

From Rituals to Resilience: Unleashing the Potential of Islamic *Kejawen* Tradition in Enhancing Community Disaster Awareness

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Abstract: Islamic *Kejawen* tradition is carried out by most Javanese. Islamic *Kejawen* is an acculturation process between Islamic values and Javanese values, especially in the mysticism aspect. This writing aims to analyse the Islamic *Kejawen* tradition in Sendang Village and its role in increasing community awareness in dealing with disasters. This research employs a qualitative method including library and field research. The data was obtained using interviews, participation observation, and collecting secondary data. The secondary data was gathered from books, journals, and other scientific works. The study found that the Islamic *Kejawen* tradition has a significant role in developing community harmony one of which is preserving nature through the annual cultural festival. Furthermore, this tradition has a role in increasing the community's awareness of avoiding disasters. The *Tetek Melek* tradition, the *jaranan*, *Grebeg wuyen* are the annuals festival conducted in increasing community awareness of their livelihood. The festival conducted is not only for blessing rituals toward the sanctification of God for their wealth but also as media in increasing community awareness for maintaining the environment. In Javanese mysticism, it is explained that God exists in every sphere of activity and natural phenomena as a manifest of the Almighty God's rewards. The contribution of this research is to provide knowledge about local wisdom in the *Kejawen* Islamic tradition, especially those found in Sendang Village, Tulungagung Regency. The analysis of this study explains that the *Kejawen* Islamic tradition can build awareness of disasters.

Keywords: Disasters Awareness; Islamic Mysticism; Javanese Islamic Traditions.

Abstrak: Tradisi Islam kejawen adalah tradisi yang dilakukan oleh sebagian besar masyarakat Jawa. Islam kejawen merupakan bentuk peleburan nilai-nilai ajaran Islam dengan sosio-kultural lokal masyarakat Jawa, yang khususnya berkaitan dengan aspek-aspek mistisisme. Penelitian ini merupakan hasil penelitian lapangan yang bertujuan untuk menjawab pertanyaan bagaimana analisis tradisi Islam kejawen di Desa Sendang dalam perspektif tasawuf dan peranannya dalam membangun kewaspadaan menghadapi bencana. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dan termasuk dalam penelitian pustaka (*library research*) dan studi lapangan. Data yang diperoleh menggunakan teknik wawancara, observasi, serta referensi dari buku, jurnal, dan karya ilmiah lainnya. Dalam penelitian ini, kajian membahas mengenai sinkretisme islam atau akulturasi kebudayaan dan unsur Jawa dengan nilai-nilai ajaran agama Islam dalam tradisi Islam kejawen yang terdapat di Desa Sendang, Tulungagung. Adanya akulturasi perpaduan kebudayaan ini berawal dari metode penyebaran agama Islam. Hasil penelitian ini menjelaskan bahwa tradisi mistik kejawen bermaksud untuk menjaga keharmonisan dan kehormatan suatu kebudayaan yang melekat di suatu daerah, serta dari tradisi tersebut mempunyai peranan dalam membangun kewaspadaan terhadap bencana. Ini merupakan salah satu bentuk untuk mengimani adanya Tuhan.

Dalam mistisme Jawa dijelaskan Tuhan ada dalam setiap lingkup kegiatan dan ucapan serta wujud Tuhan dimanifestasikan ke dalam bentuk ciptaanNya.

Kata Kunci: Tradisi Islam Kejawen, Tasawuf, dan Peranan terhadap bencana

1. Introduction

The characteristic of Islam in Indonesia has many faces. The characteristic of Islam in Indonesia adapts and adopts local wisdom (Basyir, 2019; Warisno & Tabrani, 2018). One of the results of the Islamic value acculturation process in Java is Islamic *Kejawen*. The Islamic *Kejawen* has a unique character as a result of absorbing and dialogic process between Islamic values and the local socio-cultural of Javanese society taught, which is particularly related to aspects of mysticism. This acculturation process occurred during the Demak Kingdom period in 1478-1568 M and afterward, the *Wali Sanga* (nine saints of Islam) used a cultural approach to spreading Islam in Java (Haq, 2013, p. 76).

According to Koentjaraningrat, Islamic *Kejawen* is defined as a religious practice that arises from a combination of Javanese culture and Islam. Further explanation stated by Koentjaraningrat that Javanese culture is a result of Animism-Dynamism and Hindu-Buddhism acculturation. Several views mentioned that Panembahan Senopati was the initiator of Javanese Islamic practices. Panembahan Senopati was the founder of Islamic Mataram Kingdom (1586 – 1601M). As stated by H.J. de Graaf and Th. G.Th. Pigeaud, the Javanese religious concept that refers to the community loyalty to the kings as a part of the system that adheres to religion as central to power. Panembahan Senopati has a concept called *agomo ageming aji*, which means as with religion (faith and piety), people will get "aji" (value, self-esteem, and honour). The taught of Panembahan Senopati have been practiced, widespread, and followed by the people of the Mataram Kingdom (Koentjaraningrat, 2009, p. 45).

