



MARGINAL COMMUNITY AND THEIR WHITE KEBAYA: PENGHAYAT SAPTA DARMA AND THE PURITY DISCOURSE IN JAKARTA

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A B S T R A C T

Penghayat is often marginalized with heretical and syncretic stigma. However, the negative stigma is not true for them. They believe their "religion" is pure and not a splinter from any religion. It represented by their Kebaya. The existing literature or previous studies on the Kebaya of Penghayat is limited. Therefore, this study specifically aimed to discuss their Kebaya, with case the Sapta Darma community in Jakarta. This research was conducted with a qualitative approach, through an interview, observation, and literature study techniques. Then in data analysis tend to use interpretive symbolic and discourse analysis of material. This study found that the material (Kebaya) is an important part in disclosing identity to "religion". The white Kebaya symbols as a narrative to represent positive connotations, then share with others to build strong image in their problems of negative stigma. By taking narratives of activist and dynamic in landscape, geography, history and mobility, this paper shows the significance of using of the material, the meanings and the discourse in social interaction of religious group in survive their ritual practice.

A. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education and Culture appeal the staff to wear traditional cloth in 2016. The appeal made the employees start wear *Kebaya* in the office. *Kebaya* used by female employees because simple, feminine and national culture. The women wear *Kebaya* by veil or non-veil women. The veils combining are "tight" (covering the chest) and loose ones, visible parts of the hair and neck (Indrianti, 2013). There are those who add it with a necklace to make the wearer sweet. *Kebaya* colors also vary, including white *Kebaya*. Its color as a neutral color and can combine with various other colors. The factors that influence the selection *Kebaya* is a model of *Kebaya*, material/textile, variety of decoration and comfort in usage (Karyaningsih, 2015).

In other place, *Kebaya* is also used in wedding ceremonies. There is a trend of *Kebaya* that appears much more varied. However, the fact is in my research on religious groups that the material (*Kebaya*) is still attached to the meanings it contains which originate from the norms and ethics of the *Kebaya*.

The use of materials cannot be separated from the meaning in them. However, the use of materials (like *Kebaya*) in communities is mostly analyzed in general from the structure (knowledge) they get from their tradition of community. In studies on local communities tend to semiotic studies and fixed meaning or message of materials base on shapes, colors, or patterns, and space with transmission of tradition process (Wuryani, 2013; Syafwan, 2016; Suliyati, 2019). Whereas in interaction activities, the community can also conduct discourse according to its function in social

politic context. Even though the meaning of the material has been known by the community, the actors also develop discourses in certain situations. Hence my criticism of the traditionalists angle because tends not to discuss how the communities conducts discourse to build a positive image in the midst of the negative stigma that plagues them. This paper rectifies the over-emphasis on the role the structural factors, like semiotic and fixed message (meanings) in local communities to explain revival and resistance of them. In this paper, I develop an argument that the social politic context has effect and explain how the practice of the discursive of them. Furthermore, the paper explains on how people retain the religious practices that their Belief with the support materials.

I outline my argument with case Penghayat Sapta Darma communities with their narratives in their oral discussing or coversation in Jakarta. The women of the community called *Warga* wear *Kebaya* in some momentum in Jakarta. The white *Kebaya* has a deep meaning that motivates them to behave of their *Kebaya* meaning. I found this motivation of discussion with them in their events. They wear the white *Kebaya* and share their narrative about the purity symbols.

The phenomena for the white *Kebaya* of *Warga* looks unique because *Penghayat* usually identically with the black-*Kebaya*. In Cilacap, the black-*Kebaya* related to the shadow of human and eternal and noble symbol. In Jakarta, I tend to see that other religious groups use white in their clothes and accessories. Example, Majelis Ta'lim in Indonesia. The Habib and his congregation used white robes and white turban (Jati, 2015) when pray, the Asy-Syahadatain wear a white shirt (Rohman, 2011) and the LDF-FPI (Da'wah Front Institute of Defender Front of Islam or FPI) wear are long white shirt with white hajj or *Imamah* caps (Hakim, 2014).

