

***MEGENGAN TRADITION AS THE PEKALONGAN BATIK
LABOURS' HOLIDAY***

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Abstract

Megengan is characteristic of Muslims in Java as a form of respect for Islam. There is no special order regarding the use of Islam itself. But the order to share, maintain friendship, and do dhikr or prayer is exemplified in Islam. Megengan is the essence of Islamic values which are packaged in a tradition with the name megengan. Each region has its own procedures for carrying out megengan. Until now Megengan continues to be preserved and is inherent in Javanese society because Megengan has an important meaning to hold back the passions during the month of Ramadan. East Java cannot be separated from Megengan's culture. In the Magetan area there is a Kenduri culture which is held in conjunction with Islamic holidays such as Mauludan, 1 Muhharam (suran), and of course Megengan, as well as other Islamic holidays. In Surabaya Megengan is carried out towards the last week of the month of Sya'ban and carries out various activities ranging from pilgrimage to the tomb of elders. In Tulungagung, Megengan is called the Megengan slametan. This Slametan Megengan was held for the last 10 days in the month of Sya'ban / Ruwah to ask Allah to be given physical and spiritual strength in facing and carrying out fasting in the month of Ramadan. Just like in Surabaya, Slametan Megengan was carried out to send prayers or pray for the ancestors who died. As the time goes by, the tradition itself has begun to be a bit abandoned and experienced changes. The change was caused by the development of science, as well as from the environment in the area where it was held. Because most of Pekalongan residents work as laborers, whether they are factory workers, or batik laborers, well, they have a habit of taking a holiday every Friday, but in an invisible way it is misused by their batik investors. In fact, they cannot use their wages to have fun on Friday which is an ineffective day to be used as a holiday, this is because on Friday the Muslims conduct Friday prayers. On Sundays which are generally an effective day for holidays even workers cannot use their wages to have fun because they have to work. This is discrimination for workers who do not have the opportunity to use their wages to please themselves. So in the celebration of Megengan, the workers were 'revengeful' by using their wages to the maximum to buy all kinds of necessities, Therefore, this research is aimed at examining workers' discrimination by investors, where this gap makes the people of Pekalongan look different from other cities in carrying out celebrations of the tradition of megengan.

Keywords: *Megengan Tradition, Cultural Studies, Labours*

Introduction

Megengan is a tradition to welcome the coming of the holy month of Ramadan. The term megengan in language means "holding back". The word holding is closely related to fasting, even arguably the core lesson of fasting itself. So indirectly this tradition also has a message as

well as an invitation to the surrounding community to prepare themselves to undergo one of the pillars of Islam. This kind of tradition may be difficult to find in other regions, because of its more regional nature. Megengan is characteristic of Muslims in Java as a form of respect for Islam.

There is no special order regarding the use of Islam itself. But the order to share, maintain friendship, and do *dhikir* or prayer is exemplified in Islam. Megengan is the essence of Islamic values which are packaged in a tradition with the name megengan. For Muslims, entering the month of Ramadan has its own essence, and there is excitement in its welcome. Because the month of Ramadan is a month full of grace, forgiveness and blessings from Allah SWT. Given this essence in the month of Ramadan, and also because of differences in each region in celebrating and welcoming it, this tradition of megengan becomes unique and very interesting to study.

Each region has its own procedures for carrying out megengan. In Java alone there is a special tradition in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. This tradition is intended to pick up the month of Ramadan. Megengan is usually done in villages a few days before fasting.

As the time goes by, the tradition itself has begun to be a bit abandoned and experienced changes. The change was caused by the development of science, advances in technology and influences from outside and from the environment in the area where they were held. Megengan as a celebration and enthusiasm in welcoming the blessed month.

However, what happened in Pekalongan city was also interesting with other cities on the island of Java. There are some that are still arguably the same as the megengan tradition in other cities, but there are also unique things with the megengan tradition in Pekalongan. That is nearing the month of Ramadan, the people of Pekalongan go out with family, or with friends, with girlfriends, or with their coworkers to just eat on the spot, buy soft food and drinks, shop for groceries for supplies in the month of Ramadan. Which is because most of Pekalongan residents work as laborers, whether factory workers, or batik laborers, well, they have the habit of "Pocokan" (read "Poco'an" / holiday) on every Friday, but invisibly it misused by investors or arguably the boss of batik to take advantage of the workers to keep working on Sundays, where Friday can be said is not an effective day for vacationers for workers because it is cut off on Friday prayer times., therefore, it becomes an opportunity for them to enjoy the days before the fasting month as a feeling of joy, and satisfy themselves before fasting comes.

Therefore, researchers are very interested in discussing the tradition of megengan typical of Pekalongan city. This research will discuss the Megengan tradition in Pekalongan. In the research the researcher used

the title: “*Megengan Tradition As The Pekalongan Batik Labours’ Holiday*”

Methodology

This study uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative research is writing that is shown to describe and analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes of trust, perception, thoughts of individuals individually and in groups of groups (Syaodih, 2007: 60). In this study, the reason the researchers used a qualitative approach was because the qualitative approach was suitable to be used in research on traditions and public perceptions regarding the phenomenon, social knowledge and also the region where the researchers in their research were concerned with culture and phenomenology.

