

Religiosity-Economy Simulacra within Sundanese Adat Law amidst the Acceleration of Digitalization and Technology

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Abstract. Local (Adat) law of Indonesia in all aspects of life holds the characteristics of instant, concrete, communal, and religious. The relation of man and its surroundings was bound with the spiritual aspect so that any destructing behaviors may imply “bala” (mala-), plague, or disaster. In its development, such principles particularly living in Sundanese community start to slowly shift, erode and fade in day to day life, and transform into other formal ceremony for the sake of image and tourism. The magic-religious values as the characteristics of local law is starting (also) to shift into economic values such as accelerated advantage. This research used philosophical and conceptual approaches which are combined with the hermeneutical study to obtain a comprehensive picture of hidden reality. This research was expected to discover new principles, norms of the more lenient local law and that of can respond the changes. The relation in the local community changed in a sense that it entered the abstract, consensual, and lenient principles. The religious concept and its adaptation and modification enters the “digitalization of religiosity-economy” of which the relation of man with the universe and its creator was constructed through digital, capital, and economic relation for the image fulfillment. Spirituality was determined by the news and live reports on what was happening in the world through the culture of media and “law of acceleration”. Giant enterprises constructed networks prying people consumption. Media has successfully created a massive symbolic power by forcing the life to enter entertainment world to be enjoyed by layers of community.

1. Introduction

Redictability of science that was used to be an achievement starting to be replaced with non-science dimension (knowledge of wisdom) as an alternative. Quoting what Gunther Stent, John Horgan [1] predicted the emerging of new episode and the end of the domination of science. Science may end, not that the academicians are skeptical but more to the science has already performed well. Fritjof Capra [2] explained that the grow of the new wisdom-based knowledge to challenge the settled paradigm-Cartesian. Paul Davies [3] argued about the relation of modern science with the religion in a changing world, while Gary Zukaf [4] offered the new understanding of physics (quantum) in life.

Man keeps developing the information technology, creating artificial intelligence to resolve the problems of humanity which contradictive resulted in man heavily relies on the technology and at the same time become the slave of technology, mastering but powerless against it [5]. The development of technology as Suyanto argued has created rapid flow of information feeding people with new things that creates other more complex, ambiguous, and at the same time, deceiving reality namely hyperreality [6]. Actual reality is replaced by virtual reality. The world moves under the law of acceleration: the faster is they who get and, at the end, is trapped in the new hedonism that is an ideology of progress that strictly linear, ideology of luxury using sophisticated tools for the rapid progress [7].

Local community (*adat*) is facing two options: holding on to the traditionalism or following the global change. Since the development of information of technology circa 1990, the leap is amazing.

Some see it positively for the potential to open new territory for the remote (local) reality as well as to create the creativity of the community supported with specific features with convergent flexibility of the media, distribution, participation and the control of the user upon the content of the media [8]. Other views that digital media gives freedom of expression, easy access to information, even though the content of digital media such as internet is still influenced by certain social powers.

The state deals with a similar condition when facing global system or local system. The state and the community are facing a mock reality between the real life and virtual reality, a reality of pretension what Jean Baudrillard [9] as “Simulacra”. Simulacra is a game, however, “Simulacra is no longer a matter of imitation or duplication or even parody, but the replacement of the mark of the real for the real. Simulacra reflects true reality. Simulacra covers and changes the true reality and hides the reality. Simulacra cannot have a connection with any reality and simulacra is pure from its simulacrum.

2. Problems

This paper studies how the policy of the state concerning local law/Sunda adat related to the globalization and digitalization; and how the characteristic of local law that is cosmic religious when facing digitalization, globalization, and capitalization.

3. Approaches

The approaches used was, first, the philosophical approach that is deconstructionist and heuristic to open a way or to find a new way or to solve a new problem or to describe problems by dissecting what is considered vital, to then reattach it by adding some new things in. This approach provides alternatives for new creativity.

