

## INTERNALIZATION OF THE EARTH CHARITY TRADITION IN PRESERVING LOCAL CULTURE IN KALIGANGSA VILLAGE, MARGADANA DISTRICT, TEGAL CITY

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### Abstract

Internalization of the Earth Alms Tradition in Preserving Local Culture in Kaligangsa Village, Maragadana District, Tegal City". This study aims to describe the implementation of the Earth Alms tradition, the cultural values contained therein, and the process of internalizing these values in the lives of the people of Kaligangsa Village, Margadana District, Tegal City. The Earth Alms tradition is one of the local cultural heritages that is still preserved by the local community as a form of gratitude to God Almighty and respect for ancestors. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. Data collection techniques are carried out through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation. Informants in the study consisted of the village head, the chairman of the Earth Alms committee, religious leaders, traditional elders, and the community. Data analysis techniques are carried out descriptively qualitatively through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, and data validity testing is carried out using technical triangulation. The results of the study indicate that the Earth Alms tradition in Kaligangsa is carried out routinely every year through a series of activities such as joint prayers, cultural parades, tumpeng, art performances, and other social activities. This tradition embodies religious, social, and cultural values that are internalized through the active participation of people of all ages, especially the younger generation. The internalization process occurs through direct involvement, social interaction, and cultural education, reinforced by the use of social media and digital documentation. This tradition persists as part of the local cultural identity, passed down from generation to generation despite the challenges of modernization.

Keywords: Internalization, Earth Alms, Cultural Values, Local Traditions, Kaligangsa Subdistrict.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Humans as God's creations have a responsibility to maintain balance with nature and their socio-cultural environment. In life, the relationship between humans, nature, and the social environment cannot be separated (Suratman in Umam, 2019:1). Indonesia's diverse culture, both in terms of ethnicity, traditions, and beliefs containing mythical elements, is the basis of people's lives. Since ancient times, people have believed in the existence of supernatural powers that regulate nature, which are believed to bring benefits or disasters. Therefore, various rituals such as pilgrimages, offerings, vows, and art performances are carried out as symbolic efforts to maintain relationships with these powers. Javanese people understand that an agrarian society is a society that has a concept where humans must submit to or be in harmony with nature. This is in line with the Javanese concept of the need for harmony with nature. Therefore, when bad things happen to humans related to nature, such as natural disasters or disease outbreaks, it is believed to be the result of the shaking of harmony between humans and nature, caused by human actions that do not respect nature. Therefore, maintaining harmony in life requires a balance with nature that must be continuously maintained so that people's lives can run harmoniously. Thohir in Umam (2019:2). Like tradition, it is an important element in shaping a community's culture that needs to be maintained and preserved. However, technological developments and increasingly rational mindsets have caused tradition to be marginalized. Therefore, a philosophical study of tradition as a ritual rich in symbolic meaning is necessary (Umam 2019:4).

Sedekah Bumi (Earth Alms) is a popular traditional tradition in Indonesia, particularly on the island of Java, as it has been passed down from generation to generation from ancestors and is still preserved to this day. Each region has its own unique methods and meanings for its implementation, in accordance with local teachings. This tradition is carried out as a form of charity and an expression of gratitude to God for the bounty of the earth, as well as a prayer for the soil to remain fertile, avoid disasters, and ensure a smooth next harvest. Furthermore, giving alms is believed to ward off stinginess and various calamities (Pinihanti 2020:4). In line with this understanding, tradition is seen as a symbolic effort to maintain a balanced relationship between humans and nature. Therefore, to ensure that these traditions do not fade

amidst the tide of modernization, it is necessary to internalize their values within society. Internalization is the process of internalizing certain teachings, doctrines, or values until they become deeply ingrained beliefs and are reflected in daily attitudes and behaviors. Internalization also involves re-conceiving the results of objectification by transforming the structure of the external environment into an internal one, namely subjective consciousness (Berger and Luckmann, as quoted by Hasan (2019:19)).

