

# **The Meaning And Symbol Of Dodol Dawet In The Javanese Traditional Wedding Procession In Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency**

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**Abstract.** *The Javanese traditional wedding tradition is one of the unique cultural heritage values that are present and developing in Indonesia. This research aims to discover the meaning and symbol of Dodol Dawet carried out during the Javanese traditional wedding procession in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency, East Java. The method in this study uses a phenomenological perspective with a qualitative approach. The subject of this research is the meaning and symbol of Dodol Dawet, while the object of this research is Javanese traditional marriage in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency. The informants in this study were five people, including makeup artists, cultural experts, guests, and Dodol Dawet tradition actors. Interviews with informants were carried out for data collection. The results of this study are Dodol Dawet the parents' readiness to release their children to go to the level of marriage with their partners and hoping to cooperate in family life. The relevance felt after the implementation is the strengthening of social bonds, increased cultural awareness, spiritual balance, and learning of life values such as loyalty, cooperation, and responsibility in family and marriage relationships.*

**Keywords:** *symbol meaning, marriage, tradition, culture, Javanese customs.*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Culture is a way of life that is created and shared by a society, inherited from generation to generation, and integrated into society. It serves as a means of communication and fosters a sense of satisfaction and an emotional connection with cultural ideals. The cultural characteristics of East Java are manifested in the wedding ceremony, which serves as a means to celebrate and embrace the union of two individuals. Therefore, Marriage is considered a beautiful moment that every couple is looking forward to. In the book *Myth of the Eternal Return Movement*, Eliade (2002) is sacred, in the sense that it is manifested as a reality that is completely different from the "natural" reality. The expression "sacred" in Javanese terms is synonymous with the concepts of sacred, wingit, haunted, and supernatural. Because the implementation of Javanese rituals is an effort to communicate with the Almighty, especially the Creator (God), the term "sacred" is always synonymous with all the rituals they organize. The tradition of Dodol Dawet in Javanese traditional wedding processions has a philosophical foundation that can be a socio-cultural framework for current and future generations of Javanese society. Dodol or adol is a word from the Javanese language which means "selling". Dawet is a traditional drink that originated from Jepara, a city on the island of Java. This drink is made from pandan leaves and rice flour or glutinous rice flour. The drink consists of brown sugar, coconut milk, and grated ice. The taste of this sweet drink is savory and sweet. The tradition of Dodol Dawet is carried out by the bride's family after the procession. The executor of this procession is usually the mother of the bride accompanied by her husband, and shaded by an umbrella on it. The process of serving dawet is carried out with great attention and customs that have become part of the tradition. The money used in the Dodol Dawet transaction is not real money, but toy money made from tile fragments, which is usually called the term Kreweng. In this tradition, the father of the bride serves

as the recipient of the money. Meanwhile, the bride's mother is responsible for providing wet materials to the buyers. The tradition of Dodol Dawet is not only a complement to a series of Javanese traditional wedding traditions but also carries a certain meaning.

Some people do not do all the traditions at Javanese traditional weddings, one of which is the tradition of Dodol Dawet, namely; Because of the lack of cost, and lately, people have been more dominant in choosing the modern concept of marriage. People who understand the purpose of the Dodol Dawet tradition say that parents have the determination to mate or release and give up to marry their children. In Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency, there is one family that still preserves the tradition of Dodol Dawet at the wedding procession. In the Javanese traditional wedding tradition, Dodol Dawet is not just a ceremonial event but has meaning in every series of activities and symbols used. Javanese Society, As custodians of cultural history, may not have comprehensive knowledge or understanding of the meaning or intent behind all the rituals included in traditional Javanese wedding ceremonies. In addition, the people of Sidoarjo Regency, especially the Javanese people, consistently appreciate and maintain their traditions and culture as a means to express their affection and concern for the cultural heritage of their ancestors which has been a fundamental aspect of Javanese identity for a long time.