The acculturation process between Islam and Javanese culture can be seen in the various traditions that exist on Java Island. One of them is the cultural tradition in Sendang Village, Tulungagung, such as the Javanese *Jaranan* tradition, *Siraman Barongan* which are carried out at the *Mbah Bodho* Site, *Grebeg wuyen*, *Tetek Melek*, and *Malam Satu Suro* tradition in the month of Muharram. In general, these traditions that develop in Javanese society are forms of Islamic *Kejawen*. From the mysticism perspective, Islam and *Kejawen* have many similarities. Both approaches teach that every human being comes from the almighty God and will return to God. What is more, in Javanese terms it is known as the concept of *sangkan paraning dumadi*, a concept of genesis (where did humans come from and where will return). However, in this context, although the concept of *tasawuf* (*Sufism* -Islamic Mysticism) gives a dominant colour to the concept of Javanese Islam, the concepts of *tasawuf* in classical Islamic literature are not entirely the same as the concepts of Javanese *tasawuf* (Chakim, 2009, p. 3). However, it is necessary to have a complete and comprehensive study to explain and analyse Islamic *Kejawen* from the point of view of Islamic Mysticism (Purwadi, 2003, p. 45). This is because the concepts of Islamic Mysticism are a form of the attitude of mutual respect and respect among fellow Muslims (Sumbulah, 2012, p. 52).

Several studies have been conducted related to Islam and *Kejawen*. One of them is entitled "Konsep Kejawen Ketika Menghadapi Pageblug (Wabah)" written by Yohan Kurniawan and Koentjoro Soeparno (2020). This study describes the Javanese people, especially Yogyakarta, has one of the beliefs from local wisdom among the Javanese people in Yogyakarta when there was a pageblug (pandemic) covid-19, was to provide and eat seven (7) forms of *lodeh* vegetables consisting of several vegetables, long beans, eggplant, *melinjo* and its leaves, pumpkin, and tempe. In addition, it also installs offerings derived from reed leaves. From here it is also explained that the Javanese people have a culture to resurface old traditions that are considered good and can help deal with the plague. Thus, when the Covid-19 outbreak strikes, spices such as ginger, turmeric, *temulawak*, and *salam* (bay leave), are widely used which aim to maintain and increase the stamina of the body to fight disease.

The above-mentioned study correlates with the current study on how the adherent of *Kejawen* overcomes negative influences. However, the difference between the two studies is the previous study discusses how to overcome the covid-19 pandemic outbreak with spices to maintain stamina and endurance, while the current research explores the *Kejawen* Islamic tradition found in Sendang Village using the theory of Sufism syncretism as an effort to overcome disasters.

Another research on local tradition has been conducted by Siti Rumilah (2021) on “Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Jawa Dalam Menghadapi Pandemi”. The results of the study showed that the local wisdom of the Ngawi community facing a pandemic or outbreak is seeing the existence of local wisdom in the form of the emergence of Kemukus latitude. The emergence of latitude Kemukus is believed by the Javanese people to be a sign of bad luck and it is associated with the Covid-19 outbreak. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has made Javanese people start looking for omens or *tetenger* before pageblug comes. The local wisdom is the emergence of the latitude of the mucus which is believed to have appeared in the early hours of the morning. They get this sign by honing sensitivity by getting closer to nature, this is intended to be able to capture the signs given by nature so that people are aware of the upcoming outbreak. This research has similarities in terms of how the people preserve the local culture and tradition in protecting their land from disaster.

Due to many Indonesian people still believing in mysticism and ancestral culture, this piece of writing discusses the Islamic *Kejawen* Tradition using the theory of Islamic syncretism to find out the Sufism perspective in their practices. In addition, this paper analyses the Islamic *Kejawen* Tradition's role in increasing the community's disaster awareness.

This paper employed a qualitative descriptive approach that combines library research and field research as methodology. The secondary data was obtained from library research, and primary data was obtained from field research, participant observation, and interview with the Sendang Village residents. The data that has been found is described and analysed systematically to describe and analyse the phenomena or events that occur in the field. In addition, a comparative-analysis method is used to analyse the Islamic *Kejawen* from the perspective of Sufism by using the theory of Islamic syncretism and to provide an analysis of the Islamic *Kejawen* tradition's role in increasing the community's awareness in anticipating disaster.

2. Islamic Syncretism: A Basic Understanding

The definition of syncretism in the official dictionary of the Indonesian language is a new understanding (school) as a fusion of several different schools of thought. Whereas syncretism in English comes from the word syncretised which means to combine which refers to the mixing of different philosophies of thought, religion, and culture. Connect different elements to generate new thoughts (Khasbullah & Nisa', 2021, p. 46).

The study of religious and cultural syncretism aims to compare and separate the two theoretical contexts and combine the two theoretical studies to become a new theory that is not contradictory to each other (Simuh, 2006, p. 67). For example, the study of Islam in modern times is the result of the assimilation of cultural values from the time of the Islamic caliphs with values from Western culture. Thus, there is a need for awareness from the community itself to minimise any misunderstandings from the actions of these two perspectives so that the emergence of studies of syncretism creates values from a new culture developed (Nasution, 1978, p. 58).

