

Whispers from the Forest: Local Wisdom in forest Conservation and Utilization

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Article history

Received : 2020-08-21

Accepted : 2022-03-02

Published : 2022-04-10

Keywords

Conservation,
Local wisdom,
Forest conservation,
ex-Mangkunegara area

Abstract: Forest utilization and conservation have become a serious problem faced by many countries in the world. Forests in Java have been exploited massively since colonial rule. Exploitation not only by the colonial government but also by the indigenous rulers. Of course, this exploitation has a big impact on the ecology of Java's forests, which then experience a decline in quality and the loss of several forest areas. Behind all the chaos that occurs in forest management in Java, people instinctively have a mechanism to manage and preserve the forest where they live and make a living. The mechanism in question is to use traditions and myths that have grown and developed in society. This research is social history research, which explores the historical sources of Javanese forestry and relates to social changes that occur in society. The method used is the historical research method and is equipped with information obtained from interviews with some informants. From the results of the research conducted, it can be seen that the Javanese people, especially those who still live around the forest, are currently carrying out traditions related to forest maintenance. Although the forest area is shrinking, the tradition is still carried out, for reasons of cultural and economic preservation.

Abstrak: Pemanfaatan dan konservasi hutan telah menjadi masalah serius yang dihadapi oleh banyak negara di dunia. Hutan di Jawa telah dieksploitasi secara besar-besaran sejak pemerintahan kolonial. Eksploitasi tidak hanya dilakukan oleh pemerintah kolonial tetapi juga oleh penguasa pribumi. Tentu saja eksploitasi ini berdampak besar terhadap ekologi hutan Jawa yang kemudian mengalami penurunan kualitas dan hilangnya beberapa kawasan hutan. Di balik semua kekacauan yang terjadi dalam pengelolaan hutan di Jawa, masyarakat secara naluri memiliki mekanisme untuk mengelola dan melestarikan hutan tempat mereka hidup dan mencari nafkah. Mekanisme yang dimaksud adalah dengan menggunakan tradisi dan mitos yang telah tumbuh dan berkembang di masyarakat. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian sejarah sosial, yang menggali sumber-sumber sejarah kehutanan Jawa dan berkaitan dengan perubahan sosial yang terjadi di masyarakat. Metode yang digunakan adalah metode penelitian sejarah dan dilengkapi dengan informasi yang diperoleh dari wawancara dengan beberapa informan. Dari hasil penelitian yang dilakukan dapat diketahui bahwa masyarakat Jawa khususnya yang masih tinggal di sekitar hutan saat ini menjalankan tradisi yang berkaitan dengan pemeliharaan hutan. Meski luas hutan semakin menyusut, tradisi tersebut tetap dilakukan, dengan alasan pelestarian budaya dan ekonomi.

Cite this article: Witasari, N. (2022). Whispers from the Forest: Local Wisdom in forest Conservation and Utilization. *Paramita: Historical Studies Journal*, 32(1), 23-32. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15294/paramita.v32i1.27173>

INTRODUCTION

Until the end of the twentieth century, Java's forests have undergone significant changes and serious problems. Since it was opened on a large scale by the Dutch colonial government for the benefit of its plantation companies, as well as to meet market demand for wood from Java, the number of forests has continued to decrease. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the government began to consider efforts to restore several forest areas through reforestation and scientific forestry



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programs. Towards the end of the Dutch East Indies government in Indonesia, which was subsequently replaced by the Japanese occupation government, forest management experienced a setback. Forestry issues received less attention and even the tendency of a return to the exploitation system by the Japanese occupation government, in the name of support for the victory of the Greater East Asia War. The change of government did not change the state of forest restoration the condition of the forest in the early days of the Republican government in power had not changed much. Even then there was looting of forest areas to be used as settlements and arable land.

The management of state forests has so far been in the hands of Perhutani, which has the right to manage and to use state-owned forests throughout Indonesia. The regulations regarding forest management still follow the colonial system, where all forest areas whose ownership cannot be proven will become state-owned forests. This has the consequence that anyone entering the state forest area without a permit will be considered a violation and will be subject to legal proceedings. At the same time, traditional communities have never understood any changes in ownership of the forests they live in from generation to generation. Socially and culturally, the community around the forest has become the guardian of the sustainability and sustainability of the forest, regardless of who is in power. Their instincts are manifested in the form of traditions and the existence of myths related to forests and environmental protection. It seems that this traditional instinct in the field of forest protection and preservation does not conflict with Perhutani's interests, so neither Perhutani nor the government issue a ban on these activities.

