

The Importance of Functionalism to Underdeveloped Countries in the Postcolonial Period: Focusing on the Madurese Poverty in an Asymmetric Society

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1. Introduction

1-1. The context of urbanization in Indonesia and Madura Island

This article deals with the legacy of colonization in Indonesia from the perspective of functionalist theories. For Indonesia where the traditional social structure has been collapsed after a long colonization history, reconstructing an integrated social system is imminent. It is owing to the impact from the long colonial history that the present Indonesia is constantly encountering various social problems when in the process of modernization. Just as Gerald Breese (1966: 4-5) said in 1966, although Anglo-European countries have by no means resolved all of the problems of urbanization in their domains, it nevertheless appears evident that world-wide urbanization is taking place in a peculiar context; this raises many questions and fails to resolve many issues. It has been said:

This is a world-wide phenomenon...The impact of urban growth may be even greater in the underdeveloped countries than in the industrialized nations, for it is occurring on top of a mass of other problems which North Americans and Europeans have to some degree already solved: political stability, independence, relative economic stability, decent living standards, and orderly and flexible social structure. This is a truly new international frontier of great importance. (David 1962)

Unfortunately, until today these problems are still confusing the underdeveloped countries. In addition, the current postcolonial societies still have many colonial influences which restricting the development of them. Therefore, the problem consciousness of this paper is that how Indonesian traditional social structures had been collapsed through the history of colonization. Since the impact from colonization should be regarded as variation in various functions among social elements, this paper is to investigate various conditions which dominating the sustainability, variation, and disassembly of various functions. Functionalism has weaknesses, but it is not as severe as that it

must be thrown away. Like revival of Parson's thoughts by Jeffrey C. Alexander's neo functionalism, this study will prove (or reconfirm) that the important concepts of structural functionalism are still valuable for the current underdeveloped countries.

Indonesia is suffering with poverty problems, which due to the exploitation of developed countries and domestic social upheaval and unfair distribution. Especially, the poverty of Madurese seems to be consequence of the poor soil to a great extent. However, the poverty only became a real social problem on the Madura Island at the turn of 20th century (Kuntowijoyo 1980: 100-101). The turn of 20th century is of great importance to Madura and other Indonesian islands. It was the time when many rural societies in Indonesia were experiencing a lot of big changes. Many isolated and peaceful villages were broken by the new influences from the external. The modernization was strongly affecting on the formation of the upper class, which was composed of village officials, schoolteachers, various technical instructors, government officials, students, army soldiers, merchants, and the entrepreneurs (they all have strong orientation to the outside world). In contrast, the lower strata composed of farmers who accounted for majority of the residents were still living in the traditional way as illiteracy. (Koentjaraningrat 1980[1971] : 374)

1-2. The history of Madura Island before the coming of European

In history the Madura Island was treated as a part of East Java, in administrative and cultural level. But the island is significantly different from the East Java, no matter in its social or economic system. The Madura society as a unique unit has been neglected by the scientists of whatever discipline for a long time, and this has changed for the better only in recent decades. For almost all of their history, the Madurese principalities, whose number varied from time to time, were politically subject to larger realms centered on Java. Between 900 and 1500 for instance, they fell successively within the sphere of influence of the Hindu states of Kediri, Singasari, and Majapahit. After that the principalities were subordinate to the Islamic coastal states of Demak and Surabaya. In 1624 the island was conquered by the central Javanese state of Mataram. (Jonge 1986) However, no matter in what the dynasty was, the Madurese were at the edge of society, acting a role of being exploited by the central government. The main product under the Madurese state monopoly was salt. The native rulers in Madura had, however, underutilized their power in relation to the salt production, processing, and marketing. The rulers had leased the marketing rights to the Chinese traders, but soon the Dutch acquired it from the native rulers. (Kuntowidjojo 1986)

Though the Madurese principalities enjoyed a great deal of autonomy before the coming of Europeans, they constant received the influence from the central power, reflected on the compliance

with the tax system. It was the Dutch that cut off the contact between Madurese and Javanese. As for the social pattern of society of Java before the coming of Europeans, it was a loosely organized one rather than an integrated unit. The society was composed of dyad. Some impersonal structures were emerging in Majapahit. Wolters (1982: 19) states that the king's status was unique only because it was a religious one. The basis of the ruler's power is his functional necessity and ownership of the hydraulic system rather than ownership of the land or possession of military force alone. (Christie 1986: 67) The territory controlled by this center is always in a state of flux; in the absence of permanent boundaries its limits vary in relation to the quality of "charismatic" "supernatural" power concentrated at the center in the person and the possessions of the ruler.

