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# Sociocultural Aspects of Drinking Ciu in Surakarta

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Abstract: The presence of ciu is an important part of the Surakarta society's tradition. Drinking ciu serves a multifaceted symbolic function for their supporting community. the drinking habit of ciu has become a part of the drinking community's daily life, as passed down from their predecessors. The objective of this study was to discover the sociocultural aspects of ciu drinking in Surakarta's ciu drinking community. This study was designed with a qualitative method, which emphasizes the depth of information by delving into the meaning behind the symptoms. In-depth interviews were conducted with ciu drinkers, the community, producers, and government officials. The chairman and staff of Surakarta Kasunanan Palace's Traditional Council Institute (LDA), the abdi dalem, and various parties involved. Archives, newspapers, various reference books, and journal articles that discuss objects related to the research were used as written sources. The study's conclusion is drinking ciu from a review of social aspects pertaining to the existence of three groups of ciu drinkers spread throughout Surakarta, namely the Pangunci Community within the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, the Pangunci Community outside the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, and the Ciu drinkers outside the Pangunci Community. Drinking ciu has a special meaning, namely it is a symbol of collective identity, as it is part of the social solidarity of fellow connoisseurs in channeling the burdensof life. The various functions of ciu for the people of Surakarta are closely related to a review of the cultural aspects of drinking ciu. Apart from being passed down from generation to generation, the requirements of traditional rituals, parts of herbs to keep the body's stamina, and parts of traditional medicine ingredients are an important part of ciu's function in Surakarta's culture. Therefore, this study helps the community understand the socio-cultural phenomenon of the ciu drinking tradition in Surakarta, and it helps the government determine policies related to the ciu production system and its distribution.

**Keywords:** sociocultural aspects; symbolic function; ciu drinking community, Surakarta

## 1. Introduction

Drinking ciu has a complex symbolic meaning and is part of the Surakarta sociocultural community of ciu drinkers. Ciu provides several services to Surakarta residents, ranging from ancient rites to being an herbal concoction to boost the body's stamina. Drinking *ciu* provides a social as well as a cultural function in the Surakarta community. It acts as a social solidarity binder in the community.

Ciu is an alcoholic beverage with an alcohol level of 35-45% manufactured with traditional equipment by distilling first-fermented molasses. Sugarcane drops are a byproduct of the sugar plant's processing that are used as a core ingredient in the alcohol manufacturing process. "Ciu Bekonang" is a well-known term among connoisseurs of Indonesia's traditional alcoholic beverages. This relates to the ciu producing unit in the Mojolaban District, Sukoharjo Regency, which, under the Colonial Government, was part of the Soerakarta Residency or administrative area of Residentie Soerakarta [1], [2].

Studies on socio-psychological aspects of drinking alcohol have been previously conducted by many researchers. Social aspects Alcoholism and social anxiety have a tangled relationship, and individuals with alcohol problems frequently believe that drinking might help them control their anxiety symptoms [3]. Contemporary models of social behavior automaticity emphasize the parallels between controlled and automatic processes, in which themind can become "drunk" even when no alcohol is consumed [4]. The role of family drinking and perceived drinking norms, found that he perceived benefits of drinking should be incorporated into alcohol prevention programs [5].

Due to the negative connotations associated with ciu as a traditional alcoholic beverage, the public views its consumption as unlawful. Why is ciu (Bekonang) still the preferred beverage if that is how the public at large views about it? This phenomenon is quite interesting. Because of ciu's position as a commodity, which is situated between needs and restrictions, use value detachment has developed, which indicates that a commodity has both a value and a use value. Commodities are objects with a set price. Objects, like commodities, often have a second life that is neither peaceful nor harmonious. Its presence is paradoxical, whether it is the conflicts of a value or a use value, until there is finally a large alienation of its use value. In terms of social behavior, the other individuals' responses can cause an individual to treat the object differently [6]. Similarly, ciu, as a commodity, allows its users to live a dual world that is neither peaceful nor harmonious, and its position is potentially paradoxical [7]. Ciu is in a conflicted situation whetherit is a value conflict or a use value conflict. Ciu has material power as a production object, but it also has the potential to be socially destructive due to a valuerelated response. Consequently, ciu is bound between need and restriction, culminating in use-value alienation. Based on the abovementioned, it is significant to do this study in order to comprehend the sociocultural aspects of drinking *ciu* in Surakarta.

