

“MITONI” TRADITIONAL CEREMONY FOR JAVANESE PEOPLE

(Description of Form, Components Identification, and Meaning of the Myth)

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A. Background

Indonesia consists of chain of islands ample with myriad ethnic groups and cultures. Each of ethnic group in Indonesia creates, spreads and inherits its culture to the next generation. Diversity in ethnic groups and cultures, basically creates one culture and gives a special and unique identity as the main capital for Indonesian culture.

Culture diversity on each ethnic group in Indonesia shows the richness of Indonesian culture. Every region or district in Indonesia has its own special cultural pattern. As the effort to develop the regional culture as the root of national culture, the Indonesian government has given a foundation as laid down in Article 32 of 1945 Constitution saying “Government promotes Indonesian National Culture”.

Regional cultures are the root of national culture. For this reason, the regional cultures should be preserved and maintained. One of efforts in maintaining regional cultures is through folklores preservation. Folklore as the source of regional cultural information cannot be ignored in effort to excavate values and beliefs growing in society. Danandjaya (1997:2) defines folklore as the part of collective culture that distributed and inherited from a generation to the next generation, traditionally in verbal form or examples followed by physical gestures and memory tool supports. Meanwhile, John Harold Bruvant classifies folklore in three groups: (1) verbal folklore; (2) partly-verbal folklore; and (3) non-verbal folklore.

“Mitoni” traditional ceremony for Javanese people classified as partly-verbal folklore. In “mitoni”, there is verbal folklore in form of prayers used in “mitoni” ceremonial procession and there is non-verbal folklore that exist in ceremonial components,, equipments, and conducts in “mitoni” ceremony. From cultural perspective, a customary ritual or ceremony is the manifestation of a religion or belief. For Javanese people, the “mitoni” ceremony is a chain of people’s lives cycle that that have been performed to this day. “Mitoni” is the traditional ceremony for first time pregnancy at seventh-month period of pregnancy. The purpose of this ritual is for security of the giving-birth mother and the infant.

Javanese people have so many mystical rituals and cultures; one of them is “Mitoni” ritual ceremony, for the pregnant woman of her first born-child. It classified as a ritual since one can hold it regularly and in pre-arranged and certain time and descended for generations.

Word of *Mitoni* means the seventh. Thus, “Mitoni” has a meaning a ritual for a woman who is in pregnancy state waiting for her first-born child (Purwadarminta, 1939; 534). In Javanese tradition, there is a concept of *lukat* which means erased, cancelled, released, cleaned and purified from any imminent danger to gain security (Zoetmulder, 1982: 611-612).

Mitoni is a sacred ritual with a purpose to free the pregnant mother from any harms or from anything that considered as bad or evil. In *Mitoni* also there are hope and wishes that the pregnant mother can have protection from any potential disasters or calamities, moreover that there is a belief that the pregnant mother of first-born child has certain characteristics that are closely related to several potential calamities, thus *Mitoni* created in order to prevent those catastrophes.

This paper will expose briefly the existing *Mitoni* ritual in Javanese communities. This paper has aim to have a brief description concerning *Mitoni* tradition as one form of spiritual culture, that is the culture of surrender, supplication, worship as well as effort to gain security as prolonged characteristics of Javanese people.

B. Theoretical Basis

Etymologically, folklore consists of two words: *folk* and *lore*. This word translated into Indonesian as *folklore*. According to Alan Dundes in Danandjaya (1997:1), *folk* is a collective term. It is a group of people with certain physical identification in social and culture. Thus, one can differentiate this group from other groups. But the most important thing is that this group has a tradition that is a culture inherited from previous generations, or at least there are two generations as the common owners.

Meanwhile, *lore* is the tradition of *folk* that is how the descended culture that inherited verbally or through examples followed by gesture of physical movement or through a memory tool (Danandjaya 1997:1-2). In another word, *lore* is an artistic cultural tradition descended from a generation to generation. For this reason, the

people's life perspective reflected in elements of a culture such as philosophies, beliefs, arts, literatures, mode of apparel, and popular customs (Danandjaya, 1998:8). From the above explanation, he defines folklore as a collective culture, spread and inherited from generation to generation, among any collectives traditionally in different versions, both in verbal form or form of examples followed by physical gesture and memory tool (Danandjaya, 1997:2).

