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## **Syncretism of Slametan Tradition As a Pillar of Islam Nusantara**

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### **Abstract**

*Slametan* is a tradition which is still embraced by Javanese in general, especially who is in rural areas. The slametan has different characteristics in each region that due to heterogeneity factors. The research purposes to describe slametan forms, process, and syncretism patterns of slametan tradition in Ngaringan village, Gandusari district, Blitar. The research used a qualitative tradition with descriptive narrative approach which is thematic analysis for data analysis process used. The research were participated by public figures in Ngaringan village. Data collection with in-depth interviews and observation. It found (1) Slametan forms generally includes birth, death, marriage, cleaning the village, feast day, welcoming Ramadhan, celebrating after coming back from abroad for the work, and celebrating when harvest comes. (2) The slametan process consists of serving food (such as; chicken in ingkung form, buceng rice, jenang colors red and white, jenang sengkolo) and prayer. (3) The slametan tradition is a pattern of syncretism between Java and Islam as a pillar of "Islam Nusantara". The *Slametan* had already existed as a Javanese ritual before Islam

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came than they were merged into the one. The research conclusion reveals that the *slametan* tradition is a ritual which is combining between Javanese and Islamic traditions than became characteristic of “Islam Nusantara”.

[*Slametan* merupakan salah satu tradisi yang masih dianut oleh masyarakat Jawa pada umumnya, terutama mereka yang berada di wilayah pedesaan. Slametan memiliki karakteristik yang berbeda di masing-masing daerah dikarenakan faktor heterogenitas. Tujuan dari penelitian ini untuk mendeskripsikan bentuk-bentuk slametan, proses, serta pola sinkretisme tradisi slametan di desa Ngaringan, Kec. Gandusari, Kab. Blitar. Penelitian ini menggunakan tradisi kualitatif dengan pendekatan naratif deskriptif dan proses analisis data menggunakan analisis tematik. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah beberapa tokoh masyarakat di desa Ngaringan. Penggalan data dilakukan dengan wawancara mendalam dan observasi. Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa (1) Bentuk slametan pada umumnya mencakup kelahiran, kematian, pernikahan, bersih desa, hari raya, menjelang ramadhan, setelah pulang kerja dari luar negeri, dan ketika akan panen. (2) Proses slametan terdiri atas penyajian makanan (ayam dalam bentuk *ingkung*, nasi *buceng*, *jenang* merah dan putih, *jenang sengkolo*) dan doa. (3) Tradisi slametan merupakan pola sinkretisme antara Jawa dan Islam sebagai pilar Islam Nusantara. Slametan sudah ada sebagai ritual jawa sebelum kedatangan islam yang kemudian melebur menjadi satu. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa tradisi slametan merupakan suatu ritual penggabungan antara tradisi Jawa dan Islam yang kemudian menjadi karakteristik dari Islam Nusantara.]

**Keywords:** Islam nusantara; syncretism; *slametan*

## Introduction

Javanese culture is one of the greatest cultural in Indonesia. Javanese culture historically is a group of people who came from the tradition of Hindu, Buddhist, and cling to Kejawen values which growing every time. Javanese culture is very thick with philosophical values contained in it, for example related to ethical, virtuous, and character. It came from the legacy of ancestors who always cling to these values so that the legacies are continued by Java's societies until now.

The scope of the majority of Javanese culture is located in East Java, Central Java and Yogyakarta<sup>1</sup>, The third big area is so thick with culture and traditions of Java, such as custom homes, language, behavior, character, nature, and so on. It was implanted on the basis of kejawen as a way of life. Kejawen is the Java community's religious inherited from its predecessors. Kejawen usually applied by some traditional societies are very thick with Javanese culture values, even today there are some society who still maintain kejawen as the religion of their ancestors.

The entry of several religions before Islam in Java have influence in the customs or traditions of Javanese society, especially on the elements of belief.<sup>2</sup> As more and spread of Islam in Indonesia, Java and Islamic culture began to fused together in the application of tradition. It comes from Walisongo role in the process on spreading of Islam to Indonesia, especially in Java. The impact of it all, many of Java society now embraced Islam religion. Finally, kejawen tradition which strong previously mixed with Islamic tradition, or on the contrary, Islamic tradition in its development mixed with Javanese culture. Some common traditions like slametan, *grebeg maulud*, *sekaten*, *selikuran*, *megengan*, *nyadran*, and so on.

