Nyadran Tradition in Cepokokuning Village: Construction of Local Wisdom in Islamic Values

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Abstract

Nyadran is a tradition or ritual that contains local wisdom. Many Muslims in Indonesia preserve this tradition, including the Cepokokuning village community. Ideally, the preservers of the Nyadran tradition are able to construct it according to the guidance of Islamic teachings. However, the fact is that the traditional activities of nyadran in Cepokokuning village are only tomb cleaning activities, eating together, then ending with watching wayang kulit and orchestras. This study intends to explain the series of nyadran traditions in Cepokokuning village, and to find out the community’s understanding of the integration of Islamic values and local wisdom into the nyadran tradition. The design of this research method is qualitative with a phenomenological approach. The findings of this study conclude that before the covid-19 pandemic, the construction of local wisdom on Islamic values in the nyadran tradition in Cepokokuning Village before the covid-19 pandemic was shown in goat slaughtering activities on the banks of the river near the dam, praying together, and pilgrimages in the area. the graves of the ancestors, salvation at crossroads (baritan), and watching puppet entertainment together in front of the Cepokokuning village hall. Meanwhile, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the nyadran tradition was carried out as usual, but the slaughter of goats was only attended by representatives of the residents, ziyarah (nyekar) was carried out independently, salvation (baritan) was held at the mosque, while puppet entertainment activities were abolished. The understanding of the people of Cepokokuning Village towards the values of local wisdom and Islamic values in the nyadran tradition is shown in the earth alms tradition.
which they believe is a wasilah for health and safety. According to them, the nyadran tradition has been practiced for generations and does not conflict with local wisdom and sharia values. The Islamic values found in the nyadran tradition are togetherness, harmony, egalitarian, mutual cooperation, deliberation, alms, draw closer to Allah as gratitude to Him.

**Keywords:** Nyadran; Islamic values; and local wisdom.

**Introduction**

Indonesia is a multicultural country with various traditions, cultures, and religions. The traditions of the people in each region have different ways. In Javanese terms it is called “bedo deso mowo coro” which each village has different customs according to its area. Each tradition has local wisdom values that are used by local people as norms or references in life.

One of the traditions or rituals that contain “local wisdom” is the nyadran ritual. Historically, when Islam had not yet entered Indonesia, many indigenous people or residents adhered to animism and dynamism. Along with the development of the times and the large number of Indonesian people (the majority) who have embraced Islam, the nyadran tradition originating from the Hindu-Buddhist tradition is currently known as a ritual that combines local culture with Islamic values (Riyadi, 2017: 141).

With the inclusion of the Walisongo in Java in the spread of Islam, it should have an impact on the Nyadran tradition which is currently being followed by many Muslims in several areas, including in the village of Cepokokuning, Batang District. The community, especially the Muslims in the village of Cepokokuning, should be able to construct the Nyadran tradition or also called the legenan tradition with guidance in Islam such as reading tahlil, reading prayers, and reading verses of the Qur’an. However, in reality, the series of traditional nyadran activities in the village of Cepokokuning are still limited to cleaning the graves, eating together, and ending with watching wayang kulit and orchestras. This tradition sometimes ends with drinking alcohol, causing conflict among local residents, especially young people.

In the teachings of Islam, it is taught that Islam is a religion that is rahmatan lil’alamin. The traditions that were previously carried out by indigenous Indonesians (especially on the island of Java) who used to be mostly Hindu and
Buddhist are still being carried out, but the contents of these traditions must be constructed and adapted to Islamic teachings, so that people can easily and enjoy themselves. accept cultural acculturataion (Ibda, 2018: 149).

Another phenomenon that emerged in the nyadran tradition in the village of Cepokokuning before the Covid-19 pandemic, they did a slametan (festival) on the roadside (village crossroads) and in front of the tomb. It should be more appropriate for a celebration (festival) to be done in a mosque or prayer room. In addition, post-slametan left a lot of food debris scattered in front of the tomb. Of course, this must be avoided and pursued after the ritual of the place is clean as usual.