Jakarta is the central city of Indonesia. It is bordered by several other areas, open, and not isolated. As part of the citizens of Jakarta, the *Warga* a have members with various professions, such as security guards, nurses, hotel employees, traders, teachers, lecturers, and state apparatus. Interaction with other groups is possible in Jakarta. This condition allows them in meeting and discussing or conversation other people. Some of the them are active in internal meetings, between organizations, and the meeting are facilitated by the state. Although the rights of them have been accommodated by the state in several cases, they still encounter problems due to the ritual practices, as reported and recounted by them in the case of the attack of the Islamic

Defenders Forum (FPI) to their worship place in Yogyakarta in 2008.

The purpose of this paper is to explain the dynamics of religious relations that exist in Jakarta, narratives to build positive meanings of religious groups, and how the material is used in denominational narratives. This paper shows how symbols function to support materials. The functions are a motivational, strengthen the community identity, and an expression to develop moral and religious commitment. With the symbols in the material, the community then creates narratives for the purpose of building a positive image. The role of narrative is also to negate of the alienation positions of the community, protest marginality and demand for equality. In practice of religious interaction, they build discourses through the use of their *Kebaya* symbol. With a sacred conception, the community strengthens the solidarity of its groups who are considered marginalized.

The study of cultural material pragmatism is still limited of the abundance of similar studies of Penghayat, such as mysticism (Mulder, 2011), Javanese philosophy or outlook, individual motivation of the spiritual practice (Sutarto, 2006), syncretism practice (Irwanti, 2019) and their diverse (Hamudy & Rifki, 2020:48), their stigmas and construction (Azis, 2017; Ikhsan, 2017), the political resistance (Qodim, 2017; Aryono, 2018), history (Pratama, 2017), and landscape (Khoirnafiya, 2019). The study gap of previous literature because the absence of discussion of the role of symbols in material (*Kebaya*) in discourse of *Warga*. The gaps are then filled with this paper, how the narrative built by them amidst their negative stigma. Their narrative emphasizes how the white *Kebaya* worn is in accordance with the character of their pure identity, behaves cleanly, and is covered with calm. The study of religious identity constructed by *Warga* has relevance to idea that identity as something inherent in the community with its boundaries. The boundary is not only symbolic interaction and other social relations, but also the area of identity symbolically constructed as a reflection of the search for differences or changes. Although they are multi-identity, the symbols play to maintain identity boundaries. Ethnicity have a multi-layered structure but ethnic identities are quite resistant to change (Cohen, 2019).

There is subjectivity from identity owners but also there is effort to dismantle identity crisis and the religious basis can be reduced conflict identity become integration identity as well as the ethnicity role to construct the cultural rights of the communities (Cojanu, 2014). In a religious-based of social movement, individuals are blocked from defining individual identity towards group identity, demanding strict

adaptation of traditions, symbols and values to the interests of the group. There are main symbols and vice versa others symbols that threatens solidarity are rejected or replaced, reinterpreted, and reused at a later time. In this study, the identity bases on *Sapta Darma* that the revelations received from men of Java (Javanese).

This paper show that the identity of the citizens is plural but not float. The affirmation in group norm is their significant in Cohen idea about the saliency of ethnic identity in context, called "retribalization" (affirmation of his return) that re-definition ethnic identity in response to external threats. They have the ability to deconstruct customs, values, myths, and ceremonies from their cultural traditions to articulate their active political organizations where interacts with outsiders (Cohen, 1978). Recognizing ethnicity include all related behavior and all the material of collectives. Material traces may be found e.g. in symbols. In this study, ethnicity is used as a political resource and an understanding of morality (Antweiler, 2015; Munasinghe, 2018; Ross, 2008).

Thus, this paper contributes to the study of a more dynamic religious group, by considering material in support of community discourse. The functioning of these materials shows that it is not only history factors (Segara, 2019: p. 151), only which influences the practice of discourse, but also the cultural material role in the practice of discourse. The relevance of the material in this study shows a different perspective on the idea that allegations of fetishism for artifacts (Miller, 1998). Because material in not absence because in practice of religious group, there is the improve materials process, dematerialization and re-materialization (Kao, 2020).

