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The Yaqowiyu Tradition and the Implementation of Islamic Values of Generosity From the Exemplary of Kiai Ageng Gribig in Jatinom, Klaten

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ABSTRACT

Yaqowiyu merupakan salah satu warisan budaya religius yang tumbuh dan berkembang di Jatinom, Klaten, sebagai bentuk penghormatan terhadap keteladanan Kiai Ageng Gribig, seorang ulama karismatik penyebar Islam di tanah Jawa. Tradisi ini dilaksanakan pada bulan safar, dengan kegiatan pembagian kue apem yang sarat makna simbolik dan nilai-nilai sosial keagamaan, khususnya nilai kedermawanan dan kepedulian terhadap sesama. Dalam memperkenalkan ajaran Islam di Wilayah yang kini dikenal sebagai Jatinom memiliki salah satunya aspek tradisi masyarakat. Sebaran Apem Ya Qowiyyu adalah bagian dari warisan budaya Ki Ageng Gribig yang diteruskan kepada masyarakat yang kemudian dipertahankan hingga saat ini. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi nilai kedermawanan Islam dalam tradisi *Yaqowiyu* serta menelaah keteladanan Kiai Ageng Gribig menjadi sumber inspirasi dalam pelaksanaannya di masyarakat Jatinom. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan studi dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi *Yaqowiyu* tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai ritual budaya dan keagamaan, tetapi juga sebagai sarana internalisasi nilai-nilai Islam, terutama kedermawanan, kebersamaan, dan solidaritas sosial. *Sebaran apem* sebagai simbol sedekah menjadi bentuk nyata pengamalan ajaran Islam tentang berbagi rezeki dan mempererat ukhuwah. Nilai-nilai tersebut berakar dari ajaran dan keteladanan Kiai Ageng Gribig yang

menekankan pentingnya amal sosial dan kasih sayang terhadap sesama umat. Dengan demikian, tradisi *Yaqowiyu* memiliki relevansi yang tinggi dalam membentuk karakter dermawan dan memperkuat kohesi sosial masyarakat di era modern.

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INTRODUCTION

Culture is most effectively studied purely as a system of symbols. The process is to separate its elements, identify the internal relationships between them in the form of a structure, and then characterize the entire system in terms of the central symbols around which the culture is organized (Putri et al., 2025). Drewes has re-examined three old manuscripts dating from the 15th or 16th century. These three manuscripts show orthodox Islam that can be accepted by all parties among Muslims. (Abdul, 2022). Second, there are those who accept Islam but have not yet forgotten its ancient teachings. Therefore, they mix Islamic culture and teachings with ancient beliefs. Humans, in this case society, play a crucial role in rituals and ceremonies related to existing social life and the underlying basis for these activities. Experience is a construct of a series of senses (smell, touch, sight, and other senses) that directly shape meaning (Erythrea, 2014) . Some ritual or ceremonial activities and some rituals can be described as cultural attributes where they are collective actions that take place in public spaces.

One example of local wisdom rich in multicultural values is the Yaaqawiyyu tradition in Jatinom, Klaten. This tradition, inherited from Ki Ageng Gribig, a respected cleric, teaches virtues through the symbolic sharing of apem (rice cake) (Gafur, 2021). The Yaaqawiyyu tradition conveys a message of togetherness, sharing, and respect for diversity, as it involves people from various social strata, cultural backgrounds, and religions. These syncretic attitudes and behaviors are evident in the Yaqowiyu ritual procession.

