JAVANESE-ISLAMIC CULTURAL HERITAGE IN FORMING A MOSLEM SOCIETY (A CASE STUDY)*

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Abstract:

Based on ethnic population data, the Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia. The spread of the Javanese population throughout Indonesia occurs mainly due to transmigration activities, that is the movement of people from one densely populated area to another less densely populated area. Among the Javanese culture that is maintained in almost all areas of the overseas are language, art, spirituality, and philosophy of life. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with case study approach. This study raises the study of Javanese Moslem society in Musi Rawas, a regency in South Sumatra. This research describes the form of existence of Javanese culture which does not only survive on the island of Java itself, but extends to all areas where there are people of Javanese descent. This study describes the extent to which the role of Islamic teachings that have been combined with Javanese culture in forming a Moslem society with good morals. A good and commendable personality, a norm that regulates the relationship between human beings, with God, and the universe.

Keywords: *Javanese*, *Culture*, *Moslem Society*.

Abstrak:

Berdasarkan data populasi etnis, suku Jawa merupakan suku terbesar di Indonesia. Penyebaran penduduk Jawa ke seluruh Indonesia terjadi terutama karena kegiatan transmigrasi, yaitu perpindahan penduduk dari suatu daerah yang padat penduduknya ke daerah lain yang kurang padat penduduknya. Di antara budaya Jawa yang dipertahankan hampir di seluruh wilayah rantau adalah bahasa, seni, spiritualitas, dan filosofi hidup. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Kajian ini mengangkat kajian tentang masyarakat Islam Jawa di Musi Rawas, sebuah kabupaten di Sumatera Selatan. Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan wujud eksistensi budaya Jawa yang tidak hanya bertahan di Pulau Jawa saja, namun meluas ke seluruh wilayah yang terdapat masyarakat keturunan Jawa. Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan sejauh mana peran ajaran Islam yang dipadukan dengan budaya Jawa dalam membentuk masyarakat Islam yang berakhlak mulia. Kepribadian yang baik dan terpuji, merupakan norma yang mengatur hubungan antara manusia, dengan Tuhan, dan alam semesta.

Kata kunci: Jawa, Budaya, Masyarakat Islam.

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INTRODUCTION

Based on population data for 2010¹, the Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia with a proportion of 40.05% of the total population or around 95,217,022 people (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2015). The Javanese come from areas in Central Java, East Java, the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indramayu Regency, Cirebon Regency/City (West Java) and Serang-Cilegon Regency/City (Banten)². The existence of the Javanese ethnic group is spread across 33 provinces, with the largest number in succession in Central Java (31.56 million), East Java (30.03 million), West Java (5.71 million), Lampung (4.86 million), North Sumatra (4.32 million), DKI Jakarta (3.45 million), DI Yogyakarta (3.33 million), South Sumatra (2.04 million), Banten (1.66 million), Riau (1.61 million), East Kalimantan (1.07 million). While the distribution in other provinces is also at least in Gorontalo with a total of 35 thousand people³.

The spread of the Javanese population throughout Indonesia occurs mainly due to transmigration activities, namely the movement of people from one area that is densely populated to another area that is less densely populated. Transmigration is a unique form of migration in Indonesia, starting in 1905 during the Dutch colonial period (Setiawan, 2010). Java Island, as the island with the most densely populated population, is the place of origin for transmigrants. Meanwhile, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku and Papua were among the destinations for the most transmigration. Types of transmigration in Indonesia can be broadly divided into two, some are fully funded government-owned programs and some are carried out on the initiative and independently funded by each resident⁴.

The struggle of the pioneers who opened the transmigration area was recorded in history, until now it is well remembered by their descendants. Starting with asking permission from the local traditional leaders, clearing the forest in mutual cooperation,

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¹ Commonly called SP2010, organized by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS).

² https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suku Jawa, 2023.

³ Hidayat, A. A. (2015, May 18). *Sebaran Suku Jawa Di Indonesia*. Retrieved from KangAtepAfia.com: kangatepafia.com/2015/05/sebaran-suku-jawa-di-indonesia.html.

⁴ Setyaningrum, P. (2022, Mar 21). *Transmigrasi: Pengertian, Sejarah, Tujuan, Jenis, Syarat, dan Dampak*. Retrieved from Kompas.com: https://regional.kompas.com/read/2022/03/21/161616078/ transmigrasi-pengertian-sejarah-tujuan-jenis-syarat-dan-dampak?page=all

to building the village as a whole⁵. South Sumatra, became one of the destinations for transmigration with the majority of the Javanese ethnicity.

