

Research Article

## **Traditional Mawlid Tradition: Local Wisdom Amidst the Onslaught of Millennial Community Civilization**

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Corresponding Author: [ainun\\_tanjung@gmail.com](mailto:ainun_tanjung@gmail.com)**Abstract**

Tradition in the frame of customs is one of the most important elements in a particular society—which in fact is a variance between one community group and another. Almost all islands of the archipelago have different cultural traditions, such as the traditional mawlid in the islands of West Nusa Tenggara, especially northern Lombok or better known as North Lombok. In the implementation of the traditional mawlid tradition in North Lombok Regency, the Bayan Village section is carried out by opening: collecting crops such as rice / grain, fruits and so on. Then in the evening it continued with a reassurance event opened by the women who became the opening. The tradition of traditional mawlid as a cultural property of the community (local wisdom) is a combination of local wisdom with Islamic teachings framed in a religious ritual as a form of worship and praise to the One God. Cultural clashes that occur seem to shift traditions that have been passed down for generations are tightly attached to the bayan community because of the shift in values that occur so that the stigma of the community in preserving it (read: traditional mawlid celebration) is challenged in today's millennial era. This Mawlid celebration can be said to be a reflection of religious psychology that supports cultural preservation born from community civilization, and still exists in the midst of the onslaught of modern society or in other words millennial society.

**Keywords:** Mawlid Adat, Local Wisdom, Millennial Civilization

## **A. Introduction**

Indonesia is known as an archipelagic country that has a variety of cultures that are characteristic of every society in it. Each island is inhabited by various races and tribes with each other very different both in terms of culture, language and moreover the social setting that surrounds it so that it becomes the basis for the birth of local wisdom that characterizes a particular tribe.

The tribes in the archipelago have their own uniqueness, caused by several things, such as the process of cultural syncretism – long before the civilization was born, there was already a culture that grew and flourished before. As happened on the island of Lombok with ethnic tribes that inhabit this island is known as the "Sasak tribe".

The Sasak tribe that occupies the northern part of the Lombok Islands or is said to be referred to as "Dayen Gunung", or the northern part of Mount Rinjani which is now better known as North Lombok, has a myriad of cultural customs (local wisdom) that distinguish as well as become the identity of the people of North Lombok. Although in its historical setting, this cultural custom was not born instantly, but only a long process in the historical background of the community. According to some experts, the culture that exists in the midst of North Lombok society was born as a culture resulting from cultural syncretism between the original culture of the local population and the newly entered outside culture, so that a new culture was born, for example, the culture of "Mawlid Adat".

The traditional Mawlid celebration – a hereditary tradition carried out by the Sasak tribe of North Lombok and seems to have been ingrained – a religious need manifested in sacred rituals as a manifestation of self-understanding of the existence of God Almighty, in this case the people of North Lombok, especially the Bayan area see a messenger (Prophet) as a holy figure who gives salvation after death.

It can be said that, indigenous mawlid culture is born from the culture and social setting that circles the bayan community, namely from the acculturation process. because acculturation is a social process that arises when a human group with a certain cultural group is confronted with elements of a foreign culture in such

a way that elements of a foreign culture are gradually accepted and processed into one's own culture.<sup>1</sup> Acculturation in the field of religion can affect the content of faith and high mind. Cultural acculturation itself can be called syncretism<sup>2</sup> (a combination of two cultures), for example the culture in the archipelago, especially in Lombok from the mixture of Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic cultures gave rise to a diverse culture adopted by the Sasak community but the culture did not change from the previous form.

Koentjaraningrat said syncretism was the original character of Javanese religion. This can be seen from the history of the Javanese life journey which until now even in the future Javanese people will always receive input from outside influences. The acceptance of foreign elements into Javanese culture by integration will certainly lead to fertile syncretism in Javanese culture. However, this does not only happen to the Javanese but the entire archipelago, this can be seen from the variety of cultures that exist in the archipelago due to the adaptive attitude of culture. Geertz says there is no veil of orthodoxy that covers up the syncretic base. There is no secretarial faction fighting against competitors. Rather, there is universalism in the earth vesi.