The ceremony is named Yaqowiyu, derived from a prayer recited by Kyai Ageng Gribig at the conclusion of the religious study. The prayer reads, "Ya Qowiyu Yaa Aziz Qowina wal Muslimin," which means, "O God, the All-Powerful, O Allah, the All-

Victorious, may He grant strength to us Muslims." This prayer was recited by Kyai Ageng Gribig in front of the audience and visitors, who then called the religious study group "ongkowiyu," referring to "jongko wahyu," or the effort to seek revelation. Yaqowiyu is a traditional ceremony held in Jatinom, a district in Klaten, Central Java, every Sapar month. The month of Suro, the beginning of the Javanese calendar, is considered a holy month because it symbolizes the sacred month (Putri et al., 2025) The Javanese consider the month of Suro, or Muharram, to be a precious and sacred month. Naturally, many rituals are performed during Suro, including the washing of weapons and the cleaning of palaces. In the second month, Sapar or Syafar, the people rejoice, as evidenced by the many traditions held to express gratitude for God's blessings. Therefore, locals often refer to it as Saparan (Suhendro & Subroto, 2023). This ritual has developed since the Islamic Mataram era, which was held to commemorate the great services of Ki Ageng Gribig, one of the spreaders of Islam in Jatinom Klaten during the time of Sultan Agung Hanyokrokusumo (Widiya Tri Handayani, 2024). This tradition is still maintained today, and it is estimated that more than 25,000 people attended the ritual this year, an increase from the previous year's 20,000 people (KlatenOnline).

Yaqowiyyu began when Kyai Ageng Gribig returned from the holy land of Mecca. He brought a lump of clay from Arafat and bread. This bread is known as "roti gimbal" (Ardina Candra Kirana, Anung Rachman, 2021). He then distributed it to relatives, students, and neighbors. Many people crowded Kyai Ageng Gribig's residence to listen to his sermons and stories. However, the gifts were not enough to share with all the guests. Therefore, he asked his wife, Nyai Ageng, to bake bread in large quantities so that all guests would receive a gift. Jatinom was once a perdikan village formed by the figure of the spread of Islam, namely Ki Ageng Gribig. With him, Jatinom also became a perdikan village due to Ki Ageng Gribig's services in fighting the rebellion against Sultan Agung. Because of his services, Ki Ageng Gribig requested the land that is now Jatinom. Jatinom is now a thriving village. Jatinom is now a center of various fairly developed economic activities.

The Yaqawiyu ceremony has been held for approximately 430 years. It began as a tradition among people working in agriculture, both as farm laborers and as farmers. They consider agricultural work to be a pulung (God's will) or destiny. They also consider farming a profession inherited from their ancestors, enabling them to fulfill their daily

needs. The Yaqawiyu traditional ceremony is held at the Alit Mosque. They enthusiastically participate because they receive apem cakes during the andhum apem procession. Receiving ape-shaped cakes is a blessing. Typically, the apem cakes they receive are placed in every corner of the farmland, hoping for blessings, fertile crops, and abundant yields. The symbolic meaning of distributing apem cakes is closely related to the teachings of generosity and social concern imparted by Kiai Ageng Gribig. He was known as a generous cleric, sensitive to the welfare of the community, and emphasized the importance of sharing one's wealth with others. The tradition of distributing apem symbolizes the spirit of charity in Islamic teachings, in accordance with Allah's command in the Qur'an that Muslims always give a portion of their sustenance to others (Amaliyah, 2015). Therefore, the Yaqowiyu tradition is not merely a cultural heritage, but also a means of cultural da'wah that teaches Islamic values in a relevant context. Responding to this situation, it is important to review the meaning and values contained in the Yaqowiyu tradition, especially related to the application of Islamic values of generosity derived from the teachings and example of Kiai Ageng Gribig. This study is expected to be able to explore how the Jatinom community understands, feels, and applies these values in their social life through the implementation of the Yaqowiyu tradition. Based on the explanation above, this article analyzes the Yaqowiyu Tradition and the Implementation of Islamic Values of Generosity from the Example of Kiai Ageng Gribig in Jatinom, Klaten.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative research type with a case study methodology. This strategy was chosen because the researcher wanted to collect extensive information and describe the mindset and habits of the community in Jatinom village related to the Yaqawiyu tradition. Data collection methods included interviews, observation, and documentation. The researcher conducted interviews with community members involved in the research problem. Next, the researcher conducted direct field observations to examine the implementation of Islamic values of generosity from the example of Kiai Ageng Gribig in Jatinom, Klaten. This means that the researcher was present among the community to conduct detailed observations on the process of implementing the Yaqawiyu tradition. The data analysis technique used steps, data reduction, and data presentation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To uncover the meaning of the Ya Qowiyu ritual tradition in Jatinom, it is certainly inseparable from the cultural context surrounding it, specifically Javanese culture. Therefore, after repeatedly reading this tradition and comparing it with Javanese culture, particularly the Javanese belief system and rituals, the author discovered several interpretive meanings that can be gleaned from the Ya Qowiyu ritual in Jatinom. Analysis of the results of observations and interviews indicates that the Yaqowiyu tradition has two functions: as a religious ritual and as a means of internalizing Islamic values.