Among the regencies/cities in South Sumatra that are transmigration areas or commonly abbreviated as trans areas, namely Musi Rawas Regency. Musi Rawas Regency is also known as Bumi Lan Serasan Sekatenan, which is taken from the local language⁶. It consists of the word "earth" which means place, "lan" which means work, "serasan" which means getting along or getting along, and "sekatenan" which means friend or comrade or friend. If connected into one sentence, it has the meaning of working with suitable friends.⁷

Musi Rawas Regency has abundant agricultural potential. Included in the nine areas used as food storages in South Sumatra Province, Musi Rawas Regency was chosen as one of the national food buffers (Kompas TV, 2021). According to BPS statistical data, in 2022 Musi Rawas Regency was recorded to produce rice which is the main agricultural commodity used to meet the need for rice as the staple food of the Indonesian population of 109,960.91 tons⁸.

Musi Rawas Regency is the parent region of Lubuklinggau City which was split in 2001 and North Musi Rawas Regency which was later split in 2007.9 Consisting of 14 sub-districts, Musi Rawas Regency has regional centers for the trans population group where the majority of the population comes from Java. Even though many have mixed and even cross-married between newcomers and natives, it is often the case that each chooses to join the same tribe.

This research will answer the following research questions: (1) what is the hegemony of Javanese culture in Musi Rawas; (2) what are the religious values of Javanese culture in Musi Rawas; and (3) What is the philosophy of Javanese cultural

⁵ S. Rasyid, (2022, July 27). Sejarah Transmigrasi Orang-orang Jawa ke Lampung, Penuh Perjuangan. Retrieved from Merdeka.com: https://www.merdeka.com/jateng/sejarahtransmigrasi-orang-orang-jawa-ke-lampung-penuh-kisah-perjuangan.html.

⁶ N. Asyura, (2023, March 7). Julukan Kabupaten Musi Rawas. (H. S. Hartono, Interviewer)

⁷ Results of interviews with Nisvi Asyura, Deputy Chairperson 1 of BAZNAS of Musi Rawas Regency who is also an indigenous resident of Musi Rawas. The interview took place on March 6, 2023, via virtual message.

⁸ Berli. (2023, Mar 5). Daerah Penghasil Padi Terbesar di Sumsel, Juaranya Penyangga Palembang. Retrieved from iNewsSumsel.id: https://sumsel.inews.id/berita/daerah-penghasil-paditerbesar-di-sumsel-juaranya-penyangga-palembang.

⁹https://musirawaskab.go.id/site/geografi#:~:text=Kecamatan%20%3A%20terdiri%20dari%2 014%20Kecamatan,186%20desa%20dan%2013%20kelurahan.

life in Musi Rawas. All three are basic aspects of the Javanese-Islamic cultural heritage in forming a Moslem society in Musi Rawas.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach. In this research, author explores about the existence of Javanese culture in the transmigration center area in *Bumi Lan Serasan Sekatenan*, Musi Rawas Regency, South Sumatra. In order to obtain valid and detailed information regarding the discussion to be explored, the authors conducted direct observations and interviews. The observation took place for some time, while in-depth interviews were carried out for a short duration from February to March 2023.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

JAVA CULTURAL HEGEMONY IN MUSI RAWAS

Culture is linguistically defined as a way of life that develops, and is shared by a group of people, and is passed down from generation to generation. Culture or culture comes from Sanskrit, namely "buddhayah" which is the plural form of "buddhi" (mind or reason) which is defined as matters relating to the mind and human reason. The oldest definition of culture was put forward by Edward Burnett Tylor¹⁰ in his book "Primitive Culture". Tylor expressed the opinion that culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". Culture is a unique whole and not the sum of the parts of an immaterial human creative ability, in the form of psychological abilities such as knowledge, technology, beliefs, beliefs, art and so on¹¹.

Among the Javanese culture that is maintained in almost all areas of the overseas including Musi Rawas are language, art, spirituality, and philosophy of life. The Javanese, wherever they are, mostly make it a habit to always use the Javanese language in their daily speech. Javanese has rules for different vocabulary and

¹⁰ A British anthropologist widely regarded as the founder of anthropology as a scientific discipline. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward Burnett Tylor, 2023.