While the purpose of this approach is to get deep data, a data that contains meaning. Meaning is the actual data, definite data which is a value behind the visible data. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative research. According to Whitney, quoted by Moh. Nazir (1988: 63), descriptive is the search for facts with the right interpretation. This type of research uses description research conducted by giving a more detailed description of a phenomenon or phenomenon. The presence of researchers who are in this research

the researcher is acting as an instrument as well as a data collector.

Discussion

Indonesia, known as a country with many cultural diversity. Many cultures from various types of religions exist in Indonesia, including the Islamic culture. Indonesia is very thick with Islamic religious culture, including Java. Javanese people is known as a religious people, so there are some cultures that are carried out by javanese people, especially nearing the holy month of Ramadan. There is one unique culture that is run by the people of Java on the eve of the holy month of Ramadan, namely the Megengan culture.

Megengan is a form of culture or a spiritual style that reflects local culture and Islamic values, so it is very clear that locality is still thick with Javanese Islamic culture. Megengan is sometimes called ‘the haul’ to protect the coming of the holy month of Ramadan. So Megengan is held at the end of the Sya'ban month. Before the arrival of Wali Songo on Java, the Megengan tradition had existed during the era of Majapahit government. Until now Megengan continues to be preserved and is inherent in Javanese society because Megengan has an important meaning to hold back the passions during the month of Ramadan.

A. Megengan as Labor Holiday

In Pekalongan, which is a batik city, it certainly has many batik laborers and factory laborers. Holidays for laborers in Pekalongan occur on Friday. Friday is considered ineffective as a holiday because on Friday, Muslims are required to carry out Friday prayers, making laborers unable to enjoy their holidays which should be used to rest, hangout with friends, shopping, enjoy the time and others. The laborers cannot meet their friends who are not work as laborers because they get different holidays, while the laborers are off, their friends who are not work as laborers do not take off because they are on different days of holiday, that is Sunday and vice versa.

When Megengan comes, the laborers in Pekalongan will be off because Megengan is also a tradition to welcome the coming of Ramadhan. So when Megengan comes, the laborers really took advantage of the day to hangout with friends, go out of the house, shopping and others. So it was not surprising when Megengan comes in Pekalongan city would be crowded because many Pekalongan people would leave their homes to have fun as a substitute day for their holiday which fell on Friday which was considered as an ineffective day as a holiday.

B. Megengan as consumption Day

When Megengan comes, the people of Pekalongan city, especially the laborers will off and they will leave their homes to travel, especially shopping. When Megengan comes, the need for shopping for Pekalongan people will increase as a form of impingement on the work pressure of laborers which can be said to be quite high. This happened due to the form of capitalism in the form of oppression from factory owners towards their workers.

The laborers will leave their house to shop for their various needs, this is also used by traders to sell their wares. All types of things are available when the Megengan continues, we can be sure everything which traders sell will be very salable because megengan comes coincides with a few days before the month of Ramadhan, so the people will prepare themselves by buying all kinds of needs for the month of Ramadhan.

Pekalongan City, which has been known as the "City of Batik", is not just a mere chirp, but the batik industry has become a focal point of income for most of its people. In Pekalongan which is a city of batik certainly has many batik laborers. The distribution of comission for factory workers and batik workers is done on Thursday, so the opportunity to use their

commissions is done on Friday as their work day off. In fact, they cannot use their commissions to have fun on Friday, which is an ineffective day to be used as a holiday, because on Friday Muslims held Friday prayers. On Sundays, which are generally an effective day off, workers cannot use their commissions to have fun because they have to work. Social interests to economic interests are important for them (investors), besides that, about the welfare of their workers, for example, it is not something that they think too much and blame again. This is invisible discrimination for workers who do not have the opportunity to use their wages to please themselves. The capital system applies as above, justifying the slogan that says "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer". So that the invisible things done by batik masters have an effect on the welfare of the workers and their families. So in the celebration of Megengan, the workers were 'revengeful' by using their commissions up the maximum to buy all kinds of necessities, from their own needs and all the

necessities to face the month of Ramadan.

Conclusions

The Megengan tradition is closely related to the social conditions in each region. The megengan tradition in Pekalongan has a connection with social conditions, especially the economic conditions that exist in the community, this is due to the large number of factory laborers and batik laborers in Pekalongan. When Megengan comes at the same time becomes a regional holiday that coincides with a few days before the month of Ramadhan arrives, workers who do not have an effective holiday will make Megengan as their holiday and workers will spend a lot of money to fulfill their daily needs while preparing themselves facing the month of Ramadan. From this description it can be said that the tradition of megengan in Pekalongan is more centered on worldly matters.

References

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