

THE OTOK-OTOK TRADITION: A SYMBOLISM OF ECONOMIC RATIONALITY OF MADURESE SOCIETY

Anita Kristina

Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Trunojoyo Madura
Anita.kristina@trunojoyo.ac.id

Robiatul Adawiyah

Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Trunojoyo Madura
twiitarifin@gmail.com

Informasi Artikel

Tanggal Masuk:
15 Februari 2026

Tanggal Revisi:
25 Februari 2025

Tanggal Diterima:
17 Maret 2026

Publikasi Online:
30 April 2026

Abstract

This research aims to uncover the otok-otok tradition as a symbolization of the economic rationality of Madurese society. This study delineates the focal issues within cultural analysis and economic rationality. A rationality is present within the otok-otok tradition, serving as a symbol of the economy and culture of Madurese society. A phenomenological method was employed to reveal and interpret the experiential materials of informants in Pernajuh village, Bangkalan (Madura). The research findings indicate that the otok-otok tradition is a symbolic practice within the community, encompassing economic and social values. This tradition emerges as a historical materialism, and economic rationality results in the emergence of cultural materialism, ultimately contributing to a critical call for cultural economy (tradition).

Key Words: symbolization; rationality; cultural economy

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap tradisi otok-otok sebagai simbolisasi rasionalitas ekonomi masyarakat Madura. Penelitian ini menggambarkan isu-isu yang menjadi fokus dalam analisis budaya dan rasionalitas ekonomi. Rasionalitas hadir dalam tradisi otok-otok sebagai simbol ekonomi dan budaya masyarakat Madura. Metode fenomenologi digunakan untuk mengungkap dan menginterpretasikan materi pengalaman para informan di desa Pernajuh, Bangkalan (Madura). Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi otok-otok merupakan praktik simbolik dalam masyarakat yang mencakup nilai-nilai ekonomi dan sosial. Tradisi ini muncul sebagai materialisme historis, dan rasionalitas ekonomi mengakibatkan munculnya materialisme kultural, yang pada akhirnya berkontribusi pada seruan kritis terhadap ekonomi budaya (tradisi).

Key Words: simbolisasi; rasionalitas; ekonomi budaya

INTRODUCTION

Traditions that emerge in society are dominated by the conditions of natural forces or social relations that have developed over the years. Many traditions are also created to explain things that are believed Farooq & Kayani (2015), there are reasons behind traditional events D'Andrea & D'Ulizia (2023), the purpose of traditions Fajrie (2020), and there are even meanings that are considered to be attached to community life (Hirsan, 2023). Previously, research on traditions has been viewed from a religious perspective (Christopher, 2024; Susanto et al., 2021) and the community/local wisdom environment (Januardi et al., 2022; Mahardika et al., 2021). However, a significant research gap exists in understanding how these tradition function as rational economic instruments. While previous studies tend to focus on spiritual or social values. This study views tradition through and economic rationality. Meanwhile, this study views tradition in symbolic thought and rationality. As in Marx (1990) thought which has found tradition as a scientific culture and can be in the form of modernity that appears in religious, mystical and mysterious forms. It is also believed that tradition is never modern (Qizi, 2024), because it arises in irrational minds. Conversely, modernity arises due to a combination of religious and the rationality which is symbolic of fantastic things. In this thought, there is a synthesis that tradition arises from belief and logic and ultimately ends in the economy (cultural economy) (Peet, 2000), that is, tradition can be a relatively free cultural moment, where there is a system of "power" and is conceptualized with the economy. The same is true of the otok-otok tradition in Madurese society.

The otok-otok tradition is a typical tradition of Madurese society that has been carried out for generations to strengthen ties and collect money. This tradition is carried out in informal organizational groups with a membership of between 20-70 people. The basic principle of the otok-otok tradition is that each member contributes a sum of money to the organizer, which will then be used for operational and administrative costs. The money obtained from this tradition can vary, from hundreds of thousands to tens of millions of rupiah. Thus, it can be concluded that otok-otok is an economic event and is related to debt (Nurhalizah et al., 2023), because they take turns replacing the money they receive. The research problem arises from the economic ambiguity of otok-otok, while it is traditionally rooted in togetherness and brotherhood, it operates as a rigorous economic event tied to deb. This creates a paradox where a cultural heritage functions as a primary informal financial system that requires high economic rationality from its actors. The emphasis of this tradition is on symbolization in culture (inherited) and awareness of causality consequently when they receive money. There is an emphasis on the meaning of togetherness and emotion (brotherhood).