In the nyadran ritual, there should also be a sense of togetherness and mutual cooperation among the community. Inter-religious communities can sit together in mutual friendship. But in reality, the ritual of nyadran in Cepokokuning village is only carried out by one religion, and other religions do not follow. Whereas in this tradition, there are local wisdom values such as mutual help, tolerance, mutual cooperation, kinship and deliberation (Darisma et al, 2018: 23). Lofty values are believed to be true because they are universal and become a reference in behavior (Sibarani, 2012: 111-113).

The values of local wisdom are not yet fully present in the nyadran tradition in Cepokokuning Village. The youth are less involved in the tradition. They only take part in the orchestra spectacle which sometimes ends in clashes between youths. In addition, people’s knowledge of Islamic values and the urgency of the nyadran tradition is still very lacking. They only consider the tradition of nyadran as a tradition inherited from their ancestors. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by one of the residents of Cepokokuning Village (Asari, 2021) that the villagers still think that the nyadran tradition is only a mandatory ritual that must be carried out because it has been taught from generation to generation.

Another phenomenon related to the nyadran tradition found in the village of yellow cepoko is the ritual of slaughtering goats in the riverside dam in the hope that water will always be abundant to irrigate the rice fields of the farmers around the yellow cepoko village. This needs to be clarified that in essence asking for water is from Allah SWT, not by giving offerings for slaughtering goats.

Based on these phenomena and realities, the researchers are interested in conducting in-depth research and contributing to the Cepokokuning
community on the benefits and urgency of the nyadran tradition for the benefit and in harmony with Islamic values.

Literature Review

**Nyadran Tradition**

According to Riyadi (2017: 141), nyadran aims to worship and ask for help from the ancestors, where this tradition is thought to have originated from Hindu-Buddhist teachings. The entry of Islam into Java slowly began to change this nyadran procession, where Islamic values entered into it such as pilgrimages to graves and ritual prayers. This is done by the guardians through an intensive Islamization movement. From a socio-cultural perspective, the implementation of nyadran is not only about cleaning the graves of the predecessors, salvation (kenduri), making sticky rice, compote, apem cakes, and various market snacks which are a prerequisite for prayer rituals and as offerings. However, it is also a place of friendship between relatives and local residents, as well as a social, cultural, and religious transformation.

Frankincense is an offering at the tomb of predecessors, sowing flowers, laying eggs at funerals, eating together around the cemetery, bringing mountains of food, performing local arts such as Javanese gamelan, mass dance (tayuban), and wayang kulit. in the procession of nyadran. Grave pilgrimage, tahlilan, istigotsah, and religious lectures at night are Islamic elements contained in the nyadran procession (Arinda, 2014: 104).

In addition to the above meanings, nyadran also has a social meaning. When communities implement nyadran, they must work together. There are elements of gotong royong, togetherness, love, and sacrifice in it. Nyadran is also a place of gathering among members of the community. For this reason, the nyadran tradition is familiar with the value of local wisdom of the Indonesian people (Kastolani and Abdullah Yusof, 2016: 66).

**Local wisdom**

Local wisdom is a socio-cultural order in an area in order to meet the needs of living together which is given from generation to generation in the form of norms, knowledge, rules and community skills. Local wisdom is social capital developed by the community in order to create balance and order between the
preservation of natural resources and the socio-cultural life of the community (Hidayati, 2016: 40).

Mutual cooperation, tolerance, deliberation, and kinship are values of local wisdom that have become part of Indonesian people’s lives. The emergence of local wisdom is closely related to religious values followed by the Indonesian people at large, so that the values of local wisdom are increasingly attached to the community. Local wisdom is a form of human devotion to the creator and is carried out to maintain harmonious relations between humans (Rahmaniar, 2020: 114).

Local wisdom is a broad phenomenon, the scope of local wisdom is quite a lot and varied so it is difficult to be limited by space. Traditional wisdom and wisdom are now different from local wisdom. According to (Wagiran, 2012) local wisdom emphasizes more on the place and locality of the wisdom so that it does not have to be a wisdom that has been passed down from generation to generation. In Indonesia, local wisdom clearly has a positive meaning because wisdom is always interpreted well or positively. The choice of the word local wisdom, whether we realize it or not, is a strategy to build a better image of local knowledge which is not always interpreted positively.