B. METHOD

This ethnographic study interprets the related archives and literature, interviews of *Warga*, collects stories of their experiences and memories, understands the knowledge or rationality of them, and analyzing the narratives in conversation by them.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Identity, Myth and Narratives in Sacred Space

Since President Suharto's speech on August 18, 1978, *Penghayat Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang*

Maha Esa. have been linked to terms of belief in Supreme God as a culture is not religion. They are a person who acknowledges and believes in the values of the belief in God Almighty. Although it has been standardized, the term of *Penghayat* is not single. The discussion result of informant, there are the dedication of Faith, Devoted of Faith Community, Faithful People, Native Faith Follower, believer on one Almighty God, Adherent, spiritual religious and local wisdom, a Belief in Almighty God, and Indigenous religion.

They belief their local religion is origin come from the Javanese ancestors, long before official religion - they often called import religion - in Java. The Belief also developed and gained many followers. However, the informant told me that there was no problem he used the word religion-at that time, but around 1963 the *Sapta Darma* Religion was replaced with *Sapta Darma* Spiritual (*Kerohanian Sapta Darma* or KSD). Then, *Sapta Darma* became a Belief in God organization be *Persada* (Persatuan Sapta Darma). *Persada* was inventoried in 1980 by the Directorate General of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Culture with Inventory Number I. 135 / F.3 / N.1.1 / 1980. Some of them regretted the change because it was in their narrative that religion related words, A is the same as the origin of man, Ga is the same as Gama (Kama or holy water), and Ma is the same as virtual or the light of God. By them, the *Sapta Darma* will be the role model of the world community.

In their narrative, the religion is not interpreted in a limited way. The religion is not just the fulfillment of the elements such as prophet-hood, scripture, and international recognition. They responded that the rules only made humans, the rules of religion should not be determined by humans including the government and Java is ethno-national.

Like a Javanese woman, the female of *Warga* generally roll her hair (*Gelung*) with *Kebaya*, but they use the white *Kebaya*. Meanwhile, the male usually uses batik and *Beskap* by tucking a Javanese dagger in their fingers and completing it with *Iket* or *Blangkon*. There is a lot of information that diversity of *Warga* but in their narrative in conversation signaled that a tendency to uniform the diversity of *Persada's* identity with *Kejawen* (Java Spiritual) as *Warga* value orientation or philosophy.

Their narratives also related of Javanese meanings, that Javanese means someone who understands or does not leave Java, not conflict with any interests and establishes harmony with anyone. Javanese in its philosophy of being in various arenas is a symbol of the cohesiveness of the them. Also, related to the Private symbol of Sapta Darma, the embodiment of heroism, authority seven and moment, and the language to communicate with Hyang Maha Kuasa through prostration and prostration songs. The certain symbols in religion was very emphasized because it was able to make humans immediately feel close to an extraordinary power (Geertz, 1973; 2013).

The narrative of the *Warga* is also related to the white symbol that is believed through the sacred myth of receiving teaching revelations of Harjosopoero (Mr. Sri Gutomo) myth on 12 July 1954. Then written by *Panuntun* and disseminated to his followers until now. Its related revelation to draw in to *mori* (white cloth-textile), Sapta Darma word and moral Javanese with Javanese alphabet The Personal Symbol.

The informant said that they believe the Revelation myth. They said that white has a noble meaning, purity and peace and the absence of color, another kind of emptiness. This symbol is a human concept as Hyang Maha Suci related the origin of human can be seen from the rectangular shape of the rhombus. The white indicates that the human origin of goods is holy or clean, both inside and outside. Therefore, people should always try to return to their pure/clean state; acting to nobleness or physical and spiritual purity and and return to their origin. They said that the white symbol differs from some other colors in Javanese knowledge, for example Black circles illustrate that humans have Ankara (arousal lust), their forms in dirty words spoken by mouth so that humans must say and act well; the red circle illustrates that humans have anger that arises due to sound stimulation by the ears so that the sound is not good not felt; and the yellow circle describes craving because of the influence of the sense of sight from the eye.

