide shelter and protection. The term *Gusti* said here is theological rather than socio-cultural term. It should thus be distinguished from *Gusti Prabu*, *Gusti Pangeran* which means a king or a prince. While the adoption of the word Allah comes from Arabic term which meansthe proper name of God in Islam. It is stated that the doctrine of God according to Islam *Kejawen* includes²⁵:

- a. The word *Pangeran* refers to God, the only One God, He is everywhere and He is eternal, He who create the universe and what is inside it, He is to be worshipped by all creatures using their own ways.
- b. The term *Pangeran* refers to God who live everywhere, but never dare to proclaim yourselve as *Pangeran*.
- c. The term *Pangeran* is the Almighty, if God the Almighty ever has a will, there will be no one who can prevent it.

Islam *Kejawen* concept with regard to The One God is very deep and poured in the term of *Gusti Allah ingkang Maha Kuwaos*. The concept of God for the *kejawen* people is very simple that God is the Creator of the Universe. Therefore, God is the cause of all life, the world, and the whole universe (ngalam donya), and there is only one true God (ingkang Maha Kuwaos).

The locals of Tawun interpret God as the Supreme Being and the prophet Muhammad (*Kanjeng Nabi*) as being very close to God. In every *slametan*, Tawun never miss to say grateful to *Gusti Allah*.

If there is a *Slametan*, all participants always pray by saying *Gusti Allah*. We are all born by the permission of *Gusti Allah*. He give blessing in this world, and many sustenance. Money is not the only kind of sustenance, it can be health, family, son, good neighbor, or even principal of life. *Keduk Beji* is just the way of how the locals send their gratitude hoping

the next year blessing will be better. (interview with K respondent on 4th of June, 2016).

The K respondent understands the concept of God as the Creator of life. God is the Giver of blessings in human's life. Blessings are given by God not only through material calculation, but all the good that exists in human life is a part of blessing. According to K respondent, *Keduk Beji* ritual is one way to say thank you to God for the blessings that have been given so far. This *Keduk Beji* ritual also contains the hope that God will multiply the blessings in the coming year.

According to Javanese, the form of God is something abstract to define. Nevertheless the locals still continue to have contact with the Supreme Power in the universe. Contrary to the M respondent who signifies that the existence of God does not need to be questioned, it is something beyond our mind, it can only be contacted thorough our combination of heart, mind and soul:

Gusti Allah is there somewhere closed within our body. It is impossible to think of Him. The only Javanese can do is trying to get close to Him by praying, meditating, and doing particular rituals. Juru Silem the one who starts the ritual of Keduk Beji is not just an ordinary man. They are someone who has power that is not common (interview at 4th of June, 2016).

The M respondent affirms that God is within human feelings. He give different abilities to a man and if the man wants to get closer to Him, the man must leavewhat worldly pleasures him, and perform earnestly certain rituals. People who can run it would have the ability which is not commonly shared by ordinary people. This capability is obtained through a spiritual path.

Towards the Harmony of Meta-cosmos

In running their lives in the world, humans are faced with a variety of interests. This what drives humans to establish interaction with others (microcosm), nature (macrocosm), and with his Lord (metacosmos). For the Javanese, the three interactions bear the traditional ceremonies which are still recently preserved. The objective of the traditional ceremony is to maintain harmony in human life in the world in order to avoid the occurrence of disasters orto express a gratitude of what has been given. Harmony in life can be created if the harmony within human behavior over the meanings of nature is intertwined.

Basically, most of the Tawun villagers have embraced Islam as part of their life activities for quite long time. However, in practice, the patterns of diversity are not far from the influence of the element of confidence and trust of pre-Islamic animist beliefs, namely dynamism and Hindu-Buddhist. As one of the people who embraced the view of Islam Kejawen, the Tawun villagers

still uphold the traditional ceremony as a religious ritual. The localsof Tawun believe that the traditional ceremony is one way to get closer to each other, to nature, and to God, the Giver of life. This *Keduk Beji* ritual is believed capable of putting Tawun citizens in a good personality: Good people are the people who can do good and can live good. They are good living with the others, good in taking care of the nature, and obedient to *Gusti Allah*. If the good people can do those things their life will be noble. To do the tradition is good and important, and is possible to do it everytime for taking prosperity, blessing, and far from disaster (interview on 2nd of June, 2016).

G Respondent defines a good person as one who can keep himself in the good relation with other human beings, with nature, and with God. It is a capital to build for good quality of life and a happy of life. This concept is also addressed by the F respondent to depict the role of the *Keduk Beji* which is capable of being a counterweight in the lives of the Tawun villagers:

This *Keduk Beji* ceremony gives lessons to the locals of Tawun to have a good personality. Good personality is like doing the charity for the one who really need help. By doing this *sodaqoh*, people can also clean his sustenance. Doing this charity is a way of locals copying the way of Eyang Lodrojoyokeeps the locals' life sustainability. Moreover, this ritual also gives lessons to the locals for being care with the nature that give life to the human. The human also learns the way of taking care, keeping, and cleaning. Of all the three lessons, human most of all to learn about remembering *Gusti Allah* all the time (interview on 4th of June, 2016).

The essence of humans' life balance in relation to the world is when they can manage themselves as a caretaker. Tradition is one of the elements that can drive harmony within in a society. Implementing this *Keduk Beji* ritual embodiesthe human rules, norms, and values of good life. The key is to remember to do good as it is claimed by K respondent:

Just don't foget to the creator of life, don't hurt people, don't break nature, don't contaminate the living. By having a good relation, God's will our life will be better. Don't have any trouble with people, don't forget any traditions in return the nature will not forget you. Taking a good care with Gusti Allah somehow is the better one. People's life in the end will die. Planting a good did in the end it will be a saving account for the after life. So, these are the obligation for all human. (interview at 4th of June, 2016).

The above K respondent is the statement to invite people in general to remain well behaved. Such behavior is the important key in dealing with the final days before the final return to the Lord. And only by obeying rules and norms human life will be saved.

Conclusion

Since this article discusses the essential part of human within life in relation to nature, the concept of being a good person who has to care for the surroundings has the positive correlation with the final return to the Lord. Doing good to the nature is as similar as a way of doing good to ourselves. By implementing this *Keduk Beji* traditional core relationships among human, nature and God, Tawun locals realize how important is to have a harmony with nature and with God. The benefits the locals may have are God blessings and wealthy of sustenance. To get through that, the locals of Tawun hold rituals as a whole part of the *Keduk Beji* ceremony. Theseritual ceremoniesinclude: *Nyadran,Kenduren*, *Gugur Gunung*, *Gunungan*, *Kecetan* dance, etc.Positive behaviors, such as: compassion (love of neighbor), honoring ancestors, preserving nature, and obeying the rule of

God became the main goal in *Keduk Beji* ritual. The good things that are implanted in the end will be a provision for every individual in facingthe death and be returned to the owner of the eternal life. This short-listed final concept is still in alignment with the so far theoretical foundation of Bourdieu's theory of practice that this ritual of *Keduk Beji* is a manifestation of locals Tawun's ideology in terms of harmony of the three interrelationships.

Endnotes:

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³For further understanding, see Catherine Bell's book, *Ritual Theory*, *Ritual Practice*, indebted to Bourdieu and authoritative in religious studies (Bell 1992)

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