### 2. Methods

This study was designed using qualitative methods and qualitative descriptive data analysis techniques. According to [8], in general, this study generates descriptive data; humanistic; understanding the meaning that forms the basis of the participant's behaviors; and understanding the situation in a limited scope. Qualitative methods emphasize information depth through interviews with informant data sources [9]. In-depth interviews were conducted with the ciu drinker community, the public, producers, government officials, the Chairman and Staff of *Lembaga Dewan Adat* (LDA) / the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace Traditional Council, the courtiers, ciu agents, ciu distributors, the community, and various parties involved in it. Written sources used in the form of archives, newspapers, various reference books and various journal articles that discuss similar objects with research conducted.

### 3. Results and Discussion

As part of a lifestyle, drinking has a complex symbolic role and becomes a cultural issue. Everyone can drink in the way, place, and style that best suits their interests. In the ciu, the same thing happened. Ciu underwent a shift in basic demands and became more complex as the production and consumption of self-signs became part of the lifestyle. According to Hilmar Farid in [10] *Budaya Minum di Indonesia* 'drinking Culture in Indonesia', alcoholic beverages are a significant part of people's social and cultural lives in Indonesia.

Ciu Bekonang is a type of alcoholic beverage traditionally manufactured in Telukan hamlet and theadjacent hamlets, which were included in the Kawedanan Bekonang area or Bekonang District, Residentie Soerakarta during the Dutch colonial period. Thus people refer to ciu as "Ciu Bekonang.".

In general, ciu has a negative connotation of a forbidden drink, yet ciu Bekonang remains the drink of choice for the fan community to this day. Another aspect of ciu Bekonang was discovered through a track record in the form of the Colonial Archives in the long process of history that refers to the archive catalog belonging to the *Departemen van Financien* of the National Archives Collection of the Republic of Indonesia in *Staat van Premien Toegekend bij Beschikking van den Hoofdinspecteur der In- en Uitvoerrechten en Accijnzen van 30 Juli 1925 No.B/33a/10/13 Residentie Soerakarta District Bekonang Onderdistrict Triagan 1925 that Ciu Bekonang was a Colonial Government trade monopoly asset [11].* 

The phenomenon described above is fascinating. Ciu, as a commodity, is on two opposing sides of the use value alienation, namely the commodity is both a value and a use value, ciu is between needs and constraints [6]. Objects, as commodities, frequently lead a dual lifestyle that is neither peaceful nor harmonious. Its existence is in a paradoxical position, whether it is a conflict of values or a conflict of use values, and its position is in a potential conflict [7]. Similarly, *ciu* is in a contradictory position, whether it is a value conflict or a use value conflict. Ciu has material power as an object of production, but ciu has the potential to be detrimental socially through responses related to values if the fans are unable to control their drinking, culminating in a distorted effect. Ciu is a materially powerful object of production, but several groups need the presence of *ciu* as part of their preferences, such as the Pangunci Community, which is a community of *ciu* drinkers who are informally incorporated.

The Pangunci community is a subculture of *ciu* drinkers, which exists and is increasing in Surakarta society. In Surakarta, there are three distinct communities of *ciu* drinkers, the Pangunci inside the Surakarta Palace, Pangunci outside the Surakarta Palace, and the *ciu* drinkers outside the Pangunci Community (perceived by the public as Pangunci). The construction of this community shows a peculiar feature of society. The Pangunci community arose as a result of behavioral patterns in their social lives, which occurred in a cultural construct that later developed into a fact or specific situation generated by a specific social construction.

The *Bawa Rasa*, Pangunci event includes *ciu* drinking inside the Surakarta Palace. Ciu and its accompanying dishes are fried delicacies that help with hangovers, such as pork *grabyasan* (fried swine fat), *swike* (fried frog thighs), and fried peanuts. Accordingly, Pakempalan Ngunjuk Ciu (Pangunci) existed in the palace surroundings until approximately 2009. This community consists of *abdi dalem pengrawit*, *abdi dalem bong* 

darat and the surrounding community who are involved in it who are invited in a jawilan way by Pengageng Keraton. They gather according to orders or event invitations of Bawa Rasa of Pengageng Keraton, Bandoro Kanjeng Pangeran Haryo Prabuwinoto, a son of Paku Buwana X who in 2004-2009 served as Pengageng Mandra Budaya at the Surakarta Palace in the sphere of cultural arts. Thus, the Pangunci Community in the palace environment is constrained.

Pangunci was named after the type of opening drink used in this Bawa Rasa ciu event. Ciu, in addition to being a body-warming drink (tombo anget), and a "warming condition" beverage, kagem gayeng-gayeng. Furthermore, Gusti Kanjeng Ratu Wandansari, Chair of the Traditional Council Institute (LDA) of the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, explained that ciu, in addition to being a tombo anget, also serves as a herbal medicine to maintain body stamina. This is particularly important for Abdi Dalem Pengrawit and Abdi Dalem Bong Dalem, who are in charge of lifting gamelans for the Sekaten Traditional Ceremony. Ngunjuk Ciu, these niyaga courtiers assemble in the Siti Hinggil area, namely in Bale Bang, on particular days, Mondays and Thursdays, to frequently rehearse karawitan in preparation for an official event organized by the Surakarta Palace.

