The Fiqh Munakahat Perspective toward Ngalor-Ngulon Tradition in Choosing a Wife Candidate in Banyuwangi Regency

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Abstract

The ngalor-ngulon tradition of the Javanese people in choosing a wife is a prohibition for the Javanese people, especially (men) not to marry women whose house, if pulled straight, forms the direction of ngalor-ngulon (northwest), because it is believed to cause havoc in the household. The focus of this research are: 1) How is the ngalor-ngulon tradition of the Javanese people in choosing a wife? 2) What are the views of community leaders on the ngalor-ngulon tradition of the Javanese community in choosing a wife? 3) How is the ngalor-ngulon tradition seen from the munakahat fiqh? Researchers used a field research model (qualitative) with a descriptive approach model with data collection techniques using three ways, namely: observation, interviews and documentation. The conclusions from this study include: 1) The ngalor-ngulon tradition is a rule for Javanese men not to marry women whose house is on the northwest corner of their house, meaning that Javanese men can marry any woman except the one whose house is ngalor-ngulon. 2) Of the four informants, three of them chose to keep and obey the rules passed down by the ancestors of the Javanese people because these rules had become public law, even though this was not exemplified in religion. 3) Even though this tradition is not mentioned in munakahat fiqh, it is not a violation of religious norms, it only adds to the rules in marriage and is not a violation. Therefore, obeying or violating the ngalor-ngulon tradition does not make the marriage valid or void.

Keywords: Tradition, Ngalor-Ngulon, Fiqh Munakahat.
Introduction

Marriage is an act of contract that justifies the relationship between a man and a woman, which was originally illegitimate so that the contract creates rights and obligations between the two.\(^1\) However, before carrying out a marriage there is a limit in choosing a potential partner by looking at certain criteria, one of which is the criteria regulated by Javanese customary law, namely the ngalor-ngulon tradition. in choosing a future wife before marriage.\(^2\)

The Javanese people have a variety of traditions and cultures left behind by the nation's ancestors, these legacies are still highly trusted and maintained by the community. One of the Javanese traditional beliefs, which is related to choosing a life partner, customs and traditions that govern the community in choosing a life partner, are still upheld by the community, especially those who still adhere to traditional beliefs.

Ngalor-ngulon tradition is a customary rule in marriage which is still maintained by the Javanese people to this day. The ngalor-ngulon tradition is a rule that is intended for Javanese people not to have a wedding with the direction of the groom's house to the bride's house is northwest. This means that a man is not prohibited from marrying a woman whose house is facing from the south to the north and then heading west or measured straight to the northwest or vice versa. Such marriages are prohibited from being carried out because they are considered to violate the customs and traditions prevailing in Javanese society.

However, regardless of the direction (ngalor-ngulon) they are allowed to enter into a marriage to establish the household they desire. This prohibition is a custom that has long been held and trusted by the Javanese people, especially in Tambakrejo Village, Muncar District, Banyuwangi Regency. In their belief, if the custom is violated then things will happen that result in disharmony in the family and even one of the two parents will experience a disaster either in the form of a prolonged illness or even death.\(^3\)

So far, the majority of Javanese people, especially Tambakrejo Village, Banyuwangi Regency, still believe in the prohibition of ngalor-ngulon marriage, but there are also some people who do not believe in it because they are considered never mentioned in the provisions of the Koran and al-hadist. Ngalor-ngulon marriages rarely occur, because most Javanese people choose to obey this tradition. This is evidenced by the data on the population of Tambakrejo Village who married in 2015-2018, there were 218 marriages and there were nine (9) marriages with the ngalor-ngulon direction.\(^4\) Of the 9 couples who violated the ngalor-ngulon

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tradition accordingly, 1 couple had died from the wife's parents and there was a divorce after 6 months of marriage.\(^5\)