Syncretism is a result of a combination of several beliefs and cultural values (Al-Fajriyati, 2019; Chakim, 2009, pp. 4-5; Miharja, Gumilar, Ruswanda, & Alivin, 2022; Nasir, 2019). Whereas syncretism can also be interpreted as a process, therefore some anthropologists give the understanding that syncretism is a process of blending two or more cultures to create a new cultural value by a group (acculturation), or explained, namely, (1) acceptance, (2) adaptation, and (3) reaction. In short, syncretism could be understood as habituation to the combination of one cultural element with another cultural element in creating harmony in daily activities, so that it produces a new cultural form in a community (Simuh, 1990, p. 67). Therefore, syncretism can be concluded as a process or result of acculturation, merging, and adjustment between beliefs that have different or

even opposite values and elements to become a new principle that is different from the values of the previous belief principles (Simuh, 1990, p. 49).

The process of acculturation of Islamic mystical culture with Javanese mystical culture in Javanese society (syncretism) is caused by three factors; (1) culture and civilisation of Hinduism, Buddhism, Animism, and Dynamism had developed before the arrival of Islam on Java Island, (2) the personality of the Javanese people easy to adapt and adopt new value (having syncretistic behavior), (3) there were changes in the Islamic kingdom which was located in Demak, moving to Pajang, which in general the Islamic Kingdom in Pajang leads to Islamic *Kejawen values* (Chakim, 2009, p. 7). Furthermore, the facts about the Javanese people and their culture or traditions are the result of combination and acculturation of culture between Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Animist cultures (Koentjaraningrat, 2009, p. 52). The process of acculturation of Islamic culture with other cultures is because Islam responds to other cultures with flexibility and has a high level of tolerance for elements of other cultures (Anderson, 2000, p. 68). The existence of animism and dynamism were able to develop harmony with the Hindu-Buddhist religious culture (Hadikusuma, 1993, p. 78).

Through syncretism, what is contained in a new principle does not only contain the basic principles system of the religion concerned but also contains the principles system of other religions. Elements and values of Javanese culture still have a strong essence and existence until recent times. The response from the Javanese people who were very flexible made Javanese culture have strong values, therefore Javanese culture was also used as a method for spreading Islam by *Wali Songo* (Sururin & Moh. Muslim, 2018, p. 51). Therefore, the Javanese people are well known as a community that can combine their environment and religious educational symbols in performing social harmonisation. Thus, religion and culture can give the meaning of having the same function, to make humans whole, civilised beings and derived values to regulate human relationships with God and between humans. This research shows evidence of the acculturation process among values that exist in Java and are performed as local culture and habits in the community of Sendang Village.

3. Islamic *Kejawen*: A Sufism Perspective

Several Muslim scholars explain three divisions of teachings and knowledge that are correlated with each other namely *fiqh* (law), monotheism (theology), and *tasawuf* (Islamic mysticism) (Saifulloh, 1998, p. 27). Studies on the context of *tasawuf* often emphasise the simplicity of life by not following a luxurious lifestyle. Someone who has studied or even implemented his life with the values of *tasawuf* will always try to get closer to God so that they can feel God's love and existence. Meanwhile, other thoughts explained that *tasawuf* or sufism is a process of purifying the soul and morals to avoid oneself inappropriate behavior (Aceh, 1990, p. 32).

The etymological meaning of Sufism comes from the word *stuff* (wool) which is described by Sufis using woolen cloth to dress as a form of implementation of their asceticism. In this case, the term Sufism means the teachings of the Sufis (Aceh, 1990, p. 34). While the meaning of Sufism in terminology is a scientific study that aims to cleanse oneself and the heart from bad behavior or actions to be able to draw closer to Allah to create peace in the heart (Gunawan, 2017, p. 38).

Imam Zarkasyi Al-Anshari, one of the leaders of Sufism, gave an understanding of Sufism, namely, "*Sufism is the science of cleansing the soul, improving the character and rearranging the body and mind to obtain eternal happiness.*" Thus, Sufism is a scientific study whose context is human efforts to distance and purify oneself from harmful things, to be able to draw closer to God and peace in life (Mahjuddin, 1999, p. 67).

Interestingly, the union of Javanese mystical traditions has different characteristics (Nasution, 1978, p. 59). Based on the principles of Javanese mystical thought, the existence of God is found in the conscience and mind of every human being. This is because basically, human nature is the reflection of God's existence. While the reality of life in this world there are two sides, namely the outer and inner side (Simuh, 1986, p. 62). The outer side of humans can be seen from all their actions, behavior, and speech, while the inner side of humans is subjective self-awareness. The outer side is only pseudo and temporary, the real reality comes from the inner side and the soul.

This explanation regarding the external and spiritual aspects is what in a philosophical explanation indicates the existence of God. Therefore, it is based on this explanation that the understanding of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* emerged (Haq, 2013, p. 46). This tradition regarding *Kejawen* mysticism aims to maintain the harmony and honour of an existing culture, and to avoid any attitude of disturbance or chaos, so this is a form of believing in the existence of God. The point is that Javanese mysticism (Islamic *Kejawen*) explains that God exists in every scope of activity. God also manifests in the form of His creation in nature. Thus, carrying out Javanese tradition or culture is a form of respecting and protecting God's creation and it is a form of expression that we believe in the existence of God in this universe (Endraswara, 2018, p. 47).

