

Human Values in the Megengan Tradition in Post-Covid-19 in Indonesia

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has caused chaos in human thoughts, attitudes and behavior that have an impact on life, both materially and morally. This article examines the role of community traditions in maintaining human values in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this paper is to present the role of tradition for society after the COVID-19 pandemic which focuses on three main points, namely the meaning of tradition, implementation and the values contained by tradition. This research was taken by means of observation, documentation and interviews with village and religious leaders, village heads and residents who carry out the megengan tradition. The findings of this article are that the megengan tradition has a special meaning for the community, namely as a medium to foster solidarity, because in practice it involves many people interacting with each other and the megengan tradition contains human values that are described in solidarity, awareness and humanity.

Keywords: values, traditions, post-covid-19

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic that hit Indonesia in early 2020 had a significant impact on various aspects of life. Not only in the social field but also in several other fields such as religion and culture. Indonesia, which is known for its cultural diversity, was forced to stop several traditions that caused crowds and were only allowed to carry out their traditions again in the new normal era while still adhering to strict health protocols. Local people think that even during this pandemic, traditions that have a positive impact must continue to be implemented in order to strengthen human values apart from being supported by religious aspects.

The discussion about human values becomes an interesting study when it is associated with post-pandemic conditions that began to disappear when hit by COVID, because people began to think

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about survival. Human values or commonly referred to as human values consist of several things, namely compassion, non-violence, truth, virtue and peace. (Sukayasa and Awuy 2014) All of these points are considered very important in dealing with the Post COVID-19 pandemic. But uniquely, all points of the human values above can be found in almost all traditions that exist in Java, not least in Kedungadem Village, Bojonegoro Regency which is very famous for its megengan tradition.

The study of traditions related to Megengan has various paradigms, namely the symbolic paradigm which defines Megengan as a symbolic meaning, among others, as the meaning of apologizing to others, the meaning of sharing with others, and also as the meaning of spreading Islam in Kepet Village. (Fauziyah, Yarno, and Hermoyo 2021; Shufya 2022). Megengan also has educational values that are relevant to people's lives such as spirituality, sympathy, tolerance that grow from enrichment in history learning (Ashar 2022; Tricahyono 2021). In the religious area, the Megengan tradition is interpreted as a religious phenomenon that is present naturally and naturally, namely as a phenomenon of the Living Qur'an and as appreciation in conveying gratitude to God (Aibak 2010; Ridho 2019).

The article that we wrote takes the paradigm of human values from tradition in the post-pandemic. During the pandemic, people feel they are experiencing a humanitarian crisis due to the COVID-19 virus. The level of individuality of the community is increasing for fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus. Of course, this condition is contrary to the culture of gotong royong in Indonesia. Therefore, reviving the traditions that exist in the local community is considered very appropriate as a solution besides being supported by religious aspects.

Religion and culture are two things that are interrelated and play an important role for the Javanese people, especially for the people in Kedungadem Village, Bojonegoro Regency. In Kedungadem Village itself there are many traditions that develop in it. One of them is the megengan tradition. The tradition, which was carried out before the holy month of Ramadan arrived, was carried out by distributing food to neighbors and also praying for their ancestors by visiting the graves. Megengan is believed to be able to foster harmony in a heterogeneous society. So that this tradition is considered a prerequisite for human values.

Therefore, from the various descriptions of the authors above, it is necessary to conduct a special research and analysis on human values in the megengan tradition in Kedungadem Village, especially during the pandemic. Because people who are considered a humanitarian crisis since the pandemic hit Indonesia need a solution in it. The author hopes that this research will be able to revive human values that are starting to fade from social culture in Indonesia, especially for the people in Kedungadem Village.

1.1 Problematica Academic

Based on several explanations that have been discussed and as a basis for specifying the problem, the writer takes the initiative to propose three basic statements, namely;

1. What is the megengan tradition?
2. Why do the people of Kedungadem Village continue to preserve the megengan tradition?
3. How does the megengan tradition respond to the challenges of the humanitarian crisis in society?

2. Materials and Methods

The research method consists of ways and steps in carrying out research. The purpose of the research method is to obtain optimal research results with its position as a research system. This research is a research that uses a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach is an approach that emphasizes the author's analysis in the process of deductive and inductive conclusions. In addition, in this approach

the author tries to analyze the dynamics of the relationship between the phenomena being observed with scientific logic.

This study examines the megengan tradition that is still developing in Kedungadem Village. So specifically this research was conducted in Kedungadem Village. In this study, there are three sources of data, namely observation, documentation and interviews with village and religious leaders, village heads and residents who carry out the megengan tradition. Furthermore, the data is processed in depth and also critically with some relevant literature. (Aibak, 2010)

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Meaning of Megengan Tradition

Traditions are values and norms that are passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, if we talk about tradition, we seem to have drawn closer between the past and the present. Tradition also contains a set of rules for how humans relate to other individuals and groups. In addition, tradition also regulates how humans behave and relate to the environment and with nature which then develops into a system that has patterns and norms as well as regulates sanctions for violators (Safi'i 2011).

In Kawi language Megengan can mean ngampet (hold). This meaning is in line with the social conditions of the post-COVID community who feel free from the deadly pandemic to always restrain and introspect so that nothing negative happens (Tricahyono 2021, 5). Therefore, this tradition is very important to look after and protect members of the community.

Megengan itself has the meaning of 'sticking' as a symbol that in the post-covid period we are reminded to always maintain and care for both material things and control our lusts by fasting. Fasting in this context is not only routine, but broader, namely self-control from things that can damage human and divine relationships. This is because each region has a Megengan tradition that has different meanings (Masudi 2019).

