

Conservation Practices of Sangiran Archaeological Site as a Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the social practices done by people around Sangiran archaeological site in the intention to conserve it as a cultural heritage. To know such practices, therefore, a study on people's habitus, capitals (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic) availability, and their field around the site as a cultural heritage. To address the intention, then, this study was design and administered in the light of qualitative research approach with single case study strategy. The data were collected from several informants, relevant documents, and archives by using several data collection techniques (interview, observation, and documentation). Next, samples were chosen by using non-probability sampling with maximum variation sampling. The samples, from which the data were obtained, are informants from Balai Pelestarian Situs Manusia Purba (BPSMPS) / Premordial man conservation office, public figures (Krikilan village authority) and people working in and off the site area. From the data collected, it is, then, known that people's habitus around the site is closely related to the historical development of researches on and discoveries of primordial man fossils in the area in 1930's. People's knowledge and perception about the local wisdoms, local cultural values, values of belief, and daily acts reflects the preserved habitus of theirs. To perform the social practices regarding the site conservation, the people, then, combine between the existed habitus and the available capitals. Not only economic or material capitals of which the people utilize, but they also significantly utilize cultural, social, and symbolic capitals which can be invested and inherited to produce several other beneficial capital to gain certain positions in particular area. Furthermore, it is also revealed that the conservation practices done are fully handled by Balai Pelestarian Situs Manusia Purba Sangiran (BPSMPS) / Premordial man conservation office. However, the institution does not work independently, but rather involve the people around the area as well. They, the people, take parts by handing the fossils found to the official party for the sake of research development. In addition, they also contribute by actively engaged in the empowerment programs managed by BPSMPS to develop the tourism potential of the site (Museum)

Keywords: Conservation practices, habitus, capitals, field, Sangiran

1. Introduction

Indonesia is a pluralistic country with varied culture existed as a part of its people's life. Due to the variety of cultures, Indonesia has many ancient relics in the form of ideologies, rituals, and physical artefacts (traditional architecture or traditional crafts) which can be found until today. They reflect the past life of people in certain area where they exist. Phenomenon, events, and stories happened in the past time are always crafted or told by the relics (physical) in the form of carved works. Through which, people, then, are able to know their identity as a community member, their position, and ideology inherited by their ancestor. Hence, in short, it can be seen that the relics inherited are very important for the people of Indonesia, and the conservation acts for the cultural heritage should be done

Speaking of cultural heritage, there is one, in Indonesia, that has been approved by UNESCO as a world heritage site. The site is known as Sangiran Premordial man site which is located in Krikilan village, in Sragen regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The site is well known as a rare natural laboratory as the subsoil in the area contains fossils of ancient life. For the experts, Sangiran is considered as a center of human evolution and also containing a lot of material potential to be used in learning human and environmental evolution. Due to the potentials and the distinction, therefore, UNESCO set the status of Sangiran site as a World Heritage Site no. 593 on December 1996. Such status can contribute to the development of people prosperity around the area. The idea is very likely to be a reality since the area around the site is potential to be a tourism destination especially for the educative one. Furthermore, Sangiran site is also potential to be a research center which is often visited by research team both domestic and international. However, to meet the potential, people around Sangiran site are need to be skillfull and knowledable on how to take beneficial point of the site status.

There are several researches done regarding the status of the site as an archaeological site. One of which is written by the title "Dinamika Pengelolaan Museum Sangiran 1983-2013" (The Dynamic of Sangiran Museum Management from 1983 to 2013). The purpose of the research was to find out the maagement of the museum so it can be the world heritage site (well known all over the world). The author concluded that the positive management done for the museum was the main reason why the museum can attract so many attention in the world as well as people care for the museum. Alot of local people, triggered by the management, realize that the museum is an important heritage for them to be cared. However, despite the fact, there are problems that are still

emerged. One of the major problem is the lack of qualified human resource to be involved in the management program. The study about the problem can be found in a research entitled “Strategi Dinas Pariwisata, Kebudayaan, Pemuda dan Olahraga Kabupaten Sragen dalam Pengembangan Situs Manusia Purbakala Sangiran” (The Strategy of Sragen Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sport Agency in developing Sangiran Archaeological Site) (2014).

Next, regarding the stewardship of Sangiran site, Indonesian government, then, forms an institution known as Balai Pelestarian Situs Manusia Purba Sangiran (BPSMPS) / primordial human site office. In its role as the official administrator of the site, BPSMPS said that the authority party have to, systematically, conserve Sangiran site in order to maintain cultural and historical values held by it which are a very important trope for the next generations.