Islamic Values in the Nyadran Tradition

Saefullah (2018: 92) in his research on the implementation of nyadran culture in Traji Village, Parakan District, Magelang Regency concluded that he is always grateful for the blessings from Allah SWT that has been given and does not disobey him, a sense of togetherness, mutual help and cooperation, providing funds and energy using the contribution method, creating a sense of love for the homeland (hubbul wathon), love for regional culture and maintaining it, respect for each other, strengthen brotherhood, a sense of unity and oneness, mutual love between fellow citizens and neighbors are Islamic values that exist in nyadran culture.

First, the value of gotong royong, which can be seen in the nyadran tradition, is carried out from the beginning of preparation to the end of the event by the community. Starting from the preparation of raising funds for nyadran, a fee is held for each neighborhood unit once a month, and the results are used together for the nyadran event from the beginning, to the response, to the end. The village youths and their parents work together to make the
implementation of the *nyadran* smooth and good. Second, the value of unity and integrity which is reflected in the distribution of food alms and eating together both at the graves and at the homes of each community. Third, the value of deliberation shown in the *nyadran* tradition is held when the *nyadran* committee is formed and joint deliberation is carried out between community members. This deliberation is usually referred to as a citizen meeting. Fourth, the value of social control, in the *nyadran* tradition, namely the community gives speech as well as the embodiment of gratitude to the Creator and with *nyadran*, the community is able to maintain and maintain ancestral traditions.

**Methods**

This study uses a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach. In relation to the research title, the researcher reveals about the phenomena experienced by the people of Cepokokuning Village, Batang District, Batang Regency in the *nyadran* tradition which is routinely carried out every year. At the same time, the understanding and perception of the community with the tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation has been implemented.

This research takes place in the village of Cepokokuning, Batang District, Batang Regency. This village is a plain area where the majority of the population work as farmers. Determination of the subject in this study was carried out purposively, namely the residents of Cepokokuning Village who follow the ritual of the *nyadran* tradition every year. In addition, the subject to be studied also involves village officials as the person in charge of activities including local community leaders.

The primary data sources in this study were the people of Cepokokuning Village, Batang District, Batang Regency who were involved and participated in *nyadran* ritual activities. In this case, it was represented by the Cepokokuning Village Head and village apparatus, community leaders (*Pak Lebe*), and several representatives of village residents. Sources of secondary data in this study are documents such as literature books, research results, archives, and other records relevant to this research.

This study uses several data collection techniques, while the techniques used are observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and field notes. Data analysis in this study includes several stages, namely creating and organizing the
data that has been collected, reading carefully the data that has been arranged, the process of description and reduction (horizontalization), data interpretation, and data verification.

**Results and Discussion**

**The history of nyadran tradition in Cepokokuning Village**

According to Pak Lebe in the village of Cepokokuning, he stated that the beginning of the nyadran tradition was as follows:

“The nyadran tradition is always carried out every year. This tradition has existed since ancient times. The era of the great-grandfather of the cepokokuning village clearing. This tradition is carried out to honor the ancestors who have preceded who had a great service to the sustainability and comfort of the village in the past. This tradition is carried out once a year and is held every month of the legena or the month of shura on friday kliwon nights.” (Rasulan, 2021)

The early history of the nyadran ritual in the village of Cepokokuning as conveyed by Mr. Asyari as a villager and also a community leader in the village of Cepokokuning, is as follows:

“The history of the nyadran tradition began with a dream of one of the elders of the Cepokokuning village, namely Ms. Ranggong brojogeni who was buried in the Al-Karomah prayer room, Cepokokuning village, who said that she was given a will to do a slametan (tasyakuran) with goat offerings on the riverbank so that the villagers were safe and given abundant water. In the end, what was said by the elder was discussed by all the villagers and finally agreed upon as a traditional tradition. (Asyari, 2021)