4. Islamic *Kejawen* Traditions in Sendang Village, Tulungagung, East Java

Sendang Village is located in the Sendang District, Tulungagung Regency, about 26 kilometers from the centre of Tulungagung. Sendang Village is located on the slopes of Mount Wilis. The Sendang village was declared a tourism village in 2010 and rebranded to become Cultural Tourism Village in early 2021. This title started from the dream of the Sendang Village resident to introduce their local wisdom to the world. Therefore, they continue to improve and establish themselves as a Tourism Village that elevates the uniqueness and exotics of their culture.

Based on the data from the Tulungagung Regency Population and Civil Registry Office in 2019, residents of Sendang District adhere to various religions, 81,399 Muslims, 2,613 Catholics, 270 Christians, 7 Hindus, and 128 Buddhists. In addition, the majority of the population work as farmers and dairy farmers. So that Sendang Village is one of the villages as largest producer of cow's milk in East Java Province. The following Figure 1 shows a scheme of daily activities or routines for the people of Sendang Village.



Figure 1 Daily activities carried out by the people of Sendang Village

The Islamic *Kejawen* tradition and festival in Sendang village can be seen in Figure 2.

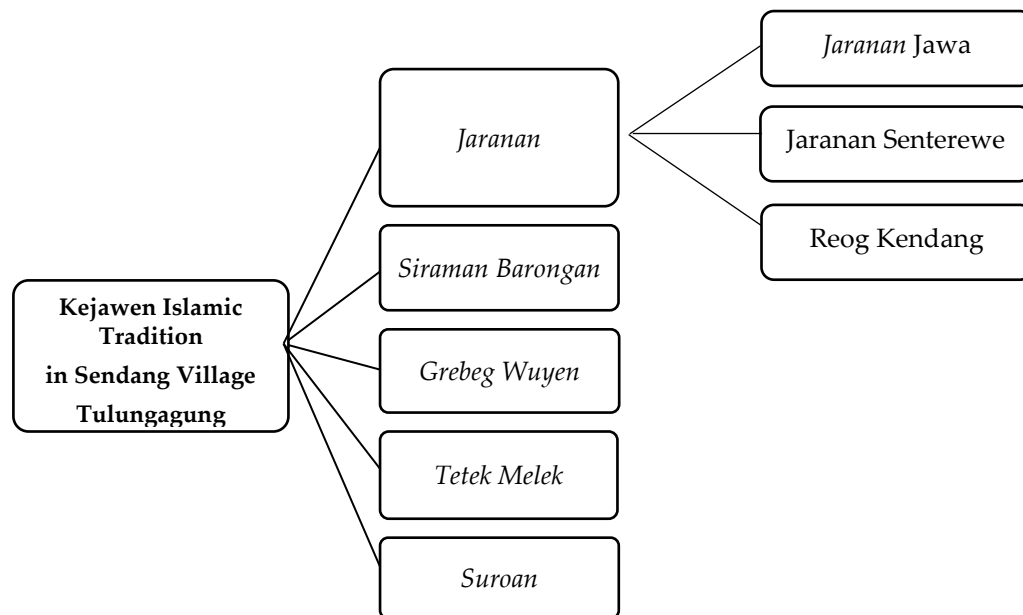


Figure 2 The Islamic Kejawen Tradition in Sendang Village

Sendang Village has many ancient traditions and is still preserved today; therefore, Sendang Village is also known as the Cultural Tourism Village. The detail of the Islamic *Kejawen* Tradition found in Sendang Village are:

a. *Jaranan* Dance



Figure 3 This is an example of an image of the *Jaranan* tradition found in Sendang Village

Jaranan dance is a legacy of Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Bonang. *Jaranan* in Sendang Village has various movements and types (see Figure 3). In the *jaranan* dance, there are several groups, and each group has distinctive characteristics that are different from other groups (Safira & Mariasa, 2021, p. 210). This characteristic is not only found in the *jaranan* dance but also other dances. *Jaranan* dance in Sendang Village has three types, namely Javanese *Jaranan*, Senterewe *Jaranan*, and Reog Kendang *Jaranan*. The explanation is as follows:

Jaranan Jawa

Javanese *Jaranan* is a *jaranan* dance that is still thick with elements of *Kejawen*. The characteristic of this Javanese *jaranan* is that it is carried out by parents and the movement is very simple. However, some movements must be present in the performance of classical Javanese *jaranan* dance namely *jejeran* (harmony), *jogetan* (dance), and *ndadi* (perform). For the tempo of the movements in the dance, classical Javanese *jaranan* has a slow tempo of dance movements because in the movements there is a separate meaning such as the sentences of the creed performed in the movements. However, the movement still follows the accompaniment and tempo of the music sounded through the *gamelan*.

The dancers of Javanese *jaranan* in following the singing of the music sounded while holding the *cemeti* or *pecut* (whip). In addition, *cemeti* or the whip is also a sign and reminder of the beats of movement and uniformity between dancers and musicians. The *gamelan* music that accompanies Javanese *jaranan* is also slow-paced following the singing of some ancient Javanese *langgams* (rhythms) which certainly have their message and meaning. The singers who sing *tembang-tembang* (traditional songs) and *langgam* in Javanese *Jaranan* dance perform the song in a sitting position cross-legged.