Conservation and forest protection activities, including the environment related to the forest itself, are an inseparable part of the daily life of traditional Javanese people. This is evident from the use of certain days that are considered to have something to do with important environmental protection events to become the time to hold celebrations. The implementation of this series of activities is proof that environmental care and forest sustainability are an important part and have an important meaning for traditional communities which seem to have an impact on the wider community. With the increasingly routine implementation of traditional environmental care activities such as village cleanup, alms of the earth, *resesik mbelik*, it is evidence of the high level of community concern in environmental protection efforts. In addition, in traditional

societies there are still many myths that contain prohibitions to enter and to take forest products without going through certain rituals. People still believe that the prohibition is absolute and will bring bad consequences if they dare to violate it. Like the myth about the Donoloyo forest, Purwo forest and several other forests in Java.

This study aims to identify efforts to protect and to manage forests and the village environment around the forest in the Mangkunegaran ex-praja area through traditional ceremonies and beliefs in myths. As an Environmental History study, the approach used is through anthropological and sociological studies. Many studies have been conducted on forest conservation, forest village communities, forest governance and social dynamics of forest village communities. The starting point of this research is to try to contribute to forestry from the point of view of Java's forest management, especially in the Mangkunegaran ex-praja area, and to compare it to how forest management is under traditional rulers and the government (the state).

Forest and mountains are two natural phenomena which are central sites for the Javanese. Both regions are areas with the complexity of natural forces not only from the outside but also sacred-spiritual-magical and mystical. The existence of forests in many historical episodes of the Javanese kingdom always stood as the beginning or embryo of the region acting as acting as its cosmic pillar. In the wayang story, Alas Wanamarta or the Mertani forest is the forerunner of the Amarta kingdom. Babat Tanah Jawi also reported that the Mataram (Islamic) kingdom was founded in the Mentaok forest which was a gift for Ki Ageng Pemanahan. Although mixed with various myths, history records the existence of the Wonokarto forest as the initial area of the Kartasura kingdom before moving to the Bengawan Sala valley and changing its name to Surakarta. Likewise, with the story of Pangeran Sambernyawa to get the Mangkunegaran area, which used the Nglaroh forest in Wonogiri as the basis of his struggle. The story of forest clearing for the Javanese people will always be related to things that are mystical, supernatural and will continue to be disseminated by the supporting community. Over time, the interests of protecting and preserving nature need to gain legitimacy that is mutually agreed upon by all members of society. This agreement then forms local wisdom.

Local wisdom is born from the human ability to observe and trace the cause and effect of an event to be used as a reference for determining the next action. That then gave birth to rituals and tradi-

tions, this was due to an internal agreement in the community to jointly maintain the continuity and balance of life with nature. The ritual can be in the form of an effort to pray a prayer or as a form of gratitude for a stable condition felt within a certain period of time by all members of the community.

In the context of maintaining the balance of the ecosystem, various rituals or traditions are used by the community to balance the fulfilment of needs and environmental sustainability. Or in the Javanese concept, it is interpreted as the balance of the *Gedhe* universe and the little one. In Javanese culture, the strata and division of society are divided into two, big traditions and small traditions. Large traditions are filled by aristocratic communities, while small traditions are among the common people. Large traditional rulers are considered and consider themselves as representatives of gods so that they have some kind of legality to perpetuate their hegemony, including controlling areas inhabited by small traditional communities.

Sociologically, the forest has become a symbol of the structure of community life, both those living around the forest and those outside the forest ecosystem. In many historical sources, both documentary and non-document in nature, forests also influence the political decision-making of a ruler. Some myths, local traditions and arts appear in the community is thought to have something to do with the existence of the forest, whether it is a background of efforts to preserve the forest, a means of uniting residents, to the tools used to legitimize power. This study seeks to explore the values of local wisdom in forest management, including forests in the Mangkunegaran area. In this research, there are several problems that include understanding the concept of forest according to the Javanese local Javanese myth about environmental protection and the forest as a symbol of government power.