The purpose of this study is to find out the meaning of Dodol Dawet in the tradition of Javanese traditional wedding processions in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency, East Java. In this regard, axiologically this study offers a new perspective on the symbolic meaning of Dodol Dawet. Providing insight in the form of knowledge in interpreting Dodol Dawet and increasing the awareness of the younger generation on the importance of understanding the messages conveyed through the Dodol Dawet tradition. Preserving and upholding the traditions and culture of ancestors may be a challenging task for any individual. This phenomenon arises from the assumption that the customs of our ancestors are very ancient. Another element is related to the obstacles that individuals have in understanding and acquiring knowledge about the nature and intricacies of culture. This research aims to explore the meaning of communication and communication situations in the Dodol Dawet tradition that takes place in Javanese traditional wedding processions. As well as digging up what symbols are contained in the Dodol Dawet custom in Javanese traditional wedding processions.

Furthermore, research conducted by Dandi Golontalo, et al. (2023) that the Pamona language uses verbal symbolic meanings through the use of questions asked by the customary council to the bride-to-be. These questions aim to assess the readiness of the individual concerned. In addition, there is also the term "kayori" used by traditional leaders which means joy because it marks the completion of the mamongo matende ceremony. The traditional clothing of the Pamona Tribe contains nonverbal symbolism, as well as the use of mamongo gifts which symbolizes the good intentions of men when proposing to future wives. If the bride-to-be opens the mamongo gift and is willing to decorate the gold necklace that has been provided, it is considered an official acceptance of the marriage proposal.

Further research was conducted by Tily and Muhammad Sahrul (2019). This study shows that trust and loyalty are fundamental pillars that underlie traditional wedding ceremonies, such as wa'a

mama, kalondo bunti siwe, boho oi mbaru, kapanca, boho oi ndeu, and nenggu. Before committing to marriage, the bride and groom go through a long process that aims to foster strong bonds between their respective families. This is done to ensure a harmonious family relationship for the couple on the journey of building a lasting and lasting household. The nika ro neku ritual is still carried out today as a means of expressing gratitude to Allah SWT for the beauty of marriage.

Further research conducted by Lisda, Wimsje Revlin Palar, and Viktory Nicodemus Joufree Rotty (2020) found that the traditional Ritual of Rambu Solo of the Tana Toraja people contains symbols that are very closely related to their culture. These symbols represent the many classes or social strata in Toraja society. The Toraja community is composed of seven layers, with the highest level being referred to as nobility.

Previous research was then conducted by Vinsensius Lai, et al. (2019). The results of this study can be used to describe the symbolic meaning of objects used in the funeral ceremony of Dayak Bahau Umaaq Luhah and the Catholic Church. The symbols of goods in funeral ceremonies are believed to protect the spirits of the deceased and the living, according to the Dayak Bahau Umaaq Luhah community. Meanwhile, in the Catholic Church, object symbols aim to ensure the salvation of the soul of the deceased.

Further research conducted by Erna Suminar (2020) showed that there was a correlation between the sign of Betel Pinang and traditional religious beliefs passed down from previous generations. The act of performing ritual communication to pay respect to the deceased betel nut has important ethical values and has a deep meaning. Betel serves as a metaphor to bring together people from different tribes and facilitate different types of communication that have meaning and value in the context of family and friendship. What's more, people change the importance of this as social relationships develop. Betel nut functions as a means of negotiation, lobbying, and access to the realm of political communication, which then undergoes significant changes.

The theory used to explore the meaning and symbol of Dodol Dawet in the Javanese traditional wedding procession in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency is the symbol theory. Susanne Langer defines symbols as a tool of human cognition or conceptualization that represents or symbolizes something. A set of symbols works by establishing relationships between a concept, general idea, pattern, or shape. Symbols have the power to encourage individuals to reflect on something different from their physical existence, Littlejohn (2009). Susanne Langer's theory of symbols can help in understanding the symbolic meanings in the tradition of Dodol Dawet in Javanese traditional weddings by analyzing and identifying the symbols used in the tradition. Susanne Langer's theory of symbols can also be applied by looking at symbols that contain deep meanings and go beyond mere physical representations. Applying Susanne Langer's theory of symbols can understand that the tradition of Dodol Dawet in Javanese traditional weddings is not only a series of actions and physical symbolism, but an expression of human understanding of relationships, commitment, love and a deeper meaning of life.