Previous research conducted by Hakam found that slametan is a ritual of Javanese Muslim community performed in contemplating religious principles concerning the safety from various of calamities in creating a harmonious life and respect to lives of others. He also reveal that the activity of this ritual does not discriminate between Islamic tradition and culture of Java, because the two held together in this slametan tradition.<sup>3</sup>

One tradition that is still firmly embraced by the Java community is slametan. It's also revealed by Geertz which mentioning that *abangan* as the Muslim population of Java had a religious tradition

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<sup>1</sup>Sutiyono, *Benturan Budaya Islam: Puritan dan Sinkretis* (Jakarta: PT Kompas Media

<sup>2</sup>Capt. R.P. Suyono, *Dunia Mistik Orang Jawa* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2007), 131.

<sup>3</sup>Ahmad Hakam, "Communal Feast Slametan: Belief System, Ritual, and the Ideal of Javanese Society," *Hayula: Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies* 1, no.1 (2017): 97-110.

which include the slametan, strong belief in spirits, and his involvement in the practice of medicine, magic, and the magical.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of the ritual slametan very diverse. Rudianto, Widiyahseno, and Susanti stated from his research that slametan activity has an impact on a person's psychological. Because according to him, societies felt a anxiety if they do not join of slametan. On the other hand, they consider slametan tradition made their hearts be peaceful, because they also hope that slametan can avoid them from disasters.<sup>5</sup>

Suwardi's research shows that the slametan tradition of death in Purwosari village, Girimulyo, Kulon Progo is a ritual which has related with the doctrine of Islam and Javanese especially like a ritual prayer and worship to ancestral spirits. Suwardi's opinion above assume that slametan he researched is patterns of syncretism between Islam and Javanese.<sup>6</sup>

Researchs above shows that slametan is a ritual performed in expecting salvation in the world. Slametan activities carried out by the Java community almost evenly, the meaning that slametan has become a obligatory tradition for almost all of the Java community.<sup>7</sup> Some habits are usually applied in slametan in various regions diverse, depending on the pattern and the various cultures in the area.<sup>8</sup>

Kistanto explained that the Java community always maintain its tradition wherever they are, even age does not become an obstacle for running the tradition process. Generally, slametan has distinctive feature in each area. Factors which make diverse originating from the elements of heterogeneity. This reason makes researchers are interested

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<sup>4</sup>Clifford Geertz, *Agama Jawa* (Depok: Komunitas Bambu, 2014), xxx.

<sup>5</sup>Rudianto, Bambang Widiyahseno, & Sri Susanti, "Model Upacara Ritual Selamatan Masyarakat Perkampungan Berbasis Masjid," (Ponorogo: Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, 2016), 46.

<sup>6</sup>Suwardi, "Sinkretisme dan Simbolisme Tradisi Selamatan Kematian di desa Purwosari Kulon Progo," Tesis Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta (2012): 161-180.

<sup>7</sup>Purwadi, *Upacara Tradisional Jawa: Menggali Untaian Kearifan Lokal* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), 22.

<sup>8</sup>Nurdien H.Kistanto, "The Javanese Slametan as Practiced as Tradition and Identity," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 6, no.11 (2016): 294, 290-295.

to further expand the study of slametan tradition, furthermore researchers want to relate it in pattern of syncretism tradition.

This study will answer a common problem, how patterns of slametan tradition in Ngaringan village, Gandusari, Blitar?. However, to answer this question, it's necessary to elaborate: 1) Slametan's form in Ngaringan village, 2) Process and stages of society in perform slametan, 3) Pattern of adjustment between Islamic tradition and culture of Java on slametan activities in Ngaringan village. The purpose of this study to answer the questions above and then analyzed with some previous research and theory regarding the discussion.

