REVITALIZATION OF THE EARTH'S ALMS TRADITION WITH ISLAMIC RITUALS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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HIGHLIGHT
- Earth alms tradition  
- Islamic rituals  
- Integration of earth alms with Islamic traditions

ABSTRACT
Earth almsgiving is a tradition that has existed since the time of the ancestors in Indonesia. The tradition of the ancestors is a form of gratitude to God Almighty for the abundance of his grace in a certain region. Society must be able to distinguish between expressions of gratitude and destruction. This type of research is a qualitative case study in a certain society to thoroughly explore the benefits and meaningfulness of the essence of the earth’s alms tradition that still needs to be maintained in the digital era. Data analysis techniques use data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. The results showed that the earth alms tradition has a very strong Islamic philosophy and ritual, people must understand the essence of earth alms as a whole so as not to just follow the currents of the times. The factor that makes people want to hold the earth alms tradition is a form of gratitude for the abundance of grace from God Almighty. The
tradition of earth almsgiving is not shirked nor is it to satisfy the
lust of entertainment by holding a momentary feast, but must
stick to Islamic rituals according to the sharia of the Prophet
Muhammad SAW and the teachings of the saints along with the
guidance of religious leaders in the region.

KEYWORD
Earth Alms, Islamic Rituals, The Digital Era

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A. INTRODUCTION

Culture is a custom that has been carried out for a long time and is part of the
life of a group of people, usually from the same country, culture, time, class, or
religion. The most fundamental thing about tradition is the existence of information
that is passed on from generation to generation both written and oral. Javanese
people are indeed famous for the various types of cultural traditions in it (Ratih,
2019). Islam holds that all stages and processions of cultural acculturation in a
tradition may be preserved and maintained as long as the tradition has benefits and
does not cause negative effects and is not related to the technicalities of worship,
and as long as there is no textual evidence prohibiting it (Nahdhiyyah & Setiawan,
2022).

From the variety of traditions that exist in Javanese society, especially to the
point that it is very difficult to detect and explain in detail related to the number of
cultural traditions that exist in the Javanese society. One of the traditions of the
Javanese people that until now is still carried out and has become ingrained and has
become a routine for the people of Tlogowungu, Pati every year is the alms of the
earth.

This earth alms tradition is a form of traditional ritual that has been going on
for generations from the ancestors of the previous Javanese people. Its
implementation must be carried out very carefully, always straightening out
intentions, and believing that the tradition of almsgiving of the earth is only to
preserve culture and as a thanksgiving to Allah Glory to Him, the Exalted who has
given his sustenance through the earth, because otherwise, it can open the doors of
destruction (Hidayat & Ibrahim, 2021).

The tradition of earth almsgiving should not be perverted into a “momentary
feast” containing entertainments that are far from Islamic rituals. If this is done, it is
certainly a form of misappropriation that has developed for generations from the
saints and religious figures in a region. Because almsgiving means rejecting disaster, but with such alms will it be accepted by the Almighty?

Previous studies relevant to this scientific article include research from Hariman Surya Siregar and friends who reviewed the alms of the earth from the positive side (Siregar, Fikri, & Khorinnisa, 2021), Utina’s research on the role of barong on earth almsgiving (Utina, 2019), Thoriqul Huda’s research on Social Harmony in the Earth’s Alms Tradition which seeks to look at the earth’s alms tradition from a positive perspective (Huda, 2017), Research by Jumadi and Umi Harmawati which explained that there was controversy in the implementation of the earth’s alms tradition, some agreed and some opposed (Jumadi Jumadi & Harmawati, 2019), research by Muhammad Hanif, et al which states that the impact of myths on the sacredness of religious rituals in society, the digital generation has a variety of perspectives that show that sacredness in modern times has faded along with rapid technological advances (Hanif, Febriani, & Bedra, 2022), and Martin Rizaldi and Anin Lailatul Qodariyah’s research on values in the implementation of the earth’s alms tradition from the point of view of the theory of functionalism (Rizaldi & Qodariyah, 2021). Previous research studies still need to be developed, so this paper is very necessary to add insight and the essence of the earth’s alms tradition that should be obeyed.