From the above statement, the researcher is interested in raising this theme in his research which aims to find out the meaning and symbol of Dodol Dawet in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency.

## **II.METHODS**

The method used in this study uses the phenomenological perspective of Alfred Schutz with a qualitative research method. Alfred Schutz said that phenomenological analysis must understand the meaning and social reality experienced by the subject in society. He emphasized the importance of understanding how the subject understands and interacts with his social environment, Nindito (2005). The qualitative approach is a research methodology that relies on the constructivism and phenomenological paradigm in pursuing scientific progress. Muslim (2018) The data in this study were collected using interview, observation, and documentation methods from people who were directly involved in the implementation of the Dodol Dawet custom in the Javanese traditional wedding procession in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency.

The subject of this research is the meaning and symbol of Dodol Dawet, while the object of this research is Javanese traditional marriage in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency. The informants in this study were five people, including makeup artists, cultural experts, guests, and Dodol Dawet tradition actors. Data collection was carried out by interviews with informants.

## **III.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In a wedding, there are often various implementation processes, for example, Siraman in Javanese traditional wedding rituals is a procession of bathing the bride and groom with water media that has been mixed with various types of flowers and leaves that function to clean themselves and pray for a smooth wedding. In Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency, there is one family that still preserves the tradition of Dodol Dawet which is used in Javanese traditional wedding processions. Based on the results of interviews with residents and wedding procession organizers, the reason why the Dodol Dawet tradition is held is that it has a deep meaning and philosophy that is closely related to the hopes and prayers of the bride and groom. Here are some of the results of interviews with informants about the tradition of Dodol Dawet.

### **The Meaning of Dodol Dawet in Javanese Traditional Wedding Procession**

The Meaning and Symbol of Dodol Dawet in the Javanese Traditional Wedding Procession in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency was researched by conducting interviews with informants and resource persons. The informants include makeup artists, cultural experts, guests, and actors of the Dodol Dawet tradition. During the interview, the researcher asked questions about understanding the tradition of Dodol Dawet, as explained by Agus as a cultural enthusiast, as follows: "In my opinion, Dodol Dawet is one of a series of ceremonies from the celebration ceremony or traditional Javanese wedding party, usually the momentum of Dodol Dawet is carried out after the flushing ceremony. All Javanese traditional ceremonies have the meaning of asking God, it depends on us who wants to peel it off or not. For example, in the Dodol Dawet ceremony, the dawet must be made from palm tree rice flour, so it's not just as long as you make it, you are usually given a green color or when you make it, you are given a piece of pandan leaf so that it smells good and the color is green, and you use coconut milk and Javanese sugar. There is an implicit meaning in the Dodol

Dawet ceremony, including that after performing the flushing ceremony, it is hoped that the bride and groom will bring a good aura and can raise the family name such as the fragrance produced from the dawet made earlier". (Agus, Balongmacekan Village, 05/07/2023)

Based on the results of an interview with Mrs. Dwi as a Dodol Dawet tradition, Mrs. Dwi gave the meaning of Dodol Dawet as a hope that in the future the bride and groom would get abundant sustenance and be beneficial for household life. Meanwhile, according to Indah as a guest as well as a buyer of dawet, it is interpreted as a hope that her wedding the next day will be visited by many guests. Then, according to the resource person, Santi as a makeup artist, means that the two families share happiness and embrace the marriage as a combination of two new families.

### **Dodol Dawet Symbol in Javanese Traditional Wedding Procession**

Symbols have a broad and diverse meaning, depending on the context and culture. Symbols are an important part of human life. Symbols are used to communicate, express ideas, and build identities. Symbols can also have deep personal meaning for individuals.