Thus, it means that only a small portion of the Tambakrejo Village community does not adhere to this tradition. Indirectly it can make the mindset of the community that marriage with the ngalor-ngulon direction is a marriage that is not good to carry out, because in the belief of the Javanese people if the prohibition is ignored it is believed that it will result in disharmony in the family, even to the death of one of the husband and wife's parents, or mild consequences will experience a disaster in the form of prolonged illness or economic difficulties.\(^6\)

In the tradition of banning ngalor-ngulon marriages, the exact history is not known. The community can only say that this tradition is the legacy of the ancient Javanese ancestors and the Javanese people of Banyuwangi also still adhere to this tradition because not a few have experienced bad events after marrying in the direction of ngalor-ngulon.

Ngalor-ngulon tradition which is also still trusted by the people of Tambakrejo Village, Banyuwangi Regency as something that is still controversial among Javanese people, especially modern society.\(^7\) Therefore this study intends to find out how is the ngalor-ngulon tradition when viewed from the munakahat fiqh.

Based on the background of this problem, the focus of this research is, first, how is the ngalor-ngulon tradition of the Javanese community in choosing a wife? Second, how do community leaders in Tambakrejo Village respond to the ngalor-ngulon tradition? Third, How fiqh munakahat in reviewing the ngalor-ngulon tradition of the Javanese people?

**Research Methods**

This research uses two approaches. The first is a normative approach, because it uses Islamic religious norms or views or teachings that are exemplified in Islam, namely fiqh munakahat.\(^8\) The second approach used in this research is the case study approach.\(^9\) The type of research used in this research is a type of juridical-empirical research which in other words is a type of sociological legal research and can also be called field research.\(^10\) The location of this research is in Tambakrejo Village, Muncar District, Banyuwangi Regency. While the subjects of this study include: Traditional leaders of Tambakrejo Village, in this case Mbah Zaenuri who lives in Curah Pacul Hamlet, Tambakrejo Village. Religious figures from Tambakrejo Village, including Mr. Nur Hadi, a Mudin of Tambakrejo Village who lives in the hamlet of the pacul, Mr. Sarbini Hasan, a religious figure and at the same time a member of the Tambakrejo Village Consultative Council (BPD), and Ustadz Syaifuddin, a religious figure who resides in living in Curah Krakal Hamlet, Tambakrejo Village, he is a Koran teacher at

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\(^{6}\) Lailia Nailur Rahma Dani & Dwi Hastuti, “Ratio Decidendi of Judges toward Divorce Cases Due to Domestic Violence (KDRT) at the Jember Religious Court” Rechtenstudent Journal Vol. 4 No. 1 (2023), 29-30.


\(^{9}\) Imam Gunawan, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Teori dan Praktik* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2014), 89.

\(^{10}\) Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfalpha, 2016), 34.
TPQ Darul Hafidzin and a KUA pre-marital guidance officer, Muncar District. The data collection techniques used in this study, namely: observation, interviews and documentation.  

**Result and Discussion**

**The Ngalor-ngulon Tradition of the Javanese Community in Choosing a Wife Candidate**

The *ngalor-ngulon* tradition is a tradition in which a man is prohibited from marrying a woman whose house is to the northwest of the man’s house, according to the beliefs of the Javanese people, especially the people of Tambakrejo Village, Muncar District, Banyuwangi Regency, if the marriage is still carried out it will cause problems later in the marriage. The types of problems that may occur include; the divorce that will befall the marriage, it is difficult to find the economy, his parents are prolonged illness, even to the point of death.

According to the observations made by the author, the *ngalor-ngulon* tradition has no definite provisions when it began to take effect and who initiated it. The *ngalor-ngulon* tradition only spreads through word of mouth or community stories to others and their children and grandchildren, therefore this tradition is still running and is still firmly adhered to by the Javanese people, especially the people of Tambakrejo Village, Muncar District, Banyuwangi Regency.

