

Symbolic Meaning of Padusan Tradition in Umbul Asem Tlatar Kebonbimo Village, Boyolali

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Abstract. The people of Kebonbimo Village perform the Padusan tradition before the arrival of the month of Ramadan. This tradition contains a series of symbols full of meaning and function in it. Unfortunately, many people do not understand the meaning of symbols in this tradition and consider it as a celebration of tradition only. This research aims to comprehensively describe the Padusan tradition, explain in detail the symbolic meaning contained in its implementation and analyze the symbolic forms and functions. This is done as an initial step in efforts to preserve regional culture. The research was conducted by applying qualitative research methods, through observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The collected data were analyzed using the comparative descriptive method. The results of this research are expected to be able to provide knowledge about the form and meaning of a Padusan tradition in Kebonbimo Village, Boyolali. In addition, this research is also expected to be used as a reference to develop further research, as well as an effort to preserve and develop the potential that exists in the area.

1 Introduction

Indonesia is a country with thousands of islands and ethnic groups. The large number of ethnic groups creates diversity in terms of religion, social, culture, and traditions. One of these diversities is the tradition of welcoming the month of Ramadan. This tradition is still believed and practiced by people in each region in different ways.

Tradition is a form of action that is done repeatedly in the same way. This repeated habit is carried out continuously because it is considered beneficial for a group of people so that the group of people preserves it. The word "tradition" comes from the Latin word "tradere" which means to transmit from one hand to another to be preserved. Tradition is generally recognized as a form of custom that has a series of ancient historical events. Every tradition is developed for some purpose, such as a political purpose or a cultural purpose in some period of time [1].

Kebonbimo village is located in Boyolali Sub-district, Boyolali District, Central Java. The village is very fertile because it has several large springs that are utilized by the community, so that they can be a source of drinking water, irrigation of rice fields, and water tourism. The people of Kebonbimo Village recognize several traditions passed down by their ancestors. One of them is a tradition carried out by the community in welcoming the month of Ramadan. This tradition is called the *Padusan* tradition. The people of Kebonbimo and its surroundings hold *padusan* at Umbul Asem Tlatar bathing place.

Padusan comes from the word "*adus*" which means bathing. *Padusan* is done a day or two before entering the month of Ramadan. The meaning of *padusan* is to clean all dirt, so that in fasting in a state of physical and spiritual clean. *Padusan* can be carried out in rivers, swimming pools or can also be carried out in the bathroom and is usually done en masse. Meanwhile, the main capital to welcome the month of Ramadan is faith, sincerity, and seriousness in maintaining purity. Every time you face god (Allah), you must be in a pure condition. Some people in Java think it is incomplete condition to start fasting without *padusan*. *Padusan* has become an annual custom before fasting. Not just a habit, but has become a necessity. In fact, there are some people who consider *padusan* mandatory [2].

Meaning is the sense contained in the symbol or attribute. Meaning is created in interactions between humans, which are usually in the form of symbols [3]. The Liang Gie states that symbols are artificial signs that

are not in the form of words, which are used to represent or abbreviate a certain meaning [4]. In addition, symbols are often associated with signs, so that the relationship between signs and objects becomes visible. Symbols have a role in society, because the symbol system is something that cultural owners find and pass on from one generation to the next [5].

2 Research Methods

This research on the *padusan* tradition uses a qualitative approach. The data collection techniques are:

- e. Observation is a direct examination of an object to be researched. Directly witnessing the object of research is one of the steps to find out and get more accurate and factual data.
- f. Interview is a technique to collect data by asking questions directly to informants or authorities (an expert or authorized person on an issue).
- g. Literature review is a study conducted by digging up information and data from written sources regarding the object to be researched so that sources of information are found that are directly or indirectly related to the research topic.
- h. Documentation is one of the supporting factors during the research and writing process because with existing documentation researchers can re-observe the object of research in more detail. Documentation can also be used as authentic evidence for accountability in this writing.