### **Methods**

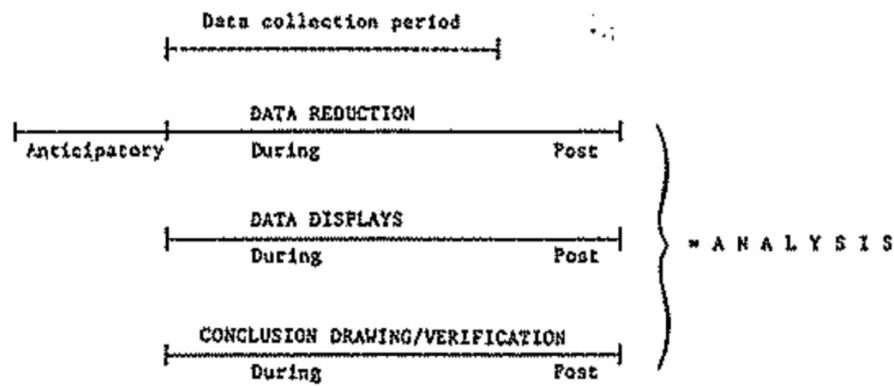
This research use qualitative research tradition with narrative approach. Narrative Research in this study is used to tell a story, a narrative, or description related from participants' experience of what he was experiencing.<sup>9</sup> Process of data collection which used by researchers through in-depth interview, observation and documentation of slametan activities in Ngaringan village, Gandusari, Blitar.

After completing the data collection, researchers then using thematic analysis to conduct an analyse the raw data. Thematic analysis process devided into six phases, which are familiarizing themselves with the data, initial the code, search a theme, review theme, defining and naming theme, and create reports. The using of thematic analysis in this study based on components of flow models by Miles & Huberman consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion and verification of data.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>John W.Creswell, *Penelitian Kualitatif & Desain Riset* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2015), viii.

<sup>10</sup>Matthew B.Miles & A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis* (London: Sage Publication, 1994), 10.



**Figure 1:** Component Analysis of Data Flow Model (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

Participants in this study were two people who become public figure in Ngaringan village, Gandusari, Blitar. They are Mr. Ma'Ruf as chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Branch of Gandusari and Pak Agus Mastur as head of Madrasah Diniyah Al-Masthuriyah of Ngaringan, Gandusari, Blitar.

## Results

### Definition of Slametan

Term of slametan in general has the same meaning each regions, as well as the perspective of people in the Ngaringan village, Gandusari, Blitar. Slametan tradition in the village still strong and often carried out routinely. They consider slametan is a tradition which aims to invoke the salvation in the world and to avoid all of *bala'* which fall on them.<sup>11</sup> It was corroborated by Geertz that slametan aims to get peace for the whole community, especially on hosts, family, and guests who attended for slametan activities. Another opinion states that slametan is one kind of offerings addressed to God, prophet, guardian, angel, religious, devils, ghosts, and other spirits in order to obtain a pleasure in life.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Clifford Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, 5.

<sup>12</sup>Suyono, *Dunia Mistik Orang Jawa*, 132.

Similarity perspective to slametan not mean in each region has the same expectations, as well as delivered by Mr. Ma'ruf below which recognizes that the desire of each respective slametan in different regions.

“Slametan tradition here (Ngaringan village) still very strong. In general, the goal is same, namely to alms, pray for the happiness and avoid from *bala'* and disasters, but only desire is different”<sup>13</sup>

Mulder saw that slametan implemented in order to obtain “*slamet*” situation.<sup>14</sup> It's important in the Geertz's opinion that meaning of *slamet* in life of Java community is condition which “*gak ana apa-apa*” or safe condition and there's no disaster which befell.<sup>15</sup> Mulder and Geertz opinion above supports the reality of what happened in the Ngaringan village, that safety is the main purpose of selametan tradition. Not only in Ngaringan village, purpose to obtain salvation is also the main runway of slametan in some areas generally.

Slametan still thick in Ngaringan village, because slametan has role of religious rituals in muslim community of Jawa.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, the popularity of slametan tradition as a social symbol could also be associated with religious attachment with tradition of Javanese culture.<sup>17</sup> One reason for the slametan tradition still strong in Ngaringan village caused by heritage ancestors strongly, because slametan still considered as a tradition of religious heritage and local cultural of the past.<sup>18</sup>

Slametan meaning as alms is also justified by Purwadi's opinion, he saw that slametan is a ritual or ceremony consist of alms the

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<sup>13</sup>Mr. Ma'ruf, interview by Virgin Suciyantri Maghfiroh on September 17, 2018 at Ngaringan village.