B. METHOD

This research is based on field studies and literature studies. Field studies with the subjects of the People of Tajungsari Village, Tlogowungu District, Pati Regency, and literature studies by taking various relevant references from various credible and accountable scientific sources. The preparation of scientific articles uses templates provided by the Equatorial Journal and adheres to the rules of writing. In taking reference references, the author uses the application Zotero, Google Scholar, VOSviewer, Open Knowledge Map, Publish or Perish, as well as various competent indexing machines. Data analysis techniques using data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of the earth alms tradition in the Tlogowungu Pati community

Tlogowungu is a subdistrict in Pati Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. Tlogowungu District, which is located approximately 6 km north of the city of Pati, is one of the districts located on the east side of the slopes of Mount Muria. From this geographical situation, this district is one of the fertile agricultural areas. The main commodities of this area are rice, various fruits, and perennials such as teak trees. The boundaries of Tlogowungu District are:
To the north, it borders Gunungwungkal District. To the east, it borders Margoyoso District. To the south, it is bordered by Pati District. To the west, it borders the Gembong District.

Its area is 9,446 ha which is the district with the fifth largest area after Sukolilo district, Pucakwangi district, Winong district, and Kayen district. Most of the residents of the Tlogowungu sub-district work as farmers with the main commodities of rice, fruit crops, and perennials. Administratively, the Tlogowungu district consists of only 15 villages divided into 70 Community Pillars and 318 Neighbourhoods. Compared to other sub-districts in Pati Regency, Tlogowungu district, along with Gunungwungkal district is the district with the fourth least number of villages after Gembong district, Dukuhseti district and Cluwak district (Farida, Wahyuni, & Zulfida, 2019).

The word tradition means a customary custom of generations (from ancestors) that is still carried out in the community (Yanti, Jumadi, & Ridha, 2019). The tradition of almsgiving in Tlogowungu, Pati is an annual tradition in which each village is different at the time of its implementation. It is usually carried out in the month of Apit or Dhul Qa’dah, but sometimes the implementation depends on when the village experiences a bumper harvest as a form of gratitude from the community to Allah Glory to Him, the Exalted who has given sustenance (Saiin & Armita, 2021).

In the past, at the ceremony of the earth’s alms tradition, there were not many events and activities carried out in it. It’s just that, at the time of the event, usually, all the surrounding communities who celebrate it make tumpeng and snacks typical of the area and gather together in the place of the village elders, in the village hall, wells, reservoirs, tombs of elders or places that have been agreed upon by all local communities to hold the earth alms ritual event. After that, people bring tumpeng and snacks typical of the area to the village hall or a place to be prayed for by a local religious leader or elder. After being prayed for by elders or religious leaders, it is then again handed over to the local people who made it themselves.

The tumpeng rice and snacks typical of the area that has been prayed for by the village elders or local religious leaders are then eaten in a crowd by the people who celebrate the earth’s almsgiving event. However, some people bring tumpeng rice and snacks typical of the area home to eat and their relatives in their respective homes. The making of tumpeng rice and snacks typical of this area is one of the requirements that must be carried out during the traditional ceremony. According to the customs in this cultural tradition, among the foods that are the staple foods that must be present in the tradition of the earth alms ritual are tumpeng rice and roast chicken. While others such as drinks, fruits, and side dishes are only additional, not the top priority.

In the final event, later the farmers usually leave rice, heads, and chicken feet, all three of which are wrapped and placed in the corners of their respective rice plots. In its culmination, the earth alms ritual event ended with the performance of Barong and Tayub and chanting prayers together with the local community led by local religious leaders or village elders who had often and were accustomed to leading the ritual. There is something very interesting in the chanting of prayers that are continued in the ritual, collaboration
between the chanting of Javanese sentences and those combined with the treasures of prayers with Islamic nuances.

The earth alms ritual, which has become a routine for the people in Pati Regency, is one of the roads and a symbol of human respect for the land that is the source of life. According to stories from the ancestors of the early Javanese, "The land is a very great hero for human life on earth. Therefore, the land must be given a decent and great reward. And it is this ritual of almsgiving of the earth which they say is one of the most dominant symbols for the people of Pati district especially the farmers to show compassion and as a human appreciation for the earth that has given life to man". So that way the land that is stepped on will never be angry such as bad harvests and landslides so that it can be friendly side by side with the people who occupy it (Fauziyah & Bustomi, 2019).

In addition, the alms of the earth in the tradition of the Pati people is also a form of pouring and pouring out gratitude to Allah Glory to Him, the Exalted for the blessings and blessings that He has given. So that the entire Pati community can enjoy it. In the earth alms ritual there are usually Barong and Tayub performances which will be described below:

a. Tayub culture

Tayuban is one of the cultural arts in Pati. The word Tayuban comes from the word Tayub, which means a dance performed by men and women accompanied by gamelan and tembang, usually to enliven parties and so on. Tayub according to keroto boso is a summary of the word "ditoto guyub". Ditoto guyub is defined in the presentation of the art of tayuban the dance movements of the dancers and the gending of the accompaniment are arranged together so that in unison based on the agreement of the performers (dancers and growers) with the audience (Winarto, 2020).