Then according to Mrs. Dinis (one of Cepokokuning Village officials), this nyadran ritual is carried out in order to give thanks to Allah SWT and the village ancestors who have preceded. This tradition is carried out in collaboration with several surrounding villages, namely Penangkan Village, Siwatu Village, and Rowobelang Village. The nyadran tradition has long been preserved by the villagers, every year it must be carried out with the aim of being grateful to Allah SWT and increasing the community of villagers. (Dinis, 2021)
From several descriptions of the results of the interviews above, it can be analyzed that the history of the *nyadran* tradition in Cepokokuning Village originated from the ancestor of the shoulder of the Cepokokuning village named Mbah Ranggong Brojogeni. In theory, *nyadran* itself is one type of community tradition which is the result of a convention or mutual agreement to unite (acculturate) the original Javanese culture with Islamic values. (Ichmi Yani Arinda R, 2014)

Culturally, giving offerings by the river can be an ancient Javanese ritual during the Hindu-Buddhist period. With the changing times and times and with the rapid development of Islamic teachings that entered Indonesia brought by Wali Songo, there was cultural acculturation between Javanese culture and Islamic culture.

The tradition of slaughtering goats on the banks of the river with the intention of giving alms to the earth or being grateful and begging God to be given smooth sustenance in the form of water that is always abundant for farmers who will irrigate their fields, this is still allowed. However, if the intention is to give offerings to the creatures who watch the river and ask other than Allah, that is not allowed.

**Construction of local wisdom in Islamic values at the *nyadran* tradition**

To find out the responses of students in online learning, this study tries to ask the opinions of students through an online survey.

a. Before the Covid-19 pandemic

*Nyadran* activities are routinely carried out by the community with permission from the head of the Cepokokuning village. Then the village head appointed *Pak Lebe* as the coordinator of the organizers. According to *Pak Lebe* (Pak Rasulan), this ritual contains the values of almsgiving, deliberation, mutual cooperation, cooperation, and togetherness. Although the ritual of slaughtering goats is not carried out by all villagers (only farmers), other activities are followed by all villagers. Especially watching *wayang*, the villagers are very enthusiastic to hold it. They also do not mind being asked for contributions in the organization of these activities.

The next activity is the salvation at the tomb which is carried out by residents in the afternoon. The residents are very united in carrying out this tradition. Each resident makes rice, side dishes, and various market snacks and
then takes them to the tomb. At first, they prayed together then after they finished eating together in front of the cemetery.

Then the next series is the baritan (selametan at night) which is carried out on the sides of the road or crossroads. Selametan was led by Pak Lebe with a joint prayer activity. People are asked to make diamonds and lepet as well as blessings for offerings at crossroads. According to Pak Lebe, this is a form of gratitude and aims to provide safety for the local village community (The Apostle, 2021).

The last series of activities was watching wayang Bersama which was held in front of the Cepokokuning village hall. The community is very enthusiastic in preserving local culture, namely responsive puppets. This activity is supported by all village residents and also village government officials. This activity involves contributions from all residents. According to the village head, activities in the form of customs and traditions as long as they do not violate the rules, the event may be carried out (Subekhi, 2021).

Based on the results of the interview above regarding the series of nyadran traditions in the period before the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak was very large, there were four series of activities. The following are the results of the researcher’s analysis for each activity:

First, slaughtering goats on the riverbank near the dam every Kliwon Friday in the month of Muharram (Shura) is carried out by all farmers in Cepokokuning village and 3 surrounding villages (Penangkan village, Siwatu village, and Rowobelu village). The activity of slaughtering goats is basically allowed. The thing to note is the intention to slaughter the goat. Is it used to give offerings to supernatural beings who watch over the river or is it only used as a form of gratitude for the blessings that God has given and is purely for alms to the earth. Its construction is on the intentions and values contained in it. As explained by the researcher in the previous sub that asking for help for conditions that occur in society is only to Allah SWT.