<sup>14</sup>Niels Mulder, *Mistisisme Jawa: Ideologi di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2001), 136.

<sup>15</sup>Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, 8.

<sup>16</sup>Ahmad Kholil, *Agama Kultural Masyarakat Pinggiran* (Malang: UIN Maliki Press, 2011), 90.

<sup>17</sup>M. Alie Humaedi, *Islam dan Kristen di Pedesaan Jawa: Kajian Konflik Sosial Keagamaan dan Ekonomi Politik di Kasimpar dan Karangobar* (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Departemen Agama RI, 2008), 222.

<sup>18</sup>Sutiyono, *Benturan Budaya Islam*, 18.

food and prayer together to pray safety and peacefull for the hosts who organized, of course specifically for all of guests.<sup>19</sup>

### Forms of Slametan

Slametan in the Ngaringan village implemented when there will be activity. Some forms slametan implemented namely relating to birth, death, marriage, clean village, feastdays, welcoming Ramadan, after coming back from abroad for the work, and welcoming harvest. Reality in the Ngaringan village according to what is described by *Tim Aswaja Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Center PWNUEast Java*, which states that in Indonesia found many Muslim communities organize slametan tradition, when moving house, births, circumcisions, and more.<sup>20</sup>

Some forms above can be categorized according to Geertz which divides slametan into four types of cycles, namely (1) slametan occurs if there is a circumcision, birth, marriage and death, (2) if it's related to the feastday such as Eid Al-Fitri, Eid al-Adha, Prophet maulud, and so on, (3) relating to activities involving community in village, such as cleaning village, (4) slametan occurred no fixed and variable, such as leaving a person on a long trip, sick, change name , moving house, etc.<sup>21</sup>

Geertz of some form *slametan* subdivide kind for slametan of birth into four main types, (1) *tingkeban*, which is the term used if a child born is the first child, (2) *babaran or brokohan*, namely slametan do when childbirth, (3) *sepasaran*, which is occurs in five days after birth, and (4) *pitonan*, slametan conducted in seven months after the birth. Ngaringan society still believe that holding Pitonan as emotional release efforts aimed for keeping the child be brave and prepared to deal with the surrounding environment. In slametan of marriage, Geertz states that slametan is a tradition that should be presented by a groom as a wedding gift to bride's parents after marriage decisions is determined. In the context of marriage, slametan carried out so that the couple inseparable from each other like *mimi* and *mintuna*. Slametan of death

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<sup>19</sup>Purwadi, *Upacara Tradisional Jawa*, 22.

<sup>20</sup>Tim Aswaja NU Center PWNUEast Java Timur, *Khazanah Aswaja: Memahami, Mengamalkan dan Mendakwahkan Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* (Surabaya: Tim Aswaja NU Center PWNUEast Java Timur, 2016), 241.

<sup>21</sup>Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, 31.



usually carried out after the funeral, especially those who have a role during the burial process as gravediggers, tombstone makers along, family, friends, and neighbors who deceased. However, slametan of death is generally held on the third, seventh, 40th, 100th, first and second year after the death, and on a day to 1000. Slametan welcoming harvest is usually done only with regard to rice harvest. Welcoming harvest, farmers began to ask for advice from people who have the knowledge to determine the day of harvest.

Small slametan held when the harvest, when the night, when sowing seeds to nurseries and when moving plants from the nursery to the fields. However, festive slametan held when farmers obtained the first fruit, the term is slametan *metik*. The term is also applied by the community Ngaringan village in calling slametan welcoming harvest arrives. Slametan of cleaning village usually carried out in drive out dangerous demons with serve dish addressed to the *danyang* of village or spirits guard of village at his funeral. It's held in month of *selo*, but some villages are also many who do pursuant of each tradition.<sup>22</sup>