Based on an interview with Mrs. Dwi a Dodol Dawet tradition actor, it was explained that there was a meaning to the symbol of the tools and materials for making Dodol Dawet during the Javanese traditional wedding procession, the following is the explanation:

“Alat bahan sing didamel kanggo tradisi Dodol Dawet niku wonten maknane pisan. Misale koyok duek seng digae tumbas iku ndugi pecahane genting utowo sebutane kreweng, maknane iku menungso diciptakno teko lemah, nafkahe teko lemah pisan. Terus cendol iku yo ono maknane Mbak. Cendol sing bunder iku ngelambangno kebulatane hati lan kesiapane wong tuo damel ngeculno masa lajang anak e. Jumlah cendol seng katah iku ngelambangno doa lan ngarepaken proses nikahe supoyo lancar lan katah tamu seng ndugi, roso legi lan gurih teng dawet iku ngelambangno karepane poro tamu undangan maringi restu lan dungo supoyo mempelai sejahtera lan tentrem. Es dawet biasae di wadah rong gentong seng teko lemah, gunane wadah gentong iku nggarai racikan es dawete adem senajan durung di paringi es batu”. (Mrs. Dwi, Balongmacekan Village, 03/07/2023)

Mrs. Dwi said that the medium of exchange used to buy dawet, called kreweng, symbolizes the idea that human existence comes from the soil and sustains itself through earthly resources. Implicitly, we are invited to reflect on our roots and sources of sustenance. To foster our awareness to appreciate the planet and uphold its survival in the long term. Cendol or dawet which is round also has a meaning because it symbolizes the determination and willingness of parents to release their children from single status. Parents exert unwavering focus and determination to provide the best service for their children who will undergo the wedding procession. The abundance of cendol is a representation of the many prayers and ideals so that the wedding ceremony runs smoothly with the presence of quite a large number of guests. Meanwhile, the sweet and savory taste of dawet is a symbol of the hope of the guests to give their blessings, the bride and groom are prosperous and have a peaceful life. The concoction of ice dawet is placed in two clay barrels, the benefits of dawet are placed in clay barrels to keep the dawet cool even though ice cubes have not been added.

Then according to the resource person Santi as a makeup artist, explained  
“ning keranjange dawet biasae wonten Semar lan Gareng, niku nggeh wonten maknane mbak. Nek semar iku seng Dodol Dawet kudu mesem ben katah seng maring, sedangkan gareng niku megane enteng mangsane maring, megare iring-iring. Maksute niku nyuon dungo marang gusti

Allah, ben wayah gadah damel mboten udan rumiyen”. (Santi, Balongmacekan Village, 07/07/2023)

Resource person Santi said that in the dawet basket, there is a picture of Semar and Gareng puppets which also have their meaning. There is a picture of semar meaning that those who sell dawet must smile so that many people come, while Gareng means asking or praying to Allah so that during the celebration there will be no rain.

### **The Situation of Dodol Dawet in the Javanese Traditional Wedding Procession**

The description of the situation of selling Dodol Dawet at the wedding procession was explained by informant Mrs. Dwi as the perpetrator of the Dodol Dawet tradition, the following is her explanation:

“pas tradisi Dodol Dawet nang kene iko mbak, aku kan Umine utowo Ibune calon penganten wedok, dadi seng nglakoni iku Abah kaleh kulo Umine. Umi bagian Dodol Dawete sedangkan Abah bagian mayungi Umi ambek nerimo duit, duit iku teko kreweng seng sampun dijagani, lek teng Desa mendet kreweng pecahane genteng teng pinggire omah nggeh saget, seng penting podo krewenge. Krewenge iki teko pecahane genteng utowo kendi lan kreweng iki kan gawe gantine duik tapi gak onok nominale seng penting uwong pas tumbas dawet ngekekno kreweng nang uwong seng Dodol Dawet supoyo isok oleh dawete. Makna teko Umi kaleh Abah Dodol Dawet iku ngajarno supoyo iso bekerja sama pas wayae berumah tangga”. (Mrs. Dwi, Balongmacekan Village, 03/07/2023)