In this context, the Sedekah Bumi tradition serves as a means of internalizing cultural, spiritual, and social values passed down through generations. This tradition, popular on the island of Java, is an expression of gratitude for the earth's bounty and a prayer for the safety and fertility of the land. Although its implementation varies from region to region, its meaning remains the same. Through this tradition, communities strengthen spiritual connections, togetherness, and concern for nature, making Sedekah Bumi an important part of community life aligned with religious values. Therefore, preserving a culture is crucial so that the noble values of local traditions can be transmitted to future generations. The ongoing implementation of Sedekah Bumi plays a vital role in introducing this culture to a wider audience. However, this tradition has not yet received adequate attention, according to Aulia et al. (2025:2). Initial observations on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, obtained from Mr. Cipto, a resident of Kaligangsa Village, Margadana District, Tegal City, indicated that the community still preserves the Sedekah Bumi tradition as a form of gratitude to God and respect for nature. This tradition, passed down from generation to generation, is rich in spiritual, social, and cultural values, although its implementation varies from region to region. However, modernization and a practical mindset have caused this tradition to lose its meaning among the community, who tend to view it as merely a ritual. Philosophically, Sedekah Bumi contains noble values that serve as guidelines for the community's lives. Therefore, it is necessary to re-internalize the values of this tradition so that they are not merely preserved physically, but also lived out in the community's consciousness as a form of concern for nature and gratitude.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a narrative study method which according to Creswell in Safrudin et al (2023:6) focuses on narratives, stories, or descriptions of a series of events related to human experiences, chosen to record, understand, and interpret the experiences of the Kaligangsa Village community related to the Sedekah Bumi tradition and cultural values passed down personally and collectively. The research design follows the flow of Raco in Fadli (2021:7) which starts from identifying problems of cultural preservation amidst modernization, theoretical studies such as social construction and local cultural values, formulation of research objectives, data collection, analysis, to preparation of reports, with procedures referring to Prof. Dr. Lexy J. Moleong (2018) which includes the pre-field stage (design formulation, location selection, permit processing, field exploration, determination of informants, preparation of instruments, ethical considerations), the field work stage (understanding the context, adaptation, building relationships with residents), and the data analysis stage (finding patterns, interpretation, preparation of a summary of findings). The data sources consist of primary Afrizal in Undari Sulung, (2024:3) in the form of observations, interviews with the village head, committee chairman, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and the community, as well as documentation of the implementation of traditions, and secondary Alir in Undari Sulung, (2024:3) in the form of village archives, previous activity reports, books, scientific articles, and other libraries, with the form of data referring to Lofland in Prof. Dr. Lexy J. Moleong (2018:157–160) including words and actions, written sources, and photos. Data collection techniques include interviews with Prof. Dr. Lexy J. Moleong (2018:186), Arikunto's observation in Sirajuddin Saleh, (2019:65), and Arikunto's documentation in Sirajuddin Saleh, S.Pd (2019:68), while data analysis uses the Miles & Huberman model in Sirajuddin Saleh, S.pd (2019:93) which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity testing is carried out using Sugiyono's triangulation technique in Wiyanda Vera Nurfaiani, et al., (2024:4) through a combination of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and the presentation of the analysis results refers to Sudaryanto in Paramita Hapsari, et al. (2022:16) using formal techniques (tables, matrices, charts) and informal (descriptive narratives) so that the research results are scientific and contextual.