Slametan form is also described detailed by Suyono. According to him, selamatan marriage is to obtain fortune between bride and groom. Usually it's held before the wedding (*widadaren*) and after the wedding (slametan *penganten*). However, three to four days after the wedding also held *ngunduh mantu* with the aim to get the blessing of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. Slametan of birth took place before the birth in order to expect the safety for mother and children who are still in womb, this term called by *ngeborebori*. additionally, slametan also held when the baby was three months old in womb (*nelani*), seven months in womb (*mitoni* or *tingkep*) and nine months in womb (*memulu sedulur*). While slametan after the baby is born consists of slametan births (*brokohan*). Brokohan term on Ngaringan community is usually done with the typical form like "*bunga tiga kembang*" and without chicken or just vegetables (*kulupan*). Then slametan after the placenta broke (crowbar navel), when the baby was five days (*nyepasari*), seven days (*mitung dino*), and nine days (*nyangang dino*). In slametan welcoming harvest, the Java community in general held slametan with aim to obtaining a good harvest. While slametan of clean the village are usually held once a year in *selo* month at the residence of village head.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid, 41-110.

Slametan of death according Suyono actually a ritual mixture of multi-religious. For the Javanese, death is a condition changed to another life, assemble together with family who have preceded.<sup>23</sup>

### Implementation Process of Slametan

Process of slametan activities in Ngaringan village always identical with the serving the food and prayed. The food is usually served is *jenang sengkolo*, red and white *jenang*, chicken in *ingkung* form, and *buceng* rice. Type of food served in slametan process is also described by Geertz, according to him, the form of food consisting of meat, chicken or fresh fish, and some food made of rice and porridge.<sup>24</sup> Specifically, *jenang* which usually served by the host on the activities of slametan in Ngaringan village is a kind of food made of rice which was made into *ketan* then processed again into *jenang*. *Buceng* rice is another term of cone rice (*tumpeng*), the yellow rice formed looming up like a mountain. While chicken in *ingkung* form is chicken already cooked and served in intact body form.

Prayer usually delivered by a religious expert in one of the villages with the reading of Al-Fatihah and a short letter in the Qur'an.<sup>25</sup> Prayer is an important part of slametan tradition in Ngaringan village, because prayer is a part in slametan as a ritual in expedite host's *hajad* as well as the closing of slametan. Among the delivery of prayer, community of Ngaringan also includes *tahlilan* when process of slametan. However *tahlilan* not done in eah of slametan, but only at the time of commemorating those who died. The tradition is similar with Humaedi's opinion, that *tahlilan* often organized in every activity slametan of death and small *tahlilan* usually carried out in each activity slametan.<sup>26</sup>

The timing of slametan process in Ngaringan village implemented based on host's desire and appropriate for the right moment. Usually it's takes place on after *maghrib* or *isha'* which followed by men, especially among adults, womens only play a role in

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<sup>23</sup>Suyono, *Dunia Mistik Orang Jawa*, 134-147.

<sup>24</sup>Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, 6.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

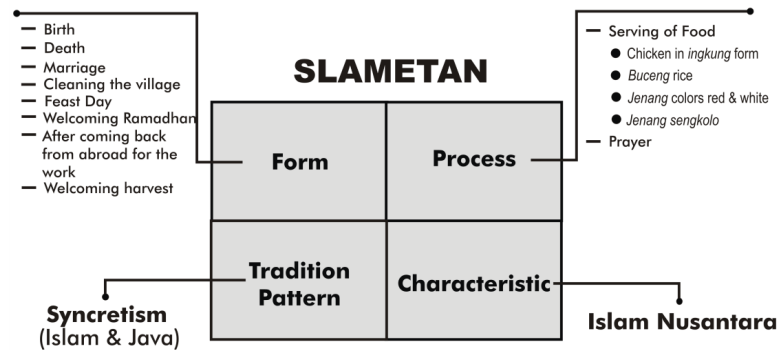
<sup>26</sup>Humaedi, *Islam dan Kristen di Pedesaan Jawa*, 223-224.

preparing food in the kitchen.<sup>27</sup> Geertz was stated thus, that womens only stayed in *mburi* (in back, namely in the kitchen).