The issue of territorial control and management is a classic conversation that has never been discussed. Neither the reconstructing nor the deconstructing talk. When it comes to territoriality, the closest ties are problems that intersect with ecology. An appropriate area to dissect it is Political Ecology, a study that emphasizes the conditions and political consequences of environmental changes that occur. In the intersection, there was also an understanding of Environmental Politics which in the view of Vayda and Walters (2009) is a branch of science that studies human behavior and efforts in organizing themselves to protect their interests, especially those related to the environment (Walters & Vayda, 2009).

The existence of myths as an effort to conserve nature has become a part of traditional community life. Myth is created to explain something that is logically difficult to explain in order to legitimize a power. The formation of myths greatly depends on the culture of the community in which the myth is born, the conditions that drive the birth of a myth and in what context the myth is created. Myths are also associated with the political environment of the rulers, and are perpetuated for certain interests (Berkes et al., 2000).

Indigenous peoples and communities who still closely adhere to their customs have a stronger motivation for protecting the forest than other parties. This is because protecting forests is correlated with the sustainability of their lives and the sustainability of their native knowledge in maintaining and utilizing forest resources in their habitat. The existence of customary laws and traditions that are still upheld ensures a harmonious interaction between them and their forest ecosystem (Niapele, 2014)

METHOD

The existence of traditional traditions and rituals from several areas in ex-Mangkunegaran shows that there is still public awareness to preserve culture in order to preserve the environment. What is then interesting to study is what values can still survive a changing society that is increasingly open to global changes. The problem of this research is how local wisdom is built and utilized to conserve nature, including maintaining the existence of the forest. As a historical research, the research method used is historical research method. This method combines the collection of sources in the form of archives and documents with data obtained from oral interviews. Archives and news sources are obtained from the collection of the Unnes Department of History, the Mangkunegaran library and the news collection from the Solo Press Monument. Meanwhile, data from interviews were conducted with local community leaders who understand and become leaders of traditional rituals. The collected data is then selected and classified according to the data needs then arranged chronologically. The interpretation that is built based on these data sources still relies on a structuralism approach that emphasizes the role of actors in every change that occurs in society. The last stage of the historical research method is to compile a historiography which explains comprehensively the matters related to traditional ceremonies, understanding the values contained therein and the participation of each individual in each se-

ries of ceremonies both as individuals and as part of the community.

MANGKUNEGARAN FOREST MANAGEMENT MODEL IN THE EARLY XX CENTURY

Since the administration of Mangkunegara I (1757-1795), the use of Mangkunegaran's forests was the task of the Wreksapandaya maturities, until 1888 when Mangkunegaran was led by Mangkunegara IV. Since the time of Mangkunegara IV, the authority of the Wreksapandaya Ministry as a forest manager has been greater than that of merely supplying wood for the internal needs of the government. The wave of plantation industrialization brought the Mangkunegaran people to a new tradition in forest management where a large supply of wood was needed to support Mangkunegaran companies. Thus the volume of logging work from the Mangkunegaran forests is increasing.

The greater the responsibility and authority of the Wreksa Pandaya, the consequences of involving more workers at that time were obtained from the mobilization of workers from villages around the forest. Although there has never been a report on the exact number of mass mobilizations carried out by the local rulers at the village level, in this case, led by the lurah and bekel, it is reasonable to suspect that some kind of agreement has been drawn up between the Praja government and the local authorities, to take turns providing manpower work. (Suhartono, 1991) In general, Mangkunegaran forest management is divided into three periods. First, the period of forest management under the intervention of the Dutch colonial government as a result of the Praja political crisis until 1899. The second period was the period leading up to the restructuring of the Praja between 1899-and 1910. While the third period is forest management at the Wanamarta forestry service.

The opposite condition occurred after the resignation of Mangkunegara IV who was replaced by GRM. Sunita as Mangkunegara V (1881-1896). In general, the economic condition of Mangkunegaran during his reign experienced a setback. His incompetence in leading and too much influence from the old empress, made various problems arise in the *pura* internal, including excessive government expenditures for ceremonial events.

The government's financial turmoil was not only about spending but also about forest management, where Mangkunegara V's influence was further reduced and handed over to his mother's relatives who were also local rulers. With the absence of the Mangkunegaran government in managing its

forest area, during the Mangkunegara V administration period, forest management was mostly carried out by local authorities who directly dealt with land tenants, private companies, and timber traders. This has resulted in the ambiguity of the position of the *kemantren* Wreksapandaya because institutionally its status is still there, but it seems that it does not have the authority to supervise timber harvesting in the Mangkunegaran forests. Even during this period, there were no reports on timber harvesting, timber sales, and other expenditures. This is in stark contrast to the policy of the Dutch government, which since 1870 has implemented Java forest management under strict control in a scientific manner.