In an interview conducted by the researcher with Mbah Zaenuri who is a traditional leader who is a reference for the people of Tambakrejo Village in holding traditional and religious activities, the researcher obtained information in the interview, he explained regarding the *ngalor-ngulon* tradition of the Javanese community in the criteria for choosing a future wife, namely:

> “Larangan rabi ngalor-ngulon ora oleh mergo enek sng omong nguyui Ka’bah. Lha enek sng omong maneh kui tuwek wedok e, dadi ibarate wong lanang ngerabi mbah’e. Enek maneh sing omong nek arah ngalor-ngulon kui diibaratne koyo wong ngubur mayit, mujir ngalor madep ngulon. Lha enek sing omong pokok e lakune ngalor ngulon, wedok e ngalor-ngulon podo wae, nanging nek aku sing duwe laku kui wong lanang, mulane nek ngidul ngetan ora termasuk ngalor ngulon. mergo sing melaku kui wong lanang”.

The meaning of his statement if translated is;

> “The ban on *ngalor-ngulon* marriages cannot be (violated) because there are those who think that this is (likened to) urinating on the Kaaba. There are also those who argue that women are older, so it’s like a man marrying his grandparents. There are also those who argue that the direction of *ngalor-ngulon* is likened to the position in burying a body, namely the head is in the north (*ngalor*) and facing west (*kulon*). There is also another opinion which says that the main direction of the house is *ngalor-ngulon*, both women and men are the same. However, in my opinion, it is the man who has the goal (to pick up a mate), therefore if a man finds a mate (the direction of his house), *ngidul-ngetan* (southeast) is not considered *ngalor-ngulon*”.

Apart from that, he also explained the impact if he violated the *ngalor-ngulon* marriage, he said:

> “Lha nek ngalor-ngulon kui mau di langgar mesti sing kalah (mati) sing tuwek”.

This means that if the ban on *ngalor-ngulon* marriage is violated, the parents will lose (die). From interviews with traditional figures from Tambakrejo Village, it can be concluded that:

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a. The criteria for choosing a prospective wife as regulated in the ngalor-ngulon tradition are the prohibition for a man to marry a woman whose house is in the Northwest of the house of the man who will marry her or ngidul-ngetan/southeast direction for women, thus men a man may marry a woman whose house is anywhere except the direction of ngalor-ngulon (northwest).

b. It is not known exactly when the ngalor-ngulon tradition started, because this tradition spread from story (word of mouth).

c. The prohibition on marrying ngalor-ngulon is likened to the position when burying a body, namely longitudinal (the head is in the north) and facing west. Therefore, the marriage was banned because it was considered to be disastrous, namely causing the death of the bride's parents.

Views of Tambakrejo Village Community Leaders on the Ngalor-Ngulon Tradition

The ngalor-ngulon tradition of the Javanese people is already embedded in the general public and is a rule that must be obeyed and only a small portion of the community does not believe in it. This is because several community leaders have different views on this matter, of the four informants who were used as subjects/source persons in the research, three of them argued that the tradition of prohibiting ngalor-ngulon marriage has never been exemplified in Islam. This has nothing to do with Islamic law but is a customary provision in which as a Javanese people and living on the island of Java it would be better to obey and respect what was passed down by the ancestors, because we do not know for sure what events or events happened in the past so such a tradition can be created.12

According to Mr. Nur Hadi, a religious figure who is also a mudin in Tambakrejo Village, in an interview with researchers he responded to the ban on ngalor-ngulon marriages that in Islam there are no rules regarding this matter, however, because custom has become law and has long been trusted by the Javanese people, the community must comply with the laws that apply in the area. Although there are some people, especially modern society, do not believe in this. Thus, he explained that regarding the impact of the ban on ngalor-ngulon marriage, it will occur according to the beliefs and suggestions of each person, if they believe in the truth regarding this custom, then the impact of the ban on marriage will actually occur.

