DECONSTRUCTING THE STEREOTYPE OF MADURA:
A SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS STUDY

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Abstract

This research aims to deconstructively describe the five faces of the central concept of maduraness, which has been stereotyped by many parties as full of subjective bias, so that such construction at its peak brings a negative stigma to the social reality of maduraness. For this reason, aligning academic understanding is necessary to prevent the stereotype from spreading like an uncontrollable virus. This research uses a qualitative-phenomenological method approach by conducting in-depth interviews with figures with purposive sampling techniques, as well as a serious literature review, so that many stereotypes of Madurese people are found, including: *carok* as a tradition, culture and identity of Madura, possessiveness of women, barbarism of cattle races and hyper egoism of Madurese people.

Keywords : stereotype, socio-culture, religion, Madura

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INTRODUCTION

Unraveling Madurese identity as a social reality is akin to dissecting the culture and religion that thrive in the lives of its people. In a sense, the study of Madurese insights and knowledge in various aspects will come into contact with socio-cultural and religious factors. In Madurese society, these two concepts are inseparable in daily social reality[4]. Religion, as well as culture, is like a unity that is interrelated and interdependent. Thus, discussing religion in the context of civilization must also touch on culture as an obligatory expression for this ethnic group[5].

Similarly, dissecting the culture in this society, which is renowned for its culture of tenacity, cannot be separated from the religious values it embodies. In the social reality of Madura, religion and culture hold a sacred place that is highly regarded. This fact can be seen from the bloody conflict that resulted in significant property damage in Sampang a few years ago[6]. The reason is that hurting the essence of religion or religiosity is the same as hurting culture; on the other hand, tearing the culture that becomes the realm of social life of the community has the same effect as tearing apart religion and all its derivatives.

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[4] Masrokhin Masrokhin and Mariyatul Qibtiyah, "Acculturation of Islamic Law and Local Tradition of Ben-Ghiben in Marriage in Bangkalan-Madura District," Shakhsiyah Burhaniyah*: Jurnal Penelitian Hukum Islam* 7, no. 2 (July 31, 2022): 131–34, https://doi.org/10.33752/sbjphi.v7i2.3926.

[5] Mohammad Hidayaturrahman, "Integration of Islam and Local Culture: Tandhe' in Madura," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 42, no. 1 (August 25, 2018): 205, https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v42i1.477.

[6] Masdar Hilmy, "The Political Economy of Sunni-Shi'ah Conflict in Sampang Madura," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 53, no. 1 (June 15, 2015): 32–34, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2015.531.27-51.

Therefore, due to the complex intersection of these two social realities, it is not easy to draw a clear line of demarcation between religious and cultural systems in the structure and social system of Madurese society. Madurese religion is always expressed through culture and tradition, and Madurese culture is also consistently reinforced by religious arguments. For this reason, it is unsurprising that the expression of these two elements, with different origins, has become a standard paradigm for the Madurese community. Most easily, the behavior and social actions of the Madurese people are always impregnated by these two realities. Thus, it is not wrong if the Madurese defense of both becomes the last bet that can no longer be bargained for[7].

Such expressions among the Madurese community are social facts familiar in daily life. Once again, all of this is the crystallization or result of verstehen[8] Madurese society, both micro and macro socially at once. As such, it is an interpretation of reality that has been entrenched within the scope of social institutions for so long; therefore, self-defense to maintain it to the last point becomes a social imperative that can no longer be delayed.

In this article, as a specific step related to the social reality of Madurese, the researcher focuses on the central concept that is most

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[7] Abd Hannan and Khotibum Umam, "Tinjauan Sosiologi Terhadap Relasi Agama Dan Budaya Pada Tradisi Koloman Dalam Memperkuat Religiusitas Masyarakat Madura," Resiprokal: *Jurnal Riset Sosiologi Progresif Aktual* 5, no. 1 (June 26, 2023): 61, https://doi.org/10.29303/resiprokal.v5i1.284.

[8] Gusmira Wita and Irhas Fansuri Mursal, "Fenomenologi Dalam Kajian Sosial Sebuah Studi Tentang Konstruksi Makna," *Titian: Jurnal Ilmu Humaniora* 6, no. 2 (December 8, 2022): 326, https://doi.org/10.22437/titian.v6i2.21211.

popular among Madurese people. Researchers, in this context, are primarily focused on five concepts of civility that are consistently present and endlessly discussed if carefully examined in the study of civility. The five concepts are *bhuppa' bhabu' guru rato, kiai, blater, carok*, and cattle race.