1-3. The arrival of European and the formation of dual structure

About the living conditions of the nowadays' Madurese, according to the data of 2011, nationally, in the economy of Madurese, income per capita is still 8.4 million/year while in average outside Madura, East Java district, its income per capita is 26 million/year. (Kuswandi, Ujianto, and Amiarkutik 2016) At the same time, Madura had been overpopulated for a long time. The question of overpopulation relates to both land fertility and agricultural technique. (Kuntowijoyo 1980: 98-99) The movement to outside of the island in a long process of history may prove to be the most important factor in the continuing integration and the ultimate assimilation of the Madurese. What are the consequences for the individuals and groups involved of this process of social change? Lots of Madurese are living at the bottom of society. And there are few ethnic groups in the Indonesian archipelago about whom as many negative and equivocal stereotypes exist as about the Madurese (Jonge 1995).

The colonization has arisen out of commerce. The products originated in Southeast Asia, such as pepper, cloves, and nutmeg, were essential to the creation of merchant capitalism. However, during the earlier stages of its expansion Europe produced little that tropical people required, and the main object of colonial policy was to get tropical produce at the lowest cost. That was the economic end of empire in the days of Portugal and Spain. The same end was attained more effectively by the great chartered companies, concentrating on economic activities, enjoying, as regards their nationals, a monopoly over eastern produce, and exercising sovereign powers which enable them to obtain part of their supplies free of cost as tribute. (Furnivall 1956: 4) And with the development of the Industrial Revolution, the colonial policy was adjusted to obtain the necessary raw materials of industry and to do overseas investment.

To achieve a virtual monopoly to the trades of the archipelagos, the United Netherlands

Chartered East India Company (Vereenigde Geocroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie, VOC) had been controlling Java's external relations and the technological improvements. In 1619, the Dutch established the city of Batavia to become the VOC headquarters in Asia. The Dutch Batavia was the shareholder of the Dutch East Company. For the Dutch the establishment of Batavia had one basic purpose: to create a base and headquarters for the expansion of the company's economic empire in Asia. (Andaya 1992: 361-362) At that time, the Dutch were hardly interested in Madura as from an economic point of view the island had nothing to offer. To avoid too much concern with local affairs, the area was given self-government almost until the end of the 19th century. This meant that the Madurese rulers could pursue the existing form of governing. Whereas Java became opened to national and international trade through the introduction of the Land-rent system, the Cultural system, and the Plantation system, Madura through the maintenance and proliferation of traditional, feudal relations became in a certain sense isolated from the wider society (Jonge 1986). Just like Dirks said in 1992, European expansion also encoded older justifications for travel and conquest. Colonial power sought not only natural resources and strategic positions, but also native souls. (Dirks 1992) The native souls I want to discuss here are not like Vicente Rafael's nuanced discussion of Christianity in early Tagalog colonial society, I am more willing to refer them to the attitudes toward Madurese from other ethnic groups of Indonesia, as the Dutch let the Madura society stay in the state of long-term underdevelopment, excluded from Java society. Due to the long history of being excluded by the colonial power, the Madurese are facing a kind of duality when in the development of decolonization, the problem of getting rid of the effects of colonial remnants, and the problem of structural adjustment to the main Java society as the Javanese are under another kind of deconstruction process.