Etymologically, syncretism comes from the words *syn* (in Arabic) and *crequiozine*, which means to mix up conflicting elements. Syncretism is also interpreted to come from English which is *syncretism* which translates mixed, combined, alloy, and unity. Syncretism is a mixture of two or more traditions, and occurs because people adopt a new belief and try not to clash with old cultural ideas and practices. The occurrence of cultural mixing usually involves a number of changes to the traditions involved, therefore in this matter it is understood the mixture of local traditions with elements of Islamic culture. See Sutiyono, *The Clash of Islamic Cultures: Puritanical and Syncretic* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2010) Aspirational singleness shines a bright light in the many and varied forms of self-construction.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the Islam in the archipelago is syncretic, this means that there is a combination of two or more cultural elements such as Hindu-Buddhist, Animism and Pantheism, as Geertz said, the religion in Java when viewed from the outside looks

like Islam but if studied what appears to be syncretic. If a particular religion, as a belief system of values and norms, is permeated by the essential elements of another religion that are completely integrated with the core of that religion, then that symptom is a true example of religious syncretism. On the islands of the archipelago such as Java, Madura, Lombok, and others, local manifestations of Islam are often syncretic in the sense that local beliefs and rituals are maintained as beliefs and rituals in Islam so that they become the main elements of the local variant of Islam.<sup>4</sup>

If you pay attention to the syncretization process that takes place in the archipelago between local cultures and Islam is indeed running very smoothly because it is in a symbolic order which in the process of Islamization emphasizes harmony not in the element of coercion, it appears that the local tradition is part of the teachings of Islam itself.

This Mawlid celebration can be said to be a reflection of religious psychology that supports cultural preservation born from community civilization, and still exists in the midst of the onslaught of modern society or in other words millennial society.

The millennial community has lost the spirit of consciousness to better understand its own civilization, and is more concerned with western civilization and solidifies it into a new mecca instead of a new school in today's millennial civilization.

## **B. Islam dan Local Wisdom**

Islam came to the archipelago as a religion that is universal, perfect, flexible, elastic and can always adjust to situations and conditions having a very significant impact on the lives of Indonesian people, Islam continues to propagate to all corners of the archipelago earth resulting in the archipelago earth is considered a country that is very rich in culture. The reason is that scientifically religious and cultural life is giving an expose of the basic subtleties. Islam is known as one of the religions that is accommodating to local traditions (local wisdom) and *ikhtilāf* ulama in understanding the teachings of their religion.<sup>5</sup> Islam was brought by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to all humans in all aspects of life, including in the socio-political field that frees humans from the darkness of civilization to the light of faith.

Discussing the concept of Islam vis a vis tradition in a series of history in the discipline of anthropology is divided into two parts which are often referred to as "grand tradition" with small tradition by Jacques Duchense Guillemin that there will always be a dialogue between the religious value order that is the religious ideal of religion and local cultural values. The dialectical, creative regulation between the universal values of religion and local culture has presented the style of Islamic teachings in spiritual unity with diverse cultural patterns (unity and diversity). 6

Islam is a humanist religious concept, that is, a religion that defines humans as a central goal based on the concept of "theocentric humanism" whose axis of Islam is tawhidallah which is directed to create the benefit of human life and civilization. The principle of theocentric humanism is that which will be transformed as a value that is lived and implemented in the context of cultural society. From this system of theocentric humanism emerged symbols formed by the dialectic process between religious values and cultural values.<sup>7</sup> Religion's normative concept of culture not only tries to understand, describe, and acknowledge its uniqueness but religion has the concept of "amr (commandment), with responsibility. While science makes culture the object of understanding, religion views culture as the object of formation. The problem of culture is not how we understand, but how we change.

To discuss local culture, there are two terms that often have vague meanings, namely regional culture and tribal culture. In everyday life, local culture is often identified with the term regional culture. According to Siti Gazalba, the term regional culture is not quite right, because the term region, or regional division has no relationship with culture. The boundaries of a region are determined by political goals and decisions through laws or regulations in which there is not necessarily cultural similarity. The boundary of society that represents culture is tribe (ethnic group). A tribe is a group of people of an area who form a social union, believing that they come from one lineage and have a common land, customs, language, and leaders. Tribes are cultural areas. With this understanding, the term local culture is closer to the term tribal culture.