In this study, the otok-otok tradition is viewed as an economic culture that exists within a radical demographic. This means that the otok-otok tradition involves serious economic habits and activities, as it is tied to debt. This understanding can be approached from the perspective of commodification, as it is related to cultural sustainability. The urgency of this research is driven by a radical shift in the otok-otok trajectory. Commodification occurs in behavioral patterns within a society's culture at certain social circle levels (Bai & Weng, 2023). The limitation of commodification in the otok-otok tradition lies in the economic rationality of its actors. Meanwhile, otok-otok itself occurs due to strong culture and economic rationality. This can be interpreted that otok-otok is also a positive tradition, namely there is a value of money productivity that occurs due to economic demography and occurs in an economic cycle (circulation). The explanation of this economic circulation is related to the improvement, distribution, and reuse of money (Rinkinen & Shove, 2023). However, the otok-otok tradition has been indicated to have undergone cultural shifts. The forms of social capital that encompass otok-otok have changed. In the past, people participated in otok-otok to share the cost together (for economic needs). Now, participants categorize it as a mechanism for saving or economic investment. This study contributes to economics by redefining how social capital transforms into a high productivity economic cycle. Cultural shifts occur due to changes in the trajectory of social relations in local communities towards changes in the characteristics of "culture" that lead to high productivity (Sayer & Walker, 1994). Nevertheless, the otok-otok tradition is still highly popular with a cultural and economic approach of Madurese society.

The framework of this study views otok-otok as a network of social and economic interconnectedness and focuses on the networks of "family," belief, and the importance of socio-cultural connections that bind actors. Cultural structure produces practical consciousness and occurs in everyday social relations. Economic consciousness as a form of local cultural aspect (local wisdom) that is embedded and reflects the underlying behavior of needs. The social network that binds otok-otok is contextualized in economic agency and analyzed in the span of beliefs, attitudes, and economic rationality. The economic emphasis on the otok-otok tradition is stronger than the social formation (network) and than the cultural context. This can be interpreted as a change in the cultural way of thinking of the otok-otok tradition, the context of economic productivity is much higher than other contexts. Thus, this study aims to reveal the otok-otok tradition as a symbolization of the economic rationality of Madurese society, especially in Pernajuh village, Bangkalan.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Actually, the economy is not a separate field from the social area, but in the tradition of otok-otok, it has dominated social existence. The economic perspective in this study is only a series of material and cultural practices that are directly involved in the existence of otok-otok. To bridge the gap between social philosophy and economic practice, this study employs the framework of economic sociology. This approach views *otok-otok* as an 'embedded' economic action (Smelser & Swedberg, 1996), where financial transactions are inseparable from the network of social relations and local values. How to conceptualize the relationship between the parts of life that are interconnected? The idea of the entanglement of economic actions is interesting when discussed with the issue of tradition/culture, especially the vision of economic actors (otok-otok) who are immersed in a network of social relations. However, although this describes the spatial form taken by social relations, it does not explain much about the ideas, beliefs, and values that are communicated through them. Entanglement in social relations needs to be embedded in cultural values. How to implement it, theoretically? In this theoretical framework,

I put forward a series of concepts that connect culture to the economy through the idea of interpretation of meaning and symbolization as well as rationality.

In this study, I argue for a set of concepts that link culture to economy through the notions of symbolization and rationality. The argument follows a Marxist discourse (Matthews, 1991): the mode of production is reinterpreted, in particular the idea of social consciousness 'reflecting' economic structures. In an operational sense, this cultural version of historical materialism is used to analyze how the material need for capital (economic structure) is translated into a 'structure of feeling' or common sense in Madurese society. This leads to the concept of Cultural Materialism, which serves as an analytical tool to see *otok-otok* not just as a ritual, but as a community-based informal financial institution that manages material resources through symbolic cultural power. Thus, in the case of the *otok-otok* tradition, the symbolization of tradition takes two main forms: the interpretation of the relationship of tradition to the material (economy) and to the immaterial (values). This symbolization as an interpretation at the level of meaning and belief can be conceptualized more precisely in terms of social events, or forms of collective consciousness structured by certain social and natural environments.