a. Spiritual and Cultural Dimension

Saparan is a belief held by most Javanese people for salvation, or what they call "ngalap berkah." It is a fusion of indigenous Javanese beliefs, Hinduism, and Islam. This fusion is called syncretism. Animism combined with spiritual elements to form Javanese religion, and then Hinduism and Islam were combined into Javanese religion, often referred to as the Javanese Faith. This tradition serves as a medium for spreading Islam through local culture. Prayers, religious studies, and tahlil (recitation of the Koran) reflect the integration of Islamic values into a cultural form that is acceptable to the community. The esoteric meaning of apem in the Yaqowiyu ritual can be seen in the following interpretations.According to Panji Supardi, caretaker of Kiai Ageng Gribig's tomb in Jatinom, the apem cakes distributed to his students by Kiai Ageng Gribig have a special meaning. He believes that apeem cakes actually symbolize forgiveness from God Almighty. Etymologically, "apem" comes from the Arabic word "afwun," meaning "forgiveness." So, if people receive ape-em cakes, they will be forgiven for all their sins by God. The apem cakes are arranged in a 4-2-4-4-3 pattern, which has the same meaning as the number of rak'ahs of prayer: Isha, Fajr, Dhuhr, Asr, and Maghrib. Among the arrangements are long beans, tomatoes, and carrots, symbolizing the local community's livelihood from agriculture. At the top of the mountain is a mustaka (a container similar to a mosque) containing hundreds of apem cakes.

b. The Value of Generosity

The Yaaqawiyyu tradition is believed to have originated from a personal ritual performed by Ki Ageng Gribig as a way of approaching God (Chayati et al., 2024).

Over time, this ritual began to be followed by his followers until it became a tradition agreed upon by the local community (Pratistiningsih et al., 2024). This tradition then evolved into a mass procession, even becoming an integral part of Jatinom's cultural identity. In the community's view, abandoning this tradition is considered to bring bad luck or disaster; thus, the Yaaqawiyyu tradition plays a crucial role in maintaining social and spiritual harmony.

One characteristic of the Yaaqawiyyu tradition is the procession of distributing apem cakes to the community. Thousands of apem cakes are prepared by a committee and distributed to residents from various social, cultural, and religious backgrounds. This tradition involves all elements of society, demonstrating a spirit of inclusivity and togetherness. Philosophically, the word "apem" comes from the Arabic word afwan, which means "to forgive." This meaning reflects the profound message of the Yaaqawiyyu tradition, namely the importance of forgiveness, togetherness, and gratitude to God. The distribution of apem reflects the principle of charity in Islamic teachings. The community adopts a spirit of sharing in accordance with the guidance in Surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 267 and the Prophet's saying that recommends giving food to others as a noble deed.