The agreement aims to bring about familiarity and brotherhood. Tayuban art depicts welcoming guests or leaders who are respected by the community according to their respective ranks. The welcome was by the female performers who were called dance by handing over the sampur (shawl worn by the female dancer) at the direction of the runner. Guests who receive sampur or the term "ketiban sampur" have the honor to dance together with dance. Within the performing arts group, tayuban can be classified as traditional folk dance. The nature of the people is very prominent, it appears as an illustration of the soul of the supporting community, namely the rural community that is commonly found in the Pati Regency area, such as the nature of spontaneity, kinship, simplicity, a little harsh, but full of humor. As the characteristic of this dance that has become popular, Tayuban has spread almost all of Pati Regency.

b. Barong Art

Barong art or better known as Barongan art is a typical Central Javanese art. However, from several regions in Central Java, Pati Regency, which in quantity, its existence is more when compared to other regencies. Barong art is one of the folk arts that is very popular among the people of Pati, especially in rural communities. In Barong art, the people's traits of the Pati community are reflected, such as the nature
of spontaneity, kinship, simplicity, rudeness, hardness, compactness, and courage based on truth (Jazuli, Md, & Paranti, 2020).

Barongan in the art of barong is a dance that uses the guise and completeness of being a beast (lion), played by two people (one person in front, namely the head part, and one person behind, that is, the tail part) performed with the story of the charcoal candidate (Darmawan, 2020). Barongan's art takes the form of a group dance, which mimics the power of the movements of a Giant Lion. The role of Singo Barong in totality in the presentation is a very dominant figure, besides there are several figures that cannot be separated, namely:

1) Bujangganong / Pujonggo Anom
2) Joko Lodro / Gendruwo
3) Pasukan berkuda / reog
4) Noyontoko
5) Untub

In addition to the figures mentioned above, the performance of barong art is also equipped with several pieces of equipment that function as musical instruments, including Kendang, Gedhuk, Bonang, Saron, Demung, and Kempul. Along with the development of the times, there are several additions to modern instruments in the form of Drums, Trumpets, Large Drums, and Keyboards. Sometimes in some stagings, it is often combined with the art of intervening sari (Kristianto, 2019).

2. Factors That Cause the People of Tlogowungu Pati to Carry out the Earth Alms Tradition

Before the teachings of Islam entered, the people of Tlogowungu, Pati had had animistic beliefs, which is a belief in the existence of spirits or souls in objects, plants, animals, and also in humans themselves. Such a belief was their first religion. All who move are considered alive and have supernatural powers or spirits of bad or good character. With this belief, they assumed that besides all the spirits that existed, there was a spirit that was most powerful than man. And to avoid the spirit they worshipped him employing holding a ceremony accompanied by offerings (Anggoro, 2018).

The next belief is dynamism, that is, the belief in the supernatural power behind all natural forces, such as the sun, rain, wind, and pests. Furthermore, they carry out religious actions by trying to increase inner strength to influence the power of the universe or the universe. This is done so that all the forces of nature that will affect the lives of themselves and their families can be defeated (Arifiani & Suryadi, 2019).

The people of Tlogowungu, Pati are familiar with various traditional worship and ceremonies. Their ancestors lived in a realm of simple thoughts that affected his way of thinking. Their view of the problems of the world life is often narrow and more influenced by things in the occult realm. They assume the world is inhabited by a variety of ethereal beings and supernatural powers that can cause happiness and misery. Facing the supernatural world, human beings use feelings, for example, respect, glorification, fear, love,
and horror. This feeling arises in various deeds related to the supernatural world through ceremonies. A ceremony is a plea in worship or devotion aimed at the power of the ancestors who ruled human life so that the salvation and misery of man depended on that power.

The purpose of the earth alms ceremony is to ensure that the salvation and happiness of the afterlife are to accompany all residents of Tlogowungu, Pati. Almsgiving of the earth must be done with the aim of "diving" the fields they have so that agricultural products are abundant, then the earth they cultivate must be saved so that there is no disturbance. "Because, all the sustenance we get comes not only from ourselves, but through god's intervention," According to him, sustenance is not only money but also happiness, comfort, and security of living in society. The earth alms ceremony according to the belief in Tlogowungu, Pati must be carried out once every year. Usually, by carrying out the Earth alms ceremony, it is believed that it will bring good.

