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**Submission date:** 21-Dec-2017 10:15AM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 898629321

**File name:** role\_of\_culture\_in\_rural\_transformation.pdf (347.47K)

**Word count:** 3341

**Character count:** 18454



CITIES 2015 International Conference, Intelligent Planning Towards Smart Cities, CITIES 2015,  
3-4 November 2015, Surabaya, Indonesia

## Role of culture in rural transformation in Manding Village, Bantul Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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### Abstract

Manding, rural areas previously dominated by agricultural activities, transformed into a region of small craft industry, and rural tourism. The transformation process was driven by the desire to grow, while in the case of Manding the process was initially hindered by the prevailing tradition in the community. This study aimed to explore the role of culture in transformation process. The case study research was applied to illustrate the unique case of transformation from the traditional rural area into rural with industrial activity and to explore why and how cultures took place in such process including the rural-urban linkage.

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**Keywords:** transformation; rural; industry; physical; change.

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## 1. Introduction

Rural area in Indonesia is classified into three categories based on the quality of rural development. According to Indonesian Rule on Rural Classification and Typology in Indonesia (*Instruksi Menteri No. 11, Tahun 1972*), those are *desa swadaya*, *desa swakarsa*, and *desa swasembada*. The first, *desa swadaya*, is described as a village in a traditional culture and local traditions attached to them, and usually in the lowest welfare with the agrarian activity. The second called *desa swakarsa*, is village with a better rate of growth progress. A part of the population occupation has shifted from the primary sector (agriculture) into the secondary sector (non agriculture). And the last, *desa swasembada*, is self-sufficiency in social economic aspects which has developed the tertiary sectors (mostly industry). There are fix and incremental indicator to classify the rural areas. Density, nature, and accessibility of the villages with civilization are fix indicators where livelihood, production, customs, institutional, educational, governmental, and facilities are the incremental indicators. But Tacoli (2006) emphasizes the important of the rural-urban linkage including location, people, and activities as economic, social and cultural transformation engine. The power of transformation including in physical, economic, social and cultural tends to be bigger as the rural-urban relation closer.

Contrary to those process of transformation, Manding Village has a unique phenomenon. Before 1970, Manding was a closed area far from the main access to the city core of Yogyakarta. The closest access from the main road to the village was through a river Winongo without a bridge and only possible to cross the river by carts. The carts path was the main road of the village, but after twenty years there was a huge transformation which was caused by changes in the public response to a tradition which was originally perceive as an obstacle becomes the power to motivated them to grow. How it happens? And why it can be happened? This study aims to explore the role of culture in transformation process in of Manding Village. The benefit of the study is to give a new understanding the role of culture in transformation process, and also to give input to all stakeholders associated with the transformation of rural area.

## 2. Methods

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### 2.1. The Case Study Research

The case study research is a mix-method research, but to explore the unconsciousness side of transformation according to its culture, the qualitative empirical should be applied. The qualitative empirical research study is applied to explore the transformation phenomenon. The case study research strategy is used to develop the transformation theory using multiple source evidence. The strategy supports a specific case of Manding's transformation among several rural development, and it also has the capacity to explain causal links (Yin, 1989).



Fig. 1. Location of Study Case

The first step was to review the change on physical condition as the basis of a visual analysis of the transformation. The second step was based on in-depth interviews with landowners, leather showroom and workshop owner or the key-informant who lead the transformation process. Interview approach was developed to explore the situation during the process. Informants was identified by reference or as a so-called snowball sampling technique (Neuman, 1997). They were especially key person in the community who knew and were involved in the transformation process and also the governmental officer of Manding to find the map during the process. The third step, change of the village's main activity and spatial rural areas were analyzed in the frame of the culture during the transformation process based on information from the depth-interview. Manding is a leather craft center initiated from small group of people who were the farmers rice cultivators, they didn't own paddy field whereas other had many. Manding is located 15 km from the city of Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta is the best representation in the process of transformation, from the royal city into a city with administration privileges. Very strong cultural influences affect the process of transformation in Yogyakarta. Manding, as a rural area in Yogyakarta, also has cultural aspect in its transformation process.

Manding has a long history of transformation classified as high to medium level of transformation. Level of transformation is identified by measuring the physical, social, economic and cultural change of the area. From the physical, social and economical aspects, Manding is classified into high level of transformation because of their dramatic change of function from agrarian rural area to be the industrial rural area, but from the cultural aspect it classified as medium change since they still keep the tradition of Javanese law especially on the division of land inheritance (Pudianti, 2015).

## 2.2. Previous Study Related to Rural Transformation

The most recent study by Pudianti (2015) found that through collective unconsciousness of the people, there is a power of survival which generated power of rural transformation especially in the location factor as one of the physical aspect. Park & Kim (2011) also supported the importance of analyzing the background of the change in rural transformation study. But other rural transformation study emphasized the physical aspect of transformation (Saraswati, 2008), (Harcedy & Deguchi, 2010), (Banski & Wesolowska, 2010). On the other hand, Herawati (2013) explored the need of rural community to transform in order to achieve community welfare based on local resources. Among several studies which was looking the aspect of rural transformation, Pudianti, Syahbana & Suprati (2014), Park & Kim (2011), Ombeni & Deguchi (2010) focused the unconsciousness of transformation background to explore the intangible factor behind its process. Nonetheless, studies of transformations and specifically the cultural factor within rural area are still few. This study thus attempts to add to that research.