Jaranan Senterewe

Jaranan Senterewe's dance arises from the process of interaction and socialisation between *jaranan* dancers through various kinds of changes and developments over a long period. The name *senterewe* is a combination of two words, "senthe" and "rawe". *Senthe* is a kind of plant that has leaves shaped wide and triangular. Its leaves when exposed to human skin will cause itch. While the word "rawe" comes from the word "rawe" which is a type of creeping plant. The shape of the leaves is oval and one stalk has three leaves and soft white feathers, the feathers when they hit human skin cause itching. So it can be interpreted that *jaranan senterewe* is when the dancers of *jaranan senterewe* are in a trance always moving like people who itch after being exposed to *rawe* leaves, the performers of this *senterewe jaranan* are usually young men.

The musical instruments that accompany the dance of *Jaranan Senterewe* are *gongs*, *kenong*, *kendhang*, *saron*, *balungan*, *ketipung*, and *slompret*. The music in the dance of *jaranan senterewe* is also combined with modern musical instruments like keyboards, bass, and drums. Modern musical instruments are included in the performance of *Jaranan senterewe* because the dancers of *Jaranan senterewe* will dance to the music of *dangdut* and *campursari*. That's why modern musical instruments are included in the dance performances of *jaranan senterewe* as a form of refreshment in another sense adding to the diversity of *Jaranan Senterewe's* musical instruments.

Jaranan Reog Kendang

Jaranan Reog Kendang is the original *jaranan* of Tulungagung. *Reog Kendang* until now is developed in almost every village in Tulungagung. The local district government made *Reog Kendang* an icon as well as the pride of Tulungagung. *Reog Kendang* is also known as *Reog Tulungagung*. *Reog* is a traditional dance similar to the more popular *Reog Ponorogo*. Based on history, the existence of *Reog* cannot be separated from the history of the existence of the Kediri Kingdom. In the *Reog Kendang jaranan*, the ranks of soldiers are represented by six dancers with various attributes used. Interestingly, both the movement and its attributes in *Reog Kendang* has symbolic and specific meanings. For example, is *udeng*, a headband made of black *gadung* in *batik* cloth that means unity. The meaning of black symbolises calmness, fairness, firmness, and authority (Hadi, 2012, p. 57).

Currently, there are approximately 300 groups of *Reog Kendang jaranan* in Tulungagung. Each group consists of approximately 45 people. *Jaranan Reog Kendang* is performed by 6, 12, and 18 people. *Reog Kendang's* dance seems simple but still spreads the nuances of beauty as well as aesthetics, and choreography that is typical to traditional and ethnic arts just like a dance of the Dayak tribe in Kalimantan (SS, Personal Communication, August 25, 2022).

b. *The Siraman Barongan Tradition at the Mbah Bodho Site*



Figure 4 The Siraman Barongan tradition

In August 2022, various art groups in the Sendang area, Tulungagung, gathered in one sacred moment. They all took part in the celebration known as *Siraman Barongan* (bathing the Barongan) (see Figure 4). This is a culture that aims to strengthen the identity of the Sendang community. *Siraman Barongan* is a ceremony that establishes interrelationships and unite all community entities, especially those who struggle and animate traditional culture. All villages in Sendang starting from Sendang, Dono, Geger, Kedoyo, Krosok, Nglurup, Ngluntung, Nyawangan, Picisan, Talang and Tugu also invigorate the ceremony. This year's celebration, there were about 18 groups of *Jaranan* and *Reog Kendang* art groups participating in the event. Both of these arts developed rapidly and became part of the life of the Sendang people. Therefore, the two dances always accompany the ritual procession.

Other communities from each village only send one art group, except for Sendang Village represents all its art groups available. Sendang Village has the most art deployments because it become the host and is located in the centre of government at the sub-district level. Another reason is that this time the celebration is constrained by costs from the local government, so the event is devolved and managed independently by the Laskar Jambangan community. This makes the invited group limited. For a long time, the people of Sendang have carried out the *Siraman Barongan* ceremony. According to the village elder, Mbah Suryani, the implementation of this celebration varied in each period of government. During the Dutch and Japanese rule, *Siraman Barongan* performed during the national days of the Netherlands or Japan. But after Indonesia's Independence, the celebration is held with great joy every year, and its implementation always coincides with Indonesia's Independence Day on August 17.

Until now, the ritual is still maintained by the community as a legacy of its ancestors. The people dare not abandon the ritual. The people believed that if they abandon the ritual, something bad will appear. Once, the village leader did not commemorate the *Siraman Barongan*, coincidentally, most of the village officials experienced sudden illness, without any symptoms or medical explanation. Since then, with advice from local elders, the community conducted the ritual of *Siraman Barongan*. The community immediately followed this instruction by bringing the *oncor* as lighting and accompanying it to the Mbah Bodho site where the *Siraman Barongan* ceremony was carried out.