However, the realization of such intention is not as easy as it seems. One of the problems faced by BPSMPS is that the area of the site is very large (56Km²). Such condition makes it hard for the institution to monitor fossil discovery process which, then, resulting in the lack fossils collection in the Sangiran Museum. Another problem exists is that despite of the protection of Indonesian law, the government has only 1% of total area in Sangiran site. In this condition, there are many fossil trade done by the villagers as they consider it as their rights as the owner of the land. In this case, the official authority (BPSMPS) makes a decision to take a beneficial point of Sangiran potential as a tourism destination by providing alternative job for the local people as service provider in the area and also involve them in the conservation practices manage by BPSMPS. To fulfill the intention, then, the authority held several empowerment programs to enhance people softskill and provide them with access to participate more in the conservation practices so they can get extra income. Hence, based on the background this research was intended and designed to investigate what and how exactly the social practices done by local people around Sangiran site in their participation in conserving the site.

2. Literature Review

The ideas constructed by Pierre Bourdieu stand on daily life phenomenon. The observations done by him are aimed to understand the perceptions and acts of agents/actors involved as well as the motives of the acts. To meet such purpose then, Bourdieu, use his theory known as Theory of Practice.

According to Bourdieu (2011), Social practice is considered as a result of dialectical dynamic between exterior internalization and interior internalization. Exterior is an objective structure which is positioned outside the actor, meanwhile, Interior is any attributes or structure attached to the actor [8]. From this idea, it can be interpreted that any observed and experienced phenomenon related to the actor is a disclosure of all the internalized which has been a part of the actors themselves. In a formulation, practice theory can be explained as (*Habitus X Capitals*) + *Field* = *Practice*.

Habitus, in a simple way, can be interpreted as behavior, mental or cognitive structure used by actors in their acts in daily social life. By which, actors are provided with a set of internalized schemes or patterns which they use to feel, to understand, to realize, and to judge the social world. Utilizing the patterns, actors, then, can produce their acts as well as appraise them. According to Bordieu, Habitus element covers knowledge, comprehension, perception, thought, values, and acts internalized in daily life. Moreover, he also stated that to see the habitus of the actors or the people in the targeted society, we should see the values believed and hold by them. Those values, when they are truly believed, can form the mindset and the behaviour which settled in their soul. In general, habitus is interconnected with the values believed by the agents; values of system, rules, law, ad meaning in their life and perception.

Another element included in theory of social practice is capitals. In daily life, individuals occupy certain positions in social space. Those positions are decided by the ownership of certain capitals. The numbers of capitals owned by every individual are varied based on capability of each of them. For those who have big numbers of capitals will be rewarded the high position/prestige. Bourdieu, in his theory, divided the categories of capital into four; economical capital, social capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital. In addition, he also stated that capitals are accumulated through investation which can be gained through inheritace. The capitals, potentially, provide the owner with chances to operate their placement of use. (Ariyani, 2014).

Especially for social capital, Woolcock divide it into three dimensions; bonding, bridging, and linking (Demartoto, 2014:32). “bonding” refer to relationship formed among individuals in premier group or adjacent neighbourhood. Such dimension is exculsive and prioritizing solidarity within the group. As for bridging, it is more of the relationship formed within the community in which the people came from different backgrounds. This type of dimension highlighted the relationship among individuals having power or access in enerpneurship and social relationship formed among secondary groups. The last, Linking is a dimension which allows people to explore and manage resources, ideas, information, and knowledge within a community or group at the level of formation and participation in a formal organization.

The next element in the practice theory proposed by Bourdieu is field (authority field. In a field there is struggle of actors to fight over the capitals, resource and power access. All of the struggles done, finally, will end

in the same point (having a position or status quo in a field). The more the capitals owned by an actor, the higher his position in a field/ field system.

Finally, the accumulation of habitus and capitals in a field will form a social practice in certain community. Similarly, in this research, the combinations of the mentioned elements of practice will reflect the pattern of social practice done by people around Sangiran museum.

3. Research Method

This study was designed using case study strategy as it is intended to investigate and reveal the background conditions and environmental interaction patterns in a society. In general, case study is the most suitable to be used in a research revealing cause and effect relation in a phenomenon (“*how*” or “*why*”) (Yin, 2013). Hence, the strategy is very relevant to be used in this study since it addresses the same categorization.