1. Features, Types and Functions of Folklore

a. Features of Folklore

folklore as one of literature products and as a regional cultural identity has universal features or characteristics. The following are those features as described by Danandjaya (1997:3-5):

1. Spreading and inheritance of folklore usually done verbally, or words of mouth (or by examples followed by physical gestures and memory tools) from a generation to the next generation.
2. Folklore has a traditional feature, which is spread in relatively fixed form or in standard form. Folklore is spread through certain collectives and it takes a relatively long period, at least in two generations.
3. Folklore exists in various versions. Verbal spreading has caused these different versions and some factors affecting it.
4. Folklore has an anonymous characteristic, the creator of folklore is unknown.
5. Folklore has a formula or pattern. Usually, began with a fixed introduction or closing remarks, "Long time ago,...., As the author said...., at the end they live happily ever after".
6. Folklore has a function in a collective life. This function includes as the education tool, consolation story, and social protest and as a projection of a hidden desire.
7. Folklore is *pre-logic*, it means it has its own logic against logic accepted generally. This feature is mainly for verbal folklore and partly-written folklore.
8. Folklore has become a collective belonging of a certain community. The reason is that the original creator or author is unknown, as a result each of community member feels that they own it.

9. Generally, folklore is so naïve, and thus it looks rough and spontaneous. One can understand this phenomenon since folklore can be used as the most trustful projection of desire. Tutoli (1994:4) said that the features of a culture reflected in three areas (as verbal culture among verbal literatures, verbal tradition, and Folklore has same treatments in three areas). Those characteristics are: 1) common ownership in the community as the owner; 2) descended from a generation to generation through verbal tradition; 3) has function in community's life; 4) can be manifested in all behaviors and works; 5) manifested in some variations in all ages; 6) has anonym feature; and 7) has patterns in its creation.

b. Types of Folklore

Danandjaya (1997: 21) classifies folklores in three groups based on their types:

1. Verbal folklore, that is folklore in pure verbal form, truly created verbally and spread by words of mouth, such as a) folk speech like dialects, nicknames, ranks, and title of kingship; b) traditional speech such as proverbs, saying and truism; c) traditional questions like riddles; d) traditional poetry such as quatrain poetry, aphorism, and rhymed quatrains; e) traditional story prose like myths, and legends; f) folksong.
2. Partly verbal folklore, that is a folklore that is a folklore as mixture between verbal and non-verbal folklore. Forms of folklore includes in this group are: a) traditional skills; b) folk games; c) customs; d) rituals; e) folk theaters; f) folk dances; and g) folk parties.
3. Non-verbal folklore, that is a folklore that is not in written form. This genre is divides into two groups: a) non-verbal folklore material and immaterial. Material non-verbal folklore i.e., a) folklore architecture, such as folk houses; b) folk handmade such as folk apparel and accessories for body; c) traditional foods and beverages; d) traditional medicines. While, the immaterial non-verbal folklore are: a) traditional gestures; b) traditional sound effects such as sound of *kentongan* (drum made from bamboos to sound an alarm) and c) folk music.

Function of Folklore

Folklore as the traditional culture and as the belongings of certain communities has roles as: 1) projection system, that is as a projection of ideals and desires; 2) tool of legality for laws and cultural bodies; 3) education tool for children; 4) observance tool in order that the community's norms are followed by members of its collective community (Danandjaya, 1997:19).

Besides those functions, there are also other important functions: 1) as the supporter or enhancer of religious emotions; 2) as an imaginary system of its collective group coming from someone's hallucination who obsessed by evil spirits ; 3) education tool for teenagers and children based on their community's beliefs; 4) as an explanation that would be easier to accept for some fearsome natural phenomena; and 5) to console the grieved families who experience disasters (Danandjaya, 1997: 170).

For Javanese people, besides they believe in God, they also believe in spirit of their ancestors and spirit of natural power and believe in the power of their material belongings in their surrounding. The magic power on natural things and on their family treasures, allegedly in their claim, this power can create balance and security. To preserve the magical power, natural power and magical power in their family treasures, they must hold some rituals.