The two activities are praying and praying at the graves of the ancestors of the Cepokokuning village. According to Bayuadhi, the activities of the nyadran series also include feasts (selametan) and also grave pilgrimages. The grave pilgrimage is intended to pray for the village ancestors who have gone before. Praying, reading verses of the Qur’an and tahlil are allowed in Islam. Because the prayers of the living can reach the dead (Bayuadhi, 2015: 98).
The third activity is the salvation at the crossroads (baritan). In this activity, the community makes food and snacks taken to the crossroads then prays together and is distributed back to the people who follow it. The construction is to return to the intention and purpose of the community to hold salvation. Wherever the salvation is, the most important thing is the essence of the values in it. Namely the value of kinship, harmony, the value of alms or sharing, and also the value of worship (prayer). These values are a combination of local wisdom values and Islamic values.

The four activities are watching wayang together in front of the Cepokokuning village hall. Essentially, apart from this activity as entertainment for the community, this tradition also preserves Indonesian local culture, namely the shadow puppet show. The construction of local wisdom values and Islamic values contained in this activity is the value of kinship, harmony, tolerance and preservation of local culture. This activity was attended by all members of the community, both young and old, as well as from cross-religious groups in Cepokokuning village. In terms of Islamic teachings, watching wayang kulit, as long as the content of the spectacle does not lead to disobedience, is still allowed. Watching wayang is one of the preservation of Indonesian culture.

The construction of local wisdom values and Islamic values from the four activities above which are a series of nyadran activities in Cepokokuning village are mutual cooperation, tolerance, deliberation, gratitude, alms, ta’awun, togetherness and kinship.

b. During the Covid-19 pandemic

According to one of the village heads, Mrs. Dinis, in 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a reconstruction or change in nyadran activities. Previously, the series of nyadran activities were carried out with 4 series of activities (slaughtering goats on the riverbank near the dam, praying and praying at the tomb, baritan activities at night, and watching wayang), but now these activities are carried out in a different way (Dinis, 2021).

The first activity of slaughtering goats near a large dam beside the river is still being carried out even though not too many people from the community follow it. This activity is still ongoing with the standard Health protocol. Most of the community members who have a livelihood as farmers continue to carry
out this activity. All farmers in the village of Cepokokuning were asked to pay a fee for slaughtering goats.

According to one of the villagers who participated in the *nyadran* (slaughtering goat) activity, Mr. Asyari stated that:

“All the farmers of the village of Cepokokuning and the farmers of other villages bordering the village, every Friday Kliwon, the month of Ashura (Legena) organizes goat slaughter. During the pandemic they also still hold, although not all follow. Both those who attended and those who did not attend all participated in the dues. With this activity, the farmers hope that water irrigation in their fields will run smoothly. That is the main purpose of slaughtering goats on the banks of the big dam river. Apart from that, it is a charity for the earth.” (Asyari, 2021)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a slight difference from previous years. At the time of slaughter, not all residents were present, but only representatives. The activity also refers to the health protocol so that there are not too many crowds. Both those who were present and those who were absent both contributed funds to buy goats. Those present slaughter goats, then cook together and eat there. Then the goat’s head and the rest of the food are put in a container for offerings and left on the riverbank. As mentioned by Pak Asyari, one of the residents and also a community leader in Cepokokuning village, that this is done to facilitate river water so that irrigation for the rice fields can be fulfilled.

Then the second activity, namely nyekar to the tomb which used to be accompanied by a salvation with food and snacks and then eaten together, during the pandemic only prayers were carried out and carried out independently by each resident. This is because of the demands during the pandemic that large numbers of people are prohibited. As stated by Pak Lebe as follows:

“Currently (the pandemic) nyekar is carried out individually by each family. No more carrying rice and snacks. Residents only bring flowers and read yasin tahlil. *Selametan* mangke is replaced at the mosque, mbeto rice, prayer together and then distributed to residents who participate in the salvation.” (Rasulan, 2021)
The third activity is the *baritan* (slametan at the crossroads at night). This activity is still carried out but the place is no longer at the crossroads, but is carried out in the mosque. This activity is carried out as a form of joint prayer for safety and so that the Covid-19 pandemic can quickly disappear. This slametan activity is only attended by Muslims, because it is located in a mosque. This activity is a form of gratitude as well as asking God for help so that the residents of Cepokokuning village are protected from the corona virus outbreak.