Recent studies in the field of Islam increasingly tend to look at the relationship between Islam and local culture in diversity, namely in the context of local cultural resistance to the penetration of outside elements such as Islam. The relationship between Islam as a "great tradition" and local culture as a "small tradition" is no longer seen in terms of "submission".<sup>9</sup> But rather in terms of the increasing diversity of Islamic expression after meeting with local elements, including in relation to the encounter of Islam with popular culture today. Islam is not only seen as universal, but also accommodating. While local culture is not seen as a low element that must succumb to Islam. Because this local element can also reject new elements. For example, in the story of the handshake is not the original of Islam, but something that was taken from a tradition of this pre-Islamic society, artinnya, that Islam that comes from every inch of the earth is always the result of dialectical reciprocity between revelation and local traditions in Makkah.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, the tradition in the Islamic community of the archipelago did not replace the tradition directly, but the tradition was adopted and inserted Islamic values in it.

Islam and local culture are two things that live together without conflict and crocodile Islam is a culture that is based on Islamic teachings but does not give up its local products. Where the nature of flexible Islamic religious teachings that always adapt to the circumstances of a society. However, the relationship between Islam and culture has no obstacles, if it is not selective, there will be concerns because of the mixing of culture with Islamic teachings so that Islamic teachings are no longer pure. Because Islam is dominated by culture.

Between religion and culture, both are equally inherent in a religious person and in them there is the involvement of their minds. From the aspect of faith and formal worship, religious practitioners will always coincide and even interact with culture. Culture plays an important role in the formation of a religious character for a person or society. Not only giving birth to various religions, this culture also has a major contribution to the formation of various religious practices under the same religious umbrella. In reality, two or more people of the same religion do not necessarily have the same practice or method of religious experience, especially

rituals.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, religion as an ancestral teaching from god will in turn also form a new cultural order.

In addition to the statement of religion as a sacred, religion is also understood as something that has been institutionalized in such a way in the institutions of life and conceptions of belief (mythical and others), which outwardly have become socio-cultural phenomena in certain societies. Therefore, in its manifestation, no religion is able to incarnate its people in the same characteristics and patterns, even though they basically claim to be followers of the same religion. This kind of diversity is what some scholars call it "doctrinal expression" while others view it as "culture."<sup>12</sup>

As a matter of fact, Islamic history and local culture are mutually influencing because both there are values and symbols. Religion here symbolizes a symbol of obedience to the khalik while culture contains values and symbols so that humans can live in it. Religion needs a symbol system, in other words, religion needs religious culture. But both need to be differentiated, religion is final, universal and eternal (prenial) and knows no change (absolute), while culture is particular, realistic and temporary. Religion without culture can indeed develop as a private religion, but without culture religion as a collectivity will have no place.

Religion is a common property, therefore there is no mutual harassment between followers of different religions and cultures. Religious sentiment in the sense of fanaticism towards the truth of the religion adopted is indeed very necessary. But this sentiment is not allowed to the point of overflowing bartas (excessive) because God does not like excess, fearing that it will offend followers of other religions and cultures.<sup>13</sup>

As a result, people will assume religion will only be a remedy in times of trouble and make religion meaningless in times of pleasure.

### **C. Mawlid Adat: Local Wisdom Amidst the Onslaught of Modern Civilization**

Quoting his opinion, Franz Boaz expresses that culture, everything that encompasses the entire system of human life that is the result of learning and that is socially transmitted, and thus includes the way society is organized as well as values

and belief systems.<sup>14</sup> So it can be said that culture is one of the factors that give birth to a belief system in a particular society, even though the belief system is born from a long process.

Mawlid adat, which in fact was born from cultural acculturation, was naturally born from the interests and needs of the community to continue to exist in preserving ancestral culture, although not a few are viewed obliquely by certain groups who claim that these teachings and cultures have never existed before in Islamic religious traditions.

Basically, the process of bayan traditional rituals in the traditional mawlid ritual, if viewed unilaterally, there is not one deviation that occurs, but rather religious symbols that are inserted with local wisdom so that it seems foreign, strange, and seems far from the criteria of religious sharia in general.

For example, at the beginning of the ritual procession, the community will gather to start collecting produce in the form of grain, bananas, cassava and so on as a sign of gratitude to God. This although somewhat different in Mawlid celebrations carried out in the "Islamic" hemisphere but in essence has the same meaning of giving or in religious language referred to as zakat, alms and infaq.