1-4. An example of cultural revolt against the colonial domination: Sarekat Islam

In 1906 a government survey confidently reported on the impossibility of social movement arising in Madura. This judgment was based on old assumptions about the lack of social solidarity and desa (village community) ties and ever present mutual distrust among the people. Nevertheless, the Madurese once had an opportunity to eliminate their mutual distrust and build up a social solidarity and desa ties through a social movement called Sarekat Islam (SI---Islamic Association). The Sarekat Islam in Madura started in Sampang in 1913. Its stress was on the strengthening of Islamic codes of behavior, such as the prohibition of stealing and gambling, and exhortation to mutual help and charity. The IS's class composition varied. The SI was initially a cross-class social movement, of great success, but differences appeared later as the interests of various social groups

could not easily be encompassed by SI ideology. The Dutch regarded the nobilities' participation in the IS as a transference of their hidden hatred toward and dissatisfaction with the government. The foundation of the IS has proved that the Madurese could work together, overcoming their individualism and parochialism. (Kuntowijoyo 1980: 434-444) SI was a great folk movement, which linked Islamic revival with anti-colonialism. (David 1996) However, they always perceived of themselves in limited and often defensive ways. (Elson 2005) Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the Dutch increasingly replaced the quasi-royal system with a bureaucratic administration, and a new form of political opposition developed. (Paul & Ben 1992: 266)

2. Critique

2-1. The cultural impact of colonial domination

In respect of colonial practice, In Burma the British have from the first relied on western principles of rule, on the principles of law and economic freedom; in Netherlands India the Dutch have tried to conserve and adapt to modern use the tropical principles of custom and authority. (Furnivall 1956: 10) The division of the fighting forces into separate ethnic and racial groups was part of a deliberate Dutch policy to forestall any possibility of their combining against the authorities. In keeping with this policy, each group was assigned a specific residential district and encouraged to maintain its own language, dress, religion, and custom. (Andaya 1992: 345) The prime care of any colonial power must be to maintain order, for order is essential to such advantages as it anticipates from imposing its rule on the dependency. In maintaining order the colonial power must choose between western principle of law and the tropical system of relying on personal authority, between direct and indirect rule. Secondly, to attain the prospective advantages the colonial power must choose between the western principles of freedom and the tropical system of compulsion. (Furnivall 1956: 8)

The arrival of the Westerners from the late fifteenth century contributed to the transformation of regional diplomacy and inter-state relationship. Western technological advances in weaponry, for instance, was a double-edged sword, while it helped increased the power of native rulers, it also contributed to the subsequent demise of numerous indigenous polities in the region, especially in insular Southeast Asia. (Ooi & Hoang 2016: 5) Although the Dutch claimed that the VOC itself had not the slightest desire for an extension of its territorial power. If it had its own wish, it would merely have established undefended trading counters along the coasts between African and Japan (Angelino 1931: 3). However, projects of colonial policy lay down the goal at which it ought to aim, but the measures advocated attaining the goal, even if free from unconscious bias and likely to succeed in

Europe, often lead in tropical dependencies in a different or even a contrary direction (Furnivall 1956: 8). There is no doubt that the tropical dependencies should be weakened as an independent country. But how to achieve this goal or the probability to achieve this is a question, because the hegemony of colonial cultural system is still controlling the cultural reproduction in postcolonial countries. What we can do at present maybe is to concern the dynamic exchange between the social reconstitution and the colonial remnants shaped by Western cultural hegemony.

Colonialism not only has had cultural effects that have too often been either ignored or displaced into the inexorable logics of modernization and world capitalism, it was itself a cultural project of control. Culture was also produced out of the allied network of processes that spawned nations in the first place. Claims about nationality necessitated notions of culture that marked groups off from one another in essential ways, uniting language, race, geography, and history in a single concept. Colonialism encouraged and facilitated new claims of this kind, re-creating Europe and its others through its histories of conquest and rule. (Nicholas 1992) Just like Geertz writes in his book about Indonesian town, urbanization in Modjokuto has consisted not of the conversion of a village into a town through a gradual elaboration of local customs and institutions but of the integration of extra local groups into a wholly novel pattern of social and cultural organization. (Geertz 1965: 3)