After they finished practicing karawitan, these niyaga courtiers immediately joined the *Bawa Rasa Ngangsu Kawruh* event lead by *Pengageng Keraton*, Bandoro Kanjeng Pangeran Haryo Prabuwinoto. They sat down in a circle formation. Then, before the event begins, ciu is provided as an opening drink that also serves as a body warmer (tombo anget) as well as a *kagem gayeng-gayeng* for fellow *ciu* enthusiasts. The ciu is served in a shot glass. The technique for *ngunjuk ciu* is as follows: there is one person who is solely responsible for pouring the *ciu* into the shot called Bang. The unique aspect of showing ciu in the Pangunci Community is that only one shot glass is provided, and one shot glass is also utilized to show ciu together, taking turns for the entire Pangunci Community who attended the event. Bandoro Kanjeng Pangeran Haryo Prabuwinoto began his *ngunjuk Ciu* on the first shot, and Bang then refilled the ciu into the shot glass used by Bandoro Kanjeng Pangeran Haryo Prabuwinoto to be consumed alternatively in turns by the entire community there.

Ngunjuk ciu continues to some part based on each individual's capacity to measure how much affect the quantity of drinking has on individuals, as explained in Serat Primbon Pradikaning Minum. According to Serat Primbon written by Ki Padma Susastra, Naskah Buku (No.H.29), Koleksi Reksapoestaka, Mangkunegaran Palace Library in Surakarta. The Serat provides a narrative explanation of alcoholic beverage behavior in 10 (ten) stages of alcohol use.

The *tukar kawruh* between the pakempalan members continued until numerous speeches including life teachings presented by Sang Guru (Bandoro Kanjeng Pangeran Haryo Prabuwinoto) were more easily accepted if there was harmony of the inner rhythm of each community member present at the event. In the Surakarta Palace context, the Pangunci community pays close attention to the rules or procedures for *Ngunjuk Ciu*. The palace environment is rich of meaningful life norms governing many things, including the technique for *ngunjuk ciu*. When enjoying ciu, this serat primbon serves as both a lesson and a sign for the Pangunci Community. These indications are used in the Pangunci Community because *ciu*, as one of human preferences, has the potential to be harmful if consumed in excess, even to the point of triggering the effects of alcoholism. As a result,

the unwritten rules of the game can become self-control against the detrimental effects of excessive ciu intake. Thus according [7], this set of rules serves to maintain respectable aesthetic distance and self-image management. This aesthetic control is strongly tied to Surakarta's social structure, which is rich in feudal nuances. In Indonesia, the term feudalism is related with the views of the court nobility. The amount of followers among the people who are related to the concept of *manunggaling kawula gusti*, essentially the union of master and servant, or subordinates with superiors, exemplifies the power of the nobles [12].

According to [13], the social stratification in the Surakarta Palace is as follows: 1) the king, 2) the aristocracy of the king's relatives, and 3) the courtiers. The king and the aristocracy are the center of authority infeudal society, and they must be obeyed and respected by the people since the king has special rights. Within the feudal structure, there is a major layer, which includes the king and aristocracy, and a layer beneath it, which includes the people. The feudal lord is a well-known role model. [14]. Koentjaraningrat (1985) distinguishes two social classes in Java, particularly in Central Java: Priyayi, which includes priyayi gede (santono dalem) and priyayi (abdi dalem); and wong cilik (kawula dalem) [15]. In Redfield, there is a social divide between the priyayi and the disadvantaged Redfield in Masyarakat Petani dan Kebudayaan Redfield used phrases like "big tradition" and "small tradition," "high culture" and "low culture," "common culture" and "classical culture," and so on. There is a cultural divide between the powerful's tradition and the common man's tradition. One of the two patterns is acknowledged as more advanced, authoritative, and solely represented by the general movements of the elite; social prestige is reliant on the observation of him who is a member of the "great tradition." The "small tradition," on the other hand, is the capture of the undercurrent people. This is what transpired in Surakarta's social structure. A series of aesthetic images generated by the priyayi in the palace positioned them in the "great tradition," as Redfield put it, and the people in the "small tradition" [16], [17]. The palace, as the center of Javanese inner culture, becomes the core of sustainable culture because of being full of meaning for the harmonization of Javanese human life. Thus, in terms of the extent of Javanese cultural life, Surakarta Palace is commonly considered as the heart of Javanese inner culture by Javanese people [8], Ordinary people belong to the "small tradition" or a wong cilik, or people who live to serve the king. The king and the aristocracy are the center of authority in feudal society, and they must be obeyed and respected by the people; the king's role has specific rights. There are two layers: the king and the aristocracy on top, and the people on the bottom.