The White depicts of the circle is different of the black, red, and yellow as the bad category. This is different from the white meaning in a circle that describes a sacred action even though it is closer to yellow (craving) but has a sense of smell from the

nose which is stimulated by good smells, holy and clean instead of refusing to be dirty. If humans want to have vigilance (clairvoyance) then the eyes, ears, and mouth are guided to the nose character. Thus, humans can match (bring together actions) with their origin is chastity. Likewise, the white on the circle covered by the *Semar* image illustrates the hole in the human crown as the tenth-hole. Likewise, the white in the image of *Semar* (the image of nobility light) can relate to Hyang Maha Kuasa (Allah). By blending together the feeling in the crown until realizing white light, then it can be God's face.

In *Warga*-women narrative, this Personal Symbol as Hyang Maha Suci is the inspiration and motivation for them to wear white *Kebaya*. They want to shine and glow like the white of light, while *Kebaya* for them is related to the Java identity. The *Sapta Darma* symbol describes the origin and content of humans, which must be understood and cultivated by humans in order to achieve nobility according to *Wewarah Pitu* (seven clues). The white of the *Kebaya* contains hidden meanings than dirty stigma and the narrative that the white color of their teachings as not mystical but sacred.

Like the white *Swarajin* cloth white soaks up corruption and sin and White (Sveta) also means merriment (Jha S., 2016: 7). The mythical provides an explanation that color as a symbol has meaning contained in it which is transmitted orally. This study provides an explanation that the teachings about the human being as the Holy One continue to be transmitted by the myth. This is use material like the physical manuscript and the religious images, what was regarded material was mediated by semiotic ideology example the healing entailed material practices (studio). That new believers had to take to continue to articulate their break with local religion (Kao, 2020:9-11).

The minority like *Warga* who filled with trauma and crisis, the experience of togetherness in daily life becomes an essential element. The personal or groups try to manage cultural cohesion, they are creative, related to "hidden transcript " which represents a criticism of power is dominant as its expression is different from the open / frontal form. They try to continue narrating the equality of the beliefs of their ancestral religion with other religions. Not only that, a critical insight into external

pressures borne by religious groups of this kind can be revealed in their art performances.

2. The Purity Claim, Pride and Retain Belief

I repeatedly asked about the white *Kebaya* worn by the female. From several informants, the answer was similar that they wanted white to glow as white as light as the teachings of *Wewarah Pitu*. As personal symbol meaning, the white meaning contains good moral values so that the white color appears in some attributes of the problem. There are male informants said that white means cleanliness and kindness. I question several times about their white studio cloth, their *Kebaya* in a white (wedding) confirmation process which is also worn by women during the process of burial of bodies or funerals. White means *mutmainnah* which benefits from purity and negative shamanism.

I have not yet obtained an explanation from the *Warga* about the origin of this word of superstition. In Arabic language *mutmainnah* related to *al-nafs al-mutmainnah* (the serene *nafs*) in 'state of ultimate peace, the highest stage of psychospiritual development (Abu-Raiya, 2012). White (*Abiath*) is the primary symbolism with the positive assumption that if something is white, it is not stained and therefore clean (A.Hasan, 2011).

Such claims of purity appear universal when we read some similar references. White is black opposite in binary category. Although it is comparable in comparison, it appears that White is more favored than black by some communities. Like Charles Daniel Redmond dissertation "Those without Sin" shows the political and social supremacy from white Christianity (Redmond, 2017). The pure white color has dominated the public face as a remarkable cultural heritage and as the importance of prestige (Port, 2007). Likewise for Indians who believe that Kshatriyas in the color of Padma (white lotus), Vaisyas in slightly light color and Sudras dark (Jha S. , 2016).