According to a deeply rooted belief in the Jatinom community and surrounding areas, apem cakes found in gunungan (mountains) or stored in ororo-oro tarwiyah (ororo tarwiyah) are considered to possess supernatural powers that bring blessings to whoever obtains them. These apem cakes are believed to serve as offerings, protection from disasters, or as a requirement for various specific needs. For farmers, apem cakes can be used as offerings in their rice fields to ensure their crops are protected from various natural disasters and pest and disease attacks that can harm their harvest. A growing belief holds that those who obtain a large number of apem cakes during this celebration are considered a sign of abundant sustenance. Therefore, the Saparan tradition which is still carried out among the Javanese people is a form of respect for the spirits of their ancestors, especially Ki Ageng Gribig.

c. Values of Connectedness and Social Solidarity

The involvement of all community members, regardless of social status, demonstrates the application of the values of togetherness and cooperation, which

align with Islamic principles in maintaining social balance (Mubaroq, 2019). The Yaqowiyyu ceremony serves to unite the community that comes to celebrate. In anthropological studies, functionalism is a methodology for exploring interdependence (Putri et al., 2025). Functionalism is a theory of cultural processes. In anthropology, functionalism is an approach or perspective (methodology) that observes that every element of culture, such as beliefs, traditions, customs, or social institutions, has a specific function in maintaining the continuity and balance of society.

The context of the Yaqowiyu tradition has mutually supportive functions, religiously, socially, economically, and culturally (Abdul, 2022). Religious values reflect the Yaqowiyu tradition, which begins with religious recitation, communal prayer, and tahlil (remembrance of Kiai Ageng Gribig). From a functionalist perspective, this section serves to maintain the community's spiritual awareness, strengthen the relationship between humans and God (hablun minallah), and preserve Islamic teachings through cultural media (Gafur, 2021). Through prayer and religious studies, the Jatinom community indirectly maintains their Islamic identity and strengthens religious values amidst the currents of modern culture. Social values are reflected in the activity of distributing apem (rice cakes) as an important symbol in the Yaqowiyu tradition. Functionally, this activity fosters a sense of togetherness and social solidarity among residents (Suhendro & Subroto, 2023). Thousands of people come from various regions, working together in preparation, maintaining order, and sharing food regardless of social status. This process becomes a moment where residents compete for apem, creating strong social bonds between them. The tradition of saparan or yaqowiyu is not just a festival but also a representation of the cultural diversity and traditions preserved in the region. This celebration reflects the close relationships among residents within their community, creating a moment for individuals from various backgrounds to interact and share experiences. Through the distribution of apem cakes, a symbol of simplicity, this festival strengthens community unity amidst their diversity, demonstrating the importance of tolerance and unity in preserving a rich cultural heritage.

Its economic function also stimulates the local economy. Many traders, MSMEs, and local residents earn income from these activities. From a functionalist perspective, this economic aspect supports a balanced social system, as cultural activities not only have spiritual value but also provide tangible benefits to the community's well-being. A Yaqowiyu ceremony organizing committee is formed, tasked with managing the crowds and the traditional market. Seven days before the ceremony, traders from various regions, including Jatinom residents themselves, begin to occupy the streets leading to the location, which serves as a large market for residents. Visitors eager to witness the hustle and bustle begin arriving from outside Jatinom. Those with relatives and those without are an asset to these traders. Likewise, Jatinom residents who live and work outside the city begin returning to their hometowns. The cultural function of the Yaqowiyu tradition serves as a means of preserving local culture. Functionalists believe that cultural elements such as these maintain the continuity of history and community identity. By preserving the Yaqowiyu tradition, the Jatinom community maintains the noble values inherited by Kiai Ageng Gribig, especially the values of generosity and compassion for others.

CONCLUSION

The research results show that the Yaqowiyu tradition serves not only as a cultural and religious ritual but also as a means of internalizing Islamic values, particularly generosity, togetherness, and social solidarity. The distribution of apem (apem) as a symbol of almsgiving is a concrete manifestation of Islamic teachings on sharing wealth and strengthening brotherhood. These values are rooted in the teachings and example of Kiai Ageng Gribig, who emphasized the importance of social charity and compassion for fellow believers.

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