In order of slametan activities are generally held several phases of activity as said by Mr. Agus Mastur below:

“Slametan starting from the arrival of the community to slametan place, and then delivery of hajad from selametan leader, tahlil and prayer (with reading of *Yasin* in selametan of death), eating together and division of *berkat* to the people who attended.”<sup>28</sup>

Reality of what happened in Ngaringan village above are supported by Geertz statement that when the guests have arrived, the host utter gratitude to the guests at once inform his intention or commonly referred to *ujub*. Then prayer process by religious experts and then the guests were given a dish of food to eat, if there are still remaining of food, they usually bring it home.<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 2:** Slametan in Ngaringan village, District Gandusari, Blitar

<sup>27</sup>Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, 4.

<sup>28</sup>Mr Agus Mastur, interview by Virgin Suciyantri Maghfiroh, on September 30, 2018 at Ngaringan village.

<sup>29</sup>Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, 5-7.

## Discussion

### Slametan: Syncretism between Islam and Java

Slametan tradition in Ngaringan village, Gandusari, Blitar is the tradition pattern of syncretism between Islam and Javanese. Because, slametan already exists and is implemented by the Java community in Ngaringan village before Islam spread widely in Java. However, some time later, slametan had merged into entity between Java and Islamic tradition.

De Graaf & Pigeaud explained that the beginning of the Islamic religion spread in Java can not be described in detail, because the source of the study are diverse. However, they said in the 13<sup>th</sup> century already there were some Muslims who had lived in Java as traders from outside.<sup>30</sup> Another perspective says that the spread of Islam in Java from the 15th M century by Walisongo who have syi'ar to extend Islamic territory.<sup>31</sup> The mission brought by Wali Songo is one way which creates a syncretism between Islam and Javanese.<sup>32</sup> But in the process, the spread of Islam in Java is not easy. Because for a centuries earlier, Javanese culture dominated by Hindus to be the reason for difficulty in spreading Islam in Java.<sup>33</sup> The fervent of Hindu dominated kejawen also justified by Kholil.<sup>34</sup> According to him that Hindu-Buddhist tradition still deeply rooted in the tradition of Javanese society. Therefore, the spread of Islam in Java was initially not easy and encountered some resistance therein.

The beginning evidence of spreading Islam in Java evidenced by the opinion that the Gresik and Surabaya is the oldest center of Islam in Java, but in between, Gresik older than Surabaya. Evidence is indicated with be found of some Muslim tombs in Gresik as tomb of Fatimah

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<sup>30</sup>De Graaf & Pigeaud, *Kerajaan-Kerajaan Islam di Jawa: Peralihan dari Majapahit ke Mataram*, (Jakarta: Grafiti Press, 1985)

<sup>31</sup>Mohammad Kosim, *Pondok Pesantren di Pamekasan: Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan* (Pamekasan: Pusat Penelitian dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat, 2002)

<sup>32</sup>Suwardi Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen: Sinkretisme, Simbolisme, dan Sufisme dalam Budaya Spiritual Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2006), 82.

<sup>33</sup>Ridwan, Suwito, Sulkhan Chakim, and Supani, *Islam Kejawen: Sistem Keyakinan dan Ritual Anak-Cucu Ki Bonokeling* (STAIN Purwokerto Press & Unggun Religi, 2008), 37.

<sup>34</sup>Kholil, *Agama Kultural*, 65.

Binti Maimun, who died on the 7th of Rajab 475 H / 1082 M, the tomb of Malik Ibrahim on 12 Rabiul Awwal 822 H / 1419 M.<sup>35</sup>

Syncretism is a social intercourse between Islamic culture with local culture, one form of syncretism is slametan.<sup>36</sup> The arrival of Islam in Java tends to produce syncretic between Islam and Javanese. Some evidence of the spread of Islam in Java becomes main basis of tradition or cultural adjustment in this time. Because the spread of Islam in Java has a significant impact in the various forms of pattern changes occurring in the Java community, especially in the pattern of slametan tradition which is still ongoing today.