3. Revitalization of The Earth's Alms Tradition with Islamic Rituals

The ritual of offering offerings to a subtle creature or genie who is considered to be the waitress or ruler of a certain sacred place is a shirking habit (confirming Allah Glory to Him, the Exalted with a being) if they believe that the ethereal being can give goodness or wreak havoc to anyone, so that by offering the offering they hope to temper the anger of the ethereal being and that all their requests are fulfilled (Abd Rahman, 2020).

This custom has existed since the time of Jahiliyah before Allah Almighty sent His Messenger to establish tawhid (worship or self-servitude to Allah Almighty alone) and fight shirk in all its forms. Allah Almighty said:

'Consider' the Day He will gather them 'all' together and say, "O assembly of jinn! You misled humans in great numbers." And their human associates will say, "Our Lord! We benefited from each other's company,1 but now we have reached the term which You appointed for us." 'Then' He will say, "The Fire is your home, yours to stay in forever, except whoever Allah wills to spare."'2 Surely your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing. (Al-An’aam:128).

Jinns (shaitans) get pleasure with man obeying him, worshipping him, glorifying him, and taking refuge in him (shirking and kufr to Allah Almighty). Meanwhile, man gets pleasure by fulfilling and achieving his desires because of the help of the jinns to satisfy his desires. Thus, the person who servitudes himself to the jinn, (in return) the jinn will help him in meeting his needs. The Word of Allah Almighty:

وَجَعَلُواِ اللَّهَ مَنْ أَضَلْنَا مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَالْأَنَّامِ نَصِيبًا فَقَالُوا هَذَا بِزَمَنِهِ وَهَذَا لِشُرَكَائِنَا فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَائِهِمَّ فَلَا يَصِلُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ فَيُصِلُّ إِلَى شُرَكَائِهِمْ سَاءٌ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ
The pagans set aside for Allah a share of the crops and cattle He created, saying, “This ‘portion’ is for Allah,” so they claim, “and this ‘one’ for our associate-gods.” Yet the portion of their associate gods is not shared with Allah while Allah’s portion is shared with their associate gods. What unfair judgment! (Al An’am: 136)

If Allah Almighty does not have paganism and shirk, then a believer is also obliged not to be approved both, because the approval and wrath of a believer follow the approval and wrath of Allah. He is angry with what God has harmed and angry with what God has done. Shirking is a very dangerous thing, Allah Almighty said:

إنَّ اللهَ لا يُغْفِرَ أن يُشْرَكَ به وَيُغْفِرَ مَا دُونَ ذلِكَ مِنْ يَخَآئِفُهُ وَمِنْ يُشْرَكَ بِاللهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَى إِنَّمَا عَظِيماً

Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him ’in worship’ but forgives anything else of whoever He wills. And whoever associates others with Allah has indeed committed a grave sin. (An-Nisa’: 48)

Indeed, a believer has had the guidance of the shari’a that is sourced and the Qur’an and as-Sunnah which obliges all servants of Allah to only submit, obey, and bow down to Allah through the described worship that can only be addressed to Allah Almighty who has No Ally for Him, so that if a Muslim still has fear of anything other than Allah, asking for help and protection to other than Allah which is realized by giving offerings in the form of offerings, then it means that the person concerned has associated Allah with other than Him, this is called shirking and the perpetrator is referred to as a mushrik (Rahim, 2019).

Islam is a tawhid religion that abolishes all forms of destruction. In Islamic teachings, Tawhid is divided into three types, namely tawhid uluhiyah, rububiyyah, and Asma wa Sifat. Practicing tawhid and staying away from shirking is a consequence of the creed sentence that has been pledged by a Muslim. The position of tawhid in Islam is very important, a Muslim is obliged to believe that tawhid is the greatest basis of Islam and the greatest nature of Islam, and is one of the conditions is a condition for the acceptance of charitable deeds in addition to must be following the guidance of the Messenger of Allah (Pratama & Trisnawati, 2021).

In the Qur’an it is mentioned about the majesty of tawhid as mentioned in the word of Allah Glory To Him, The Exalted:

ولَقَدْ نَبِلَ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولَا أنَّ أَعْبَدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ وَمِنْ هَدُيَ اللَّهَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ الحَسَالَةَ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْرَّضْ وَانْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

We surely sent a messenger to every community, saying, “Worship Allah and shun false gods.” But some of them were guided by Allah, while others were destined to stray. So travel throughout the land and see the fate of the deniers! (An Nahl: 36)

Ibn Taimiyah said: "One who wants to understand the state of nature will find that the source of goodness on the face of this earth is to abide and worship Allah Glory to Him, the
Exalted and obey the Messenger of Allah. On the contrary, all the ugliness on the face of the earth such as slander, calamity, famine, overpowered by the enemy and others the cause is to kill the Messenger of Allah saw and invite to other than Allah Glory to Him, the Exalted. The person who understands this will find this kind of reality both in himself and outside himself” (Triana, 2018).