In this case Mr. Sarbini Hasan, one of the religious leaders of Curah Krakal Hamlet, Tambakrejo Village, also conveyed something similar to Mr. Nur Hadi's opinion, that in his opinion, even though the ban on ngalor-ngulon marriage is not an Islamic religious teaching. However, he also did not dare to break it because he respected the ancestors of the Javanese people. Because it is undeniable that this will indirectly continue to affect people's lives, because the community views the case of the ngalor-ngulon marriage ban if it is violated it will have a bad impact on those who violate it, if this does not have an adverse impact the community will definitely dare to violate it.13

He said that as long as we still live in a Javanese environment and on the island of Java it is better to avoid ngalor-ngulon marriages, this is to guard against things that are not desirable

13 Mr. Nur Hadi Mudin Tambakrejo Village, interviewed by the Author on November 18, 2022.
and to be careful. He also conveyed in an interview with the Indonesian language; “Toh menikah nggak harus dengan seseorang yang arah rumahnya ngalor-ngulon juga ada, mencari jodoh dari arah rumah yang lain saja, misalnya yang rumahnya ngidul-ngetan atau ngidul-ngulon.” This means that he also obeys the customary prohibition of marrying ngalor-ngulon with the intention of being careful to guard against things that are not desirable in the marriage.\footnote{Mr. Sarbini Hasan, interviewed by the Author on November 25, 2022.}

A different opinion was conveyed by Ustadz Syaifuddin who is a Koran teacher for TPQ Darul Hafidzin Tambakrejo Village and is an Executing Officer for Premarital Guidance at the Muncar District Religious Affairs Office, he said in an interview that the tradition of banning ngalor-ngulon marriage has never been taught in Islam and violates it can have an impact on death is a form of polytheism because matters of death, mate and sustenance are the will of Allah SWT.\footnote{Mr. Syaifuddin (Muncar sub-district KUA pre-marital guidance officer), interviewed by the Author on November 25, 2022.}

From interviews with several religious leaders in Tambakrejo Village regarding their responses and attitudes regarding the tradition of banning ngalor-ngulon marriage, it can be concluded that:\footnote{Siti Barora, “Perlindungan Masyarakat Hukum Adat dalam Konstitusi sebagai Perwujudan Asas Equality Before the Law” de Jure Ilmiah Ilmu Hukum Vol. 1, No. 2 (2022), 153-169.}

a. The view of religious leaders regarding the tradition of banning ngalor-ngulon marriage is that they agree that the tradition of prohibiting ngalor-ngulon marriage is not taught in Islamic law. This has nothing to do with Islamic law.\footnote{M. Akbar, “Urgensi dan Strategi Konservasi Wibawa Hukum Dalam Masyarakat” Jurnal Tahqiqa: Jurnal Ilmiah Pemikiran Hukum Islam Vol. 13, No. 1 (2019), 51-61.}

b. However, regarding attitudes and responses regarding the practice of ngalor-ngulon marriage, they differed in opinion. Two of the three religious leaders said that although the ban on ngalor-ngulon marriage was not regulated in religion, they chose to follow a tradition that had long been trusted by the community. This is due to respect for Javanese ancestors and customs in society as Javanese. And one of them did not believe in this because according to him believing that the existence of such a marriage could cause death was a form of polytheism.

**Review of Fiqh Munakahat on the Ngalor-Ngulon Tradition of the Javanese Community in Choosing a Wife Candidate**

However, the provisions in choosing a prospective wife explained in Jurisprudence Munakahat can be understood that men are only prohibited from marrying women, including:\footnote{Fence M Wantu, “Mewujudkan Kepastian Hukum, Keadilan dan Kemanfaatan dalam Putusan Hakim di Peradilan Perdata” Jurnal Dinamika Hukum Vol. 12, No. 3 (2012), 479-489.}

A. Women who are prohibited from marrying forever include;

1) Women who are forbidden (haram) to marry because of lineage, namely: mothers, grandmothers, daughters, daughters of sons, sisters, aunts from the father’s line, aunts from the mother’s line, daughters of brothers and daughters from sister.