¹¹ Sumarto. (2019). Budaya, Pemahaman dan Penerapannya "Aspek Sistem Religi, Bahasa, Pengetahuan, Sosial, Keseninan dan Teknologi". Jurnal Literasiologi, 1(2), 144-159.

intonation based on the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor, which is known as unggah-ungguh. Unggah-ungguh is a fundamental principle of the Javanese people to always pay attention to customs, manners, ethics, morals, and manners.

It is proven that the Javanese language is not only used in the hometown where the Javanese tribe originates, but also exists internationally. It turns out that the Javanese language is also used in five countries besides Indonesia, that are New Caledonia, the Netherlands, Cocos (Keeling) Island, Kampung Padang Jawa (a regional name in Malaysia), and Suriname. Even Google, the largest search engine website uses the Javanese language to be accessible to its users and is now a trend. This means that the Javanese language is universal and survives in all corners of the world.

The same applies to the majority of the transmigrant population in Musi Rawas. Even though they were not born or raised in their hometowns in Java, they all use Javanese as the language they use every day. Even more primarily used than the mother tongue, namely Indonesian. Starting from children to adults and parents. The types of Javanese arts preserved in Musi Rawas include the jaranan, reog and wayangan dances. These three types of art are the ones most often used as entertainment at celebration events. Even the natives are used to this type of entertainment and enjoy it.

Javanese culture in the Musi Rawas area is mainly due to the mass migration of people from Java since ancient times. Javanese cultural hegemony can be seen from Javanese as the language used in the daily activities of the majority of the Javanese population, then Javanese art which is preserved in Musi Rawas, religious values which consist of religious activities to tarekat recitation, and the philosophy of life inherent in every Javanese person.

RELIGIOUS VALUES OF JAVA CULTURE IN MUSI RAWAS

Among the transmigrants in Musi Rawas there is also a group consisting of individuals who from the beginning moved from their village of origin with a passion to continue the da'wah of Islam. Bringing ancestral teachings especially from Wali Sanga on the island of Java. Wali Sanga is the designation for nine figures who propagated Islam in Java. Having its own characteristics to be accepted among Indonesian society in ancient times, Wali Sanga carried out the infiltration method, namely combining Islamic religious teachings with culture, especially Javanese culture.

As stated by Kyai Muntaha Haris, a religious figure in the Megang Sakti area, one of the transmigration centers in Musi Rawas. In 1967 his family started a journey across Sumatra from Semarang, Central Java. Not following the government's transmigration program, but on the basis of his own will and inviting a group of people who are his students. After that they invited their respective families to join them and move to a new place leaving their hometown. Starting with choosing the right location for farming, then cutting down the forest floor and making it a rice field area. Rice farming and various horticultural crops are the choice of transmigrants in making a living. ¹²

Carrying out the mission of spreading Islamic da'wah, the main figures from the group revived Islamic teachings in overseas areas. *Sedekah bumi* in the month of Muharram to be exact on the first night of *Suro*, the anniversary of *Nisfu Sya'ban*, and *bodo kupat* every seventh day of Shawwal. is one of the Javanese cultures that contain religious values. Inviting people to get used to Javanese culture with Islamic nuances, not only among immigrants from the same area, but also among indigenous people and fellow transmigrants from other regions.

Sedekah bumi, is one of the traditional ceremonies in the form of a procession of handing over the produce of the earth from the community to nature. Sedekah bumi is a form of community gratitude to God who has provided good fortune through the earth in the form of all forms of agricultural products. Sedekah bumi ritual has been going on for hundreds of years and originates from Java.

While the *Nisfu Sya'ban* night commemoration is usually filled with recitations and attended by the local community. *Nisfu Sya'ban* is the 15th night in the month of Sha'ban, the ritual that is carried out is fasting during the day and then reading Surah Yasin three times. Followed by attending lectures held at the nearest mosque.

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¹² The results of an exclusive interview with Kyai Muntaha Haris, murshid of *tarekat Qadariyah wa Naqsabandiyah* and a community figure who is also a descendant of transmigrants from Java, on March 6 2023 at his residence in Sumberrejo Village, Megang Sakti District, Musi Rawas Regency.

Bodo or bakda kupat is a community celebration by consuming ketupat, which is a typical Eid food in Indonesia made from rice put in woven coconut leaves, shaped like a rectangle and then boiled, eaten as a substitute for rice. Bodo kupat is a ritual that is performed as a form of victory after fasting six days sunnah in the month of Shawwal. Each resident in one hamlet brings their own food, and since after the Maghrib prayer, they read Surat Yasin three times, then continue with eating together.