Mrs. Dwi, who is the mother of the bride-to-be, said that when the Dodol Dawet tradition took place at her residence, the one who sold the dawet was her mother while her father received money made from kreweng. The money made of kreweng has been provided by the person who has the event, but if the event is in the village, taking kreweng from the tile fragments next to the house is also allowed, the most important thing is that both are kreweng. The kreweng is made from broken tiles or jugs. Kreweng which is a substitute for money has no nominal price, which is important when people want to buy dawet at the wedding procession must bring one kreweng and then exchange it to the dawet seller to get the dawet. The meaning of this dawet selling is to instill in the bride-to-be the importance of cooperation in arranging the house in living together in the future. When couples have the awareness to collaborate and are aware of their background, they will seek to manage their lives effectively to foster marital harmony.

Based on the data obtained, the researcher has various perspectives related to the Dodol Dawet tradition, both in terms of informants and interview results with sources. The tradition of Dodol Dawet in Javanese traditional wedding processions, communication, and culture cannot be separated. In terms of communication, the tradition of Dodol Dawet can be classified as a form of communication that is ritual. The reason is, that the practice involves several small rituals carried out by the bride-to-be's parents. The tradition of Dodol Dawet uses certain tools and materials that have a symbolic meaning so that it gives rise to several small ceremonies. Traditional marriage rituals contain aspects of unity, order, balance, and systematic.

The meaning and symbols in the tradition of Dodol Dawet in the Javanese traditional wedding procession in Balongmacekan Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency are carried out in the form of tools and materials used as well as prayers carried out by the celebrants. Communication in the Dodol Dawet tradition uses Javanese with Javanese krama or subtle Javanese. However, often the prayers

that are offered and read can be understood by the people present at the event. Communication in the Dodol Dawet tradition is greatly influenced by the cultural system it adheres to. Before the Dodol Dawet event is carried out, it is required to first make dawet from predetermined ingredients such as dawet ingredients that use palm tree rice flour, make green color from pieces of pandan leaves that give a fragrant aroma, and making the sauce from coconut milk and Javanese sugar to give a sweet taste that has a meaning about the expectations of parents to the bride and groom so that after the wedding they are given good things so that the marriage lasts until death separate.

### **Phenomenology of Dodol Dawet in Javanese Traditional Wedding Procession**

The implementation of the Dodol Dawet tradition in the Javanese traditional wedding procession, of course, has a positive impact on the two brides in life after the wedding. Many meanings and prayers are offered in this tradition.

Based on the results of interviews about life after marriage, Mrs. Dwi as a Dodol Dawet tradition actor explained:

"sak marine anak kulo rabi sampek sakniki sampun ndue anak, seng tak rasakno teng keluarga e anak kulo niku ayem tentrem, harmonis, kaleh kerjasama e kentel. Enten tukarane, tapi nggeh mboten suwe. Anak kaleh mantu kulo niki wektu tukaran niku saling memahami satu sama lain, mboten egois karepe dewe. Mungkin niku efek ndugi doa wektu tradisi Dodol Dawet dilakoni. Kulo kiyambek nggeh mesti berharap, mugi-mugi anak kaleh mantu kulo keluargane langgeng sampek maut memisahkan, saling tresno, jowo kaleh anak e, lan kerjasama e mlaku sampek tuek benjeng." (Mrs. Dwi, Balongmacekan Village, 23/07/2024)

Mrs. Dwi said that her son's life after marriage until now has children, Mrs. Dwi feels that her son's family is harmonious and works together in supporting their household. In his child's family, of course, there are quarrels but they can understand each other so that the quarrels that occur never last long and are not selfish. Mrs. Dwi feels that her son's life is harmonious thanks to prayers and hopes in the tradition of Dodol Dawet at her child's wedding. Mrs. Dwi also always prays that her child's family will last and work together until they are old.