Conceptual analysis Weber's linking economic rationality in the 'substantive' sense (ethics, motivation) with rationality in the 'formal' sense (calculation, organization). This dual rationality provides a conceptual bridge for analyzing data; (1) Substantive Rationality is used to read the social motives and "brotherhood" ethics of participants, while (2) Formal Rationality is used to analyze the financial calculations, debt-credit cycles, and organizational management of the money collected. This framework aligns with Institutional Economics, where *otok-otok* is viewed as an informal institution with its own set of "rules of the game" that govern economic behavior outside of formal banking systems. Therefore, the analytical model of this research integrates three layers: 1). The symbolic meaning as the social foundation; 2). The dual rationality (substantive and formal) as the driver of action, and 3). The money productivity cycle as the economic outcome. This model transforms the philosophical thoughts of Marx and Weber into an operational tool to answer how cultural symbols facilitate high productivity capital circulation in Madurese society, which provides a conceptual bridge between social forms of imagination (substantive) and specific types of economic action (formal) (Thompson, 1991). This seems close to the preconception in research of economic rationality as a type of symbolic logic formed in culture. Economic rationality includes motives, methods, and ethics derived from the experiences of socialized and enculturated actors. The thesis I am pursuing is that each tradition contributes very differently to the cultural economy, depending on the demographics. Furthermore, tradition can be analyzed through the spatial dialectic of culture-economy. In a phrase, I might say, that the *otok-otok* tradition becomes part of the framework of the cultural economy.

METHODS

The *otok-otok* tradition has become a long-standing tradition in Madurese society. Pernajuh village, Bangkalan, is an ideal location to reveal the *otok-otok* tradition because this village still preserves *otok-otok* until now. The definition of *otok-otok* in this study adopts the definition that *otok-otok* is a tradition of collecting money that can be received later, the amount of which is equal to the money that has been spent. This study deepens the understanding of how the *otok-otok* tradition works as an effort to increase money productivity and as a future savings.

This research uses a qualitative interpretive approach analysis, with a phenomenological method, which reveals the meaning of *otok-otok* based on the construction of the local community's demography and the economic rationality of the actors. The focus of this research is on the context of subjective meaning that phenomenology will greatly help in exploring life experiences and revealing the thinking of actors (Kristina, 2020, 2023). Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews to obtain the experiences of informants that focused on the identification of *otok-otok*. Data analysis followed the systematic phenomenological reduction procedure. This involved: (1) Horizontalization, where every statement from the informants was treated with equal value; (2) Cluster of Meaning, grouping significant statements into themes; and (3) Structural Description, interpreting how the experience occurred to extract the "essence" of *otok-otok* as an economic rationality. To ensure data validity (trustworthiness), the researcher employed member checking, by confirming the transcribed interview results back to the informants, and triangulation of sources to maintain the reliability and credibility of the findings.

Interviews were more focused on the informants' experiences, in accordance with the method used (Kristina, 2024). Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, focusing on those who possess "lived experience" and deep involvement in the tradition. The number of informants (5 people) was determined based

on the principles of data saturation, where additional interviews no longer yielded new conceptual categories. To ensure the credibility of the data, the researcher performed "epoché" or bracketing, a process of setting aside prior personal biases and theories about Madurese economics to allow the essence of the informants' experiences to emerge naturally. The characteristics of the informants include the head of the otok-otok and people who have been involved in otok-otok for 5 to 10 years. The following table is the name of the informants:

Table 1. Research Informants

No	Name of informants	Age (Years)	Role	Participating in otok-otok	Job
1.	Hafit Wandu	54	chairman 1	11 years	Construction worker
2.	Muhammad Satian	50	chairman 2	10 years	Public transportation driver
3.	M. Nur	53	members	10 years	Fish farming
4.	Haminan	47	members	7 years	Construction worker
5.	Adussalam	48	members	5 years	Barber

Source: processed primary data, 2024

The research's analytical approach follows a phenomenological method (Husserl, 1977), which involves identifying all information derived from the informant's experiential consciousness, coding all available information, and categorizing it into thematic findings. It also seeks to uncover hidden meanings so that the final findings will identify the meaning of otok-otok for the informants. Interviews lasted between 1 and 3 hours and covered a variety of questions and information about their stories, experiences in the otok-otok tradition, and patterns of rationality related to otok-otok. This research focuses on the meaning of otok-otok for their lives, the decision to participate in otok-otok based on economic rationality, and the social network relationships formed over time.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The identification of prominent findings is about the meaning of the otok-otok tradition as a symbol of community culture (radical demography) and economic rationality. The narrative interpretation of informants can be explained in the following thematic findings:

Otok-otok as a Symbol of Culture

Otok-otok as a culture based on economic activity, therefore it requires a different analysis, not only as a practice of certain cultural symbols, but also involves highly subjective issues. Cultural studies in economics take a historical approach to such traditions in the long term, as culture is believed to be a long-standing habit and otok-otok is a continuous tradition. The people of Pernajuh village maintain the otok-otok tradition until now, as a legacy of their ancestors. The debate on economics-culture is actually a serious issue, since both take on roles that obscure meaning. The informants mean that the otok-otok tradition is part of their culture, but also part of their economic activities. There are costs incurred when holding otok-otok, but there is money that they expect to receive. From the perspective of institutional Economics, this tradition persists it functions as an informal contract rooted in high social trust. The informants' statements reveal that otok-otok is a hybrid space where 'social embeddedness' meets 'economic calculation. As Mr. Hafid stated regarding the costs incurred/used during the otok-otok tradition:

"The costs incurred for the otok-otok event are quite simple or as much as the host who holds the otok-otok can afford. That it doesn't burden the host. The expenditure of around Rp. 5,000,000, including the sound system of around Rp. 1,000,000 and others, is not much in essence. The benefits of the otok-otok tradition in Pernajuh village are to maintain kinship between the chairman and members and to maintain harmony between villages".

Continuing with the statement of informant M. Nur:

"Alhamdulillah, I was able to save money while participating in the otok-otok. If I participated in the otok-otok, I would definitely be recognized as a villager."

The statements from both informants indicate that otok-otok has become a tradition and is viewed as a cultural practice that evolves over time. They have maintained the core aspects of this tradition—such as the rules of the game—for an extended period. As Mr. Hafid stated, the cost of around Rp 5,000,000 for hosting is "simple" compared to the social kinship and harmony it maintains. Here, we see Weber's Substantive Rationality at work; the actor weighs the economic cost against the "value-laden" benefit of kinship. However, this is immediately balanced by Formal Rationality, as seen in M. Nur's statement about saving money. The informants are not just practicing culture; they are performing a "calculative agency" where being recognized as a villager (social capital) is a prerequisite for financial security (economic capital).

Historically, the characteristics of otok-otok have remained consistent over the decades, signifying a social awareness among the participants regarding its traditional significance, which they follow voluntarily. Otok-otok serves not only as a means of economic collaboration but also as a form of social production in their lives. This is evident in their motivation to maintain friendships. The relationships they cultivate are interdependent, driven by their desire for social connections and influenced by their financial interactions. The material production, represented by financial savings, establishes strong economic structures within households. The social production method derived from the otok-otok tradition ultimately shapes their overall socio-economic dynamics. This suggests that their social awareness directly influences their economic awareness. They perceive the otok-otok tradition as an expression of both social and economic consciousness.

The understanding that fundamental material needs (economic) are arranged demographically can be viewed as a radical perspective. This indicates that the otok-otok community reveals the complex nature of their culture, characterized by a collective consciousness that intertwines both material and immaterial relationships. Consequently, the social (demographic) conditions in Pernajuh village reflect a dualistic awareness: the material aspect, represented by money saved as a form of financial security, and the immaterial aspect, which involves the responsibility of preserving cultural heritage and maintaining emotional ties such as friendship. It is crucial to address another significant factor: the forms of exploitation that occur simultaneously within the realms of economy, society, and culture. This is referred to as the "exploitation of consciousness." The awareness cultivated by the participants of otok-otok is shaped by their past experiences, those inherited from their parents or previous generations. They actively engage with and articulate otok-otok as a reflection of their identity and interests. Thus, this awareness emerges as a lesson drawn from historical experiences, which apply in the present. The monetary value they produce today, however, differs from that of the past. For instance, how should they return or reinvest the otok-otok money of Rp. 500,000 now? This is influenced by their understanding of the value of money contributed by others, also amounting to Rp. 500,000. Naturally, the current monetary value differs from what it was in the past. The otok-otok tradition manifests within a distinct value system, governed by established rules and agreements. This highlights how past experiences and values inform present awareness, and this process occurs spontaneously and voluntarily.

Otok-otok serves as a form of social production. In a Marxist sense, this reflects a "Cultural Materialism" where the social awareness of brotherhood directly structures the economic awareness of saving. The "exploitation of consciousness" mentioned earlier is better interpreted as a "self-disciplining mechanism." Participants feel a sense of obligation (structure of feeling) to return the exact amount of money received, such as Rp 500,000, regardless of time. This shows a "practical rationality" where the social cost of breaking trust is far higher than the inflation cost of money.