Because basically most of the Islam in the archipelago is syncretic, this means that there is a combination of two or more cultural elements such as Hindu-Buddhist, Animism and Pantheism, as Geertz said, the religion in Java when viewed from the outside looks like Islam, but if studied what appears is syncretic. If a particular religion, as a belief system of values and norms, is permeated by the essential elements of another religion that are completely integrated with the core of that religion, then that symptom is a true example of religious syncretism. On the islands of the archipelago such as Java, Madura, Lombok, and others, local manifestations of Islam are often syncretic in the sense that local beliefs and rituals are maintained as beliefs and rituals in Islam so that they become the main elements of the local variant of Islam.<sup>15</sup>

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because it is in a symbolic order which in the process of Islamization emphasizes harmony not in the element of coercion, it appears that the local tradition is part of the teachings of Islam itself.

It is recognized at the level of language to have different languages, but in Bayan people, they do not use formal religious language, but use local languages to better understand the meaning in each religious tradition they do.

This is inseparable from the social setting that surrounds it, because basically humans in society are characterized by two types of needs and two types of tendencies to act for their survival. First, humans must act towards the environment, either by adapting to the environment or mastering and controlling. Second, human societies, and cultures, often require death as a member of their continued lives. Human history shows that the ability of humans to control the environment and influence environmental conditions is increasing. Man expresses feelings, acts to carry out perceived needs, responds to people and things in non-utilitarian ways and engages in relationships.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, it can be said that, the basis of religious needs on the one hand and maintaining the cultural culture that has been inherent on the other, so that the path taken to express the meaning of a religious teaching blends with its local wisdom.

In addition, in the procession of traditional bayan rituals remind people of the necessity to always be grateful for every gift of God to humans, so as not to forget; "Why were we born, why were we raised, and why were we turned off"? They are internalized in every process of customary rituals, although all the meanings they contain seem vague to protect—and preserve long-standing customs.

But on the other hand, customs that develop in society always have challenges both in terms of social, religious, economic and new cultures that have emerged as a result of the development of science and knowledge that has begun to mushroom in the current postmodern era. New cultures that have sprung up seem to be a stumbling block for customs or local wisdom that develops in the community. Why is that? This is due to several things: 1) society is now spoiled by technology; 2) the lack of understanding of the younger generation related to the local wisdom they have; 3)

value shifts as an impact of perspectives on the value order that occurs in society; 4) the current of liberal thought that has begun to invade Islamic society.

Eickelman notes that existing cultural patterns, together with local socioeconomic power configurations, influence the way universal texts are interpreted, including the Qur'an and Sunnah. In addition, it is also necessary to trace that Islam accepted bodies, texts and forms of ritual action existed at a point that existed at a time and place. But the issue of debate in trying to explain the existing character of local Islam is not as simple as how a text, doctrine and specific ritual practices are interpreted. Moreover, we must try to determine the way in which local Islam became a religious and social system.<sup>17</sup> Here it is argued that the constitution of local Islam as a religious and social system is based on the use of a limited set of *kosneps* or axioms used to interpret elements of accepted tradition and local cultural and religious knowledge.

According to Akbar S. Ahmed, in understanding all religions including Islam must be viewed from a sociological perspective as practiced by Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and Freud. Therefore, the concept of science *al-"umran* or social science in the Islamic perspective is a world view (word view), that humans are the centrality of moral persons. As long as the vision of morality is derived from conceptions of the Qur'an and Sunnah, Islamic anthropological discourse begins to examine the originality of Qur'anic concepts.<sup>18</sup> In every religion, we will find that a change in socially defining strata usually becomes very important. On the other hand, the type of religion, which is sometimes marked, is usually urged by historical influences stretching far from heterogeneous strata. Everyone has tried to interpret the relationship between religious ethics and civilization with desire, a history is made a function for the next generation this is called historical materialism so it needs to be emphasized the conscious effort of every element of society to further develop and preserve local wisdom as a tradition so as not to be eliminated by new cultures that begin to emerge on the surface. For example, when viewed from historical traces for now, people prefer to go to the cinema which some people think is a current trend rather than having to learn local wisdom that has been inherited. Such a scourge was

born as an opium of cultural imperialism carried out by the West to eliminate the cultural spirit so that future generations are foreign to their own civilization.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Mawlid adat as local wisdom possessed by the people of North Lombok has a deep meaning if examined carefully. Every symbol that exists has a meaning that explains every flow of human life in general. For example, about collecting crops to be consumed by the community as a form of gratitude to God. But on the other hand, the onslaught of western civilization seems to be a scourge that can undermine the civilization that has long been believed by the people of North Lombok. So it is necessary to take concrete steps by introducing it to today's younger generation.

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