“The process is of slametan here (Ngaringan village) is a merger of traditional pattern between Java and Islamic traditions which merge into one entity. Before the spread of Islam in Java, the Java community has implemented the slametan tradition. But after Islam spread in Indonesia, especially in Java, slametan tradition merge into one between the Javanese tradition and Islam.”<sup>37</sup>

The explanation was said by Mr. Ma'ruf and Mr. Agus Mastur above assume that the slametan tradition in village is pure traditional pattern of syncretism which occurred between Java and Islam. The opinion above then supported by Geertz that the religious system adopted by rural communities in Java in generally a blend of animism elements, Hinduism, and Islam which later better known as syncretism. Java community are basically Hindus who come from 400 before masehi. But in its development, cannot be denied that the Java community in general has reached more than 90% who embraced Islam religion. The process of syncretism then be the basic tradition actually in the Java community.<sup>38</sup> This was justified by Purwadi that Islam entered and developed in Java influence to Java intellectual which

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<sup>35</sup>De Graaf & Pigeaud, *Kerajaan-Kerajaan Islam di Jawa*.

<sup>36</sup>Sutiyono, *Benturan Budaya Islam*, 5.

<sup>37</sup> Mr. Ma'ruf & Mr Agus Mastur, interview by Virgin Suciyantri Maghfiroh, on 17 September 17, 2018 and September 30, 2018 at Ngaringan village.

<sup>38</sup>Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, xxxiii.

convert to Islam later. Many from Java intellect converts Islam religion make Java be the central power of Islamic Javanese culture.<sup>39</sup>

The arrival of Islam in Java impact on patterns of praying in slametan process. Slametan tradition in its development as a ritual with the recitation of prayers by Arabic language addressed to the Prophet Muhammad, saints, and the ancestors to expecting a blessing in society.<sup>40</sup> Slametan also one of kejawen mystical ritual for the Java community, not a few who think that kejawen mystical is patterns of syncretism between Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. But the ritual was initially is a characteristic of Java community before influenced by various factors, especially religious.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the statement from Mr. Ma'Ruf and Mr Agus Mastur have compatibility with the above opinion in explaining slametan as syncretic tradition between Islam and Javanese.

Kejawen generally is a mixture cultures between Java culture with several comer religions others, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. However, from a several adjustments above, the role of Islam still most dominating, which Islamic elements in still strong in adjustment with Javanese culture than other religions.<sup>42</sup> The assertion above clearly gives the view that all the traditions in kejawen is mixed pattern (syncretism), specifically slametan tradition which had mixed patterns between Islam and Javanese.

### **Slametan as Characteristic of Islam Nusantara**

Islam nusantara is characteristic of Islam in Indonesia. An Islamic concept which unified with patterns traditions and cultural that exist in Indonesia. Concept of Islam Nusantara be an effort to synergy between the doctrine of Islam with the characteristics of societies in Indonesia. The doctrines of Islam are part of Islamic tradition from anciently until now.<sup>43</sup> The concept is totally not contrary with Islamic

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<sup>39</sup>Purwadi, *Upacara Tradisional Jawa*, 13.

<sup>40</sup>Mark R. Woodward, *Java, Indonesia, and Islam* (Springer, 2011), 113.

<sup>41</sup>Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen*, 73.

<sup>42</sup>Ridwan, Suwito, Sulkhan Chakim, & Supani, *Islam Kejawen*, 48.

<sup>43</sup>Nur Syam, *Islam Pesisir* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2005), 277.

doctrine in general, but it's being a solution construct of development of Islam in Indonesia.<sup>44</sup>

The concept of Islam Nusantara provide benefits for development of Indonesia. The spirit of Islam Nusantara invited to every element to maintaining the identity of Indonesia are very strong with tradition and culture which does not contrary with Islamic law (syariah). Islam Nusantara also invited all of society to maintaining a moderate Muslim personality.<sup>45</sup> That is, tradition of Islam Nusantara support all of traditions which not against the doctrine of Islam as a moderate teachings.

Slametan tradition which has been attached to the people in Ngaringan village has characteristics of Islam Nusantara. This was according with Mr. Ma'ruf and Mr. Agus Mastur opinions.