In practice, these magical-religious rituals should perform with very strict rules and must be fulfilled by the community who perform those rituals. According to Koentjaraningrat (1984), a ritual considered having magical power if it has four main forms, that is: 1) physical form that reflected in offerings, ritual clothes, ritual performers and other equipments that follow a ritual ceremony; 2) attitude of ritual performers; 3) concrete forms, it means the attitude towards material ritual claiming give hope, meaning and certain meaning to the people; 4) cultural values, that is ideals in human soul that has been existed early in the process of socialization and as a basis of living.

System of ritual ceremonies should contain four main ingredients, that is: 1) place of ceremony; 2) time of ceremony; 3) materials, articles or object of ceremony; and 4) people who perform the ceremony (Koentjaraningrat, 1985). Besides those four elements, there are also combination from many aspects such as praying,

worshipping, giving an offerings, feasts, dancing, singing, procession, works of art, fasting and asceticism (Koentjaraningrat, 1985:240).

Based on the above explanation, aspects or ingredients in “Mitoni” rituals are: 1) giving an offering; 2) praying; 3) ritual bathe; and 4) feast.

Giving an offerings is giving an offerings in form of foods, beverages and apparatus on heirlooms or places considered as sacred in order to get magical power or security from those heirlooms and magical power from ancestor spirits dwelling on those sacred places.

Prayer is an action to beg for a security, happiness and blessing from God and from ancestors living on sacred places.

Ritual bathes is an action of bathing for performers of ritual with *kembang setaman/bunga tiga warna* (flowers with various color for rituals) by the community chief followed by prayers to get worldly and heavenly blessing and security. The prayer needs to be done to ascertain that the magical power containing in bathing and offering rituals can result a good influence for the community involved.

Feast is a realization of unity between the magical power of ancestor spirits and with performers of ritual and people surrounding the ritual place.

Actually, in *Mitoni* ritual ceremony, there are hidden symbolic meanings these meaning can be seen through apparatus of this ritual, prayers in the ritual and its offerings. And even the attitude of ritual performers gives a symbolic meaning.

2. Myths and Their Function

According to Levi Strauss (1974, 254), myth is very similar to story, it can be a folk story or legend. This definition supported by Petit (1975:80) which said that a myth is a story or legend that expressed in literature language or story. A myth can be an anecdote, a legend or folk story. Moreover, myths also can be considered as sacred when it has rituals that tell the significant of myth. Meanwhile Van Peursen (1978) stated that a myth is a story that gives guidance and direction to supported groups. The myth is not only told verbally but also expressed through dances or through *wayang* performance. Myth is not only limited to a kind of report regarding past events, in form of stories of deities or miraculous worlds , but also as conduct direction for human wisdom.

According to Renne Wellek and Austin Warren (1989:88), myth is a narrative story that contrasted with expositional and dialectical stories. On larger scope, myth is an anonym story about the creation of universe, destiny, and purpose of life, which the myth in form of stories that given by a community to their children with didactic purpose.

The existence of myths is inseparable from its function towards the supported community. Function of myth according to Van Peursen (1978: 38-41) are: 1) to teach people that there are magical power in legends or mystical rituals; 2) to give knowledge about mystical worlds such as “kosmogondi” or “theogoni”; 3) to give assurance to present time related to meaning of beginning events that as if one can see them again, both in form of stories or gestures (dances) in certain contexts.

According to Levi Strauss (1974: 229), a myth can be considered as covenant in the society, since myth may give information about people’s perspective and their condition at that time, which also may present the description of that community. Besides, Levi Strauss (1963: 229) also says:

The purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction an impossible achievement as it happens, the contradiction is real.

Therefore, the function of myth as stated by Levi Strauss (163:229) is to give a logical explanation in overcoming an impossible thing becomes a real thing. It means that myth is not just a story but frequently also as symbolic expression of inner or spiritual conflicts in the society, as well as it is a means to divert, move away and overcome any unresolved contradictions, thus as a result they are explainable and logic.

Another function of myth as stated by Van Peursen (1985:3840) is to inform people that in fact there are magical powers existed. Although, myths would not give some ingredients of those magical power but they help people in understanding those power as influencing factor in their community. This function is closely related to another function that is a myth gives an assurance to present time. For instance, in spring season, when crop fields are ready to reap, people perform ritual dances and give offerings to their ancestors with a purpose gaining the best crop.

The Javanese people, up to now still have a belief that in order to obtain security or security, they must make relations to spirit world and seek for power from ancestor heirlooms.