The hegemony of the beliefs held by these "otok-otok" actors leads to the internalization of common sense. Each social form contains elements of homo economics (Gramsci, 2013), and in the context of otok-otok, this contributes to the emergence of economic rationality. This commonsense transforms *otok-otok* into a "community-based financial institution." The "Great Book" (bookkeeping) held by the scribe is the empirical evidence of this formal rationality. It is not just a record; it is a symbolic instrument of accountability that ensures the circulation of capital remains transparent. This book bridges the gap between the "mystical/traditional" aura of the event and the "mathematical/logical" reality of debt-credit relations. This rationality is a response to material needs, resulting in a complex web of beliefs that manifests as a collective consciousness. Hegemony transforms cultural activities into expressive forms of the superstructure, while underlying processes shape social and economic structures. The otok-otok tradition is rooted in cultural experiences (habituation), but lacks new modes of production, resulting in no substantial changes to the dominant social order. The cultural expressions observed reflect practical awareness, establishing a lasting culture. The interpretation of this phenomenon is

complex. Cultural change can occur when practical awareness is viewed as a "feeling structure" (where there is a sense of obligation to participate) or an "experience structure." This highlights the connection between the meanings and values associated with the beliefs they demonstrate systematically— for instance, the notion that giving Rp. 500,000 in 2020 will yield the same return in 2024. The concept of "feeling" does not stand in opposition to "thinking"; rather, it is the feeling that guides their actions. Their thought processes arise from internal relationships that are interconnected and supported by strong social ties. Ultimately, this "structure of feeling" is shaped by their lived experiences.

These various structures of thought and experience form simple symbols, namely as a sign in the social order of the village. The construction of thought and experience as a process of tradition that is cultured and indirectly forms a symbol. Symbolic forms are contextualized socially (Lungeli, 2024). This contains traces of social conditions and the production of tradition/culture in the formation of certain symbols, namely the relationship between tradition and economic agency. This means that otok-otok has connected the cultural process that contains deep symbolization with rationalization (economic) and the formation of economic intentionality. Each otok-otok actor is able to create meaning, where the meaning they present can regulate and institutionalize their social order (in terms of rules and objectives following otok-otok). There is a determination of the way in which individuals fulfill their awareness of the motives of their participation by prioritizing social values. The symbolic formation of otok-otok is constructed from their materials and experiences, and this symbolic formation is contextualized into the way the otok-otok they follow work. And ultimately forms a collective consciousness that is structured by the social environment and surrounding habits.

Ultimately, the implication of this finding for economic behavior is that Madurese society does not separate "homo economicus" from "homo sociologicus." Their rationality is "relational rationality"—a system where economic decisions are made based on long-term social sustainability rather than short-term individual profit. Otok-otok proves that informal financial systems can be more resilient than formal ones because they are guarded by a collective consciousness and a "structure of feeling" that institutionalizes trust into a productivity cycle.

The initial idea of the emergence of the otok-otok tradition was actually to help their economic needs. This idea gave rise to the assertiveness that everything must be recorded, and this record expresses trust between individuals. They named it a great book, namely a record book about the entire process of the event in each series of otok-otok. The great book is held by a scribe, who is responsible for carrying out administrative tasks to record the bookkeeping of each otok-otok event. The great book contains financial administration, a list of incoming member money, a list of member names and a list of group leaders, the place and schedule of the event. After the event is over and the scribe's duties have been completed. The great book will be handed over to the host or event organizer.

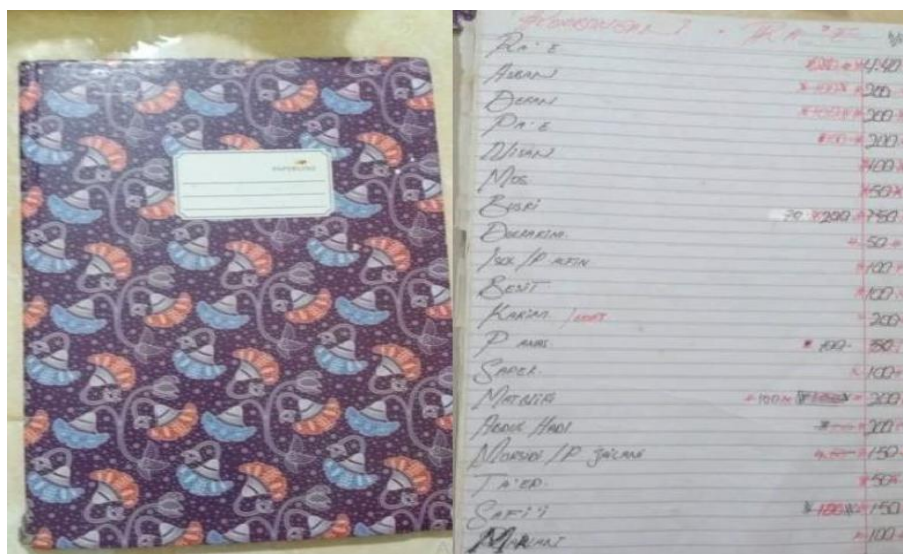


Figure 1. The Great Book (Recording) of Otok-otok
Source: Researcher Documentation