The exploitation of teak forests in the Mangkunegaran area is oriented towards the availability of land for the opening of new plantations belonging to Mangkunegaran. One of them was the teak forest in Ngadirojo, Wonogiri district, for the expansion of tobacco plantations by 200 shoulders in 1887. The reason Prangwadana put forward at that time was that the supervision of teak forests in the area was poor, so it was better for tobacco plantations. The teak trees that grow in the area are used to build tobacco warehouses. No less than 16 tobacco warehouses were established. (Mansfeld, 1986) Although then this tobacco plantation does not provide financial benefits for the Praja, it can reduce the cost of maintaining and monitoring the forest.

Mangkunegaran Forestry began to be managed in a more structured manner since it was included in a special agency, namely the Wanamarta Forestry Service in 1911, during the reign of Mangkunegara VI (1896-1916). This service in the organizational structure of the Mangkunegaran government occupies a position as a Regency, higher than the previous agency which was only a ministry. Under the management of the Wanamarta Forestry Service, Mangkunegaran forestry is expected to be profitable for the Mangkunegaran treasury, especially by separating forest types into two groups, namely teak forest and reforestation forest. This division was implemented in 1918 to ensure that the objectives of forest management could be achieved, in 1917-1919 there was no target for income from the forest. The income generated is used to reserve financing for the forest reforestation program on the slopes of Mount Lawu and a former coffee plantation in Wonogiri. Even in his report note, Superintendent Neuman explained that the Mangkunegaran authorities decided to cancel the plan to take advantage of their forest products, after

knowing that the costs of monitoring, maintaining, guarding, and transporting forest products required a large number of funds. This condition is felt to be getting worse with the decreasing demand for wood from the Wonogiri forests. So whatever the income from forest products is then oriented so that forestry managers can be independent. (RM. Mr. A.K. Pringgogidgo, 1987)

The Wanamarta Forestry Service is an indicator of the modernization of forestry management by the Mangkunegaran authorities. In the organizational system, there is a clear division of labor, regulations, as well as a system of control and supervision over its assets. Structuring the organization to achieve certain goals, namely profits for Praja. Major changes have occurred since the Wanamarta forestry service was in the reign of Mangkunegara VII. The financial statements of the Wanamarta district, which were recorded from 1918-to 1924, show that during that time, minus balances were recorded. Based on forest classification, the income generated by the teak forest group in 1918 was better than that of the timber forest group 1918. The teak forest recorded an income of f106,225.99 while the timber forest in 2015 only recorded an income of 102.84. The production cost of teak forest management is f 69,945.69 while the year wood requires funds of 49,186.15. From this year alone, it can be seen that production costs, which include maintenance, supervision, including transportation of annual timber, are higher than for teak forests (Wanamarta financial report 1918-1924). The highest income for teak wood commodities occurred in 1918, namely f106,225.99, while the lowest income was in 1923, namely f15,581.21. The largest expenditure to cover teak forest production costs occurred in 1922, which was f170,173.96 while making the highest minus balance for Wanamarta teak forest, which was f-138,661.31.

Meanwhile, for the year wood group in the same period, the conditions were not encouraging. The highest income for wood species occurred in 1920, namely f1.930.05, while the lowest income was in 1923, which was f72.75. The largest expenditure to cover the production costs of timber forest in 1920 was f82.953.87 while making the highest minus balance for timber forest in Wanamarta, which was f-81.023.82.

In the financial statements of Wanamarta district for 1918-1924, it can be seen that the condition of the service balance is always minus, which is at f-524,434.02. The profit and loss calculation with the lowest balance occurred in 1922 which was at f-182,630.01 while the highest balance occurred in

1924 which recorded the smallest loss of f-11,790.39. The smallest loss in 1924 was because there was no longer any managed forest.