In accordance with the aforementioned, Geertz offered the Central Theory as an example in Negara Teater (2017). Culture or cultural values migrate vertically from top to bottom in a sinking status pattern. The center is the pinnacle of cultural values. The portions outside the center are only valuable insofar as they copy the center, and the periphery is only an imitation at best. During the feudal system in Surakarta, the Surakarta Palace became a cultural center that became the core of the wong cilik people in acting in their life. Therefore, the people outside the Surakarta palace's fort mimic the values that apply to the palace as the center of the authority. Certainly, wong cilik has certain

limitations in mimicking these central values to the extent of their knowledge abilities. This can also be seen in the custom of *ngunjuk ciu* to the Pangunci Community in the Surakarta Palace. *Ngunjuk ciu* becomes a part of them as they learn to comprehend the rules that apply in the palace, which is their direction in understanding Javanese inner culture as well as insight into how humans should live in harmony with the teachings of life as Javanese people.

In addition to the Surakarta Palace environment, the practice of drinking ciu occurs outside the Surakarta Palace environment in the Pangunci Community, even though the procedure for drinking ciu in the PangunciCommunity differs from the Pangunci in the Surakarta Palace. This is described in an interview with Mr. SM, a member of the Pangunci Community, who stated that the majority of this community has been familiar with ciu from childhood, particularly in the environment around where they live, even in the family setting. In addition to serving as an offering in traditional rituals, *ciu* is used in traditional medicine as a mixture of *parem* for traditional massage and in processed herbal medication to maintain the body's stamina. Thus, *ciu* is not uncommon to them.

Drinking *ciu* is part of the drinking community's everyday experience and has been passed down throughthe generations. Members agree on when and where they will meet. Following a mutual agreement, the information is passed on by one member of the group to another member via the "word of mouth" technique, which is to come one by one to the members of their community group to assemble. When enjoying ciu, each member of this community group is familiar with each other's style characteristics. This helps to avoid the uncontrolled effects of drinking too much ciu. Typically, they gather in one community member's home then move to another member's home or alocation agreed upon by the group. Their motive for gathering is to enjoy ciu in a group of ciu enthusiasts with 'guyup rukun'. 'Guyup' implies one heart, one accord, agree and accept with one accord and association, join and gather.

In their community, there is a social link in the form of a sense of togetherness. When one of their members, for example, is in a difficult position in addressing problems, holding a celebration or punya gawe of wedding ceremony, circumcision, bayen, and the like, the members of this community group are delighted to help one other. They meet on Saturday nights (Sunday nights) or during holidays. The ciu is served in shot glasses, which is similar to the practice of the Pangunci Community within the Surakarta Palace. The selection of dishes available in the Pangunci Community at the Surakarta Palace is exactly the same, but the complementary dishes that accompany the ciu in the Pangunci Community here are adjusted to their ability to purchase complementary dishes in the form of fried foods. This fried snack, like the complimentary dish at the Pangunci Community in the palace environment, is used to relieve hangovers. According to the Pangunci Community, the complementary ciu dish in the palace environment is rather expensive for them. Therefore, the complementary menu is adjusted to their ability to buy a complementary menu for drinking ciu, namely the grilled tofu and tempeh bacem then cut into small pieces, karak or snacks made from leftover rice that is dried and then fried, rambak, rica guguk or dog meat rica, pork rica, and fried peanuts if there is still money. In this community, the technique for ngunjuk ciu is as follows: one individual is specifically selected based on an agreement with group members to be in charge of pouring ciu into shot called Bang.