The existence of this note indicates a representation of belief, featuring symbols and numbers that signify the dominance of traditional values, both material and immaterial. The relationship between these elements is conceptualized within a system of material practices. This illustrates how imaginary cultural values manifest in social relations. Economic construction emerges as a form of power related to the otok-otok tradition. Furthermore, this relationship reveals a strong symbolism: cultural production (otok-otok) and material meaning are highly subjective, with each individual attributing different meanings (related to money) to their expenditures. This process of cultural symbolization ultimately fosters economic subjectivity.

Otok-otok as cultural economic rationality

Another symbolism of the otok-otok tradition is its economic agency. Rationality, as a socially constructed symbol, has fostered economic reasoning. This economic rationality is a form of symbolic logic that emerges from the social imaginary and is embedded within culture. It encompasses the motives that drive individuals or groups as economic actors, ultimately controlling them in a social context. Economic rationality arises from collective experiences that are interpreted by those who are socialized into a particular culture, resulting in the emergence of subjective identities from the otok-otok tradition. However, economic rationality also possesses a material quality that shapes the context of these experiences. The interaction between economic rationality and consistent experiences leads to the rationalization of actions, thus shaping the logic of the economic system (Hirghidus & Fulgerl, 2010). This framework can produce economic behaviors that are "rational," as the economic agency structure stemming from the otok-otok tradition tends to create a robust economic logic. However, when viewed from a broader perspective, technically rational environmental and social relations can often become irrational. This suggests that the otok-otok tradition may, at times, result in economically irrational behaviors, presenting a dilemma where it exists as a rational illusion.

In the otok-otok tradition, the dominant behavior is optimizing economic profit. The intensity of economic agents in the context of values and beliefs (trust). Otok-otok actors as cultural actors, as well as economic actors. Social and cultural relations are interwoven as interactions of economic agencies and as complex actor identities (which are socially constructed), because there is maximization of utility (economic profit) and efforts to minimize costs. As expressed by the following informant Muhammad Satian:

"Continuing this tradition is important because it is part of our identity as Madurese people. In addition, otok-otok is very helpful in terms of economy, especially for families who have irregular incomes, the rich will help the poor".

Additionally, this is the information from informant Mr. Haminan as follows:

"Participating in otok-otok is clearly beneficial for individuals with low incomes; by saving, you will ultimately gain a lot in the long run".

Economic rationalism, as observed in the informant's experience, is driven by the desire to meet economic needs through participation in the otok-otok tradition. This involvement may also reflect a personal ambition to achieve the assumption of wealth. A person's motivation is accompanied by psychological will, leading to the emergence of a new form of rationality—specifically, economic motivation (Huneman & Martens, 2017). Economic utility is prominently evident in the otok-otok tradition. This rationality encompasses both productive power (economic and social) and future expectations. The mindset of those engaged in otok-otok is shaped by the rationality of economic action, which serves as the motivation behind their participation. An interpretative understanding of the actions of otok-otok participants reveals the interaction of economic actions aimed at obtaining economic benefits, which is the primary focus, alongside ethical actions that prioritize tradition and behaviors aimed at achieving cultural sustainability. This type of engagement is characterized as a cultural economy (Yıldız & Altan, 2023). Furthermore, Weber (1947) explains that cultural economic action is also a component of economic rationalism, which can be viewed both quantitatively (in terms of monetary value) and substantively (with respect to ethics and values). Thus, participants in the otok-otok tradition engage in practical efforts to satisfy their economic needs. Their practical behaviors indicate the influence of social behavior and culturally determined pathways in the pursuit of their interests.

The pursuit of economic profit is rational, driven by the necessity for economic calculations to prioritize consumption (expenses) incurred. This effort is aimed at accumulating capital for future savings (Smelser & Swedberg, 1996). This economic behavior is interwoven with a network of social relationships that reflect cultural values. Rationalized actions contribute to the formation of economic logic, while some actions are guided by

traditional practices. Individuals make choices based on their intentions, with cost-benefit analyses forming the foundation of these decisions. To fully understand this process, it is important to examine how beliefs are formed rather than assuming ideal rationality. What is considered a rational choice is not much the result of individual reflection, but rather of placing the thought process in a broader institutional (social) context (North, 2005). Thus, it can be interpreted that the rationality of the otok-otok actors implies economic decision-making, even though it is carried out in a cultural context.