Second, the conceptual approaches, as the supporting approaches to the philosophical approach. Concept is elements of abstract representing classes of phenomena in subject that often refers to universal things that are abstracted from things. The steps of conceptual approach, in this case, consists of process of abstraction namely a process of selective mental omitting or separating certain reality aspect from the other, and the process of integration combining units into a single entity, a new mental entity used as single unit of thought (however, it can be extracted into components when needed).

4. Rationale

4.1 Term & Characteristics of Adat Law

Adat law is a technical term showing the rules of customary applied in the society that is not stipulated in form of regulation promulgated by the ruler of the country. Some definitions are such as [10], FD. Holleman[11], in his address titled “De Comune Trek in het Indonesische Rechtsleven” (the characteristic of communal work in the life of Indonesian law namely, Religious magic, meaning that to contain spiritual dimension; Communal that is to put first the public needs; Instant that is logical one and another; and Concrete, is generally a real prove that, for example, trading should have agreement beforehand.

Albar Subari [12], argued about the characteristics of adat law namely religious-magic, communal, instant, and concrete. According to Retno Lukito [13] adat law is flexible, simple and supple, dynamic and flexible. Adat law lies inside the detail rules, rooting from the experience and the need of the life continuously develops along with the change of time. However, it does not mean that general principles are easily to change,

Asmah[14] explained that the original law of Indonesia can be seen from the conduct of the people who love their customs, then transforming it into the conduct of culture and to be a special custom separating them from others.

4.2 *Sundanese Local Wisdom*

Local wisdom of Sunda can be interpreted as indigenous knowledge, local genius, that is a community of certain people or local (region; wewengkon). For example, the indigenous knowledge of people of Kampung Naga, Pamengpeuk, Baduy, Ciomas, Sukajadi, Aborogin and many others. Local wisdom is a structure of value of conducts of local community in interacting with surrounding environment or live wisely. Some of Sunda local wisdom is stipulated in the traditional utterance, such as advise and message; containing moral value and reflecting the wisdom of the community. Some of the wisdom, for example, a relation of man and other man based on the attitude of “silih asih, silih asah and silih asuh”, meaning that man should take care of each other. The relation of man with the states and the people, for example the traditional utterance “kudu nyangkulu ka Hukum, nunjang ka Nagara, mupakat ka balarea” [15].

4.3 *Digitalization of Reality & the Folded World*

Digitalization, Marshall argued, is a simplification of information material in the form of binary code[16], or what by Schiller[17] is called the unity of technology, to be considered to have excellence to increase flexibility on handling, storing, and delivering data, is a description on ease and the state of the art of current life and at the same time explains that man has been reduced in their material life by (many) digital ware displaying non-sense causality namely extreme intimacy between their privacy and technology (gadgets, mobile phone, so on).

Aspects of life begin with how people dress up, technique of cooking by using wood to cooking wares full of knobs that can produce delicious and ready food. From traditional economic life until digital economic, from hustle and bustle of traditional market, supermarket to online stores such as Lazada, Tokopedia, Shopee become the identity and heaven for online shoppers. People are ruled by “dromology” that is the dramatic law of acceleration bringing huge consequence to the life. Traditional community relying on its traditional aspects cannot survive since it has entirely been dragged into the digital vortex. Digitalization of reality, naturally, creates space alternation, from material into visual space which then convergent in one point so that the world can be folded. Lovink [18] argued “...there is no unlimited freedom in digital media as what has been dreamed of all along...”

5. Discussion

5.1 *Local Law between Globalization (Digitalization) and State Policy*

According to Cultural Anthropology what is called Sunda tribe is people whose mother tongue is Sunda with its dialect in their daily life and is from the land of West Java, a region often called Tanah Pasundan. While Sunda culture is a manifestation of mind and thoughts and activities either abstract or materially of a group of people called Sundanese [19].

Sundanese culture has certain traits distinguishing them from other cultures. Generally, people of West Java or of Tatar Sunda are known as soft, religious, and spiritual. They tend to be compassionate (trait of welas asih), self-perfecting or improving (through education and knowledge sharing) and protecting each other (taking care of each other). In addition, Sunda holds some other values such as modesty, decency, respect the elderly and caring the youngsters. In Sundanese culture, the balance of magic is kept by performing rituals of adat while for the social balance, Sundanese society keep it through togetherness.

