

Linkage Between Cultural Values and Political-Economic Interests in Reconstruction of *Ngalaksa* Ritual Ceremony

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Tulisan ini dimaksudkan untuk mengkaji model rekonstruksi Upacara Ngalaksa di Rancakalong, Sumedang, Jawa Barat. Untuk kepentingan rekonstruksi, Upacara Ngalaksa mengalami banyak perubahan baik pada struktur maupun bentuknya, perubahan tersebut terutama terjadi atas wacana yang dikonstruksi oleh pemerintah. Upacara Ngalaksa dibuat dalam definisi dan konsep baru, termasuk pemaknaan baru, tidak saja dilihat dari sisi kulturalnya, tetapi juga keuntungan secara ekonomi. Untuk itulah, kajian ini difokuskan pada bagaimana pertautan antara wacana ekonomi politik dan nilai kultural dalam proses rekonstruksi.

This study was intended to explore the model reconstruction of *Ngalaksa* ritual ceremony performed in Rancakalong, Sumedang, West Java. For the sake of reconstruction, the *Ngalaksa* ritual ceremony underwent many changes in regard to its form and structure. Such changes took place based on the discourse constructed by the government. It was newly defined and conceptualized. Its new meaningfulness could not only be observed from the cultural point of view but also from the economic benefit point of view. Therefore, this present study was focused on how the political-economic discourse was linked to the cultural values in the reconstruction process.

Keywords: Reconstruction, *Ngalaksa*, cultural, and political-economic

The *Ngalaksa* ritual is an activity performed by the people in Rancakalong to express their gratefulness for what they have received in their lives. They are grateful for the agricultural yields they have enjoyed all the year round. According to the people in Rancakalong, the *Ngalaksa* ritual is believed to be a heritage which has been inherited from generation to generation by their ancestors. The values and meaning it contains have also been inherited from generation to generation. Its symbols should be referred to and learned continuously. As well, its meaning should also be understood and adapted to era development with the same objective, that is, to have a life with full of blessing.

The traditional values are so strongly attached to the *Ngalaksa* ritual that it is considered important to preserve it. One of the ways in which it can be developed and preserved as a culture is reconstructing it. It is reconstructed as an attempt to regain its meaning and values as currently needed

by people who are made to be getting more modern by the change in era.

The government has used the political-economic discourse to reconstruct the *Ngalaksa* ritual. The government has made it a cultural asset which can be developed as a tourist attraction. It should be made an interesting tourist attraction which, at the same time, should satisfy tourists. As far as the development of tourism is concerned, more and more tourists are getting educated; they prefer to enjoy the taste of local culture. They are more interested in consuming and appreciating culture in the form of symbols rather than in the form of representation or information.

For the sake of reconstruction, the *Ngalaksa* ritual has undergone many changes; in other words, it has been newly defined and conceptualized. The cultural values attached to it have been used as a commodity; as a result, its structure, form and how it is performed