This research is classified as field research. The basis of this research is sociological in nature which moves according to qualitative research. The technique used to analyze research data is a qualitative descriptive analysis technique with steps: (a) Selecting relevant data; (b) Making objective notes, in this case at the same time classifying and editing (reducing); (c) Making reflective notes; (d) Concluding data; and (e) Triangulating, namely checking the truth of the data by concluding multiple data obtained in three ways: (1) extending the observation time in the field with the aim of matching the data that has been written with the field data, (2) matching the data that has been written by asking the informant again, and (3) matching the data that has been written with library sources.

3 Result and Discussion

Umbul Tlatar is an ecotourism that utilizes natural springs that come out continuously for 24 hours from a layer of volcanic rock, which is at the

foot of Mount Merbabu at an altitude of about 350 meters above sea level. It has a natural, beautiful rural atmosphere and cool air. Umbul Tlatar occupies an area of 7 hectares and spouts water with a discharge of 6 liters/second. There are 2 large baths, namely:

- a. Umbul Pengilon bathing place
- b. Umbul Asem bathing place

Located in Dukuh Tlatar, Kebonbimo Village, Boyolali Regency, Umbul Tlatar bathing place is one of the water attractions and fishing place. Umbul Tlatar is also quite popular with the public to carry out the *padusan* tradition. When one or two days before the month of Ramadan, thousands of people perform the *padusan* tradition at Umbul Asem Tlatar Bathing Place.

At first, visitors who came to follow the *padusan* tradition came from Boyolali and surrounding areas. But over time, many visitors from Klaten, Sukoharjo, Surakarta, Karanganyar, Salatiga, and even other areas came to follow the *padusan* tradition. The enthusiasm of the community to follow *padusan* made the Kebonbimo Village Government and the Boyolali Regency Youth, Sports and Tourism Office (Disporapar) begin to coordinate this *padusan* activity. They work together to manage this tradition. Even the organization of the *padusan* tradition can be carried out for two days to accommodate the desire of the community to carry out *padusan* [6].

In its development, the *padusan* tradition has changed with the times. The mass bathing event has turned into a tourist attraction that many people are interested in. Among the younger generation, the meaning of *padusan* turned into a means of recreational swimming with friends on holidays before Ramadan. The *padusan* tradition manager also presents some entertainment to support the implementation of the *padusan* tradition, so that it can attract visitors to come to the *padusan* tradition. Entertainment activities are seen with various kinds of performances such as musical performances and other artistic attractions. *Padusan* tradition activities by presenting this entertainment can also provide additional income for the surrounding community, especially the traders who sell at the bathing location and the management of the parking area.

Padusan Procedures

Mass bathing in the padusan tradition has procedures for cleaning the body, including:

- a. Reading the Intention
Read the big intention first. This intention is obligatory because it distinguishes a normal bath from a ghusl, it can be read silently or recited.
- b. Washing Both Hands
Wash hands up to 3 times, this aims to make hands clean from unclean.
- c. Cleaning Parts of the Body that are Considered Dirty
The part of the body that is considered dirty is the part around the genitals.
- d. Washing Hands Again
After cleaning the dirty part. This can be done by cleaning hands with soap.
- e. Ablution
Perform ablution procedures as usual before praying.
- f. Wetting the Head
Wet or flush the head with water 3 times to the base of the hair.
- g. Separating the Hair
Separating the hair by interrupting the hair using the fingers of the hands. Separating the hair is obligatory for men and *sunnah* (*mandub*) for women.
- h. Wetting the whole body
Pouring water over the whole body starting from the right side and continuing with the left side

Meaning and Function

Padusan tradition has meaning and function, among others:

- g. Ritual function. *Padusan* is performed by some Muslims who are Javanese. The purpose of *padusan* is to remove all the dirt that sticks to our bodies so that they become clean and pure when entering the month of Ramadan. In addition, *padusan* has a very deep meaning, namely as a medium for reflection and self-introspection from various mistakes that have been made in the past. Spiritually, this tradition is believed to cleanse the body and soul from sins and mistakes, and improve the relationship with God.
- h. Entertainment function. In its development *padusan* tradition became a kind of feast for the people of Kebonbimo and Boyolali. It