2-2. A structural asymmetry of Madura society

The decolonization of Madura is particularly problematic because they have a structural asymmetry: they are between two kinds of different social structure, the Madura island and the East Java. When the Java society accelerates urbanization in the international trade network, then the asymmetry in welfare, education and so on is augmented by an asymmetry of size and numbers. This asymmetry of size and numbers has the potential for making imbalanced the effective rights in the relationship (Coleman 1982: 153). The urbanization based on asymmetric society will produce poverty. The time of being asymmetric is determining the difficulty of getting out of poverty. Cultural Pluralism is coming from the asymmetric structure of society and also easy to be an empty one when meeting poverty and an asymmetric society. The asymmetric structures of development between urban and rural societies are producing a kind of hegemony that dominating the patterns of social exchange between urban and rural areas. The identity of advocates of cultural pluralism should be judged carefully when dealing with cultural pluralism because cultural pluralism will become a kind of hegemony when ignoring the social status of its advocates. For example, for the classical economists, labor is the source of all value. This is why Ricardo sees the exchanges of two commodities as being, ultimately, the exchange of two equal amounts of labor crystalized in two

products with differing use values for the partners in the exchange. Whereas, in the sphere of internal exchange the law of value implies equivalence of the exchange values of two commodities containing the same quantity of labor, in the sphere of external exchange the commodities exchanged contain unequal quantities of labor, reflecting uneven levels of productivity. (Samir 1976: 133) In the present Indonesia, to unite all the ethnic groups, religious groups and so on in the country, and to accelerate the process of modernization, the country is doing its best to make knowledge of multiculturalism widely available. However, multiculturalism is not all-purpose. At the same time multiculturalism overcoming prejudice barriers, there is also the possibility of building a higher barrier to the marginal groups, which falling into poverty (social exclusion).

The work of many cultural theorists and behavioral researchers suggests that many differences in social structure result from a mix of ethno-religious, environmental, and economic conditions. These include (1) the advance of urbanization and industrialization, (2) the persistence of agrarian traditions, (3) population mobility, (4) social status, (5) social inequality, (6) family structure, (7) life cycle, and (8) racial heterogeneity. To the extent social structures embody the institutionalized social preferences of different racial-ethnic and religious groups, they constitute a culture's preferred way of life (Joel 2010). In this article, however, I want to raise a hypothesis that as for the villages in Madura, the fact of being exploited by central power is a reason that getting poverty. Cultural pluralism will fail if it does not have the basis of economy. More clearly, if Madurese lose their economic power in the living societies, they will also fail in the process of cultural pluralism.

3. Conclusion: The importance of functionalism to underdeveloped countries in the postcolonial period

The parallel mutualities of colonizers and colonized on the one hand and colonialism and culture on the other make it more difficult than ever to devise historical narratives of causes and effect. If culture itself, as an object of knowledge and a mode of knowledge about certain objects, was formed in relation to colonial histories, it is all the more difficult to recognize the ways in which specific cultural forms were themselves constituted out of colonial encounters. This task becomes even more daunting when we realize that these cultural forms became fundamental to the development of resistance against colonialism, most notably in nationalist movements that used Western notions of national integrity and self-determination to justify claims for independence. (Nicholas 1992) Just like a qualification from Said that ideas, cultures, and histories cannot seriously be understood or studied without their force, or more precisely their configurations of power, also being studied (Said 2003: 5). When we study the colonization history of Madura, it is necessary to

make clear of the relationship between the West's experience and power, because it is by no means clear that the West's experience with the process of urbanization will be duplicated in Asia.

The functionalist point of view sees the social life of a people as a whole, as a functional unity. We have to investigate as thoroughly as possible all aspects of social life, considering them in relation to one another, and that an essential part of the task is the investigation of the individual and the way in which he is moulded by or adjusted to the social life. (Radcliffe-Brown 1935) To Radcliffe-Brown, "function" is the contribution that a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part. The life of an organism is conceived as the functioning of its structure. It is through and by the continuity of the functioning that the continuity of the structure is preserved. In human society the social structure as a whole can only be observed in its function. All social relations fulfill certain functions and that all social groups need to meet certain universal functional requirements. (Harrington 2005: 89) It is perhaps axiomatic that a macro sociological analysis of a complex society requires a model such as the one offered by functionalism: a model capable of analyzing the society as a functioning whole, and of analyzing relationships between parts and between a part and the whole. (Bailey 1984) When we set out on a systematic investigation of the nature of postcolonial society, we also encounter the three sets of problems that Radcliffe-Brown discussed in 1935. First, the problems of social morphology—what kinds of social structures are there, what are their similarities and differences, how are they to be classified? Second, the problems of social physiology—how do social structures function? Third, the problems of development—how do new types of social structure come into existence? (Radcliffe-Brown 1935)