The income of the Mangkunegaran government does not only come from the agrarian sector and the plantation industry. Some income comes from the use of assets owned and located in several places outside the Mangkunegaran area. Such as cigarette factories, fiber factories, rice factories, cake factories, and even Mangkunegaran also invest in hotels and rental houses. All of these have been managed by the government for a long time and are almost as old as the start of forest management during the reign of Mangkunegara IV. The economic conditions that were chaotic during the Mangkunegara V era caused some assets to be released but were successfully withdrawn during the Mangkunegara VI period. Apart from the dynamics in the civil service, the facts prove that by using forests to support the industrial sector, the Praja can have a surplus of civil servants so that they can invest in property and securities, as can be seen in the following table.

Mangkunegaran forest management with a more modern system can be divided into three periods, namely the colonial period, the Praja restructuring period, and the period under Wanamarta. Although the three periods had almost the same management model, the regularity in the administration was different. Of the three periods of Mangkunegaran forest management, it turns out that one of the causes of its failure is the financial condition of the forestry service which continues to experience a deficit. The cause of the deficit is more because the income from the felled wood is not returned for forest care and security. So that to finance it, Wanamarta's official treasury is used, as a result, the profits are getting smaller. This condition is exacerbated by the rampant crime of wood theft and hoarding of felled logs in people's houses around the forest, even under the noses of local authorities. The confusion within the Wanamarta agency that rarely ended finally forced him to hand over forest management to the Mangkunegaran Fund Supervisory Commission (1917), while maintaining the position of local authorities as management coordinator at the village level. (Rofik, 2000)

It is undeniable that the Wanamarta forestry service was established with the main aim of benefiting from the forestry sector. This service functions as a source of revenue for Praja's cash as a consequence of its existence which is part of the Mangkunegaran Fund Supervisory Commission. Even though the Wanamarta forestry service is

managed in a modern way, using the European administrative system, because the maintenance costs are not commensurate with the income, the maintenance costs are higher than the available funds, and from time to time the forestry sector's income is far from expectations. , then in the end this service was handed over to the Praja back.

After no longer being under the Supervisory Commission of the Mangkunegaran Fund, the Praja then decided to involve the people living around the forest to participate in forest management. People are allowed to use the land around the forest by planting food crops, as long as they participate in caring for and monitoring the forest. Official regulations regarding the prohibition and how to use the forest were made as a means of legitimacy. Not only that, but the Praja also provides support for village elders in strengthening forest protection by reviving myths related to forests. One way that until now is to hold a ritual offering to the spirits who are believed to be in the forest. This method is considered effective in reducing the level of timber theft and forest destruction for land needs.

Although the Mangkunegaran forest area is not as large as the Java forest in the Gubernement area, its existence is still important for the authorities. Forests are not only seen as an economic asset but also become an important political component, as the forest functions as a symbol of power.

LOCAL WISDOM AND FOREST CONSERVATION

Local wisdom is a form of environmental wisdom that exists in social life in a place or area. Thus, it refers to a particular locality and community. According to Putu Oka Ngakan in Andi M. Akhmar and Syarifudin (2007), local wisdom is a value system or behaviour of local people in interacting with the environment in which they live wisely. Therefore, local wisdom is not the same in different places and times and in different tribes. This difference is caused by the challenges of nature and the needs of their lives are different so that his experience in fulfilling his life needs gives rise to various knowledge systems both related to the environment and society. As a form of human behaviour, local wisdom is not a static thing but changes over time, depending on the socio-cultural order and ties that exist in society. Meanwhile, Keraf (2002) asserts that local wisdom is all forms of knowledge, belief, understanding, or insight as well as customs or ethics that guide human behaviour in life in ecological communities. All forms of local wisdom are lived, practiced, taught, and passed down from generation

to generation as well as form patterns of human behavior towards fellow humans, nature, and the supernatural. Furthermore, Francis Wahono (2005) explains that local wisdom is the intelligence and strategies of managing the universe in maintaining the ecological balance that has been tested for centuries by various disasters and obstacles and human negligence. Local wisdom does not only stop at ethics but comes to norms and actions and behaviour so that local wisdom can become like a religion that guides humans in acting and acting, both in the context of daily life and determining further human civilization, as mentioned by Suhartini (2009).