- can be concluded that this *padusan* tradition changes the ritual function into a secular function. In the *padusan* tradition, the organizers also display various forms of art to enliven and attract visitors to come to this *padusan* tradition.
- i. Communication function. The gathering between the community and the Kebonbimo Village Government, Tourism Office, and Boyolali Regency Government is a useful communication medium for the Kebonbimo community to convey various problems. In addition, the *padusan* tradition can also strengthen relationships with fellow humans, especially for those who flock to visit pure springs together with family, community, friends, and neighbors.
 - j. The function of cultural preservation can be done by maintaining and developing cultural elements. This preservation process through the process of transmission or delivery of cultural patterns from one generation to another, can occur intentionally and can also take place unconsciously. Regarding the function of ritual tradition, its existence can be understood integrally with the context of the existence of the supporting community. Ritual traditions function to sustain life and fulfill the need to maintain the social collectivity of the Kebonbimo community and its surroundings. Likewise, the reciprocity of preserving community traditions is well maintained.
 - k. Educational function. Learning through direct experience is an educational process for the community. Education is a process of cultural inheritance from one generation to the next. The creativity, innovation, enculturation, and acculturation that occur during *padusan* indicate that humans are active beings. The role of the *padusan* tradition for the community is spiritual education, work ethic education, education for instilling noble values, and education for preserving the natural environment. For example, teaching children to familiarize with religious teachings (Ramadan fasting) and maintaining environmental cleanliness by cleaning irrigation channels irrigated by water from Umbul Tlatar. In addition, *padusan* also teaches the next generation to preserve the environment around Umbul Tlatar, by planting trees, cleaning the surrounding environment. The goal is to keep the water discharge from Umbul Tlatar well maintained.
 - l. Economic function. Umbul Asem, which is the location of *padusan* tradition, is one of the pond in the Umbul Tlatar area. Umbul Tlatar itself is one of the tourist destinations in Boyolali Regency which is managed directly by the Boyolali Regency Government. Meanwhile, the implementation of the *padusan* tradition is managed by Kebonbimo Village Government in collaboration with the Boyolali Regency Tourism Office. Automatically the implementation of the *padusan* tradition becomes one of the tour packages at Umbul

Tlatar, Kebonbimo Village. The implementation of the *padusan* tradition involves and brings in many people, and combines various elements of production of community centers in Kebonbimo Village. Economically, the *padusan* tradition is beneficial for local micro enterprise (*UMKM*) in Kebonbimo village to promote their products, such as traditional food and others. In addition, parking management carried out by local youth also adds to the income of the surrounding community.

The Benefits of the *Padusan* Tradition

Tradition has several functions or benefits, including:

- a. As a provider of historical heritage fragments
Padusan tradition is useful as a provider of historical heritage fragments. *Padusan* that has been carried out since long ago continues to develop until now. Even though at this time, the meaning and function of *padusan* has changed with the times.
- b. As a provider of legitimacy in the view of life
The *padusan* tradition is useful as a legitimizer of beliefs in the view of life. That by doing *padusan*, people feel clean, pure from dirt, and ready to carry out fasting in the month of Ramadan. Some people perform rituals in Umbul Asem Tlatar because this umbul is believed to be sacred.
- c. As a symbol provider in collective identity
Padusan tradition can be a very convincing symbol of collective identity. It can strengthen loyalty to the nation or community..

4 Conclusion

The *padusan* tradition has long developed in the Kebonbimo village community and its surroundings. They utilize Umbul Tlatar as a place to organize the *padusan*. *Padusan* is held one or two days before the month of Ramadan. It aims to cleanse the self from various kinds of impurities, both physical and spiritual, so that the community can carry out fasting properly.

The symbolic meanings of this *padusan* tradition include being closer to God, being a celebration to welcome the arrival of the month of Ramadan, as a means of interaction between communities. In addition, it is also a means of learning for the next generation to be more familiar with the *padusan* tradition. With the holding of the *padusan* tradition, it

also indirectly becomes a cultural attraction or spectacle that attracts outside communities to follow this *padusan*, so that it can increase the income of the Kebonbimo Village community. This symbolic meaning should be passed on to the next generation. The goal is that this *padusan* tradition can be maintained and preserved..

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