These five keyword concepts of civility are essential to study, considering the general public, especially outsiders, cannot fully understand the social meaning they contain whether it is the practical meaning in the form of daily expressions of Madurese society, or the meaning of the content of the values of the five central concepts of civility. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the social reality of Madura, which is often misunderstood by outsiders who do not fully grasp the true nature of Madurese society.

Previous research related to this theme includes the work of Mohamad Fauzi B. Sukimi (2004), which openly makes carok an integral part of Madurese identity. Second is research by Aini Aurota Mustikajati et al. (2021), titled "The Madura Traditional Carok Tradition." Third, the work of Mukhammad Nizar Zulmi (2023) examines gender injustice and stereotypes of Madurese society.

The results of the three studies explicitly highlight negative views or stereotypes of the Madurese community, and there is no counter-academic perspective presented in the findings above. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to clarify the misunderstanding and provide a scientific explanation, supported by empirical data.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a phenomenological qualitative approach. This approach is essential to use, given the study's focus, which aims to dismantle the phenomenon of negative stereotypes against the Madurese people. This is because the phenomenological approach seeks to study the experience of social life in society, which can provide meaning about various aspects of life[9]. The research was conducted in the Sumenep district, combining in-depth interviews with literature studies. For interviews, the author employs unstructured interviews with communities or figures who are considered experts in understanding the phenomenon of this stereotype, making purposive sampling an automatic option in the data collection style, followed by non-participant observation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion specifically related to the five central concepts of Madurese is essential to unravel, considering that so far, scholars of Madurese, both from an insider and outsider perspective, have encountered many dead ends, making it difficult for them to explain objectively what it is. Hatta, the logical consequence that arises later, especially for outsider researchers, is that they often portray Madurese society in an unflattering and pejorative light, and it is not

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[9] Marinu Waruwu, "Pendekatan Penelitian Kualitatif: Konsep, Prosedur, Kelebihan Dan Peran Di Bidang Pendidikan," *Afeksi: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Evaluasi Pendidikan* 5, no. 2 (April 16, 2024): 203, https://doi.org/10.59698/afeksi.v5i2.236.

uncommon to get a stereotypical impression by overlooking the social reality of unity that is not supposed to be[10].

Thus, to preserve kalam in the study of these five central concepts of civility, the researcher will discuss each one in the context of civility, drawing on social facts that have been historicized within the knowledge system of the Madurese community itself—the first concept: *bhuppa' bhabu' ghuru rato*[11]. The idea of meaning in the Caraka Madura is impossible to understand fully and comprehensively for Madura research if it is examined solely from the outside of the shell. More so if the research only dwells on the area of literature, and does not at all touch the deepest aspects of the social actions of the Madurese community in translating *baburughan becce.*[12]

The aspect of appreciation and respect for both parents in Madurese reality is rich in meaning and profound. For Madurese people, both parents (especially a mother) become talismans that can be relied upon in carrying out their life path. Like the authentic amulets commonly used by Madurese people, the social function of amulets featuring the faces of parents within the community is truly appreciated. The sentence that often appears related to all this is

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[10] Mei Nur Azizah, Muhammad Hazin, and Siti Mariyam, "Analisis Komparatif Stereotip Budaya Madura Oleh Etnik Jawa Di Desa Jaddung Pamekasan," *Meyarsa: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Dakwah* 4, no. 1 (June 19, 2023): 6–9, https://doi.org/10.19105/meyarsa.v4i1.7513.

[11] Tadjul Arifien, *Sumenep Dalam Bingkai Adat Keraton* (Sumenep: UNIBA Madura press, 2024), 19.

[12] Moh Hafid Effendy et al., "Local Wisdom Bâburughân Beccè' in Madurese Proverb to Maintain Local Content Learning in Islamic Boarding School," *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 2 (December 31, 2022): 289–96, https://doi.org/10.19105/tjpi.v17i2.7084.

mun gi' badha'e reng toana, tak usa benyak tengka nyare sarat, angghui se bedeh[13]*.* Simply put, the sentence holds a noble message that as long as both parents are still alive with us, there is no need for us to be busy looking for prayer assistance from others; just utilize both parents as authentic talismans.

The Madurese people have utilized the concept of *bhuppa' bhabu'* in various ways to create a talismanic path. One of them is very famous for asking for prayers directly from both parents when it is considered that they will face an unusual situation in the near future. Not only that, if the situation is even more critical, Madurese people do not hesitate to ask to walk on all fours under the crotch of their parents (mother) as proof of a child's devotion to achieving their hopes. Furthermore, if it is considered that there is a more attention-grabbing matter, Madurese people ask for the water used to wash or wash from their mother's feet to be drunk as a form of talismanic prayer for blessings from parents to their children.