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1 Form of Implementation of the Earth Alms Tradition in Kaligangsa Village

The implementation of the Sedekah Bumi tradition in Kaligangsa Village can be understood through the Social Construction Theory of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann in Asmanidar, (2021:3) which explains that reciprocal interactions between individuals and society occur through externalization,

objectivation, and internalization. Internalization itself, according to Berger & Luckmann in Hasan (2019:19), is the process of internalizing values until they become part of consciousness and behavior. In practice, the Sedekah Bumi tradition in Kaligangsa is held annually for three days and two nights at the Mbah Bapang grave area, beginning with community service, haul recitation, collective prayers, a cultural procession, buffalo slaughtering, distribution of mountains of agricultural produce, dangdut music entertainment, and shadow puppet performances. Although there are adjustments to the times such as the addition of bazaars or modern entertainment, the core values are maintained. This is reflected in the statement of informant 3 who said, "There are some changes... but the core traditions such as prayers, processions, and cultural symbols are still maintained," as well as religious figures (i4) who emphasized, "As long as there are no elements of polytheism... this tradition can be a good medium for preaching." The head of the committee (i2) also said that this tradition originated from the customs of agrarian communities with the aim of expressing gratitude, respect for the earth, and praying for safety. Research findings show that this tradition is a means of internalizing cultural and religious values, as well as strengthening social relations in the community.

### 3.2 Cultural Values Contained in the Earth Alms Tradition in Kaligangsa Village

The cultural values embodied in the Sedekah Bumi tradition refer to the view of Rizaldi & Qodariyah (2021:4) who divide it into three: religious, social, and cultural values. Religious values are reflected in the implementation of prayer, dhikr, tahlil, and alms that connect worship to God (hablum minallah) and to others (hablum minannas). Social values are evident in the interaction and mutual cooperation of residents, while cultural values are evident in the preservation of local wisdom such as shadow puppet performances, Javanese songs, and the belief in maintaining traditions to avoid disasters. Informant 3 stated, "The values inherited include gratitude to God, the spirit of mutual cooperation, togetherness, respect for ancestors, simplicity, and love of culture," while a religious figure (i4) emphasized that this tradition actually practices Islamic teachings by encouraging sharing and caring for nature. Observations show that these values are not only present during the annual event, but are also manifested in daily life, such as routine istighosah activities and preparatory meetings involving all residents.

*Table 1. Total Population*

Age	Man	Woman	Total
0-60th	6.267	5.988	12.255



*Figure 1. earth charity photo*

### 3.3 The Process of Internalizing the Values of the Earth Alms Tradition in the Life of the Kaligangsa Village Community

The process of internalizing values in the lives of the Kaligangsa community is in line with the concept of Berger & Luckmann (Asmanidar, 2021:3) and cultural preservation according to Sendjaja in Kusuma, et al. (2022:6) which is carried out through direct experience and cultural knowledge. The main challenges faced are the flow of modernization and the declining interest of the younger generation, as conveyed by the village head (i1), "Some consider this tradition outdated." To overcome this, the committee utilizes social media, makes documentary videos, invites guests from outside, and involves all levels of society, as expressed by i2, "We make documentary videos, invite guests from outside to get to know this tradition," and i3, "Continue to involve all levels of society, document activities to be passed

down." The results of the study show that the internalization process takes place across generations through active involvement in preparation, joint prayers, tumpeng, and art performances, so that the values of gratitude, mutual cooperation, social responsibility, and love of culture are maintained as the collective identity of the Kaligangsa community.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The Sedekah Bumi tradition in Kaligangsa Village is held annually for three days and two nights through a series of activities such as site cleaning, communal prayers, religious studies, cultural processions, and traditional arts performances that involve all levels of society in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation. This tradition contains religious values (gratitude and prayer), social values (cooperation and solidarity), and cultural values (preservation of art and respect for ancestors) that are manifested not only in ceremonies but also in daily life. Internalization of values occurs continuously through the active participation of the community, especially the younger generation, with guidance from parents, community leaders, traditional elders, and religious leaders, according to the three stages of social construction of Berger and Luckmann. Despite facing the challenges of modernization, this tradition has become institutionalized as a means of passing on values and preserving local culture. It is recommended that the village government continue to support the implementation of this tradition through budget support, permits, promotion, collaboration with educational institutions, and digital documentation; that the community maintain and instill traditional values in the younger generation; and that further research explore the role of digital media, the economic impact of culture, comparisons between regions, and the perceptions of the younger generation to strengthen cultural preservation amidst the challenges of the times.

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