The specialty of the white color of a person's skin is white features. The white box contains positive goals, and vice versa the black box contains negative goals reveal morality versus immorality. Like Fox's study that whites in a marginal position of belonging, their inextricability from land and power

continues to mark them as privileged persons with counternationalist ethics of patrimony and wealth accumulation (R.Fox, 2012). This is the strategies of stigma management (Kowal, 2011).

The relevance White shows a cultural pattern of the rule of purity. She saw a difference between white magic and black magic. Their rationality is the white spirit is not angry but happy to be slaughtered Danger. From some community rituals, this purity pattern is applied in life especially in renewal efforts to eliminate pollution (Douglas, 2001). Monochromatic "black" and "white" are the basic color terms used in any human language. Where more than two color terms exist, these two are universally with terms for other colors following in a consistent sequence across languages. White related the Levantine Paleolithic, has its own powerful semantic: in bones, skulls, and skeletons however white paints when derived from a mixture of water and clay or chalk, would probably not have survived archeologically as well as ochre, manganese, or charcoal (Hovers, Ilani, BarYosef, & Vandermeersch., 2003)

In the argument of this paper, white is interpreted by *Warga* and then made a binder of solidarity but in their efforts to carry out their stigma which is heretical or even non-religious. White also contains ideologies that show purity, kindness, and generosity. White is shown in the connotation of cleanliness which has left a bad thing. I believe that the ideology of the positive meaning of white is transmitted by the generation of *Warga* and can be accessed by audiences who want to know them. *Warga's* performance shows that civilization was built to minimize the darkness of animism and mysticism in the practice of spirituality directed at them. White appearance is an expression of their teaching beliefs about humans as Hyang Maha Suci.

White like the sun shines signifies human respect that is part of God. In *Warga* meeting, they tried to wear white *Kebaya*. For women, almost every moment of their meeting tries to wear a white *Kebaya*. This was shown when several the women who did not wear white *Kebaya* then shyly walked into the meeting room. The woman whispered and told some of her friends that she did not wear white *Kebaya* for various reasons. Her reasons are her white *Kebaya* washed or sewn because of greatness.

Meanwhile, some other women are ready to bring some white *Kebaya*. They have to borrow or give away for free.

The *Warga*-woman gave two *Kebaya* and happy. She not yet known white *Kebaya* meaning was brought and worn. But some the women (as *Warga* inborn) explained the white meaning. It may not be exactly the same but this the meaning also contained in the *Sanggar* cloth (pedestal) which is worn for their prostration. In certain momentum, they are in the prostration of daily prostration.

There are many meanings of someone's wear *Kebaya*. However, their white *Kebaya* means purity. Talks of *Kebaya* color often satire with other groups that hinder their worship, use violence to destroy the *Persada* studio (prostration), and improper behavior of religious people. Their expressions appear more often when they feel confident. They are talking to is believed to be someone who wants to understand them. They said that other groups need to clarify the misunderstanding of the practice of their 'religion'.

3. Discourse in Social Relation and Cultural Context

Warga believes in the *Personal Symbol* so they wear white *Kebaya*. The Belief not only in private spaces, but also public spaces. They convey this white theme that in line with the white shine like the sun shines. There is a white symbol meaning, as portrays the holy lust that gives rise to good character and attitude. The analysis of discourse space expected to be able to build or shape them not only reflect something far from them. Some of the underlying discourses are social identity or 'subject position', social relations, and systems of knowledge and trust. The discourse existences use various aspects, including intellectual analysis and social practice.

I try to interpret the results conversation with *Warga* in their daily practices and responding to cases that happened to them, such as the case of the worship place destruction in Yogyakarta. The term *sujud* is their problem which often leads as a heretical group. They say that prostration is the result of the revelation of the founders of their ancestors. So, the term *sujud* prostration was rejected by other groups because they did not understand their teachings. They said that the prostration was not the property of Islam.

In their discourse, there is masking or elimination of agencies through the construction of passive sentences in the worship place

destruction. In some meeting, they did not mention the agency but stated the studio has been damaged by Islamic groups. In others situation, they say "this is not inappropriate for someone who claims to be religious, right, Ms". They say "aren't the religion teaches goodness and peace and harming. They said that they on average have experienced injustice.