CONCLUSION

This article examines the informant's perspective on the otok-otok tradition within the Pernajuh village community in Bangkalan. The otok-otok tradition reflects the interplay between culture, economy, and society. This study concludes that *otok-otok* operates as a "Relational Rationality" model, where the logic of debt-credit is not driven by individual profit but by the sustainability of social capital. The research successfully answers the problem of how traditional symbols facilitate formal economic actions, such as capital accumulation and systematic bookkeeping, which function as an informal financial institution. As a hereditary practice, otok-otok merges cultural symbolism with economic rationality, thereby reinforcing the value of friendship and promoting collective savings. The analysis reveals that the otok-otok tradition serves not only as a cultural symbol but also as a manifestation of economic rationality that addresses both the material and immaterial needs of society. The meanings and values associated with this tradition have evolved in response to significant demographic changes and shifts in societal economic perceptions. However, the practice of this tradition faces several challenges, including symbolic and economic exploitation, which may shift the focus from cultural significance to purely economic rationality.

The conclusion drawn from the findings emphasizes that the otok-otok tradition is not merely a symbol of Madurese culture; it functions as a cultural economic mechanism that integrates social values with economic rationality. Theoretically, this research contributes to Economic Sociology by demonstrating that "social embeddedness" in Madurese society acts as a self-disciplining mechanism for financial compliance. This provides a new perspective in Institutional Economics, viewing *otok-otok* as a resilient community-based financial model that bridges the gap between limited formal banking access and local liquidity needs. The otok-otok tradition contributes to social capital by strengthening social networks and fostering trust among community members. Additionally, it presents a unique model for flexible collective savings, showcasing the community's ability to address the limitations of formal financial access. The findings highlight the importance of organized financial management in enhancing the sustainability of community economic practices. Ultimately, the otok-otok tradition serves as an inspiration and opportunity to promote innovation based on local wisdom, which can be replicated in other contexts to encourage collective welfare while preserving cultural heritage and wisdom. This tradition illustrates that the integration of cultural values and economic rationality can create a distinctive model for economic management, though it requires careful attention to maintain alignment with upheld social values.

Practically, the integration of cultural values and economic rationality creates a distinctive model for economic management. For policy implications, this study suggests that local economic development programs should integrate traditional collective-saving models like *otok-otok* to enhance community financial resilience, rather than replacing them with rigid formal systems. Future research should move toward comparative testing of this concept by analyzing variations of *otok-otok* in different regional demographics or across diverse ethnic groups in Indonesia. Further studies are also needed to develop a formal mathematical or structural model of "Trust-Based Community Economics" to test the scalability of this tradition into a broader economic framework.

REFERENCES

- Bai, L., & Weng, S. (2023). New Perspective of Cultural Sustainability: Exploring Tourism Commodification and Cultural Layers. *Sustainability* 2023, Vol. 15, Page 9880, 15(13), 9880. <https://doi.org/10.3390/SU15139880>
- Christopher, S. (2024). *Gaddi, a Hindu community of the Western Himalayas*. <https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.12572412>
- D'Andrea, A., & D'Ulizia, A. (2023). Preserving Local Food Traditions: A Hybrid Participatory Approach for Stimulating Transgenerational Dialogue. *Societies* 2023, Vol. 13, Page 95, 13(4), 95. <https://doi.org/10.3390/SOC13040095>
- Fajrie, M. (2020). The Variety and Meaning of The Community Tradition of Coastal Bungo Wedung Indonesia. *Mozaik Humaniora*, 20(1), 70–78. <https://doi.org/10.20473/MOZAIK.V20I1.15470>