Such is the 'extreme' expression of the Madurese in interpreting the concept of *bhuppa' bhabu'* in daily social reality. It is indispensable that the role of *bhuppa' bhabu'* in parsing social actions in the context of the central concept of Madness is truly incarnated in the institutions and social institutions of society. Once again, such cultural expressions and traditions must still be seen internally verstehen Madurese culture and not read it with external

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[13] Moh. Hafid Effendy and Suhanda Suhanda, "Nilai Ekologis Dalam Peribahasa Madura; Kajian Hermeneutik," *GHANCARAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, December 19, 2024, 392, https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.vi.17278.

cultural glasses outside Madura. For people who are unfamiliar with Madurese culture, of course the meaning behind the central concept is unremarkable and there seems to be no extra value that needs attention. But, then again, this is the true expression of a culture when viewed objectively without being contrived or even exaggerated.

Another central concept of kemaduraan follows on from this first one; ghuru rato. However, without lengthy discussion, the concept of ghuru will be specifically explained in more detail in the next section. However, the concept of rato will still be the topic of discussion in this first section, as rato in the present meaning of kemaduraan is more of a formal leader at the village level, later known as the village head. The village head is, after all, the highest administrative state leader at the village level. His influence is quite important, although it is unlikely to touch the influence of a kiai in that place.

In many cases, the village head is appointed by the community under the guidance of the *ghuru* or *kiai*. For example, this can be witnessed in almost all social and religious events in the community that involve many people, and always makes the *kiai* a central figure whose position is irreplaceable. Weddings, engagements, religious rituals, domestic family disputes, and even village disputes still make kiai the decisive figure in finding a solution, including the election of the village head, which remains heavily dependent on kiai. Without diminishing the formal role of the village head at the village level, the king, in the context of Madurese culture, occupies

the lowest position in the shared social stratum that serves as a reference in social life together[14].

Without diminishing respect for the village head, the reason why many Madurese people choose the village head is simply for the sake of security. Of course, all of this cannot be separated from the conditions of the village, where the majority of people are engaged in agriculture. In this field, the community in congregation in their respective places raise cows and other livestock. Farm animals, especially cows for most Madurese people are considered as future savings that are eagerly awaited by the results[15]. It is not surprising, then, that village security is often measured by how the community's livestock is safe from thieves. Therefore, cross-sectoral networks should be owned by candidates or village heads in maintaining security within their respective villages. A simple phrase that often appears before the village head election is as important as being safe, other problems the community does not know about.

The above expression indicates that the security system controlled by the village head in the local village, with all the necessary networks deployed, is the ideal of the community. Finally, it is evident that the requirements for village heads in Madura, in terms of social recognition, are straightforward and uncomplicated

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[14] Rahmad Rahmad et al., "Nilai-Nilai Religius Dalam Peribahasa Madura," *GERAM* 10,no.2(December28,2022):128,https://doi.org/10.25299/geram.2022.vol10(2).10627.

[15] Ardhie Raditya, "Pertarungan Identitas (Keluarga) Sapi Madura," *Journal of Urban Sociology* 3, no. 1 (January 12, 2021): 8, https://doi.org/10.30742/jus.v3i1.1189.

by other formal requirements. In this case, a sense of security at the village level becomes a benchmark for the success of a village head's leadership during their tenure.

The second concept is *ghuru/kiai* (religious leader)[16]. The beginning of the meaning of the concept of kiai among traditional Madurese people was directed at *ghuru ngajih* or in Madurese terms *keajih*. *Keajih* is simply defined as a Quran recitation teacher who exists in every hamlet in a village. *Keajih* in teaching reading the Quran is usually carried out in a small Langghar made from natural materials around in the form of wood, bamboo and woven bamboo as a wall[17].

Unlike what Kiai are called today, *Keajih* in his daily life is not much different from the general public. They also farm, cultivate, and raise cattle and other domesticated animals. However, the difference with the general public is that in the evening, *Keajih*, in this case, is tasked with the ascribed status of being a Quranic teacher for children in the neighborhood. Even so, in terms of educational status, kiai are also not much different from the general public, the only difference is the competence in the field of religious knowledge obtained from boarding schools, [18] either as direct

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[16] Ali Topan and Itaanis Tianah, "Persentuhan Kiai Lokal Dalam Kontestasi Politik Era Reformasi Di Madura: Tinjauan Sejarah," *Jurnal Keislaman* 7, no. 2 (September 10, 2024): 406–7, https://doi.org/10.54298/jk.v7i2.269.