Local Wisdom in the social system is reflected in the condition of a safe society, the maintenance of intimate and cooperative life. Tolerance is also shown by the attitude of the community's approval of friendship with other tribes/ethnics as well as followers of other religions. The concern is also reflected in the culture of protecting natural resources, especially springs. Local wisdom in physical culture is reflected in the many historical buildings scattered in the sub-districts in Indonesia. These historical sites include historical buildings, historical ports, historical stations, spiritual places/cemeteries/petals, etc. The majority, existing sites are spiritual places. Central Java is the province with the highest number of historical sites in Indonesia. Local wisdom is local, meaning that local wisdom is not the same in different places and times and different tribes. This difference is caused by natural challenges and the different needs of life between regions and between tribes. However, there is local wisdom that does not only apply locally to certain cultures but can also be cross-cultural to form local wisdom that is national. One example is local wisdom that teaches cooperation which can be found in almost all cultures/ethnicities throughout Indonesia. In Indonesia, local wisdom is a philosophy and way of life that is embodied in various fields of life such as socio-economic values, architecture, health, environmental management, and so on. Local wisdom is usually taught from generation to generation and passed down from generation to generation embodied in the form of objects (tangible) and intangible (intangible), for example, language, literature, arts, ceremonies, customs, and so on. In addition, local wisdom is usually reflected in the habits of people's lives that have been going on for a long time that are protecting and preserving nature. Often local wisdom becomes the basis for making policies at the local level in various fields such as health, agriculture, education, natural resource management, and community activities,

especially in rural areas. The values of local wisdom contained in the social system of this community are very important to be lived, practiced and taught, and passed on from one generation to the next to shape and guide community behavior patterns. So it can be said that local wisdom is an entity that greatly determines human dignity in the community. Development that is not based on a life policy can harm society and the nation, as stated in the Center for Education and Culture Data and Statistics, Ministry of Education and Culture (2016).

MYTHS THAT ARE DELIBERATELY BUILT AND PRESERVED TO PROTECT THE EXISTENCE OF THE FOREST

The political changes that occurred in Java brought new colours to forest management. The introduction of exploitative and scientific European methods of forest management, replacing forest use systems that have local wisdom. The need to continue to maintain the existence of the kingdom demanded the native rulers to change the perspective that had been held firmly. However, like a Javanese ruler, a ruler will not only use bureaucratic administrative methods as the ruler of the micro-cosmos, but also use the power of myth through the production of chronicles which is the manifestation of being the master of the macro-cosmos. The myth that was deliberately built by the ruler, through the power of words and imagination as contained in the Babad, has two powers. First, the myth that is consistently embodied in the understanding of the general public, anthropologically has the same power as the constitution, namely directing, prohibiting, rewarding and imposing sanctions. Second, myth gives legitimacy to the ruler over any political and economic policies he takes if it is related to ecology. Or in other terms it can be stated that, ecological variables are able to dictate political choices for eve-

ry economic and political transaction carried out by the authorities, and this is reflected in one of them through Babad.

The historian Taufik Abdullah (2001) once emphasized that all social ties need myth, because he proposed an answer to the possibility of imbalance between reality and logic, as well as providing an atmosphere of credibility for the enforceability of the prevailing order and could also be a necessary integrative element. Myth plays in the public sphere because it is a part of social life, and its presence imagines the integrative atmosphere that was created at that time. Confirmation of the existence of myths to this day can be witnessed through ceremonies, celebrations and memorials that are born in society (Abdullah, 2001).

Local wisdom and traditional values related to rituals, traditional ceremonies and local knowledge are used to improve welfare and create peace for people in a community. The local traditions are functionally able to maintain the environmental situation in order to remain harmonious, especially in relationships between humans. In tradition, there are various meanings and important values, including being used as a reference in people's behaviour in living life, including facing differences when interacting with other people of different cultures and beliefs (Haryanto, 2013) The functionalization of the local wisdom principles of environmental management can enrich the principles of national environmental management because these principles are derived from the ideals of community law leading to voluntary legal compliance. These principles have become part of the spirit of life adhered to by indigenous peoples so that it will make it easier for the community to apply and be bound by the legal provisions that have been regulated by the customary village. If this principle is adopted in the process of forming laws and regulations, it will strengthen local wisdom (Nasihuddin, 2017).