However, it is admitted that the development of progressive virtual reality has brought a big significant impact for the development of local law, especially for the Sundanese people. The Sundanese adat law whose main substance is Sundanese local wisdom is at dilemmatic position especially its relationship with the state in which policies related to the whole aspects of life of local

community is made. State policies are still ambiguous and view the local law not as a part of national laws. We are still difficult to find the principles/norms to be developed from other dimension of local law since it is still deemed as traditional law and is unable to reach out the development of technology due to the closed community. In fact, in conflict resolution, local law owns equal dimension to model of conflict resolution in the society and applies restorative sanction that is quite effective [20].

Illustrations below describe the relation of the state, local wisdom, and globalization.

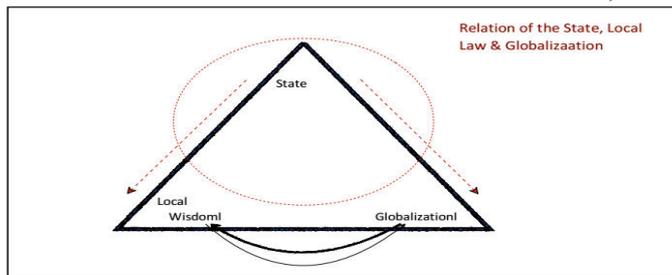


Figure 1. Relation of State, Local Wisdom, and Globalization

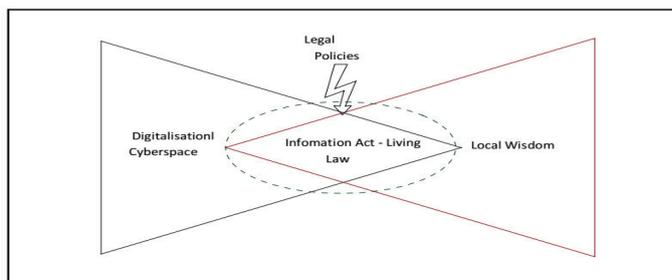


Figure 2. About Legal Policies

Legal policies must be able to adopt two different systems, for example, the Information Technology Law, is a manifestation of the modification and adaptation of global development through the world of digital or cyberspace, and the modification and adaptation of local wisdom values, local law is a law that lives in a developing society however, it is still preserved and empowered, for example in the Draft Penal Code on customary law that is still alive.

5.2 The Shift of Religious-Cosmic in the Local Law

Relationship among globalization, state, national law, and local law within the people is an evidence of openness, and conservation of local ideas at the same time remains. Sundanese traditionalism still maintained in tools and architecture. However, society does not stand still, soon it will be part of globalization. For instance, application of communication devices such as cellphone, computer, and television in local communities such as Kampung Naga, Coimas and Tasikmalaya.

There are urgent needs, from the overflow of information as the result of globalization and digitalization and encouraging remote communities to begin to realize that the local wisdom of the community has economic value. So, starting a variety of information that can be presented to the public has an important influence. This is done jointly with the local government. The sale of information to the community is massive, so that customary law and local wisdom are widely open to be accessed either through the digital world or the virtual world. Slowly the land of local legal reality shifts from a limited public space, to an unlimited virtual space.

There is a kind of unique mixture, about the cosmic religious concept developed by indigenous peoples, that is from a life that is ingrained in the behavior of the community turns into a tourist-

valued viewing arena that can be enjoyed by the public. Then the form of the ceremony was held, with awareness as a preservation effort, namely the attachment of the community to the value of spiritual or religious cosmic values, with economic value that can be displayed. The ceremony of ‘Nyepuh’ at Ciomas is no longer religious per se, but also contain economic value since it attracts tourist attention. Another example is souvenir market at Kampung Naga, Baduy, and other region. The souvenir represents a religious side of the community and at the same time filled with economic interests.