## 3. Result and Discussions

### 3.1. Chronological Growth

The village formation began around 1910 with paddy field owned by 60 % of people in Manding, other 40% were a Hodge. They had very low income and did not deserve to live. In 1947, 5 of 12 RT (RT= *Rukun Tetangga* means neighborhoods ) agreed to look for other opportunities in order to increase income. Three representatives of the neighborhood went to the Sultan palace of Yogyakarta and for 10 years they served there and learnt new skills of making saddles. And with simple tools they finally could make handicraft bags of leather. Until 1957 the core of the settlement clustered around the most strategic area. Carts passed through the main road of the village for business activity and make the area into a strategic area. Forty people followed the training from those three people to be leather craftsmen. Since then Manding became known as a leather craft villages, especially handbags and shoes.

After 1957 Manding became industrial rural area, the industrial business activity was not always in a good situation. From 1957-1962 was in a good condition, but in 1962-1976 the business decreased gradually because of the Japan product competition in the leather industry. 1976-1985 transactions increased again due to the attention of government with providing new facility. In 1985-1995 since raw materials monopoly, the growth was not so good.



The periods time of 1995-2006 there was a new innovation of leather product design. They made variation of leather handicraft from jackets, shoes, sandals and creation of mix material of bags. In 2006 Manding affected by natural disasters earthquake, which brought down the center of the leather industry. Various stakeholders helped the rebuilding of industrial activity. Manding bounced back since 2008 and gradually brought back its position as a center for leather industry. Power of survival increasingly tested over time in Manding.

### 3.2. Physical Characteristics and Transformation

To trace the transformation, first the element of transformation in existing core of rural industry is generally analyzed (figure 2). Second, to explain the factors affecting the physical transformations in the area, the interview of key person is done. Finally through an examination of all changing element, the physical characteristic are analyzed.

Table 1. Physical Element of Transformation

Element	Facts of Element
Street	Existing main street (figure 3b) → form is not straight line from the starting point to the end point
Showroom	Old main street (figure 3a) → there is no bridge to cross the river Domination of showroom with girl's name (figure 3c) Located in existing main street of Manding
Workshop	Scattered around the old main street (figure 3c)
Balai Desa (Village meeting hall)	Build in T-junction of old main street in 2007
Land tenure	Land inheritance using Islamic Javanese Law

Source : Observation, 2015



Fig 2. Form of Manding after 2008 until now

During transformation process of Manding, it is identified some elements related to the transformation of the agrarian village of Manding into rural industrial area, namely street, showroom, workshop, "balai desa" (village meeting hall), and land tenure (table 1). Street is the first important element in transformation process since the elements can show differences in the location of the new building functions. The new main road was built in 1970 including a bridge crossing the river Winongo (fig. 3b). Showroom is located along the new main road with the dominant Manding showroom named with girl's nickname. While the workshop is located in the aisles that used to be the main road (the old one) (fig. 3a). As a marker of existence of the old main road, at the junction which was once a main road used to access the cart was built "balai desa" (village meeting hall). The land inheritance is using Islamic Javanese law, that's why land owned by descendants of girls laid on the northern of Manding (showed by the showroom named with girl's nickname).