The distinctive part about ngunjuk ciu in the Pangunci Community, just like in the Surakarta Palace environment, is that just one shot glass is provided and it is used to ngunjuk ciu together, taking turns for the entire Pangunci Community who attended the event. The gathering place's host who started ngunjuk ciu on the first shot, then Bang poured the ciu back into the shot glass used by the host to drink alternately in turns by the entire community there. Ngunjuk ciu continues to some extent depending on each individual's ability to measure how much influence the level of drinking has on them. If the available space is in the shape of a lesehan, they sit in a circle formation; however, if the available space is in the form of a chair and a table is available, they sit in order and createa circular sequence formation. When this community gathers to show kisses, there are unwritten rules of the game that are enforced. The rules of this game include aesthetic control, which influences the community's self-image. Thus ,this unwritten rule of the game can become self-control against the harmful effects of excessive intake of ciu, which can produce unrest in the society. This Pangunci community has a ciu drinking style pattern that is distinct from other ciu enthusiasts outside the community. They are not a group of ciu enthusiasts who are known by the general public as drunks and, finally, when drinking ciu beyond the limits of their body's ability to behave belligerently to the environment. If a ciu drunk is found creating chaos in the community, the Pangunci community will not hesitate to take direct action. For the Pangunci community, the disruption caused by drunks is tarnishing the reputation of the ciu fan community as an elegant society. This image is fostered by the Pangunci community, a community that does not only enjoy ciu to get drunk or as a canalization of the situation. This community looks after its members in terms of aesthetic control when drinking ciu so that drunkenness does not harm the environment. They are hostile to the above pattern of kissing fans. Anticipation of this form of rejection is carried out as early as possible, beginning with the selection of group members and continuing with Bang's control when pouring ciu into this shot, which plays a big role in managing each member's body's ability to enjoy kissing. This is available until the end of the ngunjuk ciu Pangunci "guyup rukun" event.

Guyub rukun means "gathering together in a peaceful environment" in this community. The interview with Mr. SM, a Pangunci Community member and ciu agent, indicated that the friendly environment that was established when they assembled was the foundation for this community's idea of calling their community the ngunjuk ciu Paguyuban community, as a community of ciu fanatics. The Pangunci Community is made up of people from many occupations, such as factory workers, iron and glass shop employees, pedicab drivers, porters, sinoms, terminal bus control employees, entrepreneurs, parking attendants, market stall workers, artists, and cultural experts. They use the same term by replicating terms that exist in the Surakarta Palace environment with a distinct style, obviously, with the outcomes of imitation to the extent of their abilities. Ngunjuk ciu, as they called the term for drinking ciu, is the same as drinking ciu in the Pangunci Community within the Surakarta Palace, as Geertz refers to it in Theater State [18],

[19] on Central Theory as a Model Drinking ciu becomes part of a lifestyle in this area, even if it is deemed socially deviant by the wider population. Some of the reasons they choose ciu as their drink of choice are community solidarity, escaping from anxiety, calming the mind, searching for identity, happy mood in order to promote self-confidence, and affordable prices. Ciu is present only in one community—"one viewpoint." [20].

Furthermore, there are groups of ciu drinkers outside the Pangunci Community outside the Surakarta Palace. They have a different form of ciu drinker than the Pangunci Community both within and outside the Surakarta Palace. *Ciu* can be enjoyed whenever, anywhere, with whoever, or however much they want. There are no unique rules for them to follow in order to enjoy *ciu*. As a complement to drinking *ciu*, no special dish is needed. Only one could control how much influence his drinking had on him. Thus, the effects of alcoholism tend to be detrimental in this group. The wider populace refers to this group of ciu drinkers as drunkards, and when they consume ciu beyond the limits of their body's capacity, they act disruptively in the environment and cause disturbance in the community. In this context, consuming Ciu becomes a canalization of conditions that become a social burden. They chose ciu as their drink of choice since it has its own sensation that can make them drunk. The mind becomes peaceful in this drunken phase. Ciu, at an affordable price, is the drink of choice for integrating the state of escaping feelings of confusion, seeking identity, and being joyful, so that it creates a sense of self-confidence.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study looks at the sociocultural aspects of ciu drinking in Surakarta's ciu drinker community. Drinking ciu from a social point of view refers to the presence of three groups of ciu drinkers in Surakarta, namely the Pangunci Community within the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, the Pangunci Community outside the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, and the ciu drinkers outside the Pangunci Community (perceived by the community as Pangunci). A study of the cultural aspects of ciu drinking is closely related to the economic status of ciu drinkers. Each group of ciu drinkers has a drinking style that reflects the image of their community. In addition to serving as an offering in traditional rituals, ciu is often used in traditional medicine as a mixture of parem for traditional massage and in processed herbal medication to maintain the body's stamina. Thus, ciu is not uncommon to them. Drinking ciu is part of the drinking community's daily life and has been passed down from generation to generation. Drinking ciu is a symbol of collective identity for the Pangunci Community. As an aesthetic control for elegant ciu enthusiasts, the society creates their own behavior, lifestyle, and identity. Therefore, this reflexive concept contributes significantly to explaining the socio- cultural phenomenon of the ciu drinking tradition in Surakarta, as well as a significant contribution to the government in determining policies related to the ciu production system and its circulation as part of local wisdom in caring for collective national identity.

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