In practice, the procession of *Siraman Barongan* begins after the ceremony of raising the red-and-white flag of the *saka*. At first, Barongan players entered the Mbah Bodho site along with other

complements found in *Jaranan* dance, such as *Topeng Tetek Melek*, *Jaranan*, *Celeng*, and *Asu* as well as the accompaniment music. The *Barongan* Players cannot carry out the process if the complementary conditions are not met. Not all art groups follow the *Barongan* procession, but the parade. Generally, they come from Kedoyo Village. According to the people, they did not want to join the procession because the *Kepunden* (sacred place) in their area was considered older and more potent than the Mbah Bodho site. The surrounding community uses the Mbah Bodo site as a form of respect for ancestors, so the community makes the site a village *punden*.

The traditional elder recited a *mantra* (incantation) and told *Barongan* to look down in honor of the place. As the name implies, *Siraman Barongan* is a ritual of bathing the *Barongan* using water found in *Jambangan* which is placed in *Bokor* (a water container made of brass, complete with flowers). *Barongan* is synonymous with Javanese and Balinese mythology which is depicted in the form of an animal. This illustrates that this flush cleanses attributes to the original nature of the savage animal. The water in *Maron* (another name for *Jambangan* but made of clay) for the Sendang people has become a symbol of the water of the source of life (MS, Personal Communication, August 25, 2022).

The community named *Gondang* which means *goa panggonan ndang paring pepadang*. For players involved in the procession, the water is believed to provide a blessing. Therefore, it is not uncommon for players to drink this water after they have finished carrying out the ritual. Occasionally, in this place of Mbah Bodho, the *Barongan* players are in a trance. When the procession has been completed, it is now the turn of the elders to join the parade that starts from the place of Mbah Bodho to Langen Square. The motorcade of *jaranan* by the community is known as *Bodolan Jaranan Sendang*. Indeed, *Siraman Barongan* for the people of Sendang is an expression of gratitude and a plea to God to be kept away from all threatening dangers. The danger that comes can be in the form of natural disasters such as landslides, considering that the Sendang area is on the slopes of Mount Wilis.

a. The *Grebeg wuyen* Tradition



Figure 5 Grebeg wuyen Ritual

The *Grebeg wuyen* tradition in Sendang Village is a ritual ceremony that is carried out every seven months and is carried out every Friday Wage night (see Figure 5). The *grebeg wuyen* tradition is a hereditary tradition from the ancestors of the Sendang village community to commemorate the birthday of the dairy cows they raised. In addition, *grebeg wuyen* is also gratitude from the people of Sendang village to the Almighty God because since the people of Sendang Village have become accustomed to raising dairy cows, their income and economy are getting better. Therefore, gratitude for the sustenance they have gained is implemented in the ritual of the *Grebeg wuyen* tradition.

The implementation of *grebeg wuyen* during the pandemic is certainly different from that of previous years. During pre-pandemic, *grebeg wuyen* was carried out with a funfair. However, since

the pandemic, the *grebeg wuyen* celebration is organised in the simple celebration where the community brings *tumpeng* (rice with a complete dish that cone formed) to the village hall, then arranged in front of the village officials who will later lead prayers. For this event, the people wear traditional clothes uniforms called *sampir* and *blangkon* as a substitute for skullcaps. After the prayer was recited, the people present enjoyed the *tumpeng* they brought together. As a form of gratitude to God for the favors obtained, the attendees enjoy togetherness by having conversation to deepen their relationships.

The outbreak of mouth and hoof disease (FMD) of the livestock that appear in several areas in Indonesia, the people of Sendang village worried about their cattle (cows). Since, the main livelihood of the people of Sendang village is produced from milk cows. However, the Sendang village government is very vigilant about the outbreak, the village government provides assistance to all communities who have the cattle by giving vitamins and other medicines. In addition, the government also send medical personnels who are specialised in caring for dairy cows exposed to FMD outbreaks to assist the cattle farmer (SS, Personal Communication, August 25, 2022).

c. d. *Tetek Melek Tradition*



Figure 6 Tetek Tetek tradition

Tetek Melek is an art of painting with the medium of hunchback or fronds of dried coconut leaves that are taken at the stem (see Figure 6). These fronds are then painted with a variety of "scary" characters. *Tetek Melek* are usually placed in front of the house or terrace, precisely on the poles of the house near the door. In southern Tulungagung, every house put a *Tetek Melek* when *pageblug* (pandemic/catastrophe). We observed during student ventures program (KKN 150) of UIN Surabaya which located in Sendang Village accompanied by Mr. Wiyanto as the head of Sendang Hamlet, in a house that is prone to landslides.

Tetek Melek is a relic from the time of the ancestors of the Tulungagung community, especially in Sendang Village. The relics mean to reject all dangers that will attack the community or bad omen (*balak*). Several people do not believe in such belief. However, during pandemic Covid-19, the people of Tulungagung placed *Tetek Melek* in front of their homes to protect them from the disease.