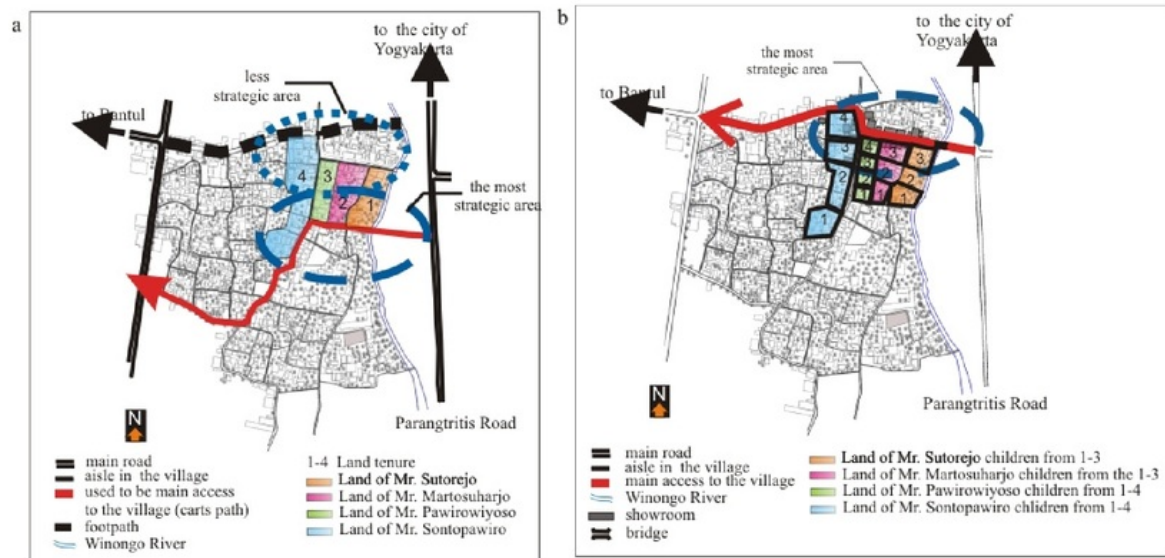


Fig.3 (a) Form of Manding 1910; (b) Form of Manding in 1970

From the physical characteristics of transformation it could be seen the cultural influence on the transformation process. Tradition land inheritance under the Islamic Javanese law (called "sepikul segendong") applies the concept of land division, which determines that the son get 2 parts while daughter 1 part, with the first priority is for the son firstborn child usually located in the most strategic area, second priority is for son from the second child onward, and the third priority is for the daughter or youngest child in less strategic area. So it forms the characteristic of the region into a zone of strategic area in the middle of the area for the firstborn males and less strategic zones in the north for the daughter or the youngest son (figure 3b) show it with the number to mark the most strategic (number 1) until less strategic (number 2 to 4)).

Tradition seems to create obstacles for the people who got land in less strategic areas. But the reality even these conditions encourage them to becoming creative. The two people of them (Mr. Ratno Suharjo and Mr. Wandu Utomo) together with one elders from the strategic area (Mr. Prapto Sudarmo) agreed to seek new opportunities in order to live better. They migrated to the palace of Yogyakarta to learn the skills of making leather goods. After ten years they wandered back in 1957 and taught these skills to 40 others people. It triggered the growth of leather workshops around the old main street. And then in 1970, when a new road was built, came along the showroom functions possessed by the majority of women.



### 3.3. Cultural aspect of rural transformation

From the chronological growth, it proves that they have strong power of survival which determine how strong they are in the process of transformation. It explains how and why they transform and how cultures took place in such process. There should be a renewed thinking of how culture could be used as a tool to drive the transformation process. Park (2011) said that the adaptation of life style in transformation process followed with the remodeling of the way of using the space whereas in Manding shows how physical characteristic and the obstacle of the culture encourage the community to solve the problem and transform the area to be the better place to live within it. Physical characteristic shows how to identify the power of transformation from the element of physical change when the power of culture inherent in the community. From these cases it appears that cultural aspects play an important role in the transformation process. The role can be seen from the high strength power of survival in Manding community. They can overcome the problem by changing the culture that inhibit these obstacles be an advantage for them.

### 3.4. Cultural Linkage as one of a rural transformation aspect

Based on Rondinelli, 1978, there were seven major linkage in spatial development: the physical linkages, economic linkages, population movement linkages, technological linkages, social linkages interaction, service delivery linkages, political, administrative, and organizational linkages, but from the case of Manding there is one major linkage called cultural linkage. Those spatial linkages refers to the integration of urban and rural development. In the city like Yogyakarta, which is culturally embedded, cultural linkage is important to be consider as one of the tools to give priority in the development of rural areas at suburban. The smart cities should give advantage to the suburban to transform into better economic activities through the creation of sosial and economic system, but in the specific case of culturallly embedded, it is suggested that the government can give more attention to helping the development of rural areas that have good ability to transform. The selection of such rural area has emphasized on visual analysis to look at the element which reflects the power of survival as the element of cultural linkage. The power of survival could be identified by checking the availability of the cultural inherent within the community.

The cultural linkage differs with social linkage in its focus of each approach. Cultural linkage emphasizes on intangible structure of the community which depends on how people interpret the meaning of physical changes as initial concept of transformation, while the social linkage identifies the tangible interaction of the community during the transformation process. But the cultural linkage could be found through the social linkage and physical linkage. So identifying the cultural linkage has to be new approach to determine on how cities interact with the rural area to obtain the optimal gain of rural transformation.

## 4. Conclusions

This study examined the role of culture in rural transformation in Manding Village as a single case of case study research which was a unique characteristic. Based on a field observation, the depth-interview and the research question, the study has highlighted several issues regarding rural transformation including: a) physical characteristic and the obstacle of the culture encourage the community to solve the problem and transform their area to be the better place to live within it, b) culture could be used as a tool to drive the transformation process, c) physical characteristic could be used to identify the power of transformation from the element of physical change when the power of culture inherent in the community.

From the rural-urban linkage it is important to look at the relation between the two in order to measure the power of transformation in related rural area. The smart cities should give advantage to the suburban to transform into better economic activities through the creation of social and economic system, but in the specific case of culturally embedded, it is suggested that the government can give more attention to helping the development of rural areas that have good ability to transform.

## Acknowledgements

Author would like to grateful for the valuable suggestions and time from the promotors. And author also thank for our conversation with Mr. Djumakir, Mr. Ratno Suharjo and Mr. Imam Sudarmono as the key-person who give valuable information for the study.

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