In addition, the Javanese in Musi Rawas are still accustomed to asking traditional elders for advice on determining a good day for carrying out an activity. In each hamlet there are traditional elders, namely people who are elected by the community to be the head of the adat institution and usually the community will ask for their opinion on many matters. This includes asking for advice from traditional elders regarding a good day when traveling or carrying out an activity known as hitung weton.¹³

Another Javanese culture that is still maintained by the Javanese people is making pilgrimages to Wali Sanga in Java, at least once in a period of one to two months. The technical departure is coordinated by the heads of each hamlet. Visit the graves and pray for the saints who have fought for Islamic teachings on the island of Java, where the majority of Indonesia's population comes from. This culture is carried out routinely and has become a habit among the Javanese in Musi Rawas.

In addition to the entire existing Javanese Culture, there are deep teachings related to the heart. This is known as the tarekat. Where the basic teachings discuss the joints of Islam which consist of four things, namely (1) Syariat; (2) Tarekat; (3) Hakikat; and (4) Makrifat. Tarekat means way, the highest level is at-ta'lim wa atta'allum which means not only learning but also teaching. There are various tarekat schools in Indonesia, most of the trans people in Musi Rawas follow the teachings of tarekat Qadariyah wa Naqsabandiyah.

¹³ Results of interviews with Nurkholifah, Head of the IMMAWATI Division of the Regional Leadership Council of the Muhammadiyah Student Association of South Sumatra Province and Secretary of the Department for Regional Leadership Organization of Naisyatul Aisyiyah of Musi Rawas Regency, who is also a descendant of the overseas Javanese who live in Sitiharjo Village, Tugumulyo District, Musi Rawas Regency. The interview was conducted on March 1 2023 at Suro Village, Muara Beliti District, Musi Rawas Regency.

Based on the teachings of the *tarekat*, there are two practices that must be carried out if someone has taken allegiance or made a promise to obey, that are: dhikr *nafi isbat*, saying dhikr "*laa illaaha illallah*" 165 times, and dhikr *ismu dzat* saying the word Allah repeatedly in seven places. Read after every prayer, after reading prayers for both parents, and for Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, the founder of *tarekat Qadariyah wa Naqsabandiyah* who is also referred to as the king of the saints on earth.

The seven places are first *lathifah qolbi* which is located on the left side of the chest, second *lathifaturruh* is located on the right side of the chest, third *lathifatusirry* is located on the left side of the chest close to *lathifah qolbi*, fourth *lathifah koffy* is located on the right side of the chest close to *lathifaturruh*, fifth *lathifah akhfa* is located in the center of the chest, six *lathifah nafsi* is located in the middle between the eyebrows, seventh *lathifah qolab* throughout the body.

The existence of a *tarekat* in Musi Rawas is a center for gathering the majority of the Javanese population in the religious field. The attachment of *tarekat* followers to their murshid is very tight. They tend to follow the advice of the *murshid* in every step of their daily life. Practice the dhikr given by the *murshid* when facing various life problems, in order to get peace of mind. This includes following the various suggestions given by the *murshid* regarding all matters in every matter of livelihood, from the direction in choosing children's education, determining the choice of a travel company that organizes Umrah or Hajj pilgrimages, to choosing a candidate for ruler who meets the right criteria in every election for hamlet heads, village heads, subdistrict heads, regents, governors, to council members and state leaders.

As for the choice of Islamic organization in Musi Rawas, the majority chose NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) around 60%¹⁴, and the rest chose Muhammadiyah. Some people choose to be culturally active, but not a few people, even among the youth, are institutionally active. Not only NU dominates, Musi Rawas is also one of the centers of Muhammadiyah, where in this area a Muhammadiyah school was established from kindergarten to tertiary level, namely the Sumatra Muhammadiyah Institute of

¹⁴ Results of interviews with Aryadi, S.Kom, Deputy Chairperson of IPNU (Nadhlatul Ulama Student Association) of Musi Rawas Regency who is also a descendant of the Javanese immigrants who live in Sitiharjo Village, Tugumulyo District, Musi Rawas Regency. The interview was conducted on March 8 2023, at Suro Village, Muara Beliti District, Musi Rawas Regency.

Technology (ITMS) which is located in Tegal Rejo Village, Tugumulyo District, Musi Rawas Regency.