[17] Naufil Istikhari and Ulfatur Rahmah, "Ngajhi Ka Langghar: The Educational Nursery of Moderation of Islam in Madura," *Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam* 7, no. 2 (December 21, 2020): 113, https://doi.org/10.19105/islamuna.v7i2.2278.

[18] Ani Rostiyati, *Balbudhi: Permainan Tradisional Di Kabupaten Sumenep* (Yogyakarta: Kepel Press, 2024), 28.

students who live in the hut or commute from home to the pesantren (*nyolok*) when they were young[19].

Based on *Keajih's* depth of understanding in religious knowledge, a corresponding status is automatically ascribed to *Keajih*. Thus, by the surrounding community, he is trusted to educate their children, especially in learning the Quran in the evening, likewise, as a *Keajih* with all the inexperience to get any salary or payment from the parents of their children who are entrusted to learn the Quran to him. Often, there is only a gift of *zakat fitrah* to the kiai once a year in *Ramadan*. This is the origin of the kiai concept that is currently very popular in Madurese society and culture.

Despite the change in the genealogical concept of *Keajih* to *Kiai* today, the most popular term is patanda *Kiai* rather than *Keajih*. Although perhaps if examined further at the village level, what is meant by *Kiai* in this context still seems to refer to the signified of *Keajih*[20]. Without getting further involved in the semantics of *Kiai* and *Keajih*, on this occasion the most important thing to explore is the central role of *Kiai* in the social environment of Madurese society. Thus, in the following discussion, the roles of *Kiai* in the realm of their scope will be the author's concern in this description.

In the social environment of Madurese society, the presence of the *Kiai* conceptually and practically is a necessity that cannot be

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[19] Farahdilla Kutsiyah, Lukmanul Hakim, and Ummu Kalsum, "Kelekatan Modal Sosial Pada Keluarga Santri Di Pulau Madura," *Palita: Journal of Social Religion Research* 5, no. 2 (October 16, 2020): 190–92, https://doi.org/10.24256/pal.v5i2.1399.

[20] Abdur Rakib and Bashori Alwi, "Rokat Beliuneh: Antara Budaya Dan Syariat Islam" 6, no. 2 (2022): 161, https://doi.org/10.33650/jhi.v6i2.5178.

delayed. *Kiai*, in the context of Madurese, is like a spice in food. It is tasteless to talk and study Madurese narratives if they do not make the figure of *Kiai* the main topic of the study. I don't know how it started, so that the *Kiai* in the Madurese tradition became the epicenter point compared to the traditions and culture in other communities[21].

However, what cannot be forgotten in this study is that *Kiai* in the Madurese tradition and culture are at the forefront of social religious practices, in particular, and social society in general. Therefore, with this multifaceted role, it is not wrong if the figure of *Kiai* in the community tradition in Madura becomes a core icon that is always eagerly awaited for its presence. This means that the role of *Kiai* in the social environment is always a determinant and role model for the surrounding community. The indication is that, in almost all social and religious activities and actions that require a leader, the leadership of a *Kiai* is the community's choice for managing their social actions. Although it does not rule out the possibility that the most common role played by *Kiai* in their social activities is centered on social and religious activities[22].

Without denying the roles of *Kiai* in other domains, *Kiai* are indeed public figures whose role is highly in demand in carrying out

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[21] Robiatul Adawiyah, "Kiai Langgar Sebagai Episentrum Pendidikan Islam Masyarakat Desa Meninjo Ranuyoso Lumajang," *TARBIYATUNA : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 1 (February 15, 2020): 3–4, https://doi.org/10.36835/tarbiyatuna.v13i1.606.

[22] A Zahid, "Dampak Globalisasi Dan Peran Sosok Kiyai Di Sumenep (Kajian Kritis Anthony Giddens Pada Peran Kiyai Di Sumenep, Madura)," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama* 14, no. 2 (December 27, 2020): 148, https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2020.142-01.

social activities within the Madurese village community environment. In that case, it is almost impossible for a social or religious activity to specifically exclude the leadership figure of a *Kiai*. No matter how small the activity, there is undoubtedly a kiai leading the event. For example, the event *rokat pamengkang,[23]* which in Madurese belief involves only as many as seven people in the ritual, indeed cannot be absent from this small event; the role of *Kiai* in leading the course of the event is crucial. This means that, regardless of the religious event's size, the *Kiai* remains the leading figure in managing the event from start to finish[24].