In Indonesia, there are various traditions that develop in society, especially on the island of Java. The tradition has meaning based on the style and character of the tradition, especially Megengan. In some areas, the ritual of welcoming the month of Ramadan by conducting family gatherings is a form of Megengan meaning. Likewise, pilgrimages to graves and thanksgiving are also interpreted by certain people as Megengan (Ashar 2022).

3.2 Implementation of the Megengan Tradition in Post-Pandemic

The implementation of the tradition has a different style and character for each region which refers to the historical context and beliefs of the local community (Tricahyono 2021). During the pandemic, which has a considerable impact on the implementation of community traditions and customs in each region. The prohibition of crowding and having to comply with health protocols makes the implementation of the megengan tradition different from previous years. But the unique thing is that people still do not abandon this tradition even though they are in a pandemic. People actually think that continuing to carry out the megengan tradition is absolutely necessary. There are several reasons why the people of Kedungadem Village still carry out traditions during the pandemic.

The implementation can be done by chanting prayers together by the community together with religious leaders and government figures because this tradition has become a routine for the Javanese people as a medium in giving thanks to God the Creator is still met with the month of Ramadan (Ashar 2022, 41). While the implementation begins by inviting the head of the family or their representative (boys). Make a Grave Pilgrimage before Ramadan. Megengan starts around 16.30 pm. The host who has the intention to prepare a mat to be held in the living room as a gathering place for the invited guests. In general, the potions sit cross-legged (one leg is on top of the other). When the guests sat cross-legged in front of him by the host, all the supporting materials had been prepared. The ingredients start from

the blessing (ambengan), the mandatory content of the ambengan in the form of white rice which is placed at the bottom, on top of the rice there is a barrier made of parchment paper or banana leaves to put food supporting rice such as apem, srendeng (grated coconut which fried with brown sugar), peanuts (chinese beans or soybeans), side dishes (tempe, tofu, eggs) and chicken fried or cooked with yellow spices (lodho). Sometimes on top of it, snacks are given. Together with the ambengan, there are old jenang, sengkala jenang, and metri which are also placed in front of the invited guests (Tricahyono 2021, 4).

During the pandemic, the people of Kedungadem Village continue to carry out the Megengan tradition which adapts to social distancing and invites a few people. This implementation continues to use rituals and complete dishes as before the Corona pandemic. However, during the post-pandemic period, the community carried out the Megengan tradition regularly and paid attention to the health aspect, because it maintained human and family values.

3.3 Humanitarian Values in the Megengan Tradition

Human values become a topic of discussion that is often discussed lately. In almost every dialogue, discussion, and seminar, human values are often juxtaposed with the pandemic condition which is still in the recovery process. Not without reason, because based on data in the field regenerating human values during a pandemic is absolutely necessary, including when holding traditions, as expressed by government figures.

"The megengan tradition is a tradition that has been passed down for generations by the people of Kedungadem Village as an embodiment of gratitude for being reunited with the holy month of Ramadan."(1 2021).

Based on the results of the interview, it indicates that the meaning of the megengan tradition for the people of Kedungadem Village is as a form of gratitude for the coming of the holy month of Ramadan. This is because people can do more worship in the month of Ramadan, because the megengan tradition is carried out once a year just before the holy month of Ramadan, and some people call it the haul of the holy month of Ramadan.

During the pandemic, the people of Kedungadem were divided in responding to the Corona pandemic which had an impact on the loss of humanity. Therefore, a theological argument is needed in responding to this phenomenon which aims to make the Magengan tradition a success, such as the teachings on alms in the following hadith narrated by At-Thabrani:

"Hasten to give charity, because calamities can never precede alms. Buy all your troubles with charity. Cure your sickness with charity. Alms is something miraculous. Alms rejects 70 kinds of calamities and disasters, and the lightest ones are leprosy and vitiligo." (Jabbar 2021).

Based on this hadith, we can see that there are many benefits of giving charity. Megengan in the form of distributing food to neighbors is considered a charity that is able to distance oneself and family from evil. So that by continuing to carry out community support, people believe they will be able to avoid being easily infected with this COVID-19 virus.

Second, when social distancing is implemented in almost all regions in Indonesia, people's lifestyles become more individual. In addition, people are also afraid to interact with other individuals, especially people who are sick and not necessarily the cause, namely the COVID-19 virus. Of course this is very contrary to human values. Therefore, by maintaining the tradition of megengan, the community hopes that harmony and friendship between neighbors will continue to be well established even during the pandemic.

The method used in an effort to regenerate human values in the post-pandemic period is through the preservation of the magengan tradition. In this article, the author finds that reviving tradition can be one solution, especially the megengan tradition. In the megengan tradition there are a lot of human values contained in it.

One of the values of humanity that we will discuss is virtue. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary or commonly abbreviated as KBBI, virtue has the meaning of good deeds, goodness, and bringing profit, all of which are found in the megengan tradition (Electronic 2008). In the megengan tradition in the form of distributing food to neighbors, it can be called a good deed. In addition, the megengan tradition also contains other human values such as compassion and peace. Therefore, the author concludes that it is important to continue to preserve this tradition as an effort to foster human values which are now starting to experience a crisis due to the pandemic.

4. Conclusion

The megengan tradition is a tradition in the form of distributing food to neighbors as an embodiment of gratitude for the coming of the holy month of Ramadan. In the post-pandemic period, the Magengan tradition has proven to be an effective way to grow human values. Therefore, preserving this tradition can be one of the efforts to grow and revive human values that have been eroded in the midst of society as a result of the pandemic. This is because a series of procedures in the tradition have conditions that contain almost every human value and also do not conflict with the Shari'a or religious norms.

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Appendix A (Optional)

Any extra data, equations or information that is beneficial to the discussion of the paper should be included here. More appendices can be added as deemed necessary.

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