True religious teachings of them are often their claim. For examples the statement: we are *nrimo* (accept), but God does not sleep, in real many of the worship place destroyers who died unnaturally, some committed suicide, some fell from sewers. Whether or not this is true, such statements appear in the Jakarta, the religion legitimizes very effectively because it connects the construction of reality with sacredness. The sequence of events presented or such narratives reveal that religion in the questioned narrative takes place on a 'cosmic' scale, including their own 'reality other than everyday experience.

Religious legitimacy is discursive construction. Although religious can cause social conflict religion becomes social cohesion. In the integration perspective, religion is a prominent identity that can control society. Religion offers a set of structures of beliefs that internalize moral tension and use them to guide life choices and moral commitments. The white *Kebaya* shows the emotional reaction of the wearer, both political emotions and their religious emotions. *Kebaya* revealed the issue of religious morality. The white *Kebaya* functions as a portrait of a person who is not only represented in ideas but has significant meaning in building mental representations of *Warga* who are often stigmatized by the occult, heretical, and non-religious. The shared meaning based on the teachings of faith then operates in the actions and performance of its citizens to effectively shape the identity. In the context of the meaning of the sacred text allows multi-vocal but then guide by leader.

Religious emotion is sought to be built through various possible means including a chastity discourse which should not debate the contents of the sacred text. This kind of orthodoxy apparently does not only occur in a number of other faith-based groups, but also them. Although there are several practices that have changed from practices that have existed in the past, they always build narratives that their elders do consider it does not conflict with the teaching values of their beliefs. In their perspective, emotionally they respect their ancestors as a moral obligation for their ancestral heritage but the text is useful for sustainability in the changing times they live. Changes that exist are not as opposed to the sacred text while still basing the essence of the content of the text.

In their narrative that *Kebaya* is not the only their representation but Indonesia identity with positive character and the traditional values. For them, *Kebaya* is expected not to be replaced with other clothing including wearing robes that are rife now. They said that the robe as a representation of Islam (both women and men) comes from Arab culture which is now frightening because of the issue of radicalism. In addition, the *niqab* as a complementary attribute is seen as a culture of female closeness and human inequality.

The text can be assimilated, contradictory, ironically echoed, etc. The use of inter-discursive also emphasizes the implicit aspiration of discourse in addition to explicit textual references. I got their narratives when I present at the studio, chatting in cars or buses, or joking in the kitchen even a discussion that struck my Muslim identity on a studio cloth. Their small voices are often the same as those of a leader but not infrequently the different ones are conveyed by whispering in my ear.

The religious issue, the study shows cloth produced and then as a body cover (clothing) that contributes as a marker for various purposes, including traditional ceremonial media worn. Autonomy of clothing combines with the values of existing traditions, but sometimes it is influenced by the conflicts that exist in the community. This material can be barrier between self (self) with other people (other) or between individuals with their groups (community) and between groups in society. Thus, the *Kebaya* as social visualization is structured by certain rules or norms in the realm of togetherness and not alienation.

D. CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to provide a framework to explain the material, meaning and the narratives in social

interactions or relations. By focusing on narratives of material (*Kebaya*), this study has effort to the material (*Kebaya* clothing) related social relations and cultural context. The materials not only strengthen religious group solidarity but also help or communicate identity for efforts to consolidate social and cultural contexts by sharing the meanings contained in the material. This paper has showed the importance of dynamic of structure through community narratives of religious group in their transformation. I should state clearly that the meanings of material have effect in community knowledge but in case *Warga* in Jakarta, the narratives of the social units or institutions organized relate to landscape, geography, history and mobility. Producing the narrative pursued these goals in a contestation field. The cognitive efforts are not separated in the practice of spiritual activities, but rationality encourages them to carry out discourses for group survival in their political and social context. The white *Kebaya* as an instrument to retain or resist their Belief.

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