The third concept is *bhajingan* or *blater*. The use of the term blater is very popular among Madurese people, especially in the western part of Madura[25]. In fact, due to its popularity, this term has been incorporated into the standard Indonesian language. However, without distinguishing between the articulation and social practices of the Western and Eastern Madurese communities, the term sandingan for the people of the Eastern Madura region, which includes Pamekasan and Sumenep, has a concept that differs from the earlier concept. For the eastern Madura region, the term that is

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[23] Badrud Tamam, "Upacara Rokat Dalam Tradisi Madura: TinjauanLiving Hadist," *Khazanah* 11, no. 1 (November 19, 2021): 80–81, https://doi.org/10.15548/khazanah.v11i1.372.

[24] Hasanatul Jannah and Danang Purwanto, "Tèngka Tradition in Madura: Constructive Role of Ulama as Religious and Cultural Leaders," *SHAHIH: Journal of Islamicate Multidisciplinary* 7, no. 1 (June 21, 2022): 50–51, https://doi.org/10.22515/shahih.v7i1.5201.

[25] Rinda Dwi Pradina et al., "Komunikasi Antar Blater Dalam Tradisi Remoh Blater Sebagai Resolusi Konflik Di Kabupaten Bangkalan," *JIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 6, no. 9 (September 2, 2023): 6732, https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i9.2814.

commonly used is *bhajingan*. This term is written in italic style and receives an additional letter 'H' after the letter 'B' because the word is a differentiator from the word 'bastard' in the Indonesian dictionary.

Moreover, significantly, the diction of bhajingan in Madurese society is entirely different from the syllable equivalent of "bastard" in Indonesian. For this reason, the author proposes maintaining the original word "*bhajingan*" as the initial concept that has been neatly institutionalized in the social environment of the eastern Madurese community. Therefore, the consequence is that the meaning contained in the word remains attached and maintained by the cultural construction and social practices of eastern Madura. Thus, henceforth, the writing of the word bastard in this work will still keep the concept of *bhajingan*.

Not only does it stop at the play of signifiers that refer to the existence of *bhajingan* as a brave group that is different from society in general, but another fundamental concept, a derivation of the diction of *bhajingan*, is the social practices that they must have compared to other communities. This basic concept, for example, is partly embodied in the ability to provide security guarantees at social events that involve multiple elements[26]. This means that the social event remains free from all unwanted things in its care and responsibility.

The question then arises, why are *bhajingan* able to make the situation safe and under control? The answer is that the network

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[26] Arifien, *Sumenep Dalam Bingkai Adat Keraton*, ix.

system within the group and across groups is very cohesive and solid. The network can range from the smallest scope to extend across districts. The network system they built together can be felt from the village level to the inter-district level[27].

At the village level, this group is not alone in its self-actualization as a *bhajingan*. At the village level, many people have joined the *bhajingan* group. Thus, not every village may have a representation of *bhajingan*. The group of bhajingan from the village level eventually expands to a wider level in a town, and so on[28].

Not stopping there, their network extends to the village level, which is an accumulation of individuals at the village level. Then, at the village level, it continues to the cross-village level or the wider sub-district level. Even more interestingly, this network extends to a very broad scope, encompassing the district level and even across districts[29]. That's it, the social network of the *bhajingan* system from the lowest level to the top.

From this explanation, it is not surprising that the security and order system they are able to control in a particular sector runs as expected, because on the one hand they can mobilise the relationships between these criminals at a particular moment and opportunity. The reason is quite simple: the functional use of the

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[27] Yan Ariyani, Merry Atika, and Denis Ary Prasetya, "Perilaku Prososial Blater Dalam Masyarakat Madura" (Prosiding Seminar Nasional 2024 Psikologi, FISIB, UTM, Bangkalan: UTM, 2024), 198.

[28] Yan Ariyani, Merry Atika, and Rekananda Ratu Bianca, "Peran Blater Dan Identitas Budaya Menjaga Tradisi Di Tengah Globalisasi" (Prosiding Seminar Nasional 2024 Psikologi, FISIB, UTM, Bangkalan: UTM, 2024), 218.

[29] Ariyani, Atika, and Tijani, "Hubungan Interpersonal Blater Dalam Tradisi Remoh," 205.

informal organisations they have established can be effectively implemented under implicit command and coordination. Once they plan a security system for an event or a specific village, the plan is already known to their fellow *bhajing* members.

In such circumstances, if a particular social event or village is declared safe and controlled by the *bhajingan* relationship system, it is certain that this will also be affirmed by *bhajingan* in other places who recognise it and even support it. Given the system that has been established, it is very possible and not impossible that security and order at a particular event or in a particular village will truly be realised.