In terms of education, currently it is evenly distributed from all walks of life with easy access to proper education. Including many recitations have been held in homes in every hamlet, so that people can easily recite the Koran, especially reading the Qur'an. At Musi Rawas there are also many Islamic boarding schools. In fact, almost every village in every district has a boarding school. Apart from direct support from the government, in Musi Rawas there are many qualified human resources in the field of Islamic education. Most of the founders of Islamic boarding schools are graduates of Islamic boarding schools in Java. Most of them are also descended from the Javanese tribe, or indeed indigenous people who studied on the island of Java. So, it is not surprising that the form of Islamic boarding schools follows the majority of the teaching styles of Islamic boarding schools in Java.

JAVANESE CULTURE LIVING PHILOSOPHY IN MUSI RAWAS

Jer basuki mawa beya is a philosophy or principle of life that comes from Javanese culture, which means working hard to achieve what you dream of. This philosophy then underlies the Javanese people to work hard and never give up to achieve their goals of a successful life, including overseas. Of the many Javanese residents who transmigrated to Musi Rawas, only a very few chose to return to their hometowns. The majority of those who are already living in Musi Rawas are still working hard to build a better life and have children to pass on to the next generation.

Among the trans population centers in Musi Rawas there are also areas which are centers of crowds including Mirasi or commonly called Merasi which is the center for gathering of residents of Musi Rawas and also from its neighbor, that is Lubuklinggau who want to find a place especially for culinary delights. The Merasi region is also a trans population center which can be named as the most complete area in terms of the availability of people's daily commodities. If the neighboring town of Lubuklinggau is more advanced and even has domestic airport facilities, in Musi Rawas the natural conditions are still dominated by rice fields and plantations including a large palm oil management company. Musi Rawas also has a food barn in the Merasi area or currently called the Tugumulyo District which has been formed

since 1932. And the majority of its workers are descendants of the Javanese population.

Gotong royong, prioritizing manners, and good manners are things that also become the basic philosophy of Javanese culture. The Javanese in Musi Rawas also carry a culture of mutual assistance, especially for fellow Javanese. Holding community service every Sunday, cleaning up the surrounding environment together when the community is off from daily activities. They also pay great attention to manners and courtesy to people who are respected or older.¹⁵

Not only men, women from the Javanese tribe, both teenagers and their mothers, are hard workers. The Javanese family instills customary norms where they have to live independently and not depend on other people. They are also used to live nimble and simply. Young people are taught leadership and responsibility. In terms of politics, the majority of Javanese in overseas areas do not want to appear as rulers. They choose to take a neutral position even though they often have the potential to advance as leaders. On the positive side, these figures become elders, become figures to ask for prayers and support from various groups. However, these figures stated that they did not rule out the possibility that if something was in accordance with their conscience, they would give their full support.

The Javanese who lived in Musi Rawas initially experienced a clash of cultures with the local population. Over time, these differences are no longer a problem. Some families even have interracial marriages with different cultures. Currently, it can be said that there are no more differences and maintain mutual tolerance with one another. Both with native natives and with fellow transmigrants from other areas such as the Sundanese, Malays, Minangkabau, or Hindus from the island of Bali.

CONCLUSION

Javanese culture gives influence to the area overseas. Maintain whether in terms of language, art, religious values, and a philosophy of life that is different from

¹⁵ Results of interviews with Muhammad Rifki Nailus Sarof, Manager of Bank Zakat BAZNAS Musi Rawas Regency who is also a culturally active NU youth and also the son of Kyai Muntaha Haris, murshid of the *Qadariyah wa Naqsabandiyah* order. The interview was conducted on March 1, 2023, at Suro Village, Muara Beliti District, Musi Rawas Regency.

that of the indigenous population. The existence of Javanese culture in overseas areas has been going on for a long time, and has continued to this day. With domination from various sides, it does not make the majority of the Javanese population become usurpers. In fact, most of them prefer not to appear too much, and are closer to the community. The Javanese culture inherent in the Javanese in Musi Rawas consists of using the Javanese language in their daily lives, preserving Javanese art at every event, spiritual religious activities, and a philosophy of life that is not only used as jargon but is truly instilled as a principle and implemented wholeheartedly. Javanese-Islamic culture is a legacy for the community, not only in the area of origin, but also in areas outside Java even to foreign countries in forming an Islamic society. In the next research, it can further explore the extent of the role of Javanese culture in forming Islamic society, not only in Musi Rawas, but also in comparison between the area of origin and the overseas area, both in Indonesia and abroad.

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