Tradition has become a part of Javanese culture which has lived for centuries along with the growth of Javanese society. Javanese culture has characteristics namely religious, non-doctrinaire, tolerant, accommodative, and optimistic. These characteristics give birth to distinctive features, characteristics and tendencies for the Javanese people as follows: 1) to believe in God Almighty as *Sangkan Paraning Dumadi*, with all His attributes and greatness; 2) idealistic, believing in something immaterial (not material) and supernatural and tend towards mystical; 3) prioritizing the essence of the formal and ritual aspects; 4) giving priority to love as the basic foundation of human relations; 5)



Figure 1. Mbah Menyek water spring. One of ritual location



Figure 2. Traditional ceremonial food, full of local wisdom



Figure 3. Traditional values maintain good relations between humans

believe in destiny and tend to let go; 6) convergent and universal; 7) *momot* (accommodate all problem) and non-sectarian; 8) tend to symbolism; 8) tend to be mutual, friendly, harmonious, and peaceful; and 10) less competitive and less prioritizing material (Huda, 2011). Furthermore, this tradition and culture can perhaps be said to be a binding vehicle for Javanese people who have different social status, religion and belief. Because in tradition and culture there are noble values that play a role in shaping character, functionally able to maintain harmony in society. These cultural values, such as an attitude of respect, harmony, tolerance is then used as a moral reference and behaviour in relationships, especially in life with a plural background. In everyday life, the typical Javanese people prioritize their obligations rather than demanding rights. They have a noble culture that emphasizes living in harmony and then encourages the community to strive to maintain harmony. Javanese cultural values, such as respect, harmony, tolerance, and so on, become a moral reference and behaviour inter-religious relations. The long experience of Javanese people in living together, interacting with fellow humans, achieving their personal goals and common goals makes Javanese people wise in living it. This cultural value is then expressed by the Javanese community in various traditions which contain noble values in living together. These traditions become the crystallization of the intelligence of the Javanese people in dealing with life problems that arise in their relationships with fellow humans (Haryanto, 2013).

Earth alms are a tradition of Javanese society which is usually carried out in the month of harvesting crops with the aim of gratitude because the

harvest has ended. Javanese people often call the earth alms tradition by the name of the *nyadran* tradition. Almost all Javanese people carry out this tradition on time according to their respective regional agreements. In addition to aiming to create gratitude, the Javanese community has agreed that with this tradition the Javanese people carry out a cultural preservation of the earth's almsgiving (*Nyadran*) to be held every year (Jumadi & Yuni Harmawati, 2017).

The earth alms tradition contains the five basic problems in human life. First is the essence of meaning. The earth's alms tradition teaches us to always help, work hand in hand and work together in any case for the common good. In addition, this tradition teaches that every human being should always remember God the Almighty to always be given the blessing of life in the form of springs that are still flowing, crops and livestock products. Thus, the existence of the earth alms tradition which is still routinely carried out every year gives the assumption that local people carry out traditional ceremonies as a form of gratitude for abundant blessings with the power of God Almighty. Second, the nature of work. The earth alms tradition teaches that in human life we must work in order to increase the value of prosperity. Efforts to preserve the culture and traditions of the local community aim to develop and increase the value of the community's prosperity. Third, the nature of time. Time is precious. Over time a tradition will fade with the times. In order not to fade and disappear, we as the successors must preserve it. The local community preserves this tradition through the activities of the earth alms tradition. In this activity, it is expected to be able to invite many circles both young and old to

be able to preserve these cultural traditions. Fourth, the nature of human relationships with the natural surroundings. The earth's alms tradition teaches how to balance the relationship between humans and nature. In the tradition of almsgiving, the activity of cleaning springs indicates that humans are obliged to care for and preserve nature as a form of gratitude to God. Fifth, the nature of human relations. Humans are creatures that cannot live alone, humans need other humans. In the activity of eating together with the crops and livestock, this reflects that humans cannot live alone. Communities share with each other as a form of gratitude and as a society must share and maintain good relations between humans (Jumadi & Yuni Harmawati, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The existence of traditions, traditional values, rituals and traditional ceremonies that are still carried out today is an indicator that the supporting communities still have the same views and hopes for maintaining tolerance and harmony between communities. Apart from that, the willingness to share and work together in its implementation can be a positive energy that can be directed in efforts to preserve the environment.

Local government intervention to support the sustainability of the existence of the implementation of various traditional ceremonies, shows concern for improving the welfare of local communities. Efforts to continue to support and encourage the preservation of the implementation of traditional ceremonies can spark the enthusiasm of the younger generation to explore the local potentials to continue to be developed. The participation of all levels of society shows a sufficient sense of ownership over the traditional values of every customary ceremony and ritual related to religion and the natural environment.

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