I do not intend to comment on what kind of theory is better or not. I just want to say that it is now of great importance to emphasize the importance of Functionalism to developing countries in the postcolonial period, because we must hold a special Marxism sensitivity to the influences of theories of modernization from developed countries (from a Eurocentric perception of the 'Far East'), and pay attention to the development of structures within societies. Alexander treats the functionalism as a kind of tradition, not a set of concepts, a method, a model, or an ideology (Alexander 1985). Nevertheless, it is the tradition of western world, not of the underdeveloped countries if we permit the dichotomy. To the underdeveloped countries, I would rather treat the functionalism as a method, a method to rethink on the social theories emerging after 1960s, and a set of concepts that will offer a theoretical basis to the understanding of the development of underdeveloped countries at the present time. I do this because I believe that fundamental to our understanding to today's social changes in the underdeveloped countries is a set of concepts of which social structure is composed, and this is major issue which has been rather neglected in

sociological theory. No matter what kind of development is to be pursued, a complete social system is necessary. Even the newly developing countries can attain a temporary development following the West's experience without a critical realism, I am afraid that they would be the castles in the air.

Functionalism has been severely criticized for it was quite simple to explain causes by effects, and its functional prerequisites and the attendant notion of system survival. Undoubtedly, these are fatal weaknesses of functionalism, especially in the present period of globalization. However, if we turn back to look at the history of functionalism in developed countries, we can understand the importance of functionalism to their social development. For example, the history of functionalism from the development to the demise in the United States is also the history that the Americans were criticizing the Social Darwinism, criticizing the reformism, and developing their pragmatism. This country owns a highly integrated functional system. Accompanying the weakening of the republican bound, which simply linking individuals to the entire society as citizens, a complex and hierarchical nation building, which premised on the collective belonging to ethnic sub communities, was being in its process. When they denouncing individualism, they developed social welfare policy to make up for it by offering children's raising fee, annuity and auxiliary. After the 1960s, they promoted the anti-cultural current and multiculturalism, accompanied by the decline of functionalism. Ironically, functionalism was mainly attacked in the United States, the place that had been promoting its development to the pinnacle. Americans have the capital to say no to functionalism when their multiculturalism, theories of social development are based on a long history of rational development, and a highly integrated society. As Balch said, the United States is a organic whole, inter-sensitive through all its parts, colored by one tradition and bound together not only by love of one material motherland but by one conception of the country's mission and of the means---liberty, enlightenment and prosperity---by which that mission is to be accomplished (Balch 1910: 403). Nevertheless, the urbanization in the underdeveloped countries is occurring on top of a mass of other problems which North Americans and Europeans have to some degree already solved: political stability, independence, relative economic stability, decent living standards, and orderly and flexible social structure (David 1962: 5). Perhaps the urbanization in the underdeveloped countries should also undergo a long process of history that criticizing the Social Darwinism, criticizing the reformism, and developing their own pragmatism, a time as when Americans have to some degree already completed under the effect of functionalism. I don't say that there is a kind of single-track history, as the hegemony of colonial cultural system is still controlling the cultural reproduction in postcolonial countries, these countries might have to undergo a similar history to the developed countries when they were improving their economic or social systems. Of course, they will not have a colony, and

also lack an “orientalism” to structuralize their social rationality as the advanced countries in the process of accumulation.

The underdeveloped countries are in need of a comparative method to recognize the utility of bureaucracies and eliminate the mechanisms of the colonial state. Douglas said, a wide range of ethnography, which bases on the multidimensional analysis of the social and phenomenological analysis of culture, has a more effective way to explain ethnic problems than the individual social class analysis. (Douglas 1991) Future research will be needed to compare the similarities and difference of functional referents in the poor’s urbanization between Madura and East Java or other places in Indonesia.

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