This belief that rooted strongly in supported community cannot just erased easily. They believe not only at physical world, but also believe the existence of spirit world. Both physical world and spirit world, ruled by good spirits and evil spirits, and each of them are affecting human world. Good power shall expel a goodness and security, but on the other hand, evil spirits shall generate calamities and disasters.

In an effort to achieve secure condition and happiness, the Javanese people frequently perform ritual ceremonies. One of them is *Mitoni* ritual for the first-time pregnant mother on her seventh-month pregnancy. This ritual is held only on first time pregnancy, with a purpose attaining strength, protection and security for the pregnant mother and her baby. The Javanese people believe that this ritual may prevent dangers affecting a woman in pregnancy condition as well as the baby in her womb.

The Javanese people strongly have confidence that *Mitoni* ritual that they perform for seventh-month pregnancy can hamper potential troubles and produce security. On the other hand, if they failed to perform it, catastrophe would surely come for both the pregnant mother and her infant.

Actually, this is a myth that had been developing up to now and still believed by Javanese people. This myth still existed in Javanese people's mind who trust in the sacredness of nature, living place, heirloom, and spirit of their ancestors.

C. Method of Research

A research is a process where a step and another step are related making a systematic structure. Each step in research is a crucial part influencing another process. For that reason, before the research is taken, first one should make research steps.

This research steps are made with a purpose to make a research becomes easier, thus the researcher are restrained in arranging and performing a well-planned research. The following explanation describes steps of research that has been taken.

1. Data and Source of Data

a. Data

Data are information or account about everything that pertaining to the purpose of research. Data of the current research are obtained by interviews, observation, and photo documentation during research. The author finds data from: a) books, magazines, and newspapers reporting *MItoni* rituals; b) result of interview with respondents (heads of ritual and chiefs of community) about the apparatus, tools of offerings, method of offerings, meaning of the ritual, myth of the ritual, and procession of *Mitoni* ritual; c) photos and documentations regarding apparatus, offerings, performers, ritual and procession of *Mitoni*.

b. Source of Data

generally, source of data coming from people of Sidoharjo village of Salatiga municipality as the performers of ritual. To gain accurate data, there must be prerequisites in choosing of informant. Those prerequisites are:

1. Adult
2. Live or domicile in Java island since their childhood years.
3. Can speak Javanese language as their lingua franca.
4. Healthy in physical and spiritual.
5. Active descendant and supporter.

With those prerequisites, the author hopes that data can be gained more accurately and precisely. Data collection in this research uses primary data source and secondary data source.

1. Primary Data

Primary data source is the source of data obtained directly during he research. Data gained through result of interviews with elders of ritual, performers of *MItoni* ritual and elders of community in Sidoharjo village of Salatiga municipality, Central Java.

2. Secondary Data

Secondary data source is the source of data achieved from books, journals, magazines and newspapers related to procession of *Mitoni* ritual. This type of data are used to enrich and compare research data.

c. Data Collection Techniques

In the framework of data collection needed in the research, it is necessary to perform identification on how to collect them. Data collection in this research uses interview method. Interviews are performed with a purpose to get data directly from informants.

Applied interview method is unstructured interview, in other words, it has a characteristic of freedom and loose for all informants in giving of their thoughts, feelings views and faith without any arrangement from interviewers. In addition, the author also collects data from books, magazines, newspaper articles, and journals that related to *Mitoni* ritual.

In an effort to have a valid findings and interpretation of research data, it is necessary to examine the credibility of research data by using techniques of prolonged research existence on the research area, in-depth research, triangulation (using some sources, methods, researchers, theories), partner discussion and tracking of result consistency. Techniques that have been used for data validity test in this research are:

1. Extended participation, that is add more time for observations and interviews, to get more data from informants.
2. Triangulation, by which the researcher tries to collect data from various sources (newspapers, magazines, journals) by implementing different method for the same data, implementing various theories to discuss the same data, therefore the result of discussions are relevant to purpose of research.
3. Making a partner discussion who has the similar background, to add researcher's insight in data discussion.

d. Technique of Data Analysis

The applied data analysis technique is direct data analysis, which means that data analysis performed since the start of data collection and still continues until end of research. The data analysis techniques as follows:

1. Data Analysis During Data Collection

In this step, the interviewer ask informant as the data source. Result of interview then analyzed and developed in form of summary.