The illustration above concerning the *tetek* painting reminds us of the *ogoh-ogoh* that is always paraded by the Balinese Hindu community ahead of Nyepi Day. *Ogoh-ogoh* is a large doll that has a giant-like face and shape with an antagonistic facial mimic. The *tetek* paintings are also depicted like ugly creatures sticking out their tongues. This character is exactly like the *ogoh-ogoh* inspired by the story Bhuta Kala (another version of Batara Kala) Putra Shiva who is described as a giant with a scary face. These giants are believed to inhabit in quiet and dark places, long-abandoned places or sacred places.

Besides Bhuta Kala, the other sons of Shiva are also described as giants, one of which is Ratu Gede Mecaling who is believed to be the guardian of the island of Bali and is God of the ethereal creatures in the archipelago. Not infrequently this figure is also a character who is often used as inspiration for making *ogoh-ogoh* in Nyepi day. *Tetek* paintings have become statues that continue to live in the Tulungagung community until now. An ancestral heritage tradition that is proof of the great influence of Hinduism in the life of pre-Islamic Tulungagung community. Although today the people of southern Tulungagung are predominantly Muslim, its tradition continues to exist in the community.

d. *The Spiritual Message of the Tetek Melek*

Tetek Melek is believed to be able to repel dangers that threaten the people of Sendang Village, Tulungagung Regency. Mr. Suji, one of the residents of Sendang Tulungagung Village, said that *Tetek Melek* is a symbol of the arrival of infectious disease disasters that threaten the lives of the wider community and *tetek melek* can withhold it. A *Tetek Melek* painting depicting Buto's sinister character, does not necessarily have bad connotations. *Tetek Melek* painting is a reminder bell to always be introspective during *pageblug*.

The selection of painting media in the form of humpback also has a deep meaning. Hunchback has the meaning of surrender. We often hear Javanese expressing a sense of resignation with the term surrender *bongkokan* (surrender completely). People who do not delve into the meaning of the installation of *tetek melek* think that it is able to ward off *pageblug* without other efforts to take care of themselves (Simuh, 1996, p. 62). In the face of a pandemic, various efforts are important to be made, not only efforts to maintain cleanliness and health, but also resignation to the almighty God for life and safety. *Tetek Melek* also seems to be a connection of people's prayers to God for the various efforts that have been made to deal with the pandemic.

Speaking in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, literacy is a reminder that around us there is a lot of danger, in the form of a virus that sticks to places we don't want and is ready to weaken anyone. Therefore, it is appropriate for us to continue to be introspective by maintaining cleanliness, complying with personal safety protocols, and complying with various regulations that have been set by the government. In addition, the ritual of installing *Tetek Melek* also makes the Tulungagung community calmer and more introspective in facing the pandemic. Therefore, this tradition is worth preserving. Readiness and calm in facing a pandemic are important capital that every community must have, so did the people of Sendang, Tulungagung Regency (MW Personal Communication, August 25, 2022).

e. *The Suroan Festival*



Figure 7 Suroan Festival

The tradition of welcoming the month of Muharram or "Bulan Suro" is something that has become one of the important cultural parts for the Javanese Muslim community. This is due to several factors, *first*, for traditional Islam, the month of Muharram is one of the holy months, where by the Muhammad the prophet, Muslims are instructed to do self-introspection (*muhasabah*), both for the journey of the past years and to prepare themselves for the provisions of the coming years. *Mujahadah* rituals, prayers, almsgiving (in Java including *selamatan*, *kenduri*, and others) ascetic, and fasting. The month has firm roots in the Javanese-style tradition of Islamic diversity. *Second*, for Javanese Muslims, the "Month of Suro" is one of the sacred months, in addition to the influence of Islam, as well as because it determines the journey of life. So for the Javanese Muslim community in that month, it is advisable to abandon various worldly celebrations, unite the five *pancers*, and focus on Allah (Andesta, 2020, p. 38). Every religion and belief have a special month for introspection and self-reflection.

Meanwhile, in Sendang Village, the "Suroan Festival" is held every Friday on *Legi* night or Friday *Pon* night, because there used to be a big cleric named "Sheikh Subakir" who deprived Java of the negative influence of subtle creatures at the beginning of the spread of Islamic teachings in the archipelago. In Sendang Village, also in the implementation of the Suroan Festival, each hamlet puts *Takir Plontang* (plate made of leaves) at the crossroads, then the existing *takirs* are redistributed by taking another *takir* (see Figure 7). *Takir Plontang* itself is a container that is used to place food, usually used for offerings. This container is made from banana leaves and coconut leaves (*janur*), shaped to resemble a boat, at the ends of the right and left sides are formed with sticks. According to the people in Sendang Village, this *takir* symbolises gratitude for the favours that have been given from cattle production (MS, Personal Communication, August 25, 2022).

5. Preserving Local Tradition: Awareness of Preventing Disaster

Based on the basic meaning of the word, "Jaranan" comes from the word *Jaran* or horse, and by adding the suffix "an" indicates a non-original form or toy *jaran*. In Javanese culture, "Jaran" is a symbol of strength and a symbol of loyalty. When humans use horses as their vehicles, humans are described as struggling to achieve their life goals. It is said that in the beginning, *jaranan* dance performances were ritual activities related to ancestral spirit-summoning ceremonies carried out by the ancestors of the local community. The ritual activity aims to overcome various calamities that befall human life. In primitive times there was a belief that the destruction of the natural environment, plagues, disasters, and so on occurred due to the spiritual power of the ancestors. As time goes by, any catastrophic calamity or various problems in life connected with the spirits of the ancestors are compiled into a series of stories that develop into myths.