Regarding the sampling technique, the study used non-probability sampling approach with purposive sampling technique (Bungin, 2011). In the case of this study, researchers choose several samples (informants) whose information will be used as the data of the research. The informants are as listed below:

- Members of Balai Pelestarian Situs Manusia Purba Sangiran (BPSMPS) / Premordial man conservation office.
- Local public figures (Krikilan Village chief and his staffs).
- Local people who live around the Sangiran archaeological site.

Next, the data used in this study was collected by several technique; observation, deep interview, and documentation. Once they are collected, then, the data were processed through several stages; data reduction process, data presentation, and verification.

4. Finding and Discussion

Sangiran region which is located in Sragen Regency is an archaeological site in Java Island, Indonesia. According to UNESCO report in 1995, the area is one of the most important sites for research on human fossils. It is positioned equivalent to Zhoukoudian site in China, Willandra Lakes in Australia, Olduvai George in Tanzania, and Sterkfontein in South Africa. The width of the area is about 56 km². Administratively, it is located in two different areas, in Sragen Regency (Gemolong District, Kalijambe District, and Plupuh District) and Karanganyar Regency (Gondangrejo District). The contour of Sangiran site consists of rice fields, moor, and dry grounds.

To support the conservation program of Sangiran site, currently, the government has built one central museum and four cluster museum in the area. The central museum is the largest one which is located in Krikilan village; meanwhile, the four cluster museums are located in Ngebung Village, Manyarejo Village, Bukuran Village, and Dayu Village. The central museum is functioned as Visitor centre (information centre about primordial site in Java). Meanwhile, the four cluster museum functioned as supporting spot where the visitor can enrich their information about the site and its content.

The facts about Sangiran site and data gained in this study reflect that the internalized habitus of people around the site (Krikilan Village) is a Historical product created by historical factor and interaction between people in time and space. The habitus are repeatedly done and, finally, merges with local wisdom values which are, then, made as guidance for people in the area in doing their social acts. The habitus found in Krikilan Village are:

- People knowledge in the form of local wisdom related to the Balung Buto legend and kinds of fossil which are inherited from generation to generation.
- Peoples understanding on the status of Sangiran as a international cultural heritage which is protected by the law
- Perception shaped among people that the existence of Sangiran site can improve their living standarts at it provides new employments.
- There is loyalty to the authorized institution (BPSMPS), to the neighbor, and to relatives.
- There are acts reflecting the people’s identity as Javanese shown by the use of “Kromo Inggil” in their daily life and there is also a character full of work ethics of the farmers which can be seen from their enthusiasm to entrepreneurship in the area around the Museum.

Utilizing such habitus, the people around the site are able to understand social world around them. Moreover, the habitus shaped influence the people way of thinking significantly. For example; the understanding, comprehension, and perception formed about the site lead the decision made by the people in every acts they do. The majority of people in Krikilan Village come from poor family who own unproductive agricultural lands and relatively low level of education. Hence, with the developed knowledge, as the influence of Sangiran site existence, about fossils, research development history, Sangiran status as a tourism destination and perception about its potential in increasing people standart of living can spur work ethic of the community to compete in

getting the benefits of the existence of Sangiran site. Of course, the competition needs capitals or assets. Those elements are important in supporting the actors to obtain their goal. Hence, to fulfill their intention, the actors use capitals which they owned in a certain field maximally.

Another fact revealed about Sangiran sites is that the conservation practice in the site is dominated by BPSMPS as the authorized party. The institution has the capacity in doing needed practices including fossil excavation, providing land compensation to the people around the site, socializing Indonesian law number 11 of 2010 on cultural preservation, awarding reward and certificate to the people who hands the fossils, managing fossil treatment and storage, promoting Sangiran museum, and administering empowerment program to involve local community to be actively take part in the conservation practices.

BPSMPS, with its practices, is a part of a big process involving several elements. The underlying patterns of element of the practices (having high loyalty, high social capitals, and high cultural capitals) create a conservation practice through the ability to identify the area containing fossil, to excavate the fossil, and to treat the fossil. However, economically, BPSMPS is not too active as it has the donation from Indonesian government and experts help from UNESCO so there is no need for the institution to hire specialists and consultants in maintaining the site. Having no concern about economical constraint, then, the value of loyalty to the government is increased which can be seen from how good BPSMPS do its job in managing the museum. Even, BPSMPS provides integrated service supporting people's participation in the conservation practices.

Although in the previous point of elucidation is said that the authority of conservation practice is held by BPSMPS, it doesn't mean that the institution works independently and separately from the local community. In fact, it involves the people in the conservation practices. There are two aspect in which local people have certain roles; submission of fossil findings, and enrolls in empowerment programs in order to develop Sangiran museum.