2. Data Analysis After Data Collection

After data collected, there are several steps that should be done to process data i.e.,

- a. Editing, that is to check all data completion and reasonability in order to gain an accurate data. If they are not complete enough, one should make data recollection to data source.
- b. Coding, it means the author presents codes to result of interview, checking the response classification and information related to problem formulation to make easier in the next step.
- c. Making conclusion from collected data and analyzed in order to obtain meaning of main subject.

D. Analysis

I. Process of Performance Mitoni Ritual

a. Preparation Stage

In this ritual, the concerned family forms a committee. The committee led by parents of pregnant mother and assisted by neighbors. This committee shall perform according to stipulated role.

Ritual procession involved the pregnant mother, her husband, her parents, the head of village and neighbors. Two weeks before performance of ritual, the committee holds a meeting to share task responsibilities among members in making of

offerings, making of performance preparation, and collecting data about those who would participate in this ritual.

One week before *Mitoni* ritual performance, the head of committee and his members check all equipments and utensils of ritual, sequence of ritual ceremony, and rules of ritual.

One day before ritual began; the concerned people cook offerings according to their own roles and check all ritual equipments and utensils. These utensils such as offerings, *tumpeng* (cone-shaped of ceremonial dish), ritual clothing, flower liquids, etc.

b. Ritual Performance

Mitoni ritual performed when the concerned mother reach her seventh-month pregnancy, from which date of this seventh-month pregnancy decided or based on *neptu* (birth date of the pregnant woman). In addition, it is possible that the date decided upon the birth date of her husband plus or combined with her birth date. For example, if the birth date of husband is *Saptu pahing* (sabtu = Saturday, pahing = second day of Javanese week) and the pregnant mother is Rabu wage (Rabu = Wednesday, wage = fourth day of Javanese week) then the ritual would be held on *Sabtu wage* (Pratikno, 1984: 63).

The pregnant woman should wear a special clothing, that is *kebaya* (woman's blouse of which its front parts are pinned together), while her husband should wear *beskap* and guests wear a nice and neat clothing such as wearing batiks and *kebaya*.

The sequence of *Mitoni* ritual as follows:

1. The pregnant woman and her husband enter ritual site;
2. Head of ritual ceremony prays to God asking His protection;
3. *Sungkeman* (showing respect by kneeling to someone's knees), by which this part of procession has a purpose asking blessing from parents;
4. Head of ritual prays to God before entering *siraman* stage;
5. *Siraman* has a symbolic purpose of sin purification for the pregnant woman;
6. Cutting of *benang lawe* done by the prospective father (husband of the pregnant woman) using *keris* (kind of weave double-bladed dagger) which it has a meaning that the baby would be born smoothly.

7. After the performance of *benang lawe* ritual, then *Brobolan* ritual which the head of ritual puts in a coconut with yellow-color hull that has been drawn of *Arjuna* and *Wara Sembadra* wayang figures on the pregnant woman's cloth.
8. The prospective mother changes her clothing seven times;
9. Praying;
10. Feasting.

c. Closing

After all ceremonies completed, offerings given to guests with the aim when those offerings eaten by all guests then all participants would receive security blessing, long live, and abundant wealth.

II. Main Parts of Mitoni Ritual

In the performance of *mitoni* ritual, a few things should get more attention.

a. Name of Ceremony

Mitoni ritual is a ritual for a prospective mother who is entering her seventh month-pregnancy period for her first prospective baby. This ritual held at seventh month-pregnancy period.

Length of a proper pregnancy for a woman is nine months. However, this pregnancy period considered as a tough time for a prospective mother. As a response of this idea, people hold pregnancy rituals to receive security and blessing for all participants, and mostly for the prospective mother, prospective father, infant, and all families.

For first pregnancy, a *mitoni* ritual usually held with a great ritual, and more merry than second pregnancy.

Mitoni ritual began with *sungkeman* and *siraman* ceremonies for the prospective mother with purposes to clean her from any potential dangers and calamities and to receive welfare, blessing and security.

b. Ritual Time

As stated by Koentjaraningrat (1992:54), time during ritual or ceremony considered as crucial and magical. This magical power must be contained through performances of rituals.