The preservation of *jaranan* traditions is the implementation of the people of Sendang Village so that they are protected from unwanted dangers. With the calamity that has befallen in the past, the animistic attitude of the people of Sendang Village is stronger in maintaining the ancestral heritage in the hope of avoiding disaster. When viewed in terms of Sufism, it is a form of preservation, harmony, and honour of an existing culture (Komara, 2019, p. 43). In addition, the Javanese *Jaranan* tradition has a movement in which it has the meaning of *dhikr* to remember Allah. This is by the perspective that Sufism explains that art can be manifested in the form of knowing God.

Meanwhile, the people of Sendang Village on August 17 this year held bathing the *barongan* tradition which was attended by dozens of *jaranan*, *barongan*, and *reog* art groups in all villages in Sendang District. The annual ritual, which is held every August 17 in conjunction with the commemoration of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia, is centred on the Mbah Bodho Site which is a heritage site of the Majapahit Kingdom era in Nglurup Hamlet, Sendang Village. It is said that this tradition has lasted for hundreds of years by pouring flower water taken from the Mbah Bodho Site into *barongan* art props, peacock *dadak*, and other traditional art props that resemble dragon heads. In addition to being poured on every *barongan* head, the flower water that is believed by the local community to have a lever is also drunk by *barongan* artists before taking part in a

cultural march to welcome the commemoration of the Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia on the highway of Sendang District.

The purpose of bathing *barongan* is to ask for a blessing from the Almighty so that the people of Sendang on the slopes of Mount Wilis are given safety and avoid danger. This tradition is part of one of disaster mitigation.

Meanwhile, before the people of Sendang Village had the habit of raising dairy cows, their economy could be said to be below average except for people who did have positions and descendants of rich people and had their income from agricultural products, trade, and other business activities. Since the people of Sendang Village have become accustomed to raising dairy cows, the economy of the people increases so that they can build their houses better than before and the village develops rapidly compared to other surrounding villages.

The *grebeg wuyen* tradition, which is carried out once every Friday *Wage* night, is a tradition intended to commemorate the birthday of cows as a form of gratitude to the one true God who has given sufficient sustenance through the dairy cows they raise. However, it is not only limited to gratitude, with the *grebeg wuyen* ritual, but the people of Sendang Village also hope that the dairy cows they raise will be avoided outbreaks or diseases.

Meanwhile, *Tetek Melek* paintings with scary characters are believed to be an antidote to distress by the people of Sendang Village. The *Tetek Melek* is usually installed in front of the house or terrace, and around their cattle cages. With these scary expressions, people believe that the plague or disease that will hit them is afraid to see *Tetek Melek*. During the pandemic, many residents' homes were installed to avoid the Covid-19 outbreak, as well as during the rampant outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) of their cattle, as they believed it protect their cattle in Sendang Village.

The tradition of installing *Tetek Melek* has indeed been attached to the people of Sendang Village but it is only an effort to avoid danger or plague that will befall. If the tradition is not carried out, the people of Sendang Village are worried that they will be affected by unwanted plagues or diseases.

In addition, the *Suroan* Festival are also organised by many Javanese as it is believed that during this month several disasters emerge such as long droughts, complicating food crises, and even landslides which are indeed the main factors caused by their human actions. Therefore, sometimes people believe that the month of *suro* is the door to the fate of human life and nature for the coming year.

The people also believe that during this month not misbehaving for it will cause bad luck not only for the individual but also for the community in general. Therefore, the month of *Suro* also means self-awareness for the people in the community to remain vigilant with natural disasters like landslides. Thus, the people will prepare on how to prevent their village from danger. They repair the drainage and build rainwater infiltration. Thus, the ritual on month *Suro* aims to get blessings.

6. Conclusions

As it turns out, the Islamic tradition of *Kejawen* in Sendang Tulungagung Village has a significant role in increasing the community's awareness of disasters. This can be seen in the *jaranan* tradition, the bathing *barongan* tradition, the *Suroan* Festival, the *grebeg wuyen* tradition, and the *Tetek Melek* tradition all of which have meanings and roles that are still believed by the surrounding community in increasing awareness of disasters. One of them is the *Suroan* Festival, which is always commemorated with a congratulation ceremony that is usually performed at a crossroads, in a mosque, or in a place considered sacred. This is conducted to reject *Balak* (bad omen) or reject the existence of disasters and ask for blessings from God during the Month of *Suro* (Muharam).

The mystical tradition of *Kejawen* is still carried out to maintain the harmony and honor of a culture attached to society, as well as to avoid disturbances or chaos, so this is a form of believing in the existence of God. Javanese mysticism (Islam *Kejawen*) explains that God exists in every sphere of activity and is manifested in the form of his creation. Therefore, this paper confirms that practicing Islamic Javanese tradition is a form of respect and care and it is a form of our belief in the existence of God in this universe.

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