Regarding fossil, it is not a new item for people in Krikilan Village. It has long been known as "*balung buto*" (blind bones), even, before it was visited by Von Koenigswald, a researcher from netherland, in 1930's. At first, the fossils found are only kept in a storage by local people or hanged out of the house as what they call "*penolak bala*" (lucky charm). However, when research in Sangiran became massive, people started to understand the economic value of the fossils. Because of this condition, then, they are appealed to hand the fossils found to the research team. As the incentive for the handers of fossils, BPSMPS provides rewards and certificate for their cooperation.

Not only participate in fossil submitting, people around the Sangiran site also actively engaged in empowerment programs managed by BPSMPS such as; souvenir making training, tour guide training, and home stay management training. Those trainings are expected to be an important provision which, indirectly, can provide economical aids both for local people's prosperity and the sustainability of Sangiran site as a cultural heritage. In the same intention, BPSMPS also involve souvenir merchant and food merchant union to participate in accordance with the capital owned.

The underlying practice pattern of the craftsmen of the souvenir and the merchants is based on the ownership of high cultural capital from which they have, individually or grouply, the ability in creative industry. Beside the pattern created by cultural capital, there is also economical pattern exist reflecting from cooperation taking place between souvenir craftsmen, merchants, and distributors. Such cooperation, then, forms a network link between them. In addition, the bridging exists between the merchants also contribute to the strengthening of their existence. However, from all the relation mentioned, there is bigger network formed which known as "bonding". Such network is formed as the result of union stewardship which is based on the principle of kinship. Of course, the condition gives much help both for the people, individually or grouply, in maintaining the system strength and regeneration.

Next, as what has been mentioned before, there is also practice pattern formed between the food merchants. The underlying factors of the patterns formation is that there are strong work ethic owned by the people around the site area and also strong economic capital gained from the authorized party's assistance which results in the people's financial strengthening. In addition, the merger of traders in the art group "teater sangir" makes a certain attraction for the people in forming solidarity among them to conserve the typical arts of Sangiran.

Similar to the practice pattern formed among the souvenir merchants, there is also "bridging and bonding" formed among the food merchants which is reflected from the creation of Sangiran food merchant association as an effort to maintain their strength, existence, and regeneration so their family member can inherit the profession as a food merchant without encountering many difficulties.

Furthermore, Sangiran site status as international tourism destination also open the opportunity for the formation of other practice patterns (tour guide and home stay business) to support the sustainability of Sangiran museum. Slightly different from the practice patterns among food and souvenir merchants which are dominated by economic capital, the practice patterns among tour guide and home stay business tends to be dominated by background habitus and strong cultural capital.

For the tour guides, their habitus is gained from their long experience in the area. Commonly, the tour guides are local people who are very familiar, since their childhood, with fossil research and excavation, hence,

their knowledge about fossil and the detail of the site is second to none. Regarding the cultural capital, they inherit it from generation to generation or from formal education (including English learning). Hence, the strong abilities had by the local tour guide make them perfect for the role.

Similar to the patterns formed among the tour guides, for the home stay entrepreneur, the patterns formed is dominated by background habitus and strong cultural capital which they get from their long experience lived in the site area. Even, some of the owners of home stay also serve as tour guides.

However, specifically for home stay business, the existence of social capital also has a great effect. It can be seen from the effort done by the owners of home stay in involving local other members of the community around the site who have cooking ability to be the catering supplier. In addition, they also, individually or in groups, have done the effort to lend money from banks.

Another fact about Sangiran is it is located in agricultural area. People of Sangiran region are, commonly, farmers who have hard worker, persevering, and tenacious habitus. Hence, with high work ethic and tenacity owned by the people, which are combined with the capitals and resources exists in the area, the people can be creative to develop their region by opening businesses in craft, culinary, tour guide services, and lodging services. Such practice, of course, is supported by the empowerment program managed by BPSMPS which is targeted for the development of tourism area around Sangiran Museum. The synergy between the people and the authorized party can ease the preservation of Sangiran site.

5. Conclusion

From all the facts revealed, it can be concluded that the conservation practice taken place in Sangiran archaeological site are dominated by BPSMPS as the authorized party but in the administration it also involves local peoples as supporting party. Local people involved take several roles in their contribution in conservation practice; actively engaged in the submission of fossil findings, and involved in empowerment programs managed by BPSMPS. As for the empowerment programs mentioned are training on souvenir production, tour guiding, and home stay management. Those trainings have a high prospect in improving the welfare around the location and the sustainability of the Sangiran site as well.

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