Mitoni ritual held at the seventh-month period of first pregnancy. Choosing of time based on *neptu* (date birth of the prospective mother) or combination of date birth of prospective mother and prospective father.

c. Place of Ritual

Place of *mitoni* ritual usually at the house of prospective mother's parents.

d. Participants of Ritual

participants of *mitoni* ritual consists of the prospective mother, prospective father, parents of prospective mother and father, head of village, *kyai* (religious figure), relatives and neighbors.

e. Purpose of Ritual

Koentjaraningrat (1996:5) stated that the purpose of offerings is to have magical power and aura from those offerings and power of offerings sacredness. All ritual ceremonies has purposes to gather security, happiness and welfare of the concerned community (Koentjaraningrat, 1985).

The main idea of *mitoni* ritual is to throw away all kinds of dangers, evil deeds, and calamities so that the prospective mother may have happiness and security, also as a supplication to God for the security and welfare for the community who hold the ritual. On the other hand, if the prospective mother does not hold this ritual, fear of having calamities, fear of having troubled by evil spirit surely would come to her. *Mitoni* ritual is also a form of worship to God Allah Almighty and to ancestor spirits and thus they shall receive happiness in this world and in heaven.

III. Form and Contents of Prayers in Mitoni Ritual

Prayer is something that surely existed in all types of religious ceremonies in the world. Prayer at early stage is a reflection of desire from human to ancestors, as an homage for the ancestors, and then as a supplication to God Almighty. Prayer to God usually led by a religious head (Frans-Magnis, 1996). In *mitoni* ritual, prayers are pronounced in Javanese language and Arab language (in line with prayers in Islam) that uttered under guidance of a religious leader.

Prayer recitation has an aim to supplicate to God as the ruler of universe to pour out His salvation and His power to keep them away from evil and danger. In Javanese concept, prayer is also a manifestation of supplication to the ruler of universe in order that human may have security and welfare (Frans-Magnis, 1996).

Content of prayer that recited in *mitoni* ritual are supplication to Allah God Almighty for sin forgiveness, keeping away from all evil deeds, and asking His mercy, guidance and fortune. Thus, the main purpose of the prospective mother and her community in holding of *mitoni* ritual besides an expression of giving thanks for all God's grace, prayer also as a means to keep away all dangers and to have an abundant prosperity for the prospective mother and community members.

IV. Components of Mitoni Ritual

a. Components or utensils applied in *mitoni* ritual are:

1. Incense as a necessary utensil on prayer during ritual.
2. *Gentong* (large earthen ware bowl), water dipper, *kembang setaman* (three-color flowers) for prospective mother bathing ritual.
3. *Keris* (dagger) to cut off *benang lawe*.
4. *Benang lawe*.
5. Water that consists of water from seven wells, and *air taubat* (water that has been blessed through prayer by seven religious men called *santri*).
6. Seven sheet of *jarik* (woman's clothing like sarong) symbolizing the seventh-month pregnancy of prospective mother.
7. Two yellow-colored hull coconuts drawn with *wayang* figures of Arjuna and Wara Sembadra.
8. *Kembang Setaman*.

b. Clothing for mitoni ritual

1. Jarik Clothing

Jarik clothing that mostly worn are batik *lereng* motive, by which *lereng* motive symbolizes the greatness and authority, so that the prospective mother and father may follow the ritual with aura of greatness and authority.

2. Upper Part Clothing

The prospective father wears black beskap or other color with no motives and wears blangkon headdress. While the prospective mother wears kebaya with any color. These colorful clothing symbolizing colorfulness of Indonesian races.

c. Offerings used in mitoni ritual

offerings in mitoni ritual as follows:

1. *Tumpeng lumping* that is *tumpeng* rice with its top part bended to form a *tumpang* (*tumpang* is a stone-made container to pound rice), of which it signifies womanship.
2. *Tumpeng atup atup* i.e., a *tumpeng* rice with its top part placed with a boiled egg and chicken, symbolizing manhood.
3. *Kembang setaman* is a collection of flowers i.e., champak, white rose, red rose, and jasmine.
4. *Nasi tumpeng* i.e., a cone-shaped rice added with spicy grated coconut, salted fish, *tempe*, tofu and boiled egg as side dish. *Nasi tumpeng* symbolizing that every supplication would be directed to Allah Almighty.
5. Two *Ambeng* that symbolizes the prospective mother and prospective father, while the side dish is *godhong sewu* spicy grated coconut. This grated coconut symbolizing problems that would be encountered by human.
6. *Tumpeng kuat* i.e., a type of *tumpeng* added with a fried chicken as side dish.
7. Red-white colored porridge i.e., porridge made of red rice and brown sugar. The porridge symbolizes origin of human. Red color signifies mother's water of life and white color symbolizes father's water of life.