We can depict those relationship as following:

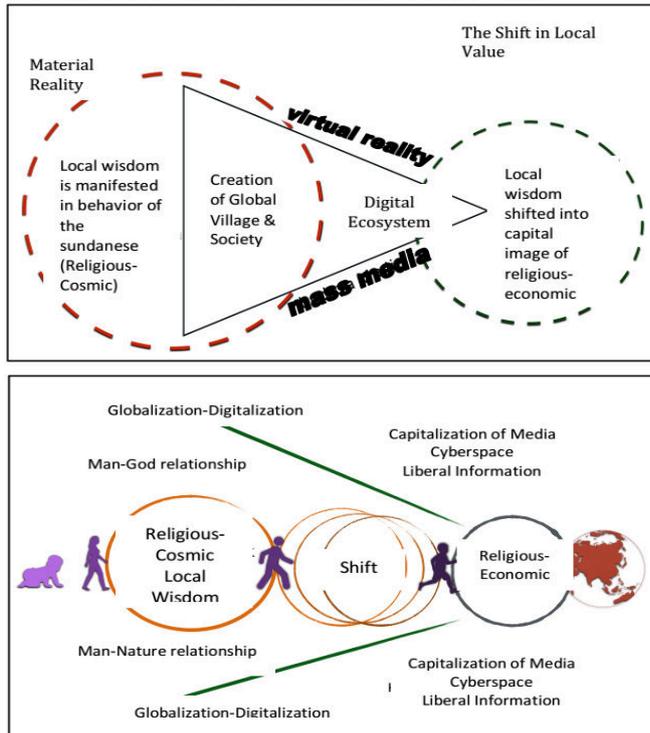


Figure 3. The Shift in Local Value

Global and digital developments have changed the face of reality inhabited by local communities, especially about the concept of space as described above, but local people do so with the aim of making efforts to maintain value so as not to be eroded and stay friendly with extraordinary rapid development. In such a position there is no longer the original identity to be created, all identities will become false identities.

The case of Kampung Naga communities shows the failure in positioning magis-religious dimension as significant part of the society. They tried, in vain, to preserve their tradition as well as accepts changes, and the result is a mixture between the old and new conceptual value. Religious-economical is one of these adaptive concepts. This condition has urged for openness of meaning-giving process or re-interpretation [21].

Martin Heidegger, a German philosopher, has raised the issue of technology as a philosophy, which means that the development of technology including digital technology is a form of existence in the world, which reflects humanity in the desire to always increase the completeness and ease for him in nature to guarantee its existence. Thus, technology forms relationships that are characterized by the desire to exploit nature as far and as efficiently as possible. This means showing changes in human attitudes towards nature which were originally determined by qualitative values into quantified relation of production [22].

The effort to preserve Sundanese tradition in global era is an evidence that local law, especially Sundanese adat law, has turned into religiosity-economic simulacra. A show of local community with

emphasis or façade to village tourism is being presented to tourists, in which some traditional value has been converted for economic purposes. Village tourism or Eco-tourism is an instance. All of these want to expose or preserve local culture, something that is no longer manifested in sundanese people, but to be understood as new interpretation of sundanese 'Nyantri, Nyuda, jeung Nyakola'. French philosopher, Jean Baudrillard, argued that cultural façade has created local culture simulacra.

Digitalization has an influence on the development of the media industry, so that the process can produce better media features to build the image of the community, so that its development becomes more effective and can always create new models or new versions to update things. In the next phase, the local culture (customary law) becomes more open and with the medium of information being absorbed by the wider community, this phase creates the formation of free media or liberal media, and information has become public property. Local law, Adat, will become media consumption because provide information that is beneficial to Local Communities and spread very quickly to other parties. The condition creates opportunity for communities to exploit their religious values and convert those into economic capital. At the time when media text has been written in internet system, anyone can make variation of it [23].

6. Conclusion

Digital media in all its applications is now crucial for communication. Specifically, digital technology has transformed society into economic business activities. Media convergence and the presence of handheld devices open a new level in correcting traditional relationship formation and globalization / digitalization. Both dichotomies have now become one and a living part of the traditional reality which has been inherent in local law, has undergone significant changes. Legal relations in indigenous communities shift from life with a religious cosmic character to a religious economy. The simple reality in local communities (Adat), develops into complex realities.

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