An interview was also conducted with Zizah As a bride who has carried out the tradition of Dodol Dawet in the Javanese traditional wedding procession, she explained:

"In the past, when the wedding day was carried out after yesterday doing the tradition of Dodol Dawet, I felt that many guests came, maybe only one or two people could not come on that day. I think maybe it's thanks to prayers and hopes in the tradition of Dodol Dawet yesterday. If the twists and turns of my life after marriage until now, I have 2 children. I feel that my family is quite harmonious and understands each other. My husband and I can also say that the cooperation in building this household is quite strong. When it comes to domestic quarrels, of course, there is, but the way we deal with them is by understanding each other. So, we never had a long fight. I am very grateful for the Dodol Dawet tradition at my wedding procession at that time. Many prayers and hopes were conveyed for my husband and I after marriage. My brother at his wedding also used the tradition of Dodol Dawet, and then passed it down to me to participate in preserving it as well. I am also happy to be able to participate in preserving the culture of the Dodol Dawet tradition at the wedding procession. I hope that later it can be passed down to my children so that they can know and preserve Javanese culture." (Zizah, Balongmacekan Village, 23/07/2024)

Based on the results of explanations from several informants who have been interviewed, the researcher found the reason why the Javanese traditional wedding tradition uses Dodol Dawet instead of dodol serebeh or others because dawet has a long history in Javanese culture and is often associated with wedding ceremonies and celebrations. While serebeh or others are better known as everyday dishes, not special dishes for traditional events. In Javanese traditional beliefs, dawet is believed to bring good luck and happiness to the bride. In a symbolic sense, the round shape of the dawet symbolizes the determination and agreement of the parents to approve their marriage. Meanwhile, celebs do not have a symbolic meaning. Even though the ingredients are the same, Dodol Dawet has a stronger traditional, symbolic, and belief meaning than dodol serebeh. This makes Dodol Dawet the right choice for Javanese traditional wedding traditions.

People who follow the tradition of Dodol Dawet may better understand its meaning and symbolism. They honor this tradition as an important part of cultural identity and as a way to honor ancestors and convey prayers and wishes for the future of the bride. This tradition shows the values that have been passed down from generation to generation, which makes it a cultural heritage that must be preserved.

Conversely, people who do not follow these traditions, especially those who are young or live in cities, may not understand or appreciate the principles. They often see this tradition as something outdated or irrelevant to contemporary life. This misunderstanding can lead to a lack of preservation of traditions and increased belief in marriage.

Residents who practice the Dodol Dawet tradition usually feel better because it strengthens social and spiritual ties in their communities. This tradition not only strengthens a sense of community and cultural identity but also serves as a way to convey prayers and wishes to God and their ancestors. Through participation in this tradition, they receive blessings and support from the community, which is believed to bring blessings in household life. This tradition also helps to increase respect and loyalty in family relationships, which is considered essential for fostering a harmonious and strong family.

On the one hand, citizens who do not follow these traditions, on the other hand, may not experience the same social and spiritual bonds. Modernization, urbanization, and changes in social values that prioritize practicality and efficiency over cultural preservation are some of the factors that influence their non-participation in these traditions. Those younger, in particular, may find these traditions archaic or incompatible with their more contemporary lifestyles. They also choose not to do traditions due to economic pressures, lack of understanding, and outside cultural influences. As such, they may be missing out on opportunities to build deeper social and spiritual connections with their ancestors and communities.

#### **IV.CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the analysis and discussion, it was concluded that Dodol Dawet is a ritual of selling dawet which is an important part of the Javanese traditional wedding tradition. This tradition is carried out by the bride's parents as a symbol of cooperation in the family, as well as prayers and good wishes for the life of the newlyweds. Each element in this tradition has a profound meaning; The round shape of the dawet symbolizes the determination of parents to let their children get married, the number of cendols symbolizes prayers for the smooth wedding procession and the presence of many guests,

while the sweet and savory taste of dawet is a symbol of hope for the guests to give their blessings, as well as a prosperous and peaceful life of the bride. The use of kreweng as a means of payment signifies the origin of humans from the earth, and fosters awareness of the importance of preserving the environment. This tradition of Dodol Dawet also teaches the bride-to-be the importance of cooperation in building a household, and after implementing it, the relevance felt is the strengthening of social ties, increased cultural awareness, spiritual balance, and learning life values such as loyalty, cooperation, and responsibility in family and marriage relationships.

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