In fact, to be honest without disrespecting the authorities, security that has the blessing of a gangster or gangster group is more guaranteed than what we have known as the brown party all this time. Security from the authorities can be said to be only tentative, while the security system from the *bhajingan* can last a long time and even indefinitely, depending on the patterns of consensus communication among them. Borrowing Michel Foucault's term for power relations, the authorities build a security system with hardware, while the *bhajingan* build a security system with software. .[30]

The fourth concept is bull racing. Whenever non-Madurese people see Madurese culture, two things often come to mind: carok

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[30] Muhammad Hussen, "Relasi Kekuasaan Masyarakat Aceh Dalam Novel Tanah Surga Merah Karya Arafat Nur: Studi Kekuasaan Michel Foucault," *Syntax Idea* 5, no. 10 (October 6, 2023): 1373, https://doi.org/10.46799/syntax-idea.v5i10.2506.

or bull racing. However, for this section, the author will focus on discussing bull racing. Bull racing, like other cultural practices in society, is a form of local wisdom that cannot be rationalised by cultures outside Madura. Of course, this rationalisation is within the framework of cultural perspective, and not in terms of religious ethical values and morality. .[31]

Because bull racing is a deeply rooted cultural tradition in the Madura region, from west to east, its institutionalisation is also very strong compared to other cultures. A simple example of this strong institutionalisation can be seen in the fact that it is impossible to replace or even innovate this cultural tradition with a new style that is considered more friendly. Several years ago, there was an initiative from various groups, including the provincial government, to replace the tools used to drive the bulls during the race, which involved using nails to pierce the bulls' hindquarters, with wooden stakes split into two pieces, thereby eliminating the risk of injuring the bulls as was the case with nails.

The goal of replacing the old style of bull racing, which was seen as cruel to the animals, with a new style that is no longer cruel to the animals has been ignored or even disregarded by the Madurese people, who are accustomed to the old style of bull racing. They argue that the new culture is not the original culture of Madura and does not need to be followed. They remain steadfastly committed to the old-style bull racing, which they consider to be the

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[31] Imam Bonjol Juhari, "Ekonomi Dan Prestise Dalam Budaya Kerapan Sapi Di Madura," *KARSA: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Keislaman* 24, no. 2 (December 1, 2016): 192–95, https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v24i2.913.

authentic, traditional culture passed down from ancient times. This situation fundamentally demonstrates that bull racing has become deeply institutionalised and has even taken root in the collective subconscious of the Maduran community as a whole.

Therefore, it is reasonable to say that the existence of bull racing in Madurese culture seems to be the most popular culture compared to other cultures. Moreover, empirically, bull racing only exists institutionally and is recognised purely in Madura and not in other cultures.

Bull racing is not merely an annual cultural event or a common cultural activity within the cultural system in general. More than that, bull racing embodies other values that cannot be found in other cultures. In bull racing, the values that are commonly expressed are courage, agility, precision, and resilience. The four cultural values contained in the bull racing culture indicate that in practising bull racing, everyone involved, especially the jockeys, must represent these four values.

Becoming a jockey in a bull race is not something everyone can do; only certain, select individuals are capable of it. Therefore, it is only right that these four values must truly be present within a jockey when they declare themselves a true jockey. The courage to ride a bull that is 'wild' during the race is a unique trait that a jockey must possess. For it is simply impossible to be a jockey if one's heart still trembles while performing as a jockey on the racecourse. Of course, this value of courage is directly proportional to the risks that may arise at certain moments if fate does not unfold as imagined.

The condition of an uncontrollable bull that has gone 'wild' is a consequence that must always be anticipated by a jockey during a bull race.

Similarly, agility in every moment, especially when the cow is racing, is also a challenge that the jockey must possess. This agility refers to the skill in managing the cow's speed on the field, from the start to the finish line. In this context, the jockey is one of the key factors determining whether the bull runs quickly or slowly. Therefore, the jockey must possess the skill to harness the bull's full potential, enabling it to move swiftly and outpace its rivals.

Another equally important task for bull riders or jockeys is precision and resilience. Precision in reading the bull's movements on the field and resilience in performing their duties as jockeys. This means carefully observing the direction of the bull's movements while it is being raced on the field. If the bull runs in a zig-zag pattern, one of the jockey's tasks is to influence the bull's movements so that it does not veer off course. Their task is to drive the nail they are holding into the bull's hindquarters more forcefully, causing the bull to accelerate faster toward the finish line.