8. Market foods i.e., several kinds of foods bought in traditional market such as *jenang, jadah, wajik, ketan* and fruits.
9. Chicken's blood which it means that when giving birth time comes, the prospective mother would not expel so much blood and chicken's blood as the substitute.
10. *Liwet ayam* i.e., it symbolizes prospective baby.

Offerings for *siraman* ceremony of prospective mother as follows:

1. *Tumpeng peturon* i.e., *tumpeng* rice added with vegetables on its top like string beans, cabbages, mustard greens, carrot and chilies and then place this *tumpeng* on prospective mother's bed.
2. Fried chicken.
3. Market foods i.e., it consists of foods bought in traditional market like *jadah, jenang, wajik*, fruits etc.

All these offerings functions as supplication to Allah God Almighty so that the prospective mother would give birth successfully and may have a healthy baby. All these offerings are placed on prospective mother's bed after the end of ceremony of which these offerings given first to the chief of ritual.

d. *Siraman* water for the prospective mother

Water for prospective mother purification:

- a. Purified water taken from wells surrounding house of prospective mother or father (if there is no well, then one can use regular water available). The purpose is to get permission from spirits who dwell in the house.
- b. *Air tujuh sumur* i.e., water taken from seven wells using a piece of coconut shell and all seven wells chosen by the owner of house who used to make marriage party for his son. The purpose of this idea is to get blessing. This type of well called as *sumur kawak*.

V. Procession of *Mitoni* Ritual

Mitoni ritual is a ceremony held at seventh-month pregnancy period. The observance is usually at afternoon.

After all guests coming, the chief of ritual let *modin* (spiritual leader in prayer) to lead the prayer, which the content of prayer asking to God Almighty concerning the security for prospective mother and her prospective baby, then continued with *siraman* ceremony for the prospective mother.

The first one who bath the prospective mother or the pregnant woman is *ibu nyai* (traditional medical practitioner on giving birth matters) then followed by her mother-in-law then her own mother, followed by relative from prospective father, followed by relative from prospective mother, followed by her grandmother, and finally by her husband.

The method of *siraman* by employing water dipper made from coconut hull, of which her head poured out with water three times, her right shoulder two times, and her left shoulder two times.

During *siraman* ceremony of which accompanied with prayers led by *modin* and all guests, hopefully when prayers finished then water of *siraman* also emptied. And hopefully also when all participants say “Amen” it also coincides with the fallen of water dipper as a symbol that the prospective baby can be born safely.

Then followed with ceremony of *Lawe Wenang*, that is a ceremony of cutting of *lawe* thread, which the thread worn around the neck of prospective mother by the shaman. The shaman then gives direction to prospective father about when to cut the thread using a *keris* (dagger). After thread cutting, the prospective runs around without put the dagger into its wrapping. The symbolic meaning of this ritual is that someday his child would be able to run fast and has an authority since *keris* is one of Javanese heirlooms.

After finishing the ceremony of *benang lawe* thread cutting, continued with *Brobolan* ceremony, that is when the shaman inserts yellow-hull coconut drawn with figures of Arjuna and Dewi Dubadra into prospective mother’s clothing. The shaman performs this while saying, “this is your grandchild, accept it no matter it is a boy or a daughter” and then the coconut accepted by the mother-in-law while saying, “I accept this, whether it is a boy or a daughter” then the coconut taken into prospective mother’s bed.

When in her bedroom, the prospective mother would perform seven times of cloth changing, assisted by shaman and watched by all participants. Every time of cloth changing, the shaman says to the audience, “Has it been proper?” Then the

audience would say, “ It has not been proper”. This is done seven times, and at the seventh time, the shaman would say, “Wow, it has been proper and beautiful”.