2) Women who are forbidden (haram) to marry because of marital ties, namely: father’s wife, grandfather’s wife, mother-in-law, wife’s grandmother (mother-in-law’s grandmother), and wife’s daughter (stepdaughter).
3) Women who are forbidden (haram) to marry because of breastfeeding, that is, as women who are forbidden to marry because of lineage.
4) Women who have been li’an, namely women who have been accused of committing adultery by their future husbands, are forbidden to marry forever.

B. Women who are prohibited from marrying temporarily
1) Women who are prohibited from marrying because of marital ties with their husbands and women who are still in the iddah period are forbidden (haram) to marry.
2) Women who are prohibited from marrying because of talaq bain kubra (a woman who has been divorced three times by her husband is unlawful to re-marry before the woman remarries another man and has mixed with her new husband)
3) It is forbidden to marry two women who are sisters
4) It is forbidden to marry a woman if you already have four wives
5) And it is forbidden to marry women of different religions.

While the recommendations in the criteria for choosing a future wife according to Rasulullah SAW. Based on (limaaliha) his wealth, (hasaabiha) his offspring, (jamaaliha) his beauty and (ad-diiniha) his religion. This means that men are encouraged to choose women who are equal or equal to them based on the four criteria above, if between men and women as husband and wife have compatibility and equivalence in the relationship then household happiness and harmony will be achieved, so that it can become sakinah mawaddah family wow mercy.20

In terms of the munakahat fiqh review of the ngalor-ngulon tradition of the Javanese people in choosing a wife, that in the ngalor-ngulon tradition the Javanese people have never been regulated in munakahat fiqh,21 in munakahat fiqh states the rules for men are prohibited from marrying certain women but not based on the direction of the ngalor-ngulon house, which is based on Qs. An-Nisa Verse 23 and the criteria for choosing a woman are not based on the direction of her house but as suggested by Rasulullah SAW regarding the criteria for choosing a woman to be a potential wife, namely based on (limaaliha) her wealth, (hasaabiha) her offspring, (jamaaliha) her beauty and (ad-diiniha) the goodness of her religion in terms of kafa’ah. Thus, in fiqh munakahat, marriage is considered valid if it fulfills the requirements and pillars regulated in religion.

Even though it is not regulated in fiqh munakahat but the ngalor-ngulon tradition does not conflict with Islamic law, this tradition only adds to the rules in marriage. Because basically in munakahat fiqh as long as the conditions and pillars of marriage have been fulfilled then the marriage is valid, therefore even though the direction of the prospective bride’s house is ngalor-ngulon, the conditions and pillars of marriage mentioned in fiqh munakahat are fulfilled then the marriage is still valid.22

Conclusion

Ngalor-ngulon tradition is a tradition that is believed by the Javanese people not to marry in the ngalor-ngulon direction, meaning that a Javanese man is prohibited from marrying a

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woman whose house is northwest of his house, because it is believed to have unwanted consequences. Both in his family, including the death of the economy, divorce and even the death of one of his family members. Thus a Javanese man is allowed to marry any woman except in the direction of ngalor-ngulon (northwest), for example ngidul-ngulon (southwest) or ngidul-ngetan (southeast) and so on.

Regarding the responses of community leaders regarding the tradition of banning ngalor-ngulon marriage, three out of four of their sources concluded that this kind of tradition is not regulated in religion but they still practice and obey this tradition because it has become a general rule and respects the ancestral heritage and to be careful of unwanted things. While one of them does not believe in this and adheres to what is taught in religion.

In munakahat fiqh, the ngalor-ngulon tradition is never mentioned in it, because basically the ngalor-ngulon tradition is not included in the Laws and Conditions for a valid marriage, so in conclusion breaking or complying with this tradition does not make a marriage void or not.

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