- Farooq, A., & Kayani, A. K. (2015). Changes in Traditions and Material Exchanges. *Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.1177/0971523114559819*, 20(1), 150–161. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971523114559819>
- Gramsci, A. (2013). *Prison Notebooks : Catatan-catatan dari Penjara*. 670. <https://archive.org/details/AntonioGramsciSelectionsFromThePrisonNotebooks>
- Hirghidus, I & Fulger, (2010). The Basics of Rationality and The Culture of Economic Behaviour. *Annals of the University of Petrosani: Economics*, X(2), 171–184. <https://doaj.org/article/7d492a597284486e80d2f653eb23491c>
- Hirsan, A. (2023). Implementation of Islamic Education Values in Community Medicine Tradition in Aikmel District | Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan. *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 7(2), 5396–5403. <https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v7i2.6605>
- Huneman, P., & Martens, J. (2017). The behavioural ecology of irrational behaviours. *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, 39(3), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S40656-017-0150-5/FIGURES/1>
- Husserl, E. (1977). *Phenomenological Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-010-1083-2>
- Januardi, A., Superman, S., & Firmansyah, H. (2022). TRADISI MASYARAKAT SAMBAS: IDENTIFIKASI NILAI-NILAI KEARIFAN LOKAL DAN EKSISTENSINYA. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi Dan Humaniora*, 13(1), 185. <https://doi.org/10.26418/J-PSH.V13I1.52469>
- Kristina, A. (2020). *Belajar Mudah Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Rumah Media.
- Kristina, A. (2023). *Mengupas Daya Tahan Bisnis Saat Pandemi Covid 19 Melalui Fenomenologi* (K. A, Ed.). Deepublish.
- Kristina, A. (2024). *Teknik Wawancara Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif*. Deepublish.
- Lungeli, D. (2024). Restored Behaviour and the Formation of Ethnic Identity: Critiquing the Rai Youths' Sakela. *The Outlook: Journal of English Studies*, 15(11), 11–21. <https://doi.org/10.3126/OJES.V15I1.67756>
- Mahardika, I. N. U., Ayu, G., Suartika, M., & Saputra, K. E. (2021). Local Traditions and Environmental Preservation - Genius Loci in Penglipuran Village in Protecting Public Spaces. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 903(1), 012010. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/903/1/012010>
- Marx, K. (1990). The Labour Process. *Capital, Vol. I*, 283–292. <https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/35192/capital-by-karl-marx-intro-ernest-mandel-trans-ben-fowkes/9780140445688>
- Matthews, J. V. . (1991). *Toward a new society: American thought and culture, 1800-1830*. 188. https://books.google.com/books/about/Toward_a_New_Society.html?hl=id&id=RHsrAQAIAAJ
- North, D. C. . (2005). *Understanding the process of economic change*. 187.
- Nurhalizah, S., Yuliana, R., & Daud, D. (2023). Praktik akuntansi utang-piutang oada tradisi otok-otok. *Jurnal Akuntansi Multiparadigma*, 14(3), 591–609. <https://doi.org/10.21776/UB.JAMAL.2023.14.3.41>
- Peet, R. (2000). Culture, Imaginary, and Rationality in Regional Economic Development. *Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.1068/A3250*, 32(7), 1215–1234. <https://doi.org/10.1068/A3250>
- QIZI, O. F. A. (2024). Preserving Uzbek Family Traditions: Adapting heritage for modern society stability. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies and Social Sciences*, 4(4), 323–329. <http://ijpsss.iscience.uz/index.php/ijpsss/article/view/705>
- Rinkinen, J., & Shove, E. (2023). Material culture and the circular economy. *Frontiers in Sustainability*, 4, 1158079. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FRSUS.2023.1158079/BIBTEX>
- Sayer, R. Andrew., & Walker, Richard. (1994). *The new social economy: reworking the division of labor*. 306. <https://www.wiley.com/en-us/The+New+Social+Economy%3A+Reworking+the+Division+of+Labor-p-9781557862808>
- Smelser, N. J., & Swedberg, R. (1996). The Sociological Perspective on the Economy. *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Handbook_of_Economic_Sociology.html?hl=id&id=Rmx4QgAACAAJ
- Susanto, D., Rosidah, A., Setyowati, D. N., & Wijaya, G. S. (2021). Tradisi Keagamaan Sebagai Bentuk Pelestarian Budaya Masyarakat Jawa Pada Masa Pandemi. *SULUK: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya*, 2(2), 107–118. <https://doi.org/10.15642/SULUK.2020.2.2.107-118>
- Thompson, J. B. . (1991). *Ideology and Modern Culture : Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*. https://books.google.com/books/about/Ideology_and_Modern_Culture.html?hl=id&id=ql5Ab8OXiPMC
- Weber, M. (1947). Concepts Of Organisation Theory. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, 341–342. https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Theory_Of_Social_And_Economic_Organi.html?hl=nl&id=Zq8UAQAAMAAJ
- Yıldız, M., & Altan, M. (2023). Literature review of the sharing economy: Socio-cultural perspective. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 33(5), 1112–1136. <https://doi.org/10.1002/CASP.2728>