Meanwhile, the resilience value in the social practice of bull racing can be seen from the energetic style of the jockey during the battle in disrupting the bulls. Although the bulls have gone mad during the battle, the jockey's role as an unlimited mobiliser also adds to the madness of the bulls under his responsibility. The craziness of the bulls during the bullfighting arena cannot be left unchecked by the jockey. In this context, the jockey remains the swift

controller of the bull's speed and straightness of its run during the bullfighting event. It is here that the four points can be illustrated from the values underlying bullfighting in Maduran society.

Another equally interesting aspect of these four values is that spectators, supporters, and people who are directly or indirectly involved in this arena are also under psychological stress. As members of the general public who voluntarily attend the event, spectators must also exercise extra caution while on the sidelines of the racecourse, as the uncontrollable behaviour of the rampaging bulls could suddenly charge into the crowd, effectively exiting the competition arena. As spectators, they must always be prepared to avoid the bulls' sudden and unpredictable attacks.

Similarly, the participants or organisers of the bull race, who carefully plan their involvement in this cultural event, spend a considerable amount of money to ensure its success from start to finish. Various physical and spiritual preparations (*sarat*) are made to ensure that the bulls participating in the race emerge as winners. Considerable expenses are incurred in seeking sarat from individuals deemed skilled in their respective fields, whether they are religious leaders, shamans, or others. Undoubtedly, all of this is done with the hope that their bulls will win in the bull racing event.

As a bookmaker who undoubtedly incurs significant expenses, from cattle care to the recent fees, it is no surprise that throughout the racing process, his heart is filled with constant anxiety. Similarly, those who were asked to pay the recent fees also feel uneasy, waiting for good news to come their way—or the opposite. This is the world

of cattle racing, often described as a 'harsh world,' which is not only reflected in the condition of the cattle during the race. Those around them also experience the same harshness of the bullfighting world. From this, it is clear that bullfighting is only appropriate within Maduran culture and nowhere else, and the various illustrations mentioned earlier serve as social practices that depict the harshness of the bullfighting world in the Maduran region.

The fifth concept is *carok*. There is no need for a lengthy explanation of this concept, as *carok*, as a form of defending one's honour, has been studied extensively from various angles, including books, journals, and other forms of research. In this section, the author will attempt to examine the practice of *carok* solely from a typological perspective. This is because this perspective is the least explored by writers or researchers on the meaning of *carok* in Madura. To date, most scientific reviews of *carok* in research papers have focused on its violent aspects, often with a pejorative tone. In fact, it is not uncommon to find research on carok that refers to it as a culture. However, to be honest, carok is not a culture. But, perhaps due to researchers' lack of in-depth understanding of *carok*, many researchers associate carok as a culture deeply rooted in Madura.

In accordance with the purpose and focus of this paper, the author focuses solely on the "typology" of *carok* that occurs in the Madura region. The term 'typology' is deliberately placed in quotation marks because, according to the basic principle of *carok* as a defence of one's honour, which is commonly expressed in the

phrase *ango'an potea tolang, katembang pote mata*,[32] the use of this typology is merely to distinguish the various forms of physical violence that are still categorised as *carok* by the people of Madura or those outside Madura. However, if one were to refer to the origins or paradigm of *carok* itself, not all physical violence, as will be explained in the following points, can be considered *carok*. The reason is simple: carok is truly considered *carok* only when it is carried out intentionally by both parties, and both are equally prepared in every aspect. For example, with many conditions agreed upon beforehand.

What are these types? First, prepared versus unprepared. This means that *carok* carried out by *carok* perpetrators, whether one-on-one or mass *carok*, are both prepared to face each other. In this type, the execution of *carok* does not simply occur spontaneously without prior preparation. .[33] However, the process of executing *carok* is preceded by a consensus between both parties regarding the location, date, and time of the execution. In essence, this is the true nature of *carok* as it has occurred in Madurese history since ancient times.

Because both parties are equally prepared for the *carok*, everything necessary can be prepared in advance. For example,

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[32] Kuntum Chairum Ummah and Tri Pujiati, "Bahasa Sebagai Pertahanan Bangsa: 'Atembang Poteh Mata, Lebbhi Bagus Poteh Tollang' Dalam Tinjauan Sosiolinguistik," *Diskursus: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia* 7, no. 3 (December 16, 2024): 417, https://doi.org/10.30998/diskursus.v7i3.25916.