The construction of religious values in the third activity is very visible. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, *baritan* activities at night were carried out at the crossroads, but with the Covid-19 pandemic the activities were carried out at the village mosque. Although not followed by interfait, this activity was very enthusiastically carried out by the majority of Muslims in Cepokokuning village. The positive impact of this activity is that the community becomes more friendly, harmonious, and gives more meaning to worship for the activities carried out.

The fourth activity is puppet response (*nyadran*). During the COVID-19 pandemic, this activity was cancelled. According to the head of the Cepokokuning village (Pak Rokhaini Subekhi) this activity is no longer allowed because it is considered to cause large crowds and of course violate health protocols. If conditions allow it to be held again, then this activity will be allowed again of course by meeting the applicable health protocol standards (Subekhi, 2021).

**Community understanding of local wisdom and Islamic values in the *nyadran* tradition**

First, according to Mr. Asyari as a resident of the Cepokokuning village community who always participates in *nyadran* activities every year, when interviewed by the research team, he said that the *nyadran* tradition has the value of alms, togetherness, mutual cooperation and gratitude. This tradition has been carried out from generation to generation and is considered not contrary to the values of Islam. (Asyari, 2021)

Secondly, according to Pak Lebe (Pak Rasulan), he explained that:

“The *nyadran* tradition has been carried out for generations. This tradition is essentially a tradition of alms to the earth so that the
community is always given health and safety. Currently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, people are still carrying out alms to the earth. The values contained in this tradition are mutual cooperation, togetherness, a form of gratitude to the creator. Village communities carry out this activity solely to preserve traditions that have been handed down from their ancestors. So far there have been no problems. If there are residents who do not follow it is the right of the citizens “. (Rasulan, 2021)

Third According to Mr. Rohaini Subekhi as the head of Cepokokuning village, he said that the village will always support the routine activities of the residents as long as they do not violate the rules and can be accepted by all residents. The village party gave permission for the implementation of the nyadran ritual activity because the ritual has positive values for the residents, namely harmony, mutual cooperation, deliberation, and alms of the earth. Although recently there are some villagers who say that this is slightly against the teachings of Islam, but according to him, as long as the community does not do things that are prohibited, the activity will still be given a permit for implementation. (Subekhi, 2021)

Fourth, according to Mrs. Dinis, as a resident as well as a Cepokokuning village apparatus, she also explained that the nyadran tradition or commonly called legenan has positive values for the villagers. Namely the value of gratitude to the creator, the value of alms, the value of harmony, and deliberation. (Dinis, 2021)

From several interviews with village residents, Pak Lebe, village officials, and village heads, the results were not much different. They all assume that the nyadran tradition does not conflict with Islamic religious law. The understanding of the Cepokokuning village community towards the values of local wisdom and also Islamic values contained in nyadran activities are the values of alms, gratitude, tolerance, deliberation, ta’awun, harmony and kinship. Traditions that are considered to have benefits both culturally and religiously need to be preserved throughout the ages. The most important thing is that the activity does not burden the community, does not have a negative impact after the activity, does not conflict with religious law, and has positive values to always be preserved.
Conclusion

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the nyadran tradition consisted of a series of activities to slaughter goats on the riverbank near the dam every Kliwon Friday in the month of Muharram (Syura) which was carried out by all farmers in the village of Cepokokuning and 3 surrounding villages (Penangkan Village, Siwatu Village, and Rowobelang Village), praying and praying at the graves of the ancestors of the Cepokokuning village, praying at crossroads (baritan), and watching wayang together or called legenan in front of the Cepokokuning village hall.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the nyadran tradition was carried out by slaughtering goats near a large dam beside the river but only attended by representatives of the residents, nyekar to the tomb which was carried out independently by each resident, the baritan which was previously held at road crossroads now held in the mosque, while puppet response activities during the covid-19 pandemic are abolished because they are considered to cause crowds.

The nyadran tradition in Cepokokuning Village, Batang District, Batang Regency is a tradition of alms to the earth so that the community is always given health and safety. This tradition has been carried out from generation to generation and is considered not contrary to religion. The values contained in the nyadran tradition are alms, togetherness, harmony, mutual cooperation, deliberation, and gratitude to the creator.

References