Islam brought by the Messenger of Allah SAW came to uphold tawhid and abolish all jahiliyah practices in have faith because the behavior of the jahiliyah community in have faith is more shirk. But Islam came not necessarily erase the existence of these traditions, instead, Islam gave a beautiful color with acculturation between previous traditions and the concept of Islamic religious teachings (Ridwan, 2021).

Therefore, culture receives serious attention in Islam because it has a very important role to ground the main teachings following the conditions and needs of life of Muslims, so the principles of culture in Islam must refer to the source of Islamic teachings, namely (Harisah, 2018):

a. Respect for reason

Man with his intellect can build a new culture. Therefore the culture of Islam puts reason in an honorable position. Islamic culture will not present things that can damage human reason. This principle is taken from the word of God which means: "Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day there are signs (of the greatness of God) for the sensible" (Ali-Imran: 190).

b. Motivating to demand and develop knowledge

With the development of one's knowledge, Islam will naturally be more advanced. This is in line with the word of Allah Almighty: "Allah will lift (degrees) the believers among you and those who are knowledgeable several degrees" (Al-Mujadalah: 11).

c. Avoiding blind adhere

Islamic culture should lead Muslims not to accept something before being studied, not to just follow others without knowing the reason, even from both parents or ancestors. As Allah Glory to Him, the Exalted said: "And you shall not follow anything you do not know for the hearing, sight and conscience of all of them shall be held accountable” (Al-Isra: 36)

d. Does not make damage

Islamic culture can be developed as widely as possible by the man himself, but still must consider the balance of nature so that there is no damage on this earth. As Allah Glory to Him, the Exalted said: "Do not do mischief on earth. Truly, God does not like people who do mischief” (Al-Qashash: 77)

Islam essentially comes to govern and guide society towards a good and balanced life. Thus Islam does not come to destroy the culture that has been embraced by society, but at the same time Islam wants this human race to be far away and avoid things that are not useful and bring harm in its life, so Islam needs to straighten out and guide the culture that develops in society towards a culture that is civilized and progressing and heightening the
degree of humanity (Minarti, 2022). Even in the Semerap Kerinci Kedepatian area, people who live by deeply held customary law norms, customary ceremonies are often held in parts of customary territories, still using Islamic law in deciding a problem (Asa’ari, Nurdiansyah, & Hainadri, 2022).

The attitude that should be done is to straighten out the people’s view that by doing the tradition of almsgiving of the earth, it does not mean that we follow the beliefs of our ancestors who considered that by offering these offerings they hoped to quell the anger of the ethereal beings so that all their requests would be fulfilled. The tradition of earth alms must be submissive and obedient to the Islamic rituals that have been instilled by previous scholars, it is not allowed to organize the earth alms tradition which is contrary to Islamic rituals, because the essence of earth almsgiving is an expression of gratitude for the abundance of mercy from Allah Glory To Him, The Exalted for everything that has been given to the inhabitants of the region.

D. CONCLUSION

The earth alms tradition of the Tlogowungu community, Pati is usually carried out by the entire surrounding community by making tumpeng and snacks typical of the region and gathering into one. After that, people bring tumpeng and snacks typical of the area to the village hall or somewhere to be played by a local religious leader or elder. In its culmination, the earth alms ritual event ends with a performance of Barong and Tayub and then chants prayers together. The factors that caused the people of Tlogowungu, Pati to carry out the tradition of earth almsgiving were the beliefs of animism and the belief in the dynamism that arose in their ancestors. And have the purpose that the salvation and happiness of the afterlife are with all their citizens. Usually, by carrying out the Earth alms ceremony, it is believed that it will bring good. The attitude that should be done is to straighten out the people's view that by doing the tradition of almsgiving of the earth, it does not mean that we follow the beliefs of our ancestors who considered that by offering these offerings they hoped to quell the anger of the ethereal beings so that all their requests would be fulfilled. The tradition of earth alms must submit and obey the Islamic rituals that have been instilled by previous scholars, it is not allowed to organize the earth alms tradition which is contrary to Islamic rituals, because the essence of earth almsgiving is an expression of gratitude for the abundance of mercy from Allah Glory to Him, The Exalted for everything that has been given to the inhabitants of the region.
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