[33] Mohammad Refi Omar Ar Razy and Umar Faruk, "Budaya Carok Dalam Perspektif Lanskap Alam Pulau Madura: Sebuah Pendekatan Ekologi Sejarah," *Jurnal Adat Dan Budaya Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (September 30, 2024): 231, https://doi.org/10.23887/jabi.v6i2.75810.

asking for blessings from the extended family and leaving final messages in case one loses in the *carok*. Additionally, seeking spiritual guidance from a religious leader or someone believed to be capable of providing spiritual assistance. Similarly, planning the use of the traditional weapon that will be employed during the *carok*.

The second type is ready versus semi-ready. In this type, both parties involved in the *carok* plan are already aware that a *carok* will occur at some point in the future, but neither party reaches a consensus like in the first type mentioned above. This is because, based on the discomfort felt by both parties due to each other's actions, each party remains on high alert, ready to act if a carok were to occur at any time in the future.

Due to the lack of initial consensus, neither the location, time, nor implementation are known for certain. Therefore, the steps taken in the first type of *carok* do not exist at all. What exists in each individual is constant vigilance against attacks from the opposing party. Of course, those who feel that their pride has been trampled upon will always be on the lookout for those they consider to be disrupting the social order of the Madurese people. This party will use every means to exploit the opponent's vulnerabilities by constantly monitoring their movements. Once the timing is deemed appropriate and the opponent begins to let their guard down, an attack can be launched. In this situation, one party is ready for battle while the opponent is not as prepared. The point is, this type does not fall under the category of true carok as practised by the Maduran community.

The third type is prepared versus unprepared. In this session, the point that can be explained is that the game is unbalanced. The first party, with all its preparations, has done various things related to the planned attack, while the opposing party has no idea that it will be attacked and therefore has made no preparations whatsoever.

Since there is no prior communication, either verbal, which is the consensus practice of *carok*, or nonverbal signs that indicate the execution of *carok*, the target party is unaware and does not even suspect that an attack will occur. Therefore, the lack of preparedness means that they are completely unprepared. In this type of *carok* practice, the attacker does not need to stalk the target, as in the second type mentioned above, because it is certain that the target is completely unprepared, while the attacker can launch their attack at any time.

Of the three types mentioned above, historically in Madura, only the 'prepared versus prepared' version of *carok* can be considered the true category of *carok*. The reason is simple: *carok* is only permitted between those who are gentle, where both parties are fully aware, prepared, intentional, and fully alert.

Meanwhile, types two and three do not fall into the category of recommended *carok*, which has existed in the social reality of Madura. This is because these two types reflect the reluctance of Madurese men to openly challenge their opponents. In the author's opinion, and as Maduran culture itself states, these two final types are not worthy of being called *carok* practices, as they lack the

essential elements of the 'traditional' *carok* practices that Madurans have carried out from ancient times to the present day.

Thus, the understanding of both insiders and outsiders about carok has been contaminated by the style of violent practices also carried out by non-Maduran communities. This means that violent practices occurring in Madura, where a celurit is used as a weapon by almost all parties, are also referred to as carok practices. However, as per the criteria outlined above, this type does not fall under the category of carok, except for the first type alone.

As a native Madurese who understands the true nature of Madurese culture, it is appropriate for the author to clarify the understanding of the second and third types of '*carok'* so that they are no longer considered to be the well-known form of *carok*. The purpose is none other than to uphold the reputation of Madurese culture in the eyes of outsiders who do not understand Madura, especially among Madurese people who are beginning to drift away from their Madurese culture. Thus, they end up spreading misinformation about Madura, particularly regarding *carok*.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion on the deconstruction of stereotypes about Madurese society: a socio-cultural and religious study, it can be concluded that there are many stereotypes about Madurese society, whether written by insiders or outsiders. Among these stereotypes are: *carok* as a culture, *carok* as a tradition, the identity of *carok* in Madura, bull racing as synonymous with barbarism,

excessive respect for religious leaders, possessiveness towards women, and selfishness.

Upon closer examination of the factual reality on the ground, these stereotypes are far from the truth. In other words, the assumptions about Madurese identity that have been taken as valid knowledge are, in fact, inaccurate. Therefore, the author, armed with objective data and daily experiences among the community, is able to deconstruct all these stereotypes. For example, *carok*, which is considered a culture, tradition, or identity of the Madurese people, is not actually the case. The existence of *carok*, when viewed from a historical and genealogical perspective, indicates that there are circumstances that cannot be compromised, especially when it comes to personal dignity and family honour.

The emergence of stereotypes about the Madurese community can be attributed to two factors: academic fallacies about Madura and its social philosophy, and secondly, ethnocentrism, which leads to a refusal to acknowledge the actual facts in Madura.

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