VI. Myths in the *Mitoni* Ritual

a. Myth Concerning *Mitoni* Ritual

Up to present time, the Javanese people are well known as the people who truly believe and uphold spiritual cultures. They have faith that disasters, sicknesses, evil deeds, and calamities that occur to human caused by the imbalance between physical world and spiritual world. This imbalance surely will cause all kinds of disasters, thus it is necessary to perform rituals. One of these rituals is *mitoni* ritual that is a ritual held for first-time pregnant mother at her seventh-month pregnancy. *Mitoni* has two symbolic meaning, *luwar saka ing panenung*, which means has been delivered from disasters and *luwar saka paukumane dewa*, which means has been delivered from deities punishment (Sudaryanto, 2001: 906). Thus, the *mitoni* tradition was made to achieve protection, health and happiness, from which through *mitoni* ritual the prospective mother feels protected by spiritual power that would save her from any dangers and calamities.

Mitoni ritual not only gives security to the prospective mother, but also to all participants. Actually, the performers of ritual communicate to spirit world by several media. These media can be prayers, offerings, and magic spells.

Through *mitoni* ritual, the prospective mother and surrounding community may preserve a good relationship between themselves, physical world and spiritual world.

The Javanese people until now still believe that in order that they may gain security, they must build relationship with spirit world, with nature and seek for power from ancestors' heirlooms.

Beliefs that rooted strongly in people who support *mitoni* ritual cannot just get rid of right away. They still have faith that beyond physical world, there is also spiritual world that we cannot see. Actually, bad and good spirits have authority over these seen world and unseen world for them, from which these spirits affect people's lives. Good spirits surely would give goodness and bad spirits on the other hand would create catastrophe for human.

Thus in order to achieve those security and happiness, the Javanese people hold *mitoni* ritual for a prospective mother. Javanese people have confidence that by performing this ritual, they may earn security and cast off imminent dangers that would threaten lives of a prospective mother, prospective baby, and people in general.

People still believe that ritual held at the seventh-month period of pregnancy can discard troubles and create security for the prospective mother and prospective baby. Otherwise, if this ritual fails to exist then the result would be death and sickness.

b. Myth of Mitoni

Javanese people mostly believe that to have children is a grace from God Almighty; as a result, the prospective mother will treat her pregnancy in special ways. Special treatments actualized through following prohibitions:

1. Do not kill animals in order that the prospective baby would be born safely. Javanese people believe that if the prospective father or prospective mother kills any animals then their baby would have defects. However, if a prospective father or mother in any way they have to kill animals, they must say, “*amit-amit jabang bayi*” while stroking prospective mother’s belly.
2. Do not mock or have vengeance towards incapacitated people if you do not want your children born in defect condition.

Considering those myths, Javanese people and mostly the prospective parents would treat pregnancy carefully, because they have faith that if they violated the rules on those myths then they would have a defect baby. On the contrary, after *mitoni* ritual, the prospective parents and their community would get blessing and happiness for their babies in the future.

VII. Conclusion

Based on the above explanation, the author can conclude that:

1. *Mitoni* ritual held in the seventh-month period of pregnancy of first pregnancy at afternoon, by which the ritual date based on prospective parents’ date of birth according to Javanese calendar. This *mitoni* ritual is held to gain

- blessing and protection from Allah God Almighty who shall give them security and welfare;
2. Prayers in *mitoni* ritual are taken from Quran in Arabic language and prayers in Javanese language;
 3. The symbolic meaning of utensils and components in *mitoni* ritual is to ask security and protection for the prospective mother, the infant, participants of ritual and the whole community from Allah God Almighty.
 4. A legend or myth is not just a sheer story but it contains deep meanings and patterns that rooted or innate in supported community reflected on their actions. The innate structure or model actually is located at their sub-consciousness and can only be found through structuralism analysis of Levi Strauss.

From the above analysis, one can find the innateness of Javanese people. Javanese people are in fact flexible and modern minded. Even though, customs, politeness and ranks have placed them into a confirmed attitudes and behaviors, but the Javanese people acknowledge that each person has his/her own place and calling. In addition, in practice they are willing to accept the diversity alternatives available as long as those alternatives do not place absoluteness on itself but can be adapted into actions and harmony of people's lives.

The Javanese people are very proud of their capability in accepting aspects of a new culture without neglecting existed culture. Moreover, Javanese people can combine two components from different new cultures, from which this combination accepted in people's lives. for example: the emerging of Islam Kejawen. Javanese people believe that life would be better if there is a balance between human life and their surroundings where they live and build social relations.

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