“Slametan here be part as pillars from Islam Nusantara, because the pillars of Islam Nusantara consists of slametan, mosques, cemeteries, TPQ / *madrrasah diniyah*, and Sufism. So the pillars still awake, we need a forum for the study of the younger generation to develop it.”<sup>46</sup>

“Although slametan tradition recedes, it will not make pillars of Islam Nusantara shaky, because it transformed into several terms as *walimah*, *genduri*, *banca'an*, *tepung gelang*, *bujono ondrowino*, *tembul*, *sanjung puji*.”<sup>47</sup>

Explanation from Mr. Ma'ruf and Mr. Agus Mastur above confirms that slametan still a part of the Islam Nusantara. This assumption can bring back to the discussion about the tradition slametan as syncretism between Islam and Javanese. The mixed

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<sup>44</sup>Hanum Jazimah Puji Astuti, “Islam Nusantara: Sebuah Argumentasi Beragama dalam Bingkai Kultural,” *Interdisciplinary Journal of Communication* 2, no.1 (2017): 38, 27-52

<sup>45</sup>Said Aqil Siradj, “Mengapa Islam Nusantara,” in *Youtube*, last modified October 5, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8me2C7g1O-Q>.

<sup>46</sup>Mr Ma'ruf Interview by Virgin Suciyanti Maghfiroh, on September 17, 2018 at Ngaringan village.

<sup>47</sup>Mr. Agus Mastur Interview by Virgin Suciyanti Maghfiroh, on September 30, 2018 at Ngaringan village.

between Islam and Javanese make slametan be a typical pattern tradition and it still done by muslim Javanese in general, so that adjustments can be said has a role in parts from concept of Islam Nusantara. Slametan as part of Islam Nusantara also presented by the head of Fatayat Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Hikmah Bafaqih.

“Actually slametan, *tabayyun*, and *mauludan* it as soul and become part of Islam *nusantara*, but it has not been realized by many people.”<sup>48</sup>

Based on above explanation that slametan be characteristic of Islam Nusantara. Islam Nusantara concept basically is typical Islamic, substantial and not divisive or not differentiate between each other.<sup>49</sup> Evidently from the opinion of participants stating that slametan also more strengthen the unity from various elements of society, as slametan tradition in commemorating 1 *Suro* (Muharram/Hijriyah), at crossroads. This tradition is carried out involving various elements of society in Ngaringan, such as religious elements which all come together in this ritual.

Slametan mission to uphold the unity supported by Geertz who interpret slametan as a simple religious rituals which symbolize the mystical and social unity among the people who join it, all of them come together in a unity that pledge mutual helping and cooperating.<sup>50</sup> The emergence of harmony and avoid any form of conflict be one of the reasons for the Java community to maintain the slametan tradition.<sup>51</sup>

## Conclusion

Slametan tradition still be a ritual which carried out by the Java community, but the characteristics are applied differently in each country or region, especially in Ngaringan village, Gandusari, Blitar. In

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<sup>48</sup>Hikmah Bafaqih, presented at *Talk Show Mengenang Pemikiran Gus Dur* with a discussion of “*Merawat Cita-cita Gus Dur: Menegakkan Visi Bernegara Pancasila dari Ancaman Radikalisme*” on October 4, 2018 at Widya Mandala Catholic University, Surabaya.

<sup>49</sup>Alma'arif, “Islam Nusantara: Studi Epistemologis dan Kritis,” *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 15, no.2 (2015): 277, 265-291.

<sup>50</sup>Geertz, *Agama Jawa*, 3.

<sup>51</sup>Sutiyono, *Benturan Budaya Islam*, 6.



the village slametan still very strong and often carried out when to organize an event, even on slametan in commemoration of the 1st *Suro* they come together from different social background and different beliefs.

Process and slametan form in Ngaringan village has resemble characteristics with slametan in other areas. but the difference is hajad of each host and the various regions in general. Hajad usually delivered by the leader or host of slametan early slametan activities take place. Besides hajad, forms term in each region still have differences, but these differences are still easily recognizable because the terms used are still within the scope of the Java language term which generally be main language of the Java community, especially in Ngaringan village.

Java community thought that slametan held in effort to achieve *slamet*, peace and harmony each others. Therefore, they assume that slametan is a moment for them to give charity to others so hajad he hoped could be realized.

Although the fact slametan has existed since Islam has not spread in Java, slametan in Ngaringan village is not a tradition which owned by certain culture, Islam or Java, but the people in the village explain slametan as a syncretism pattern tradition or a mixture between Islamic tradition and Javanese culture which together provide the role in slametan concept. It's makes slametan tradition is still strong carried out by them.

Several characteristic in slametan tradition has relevance in Islam Nusantara concept which underway currently and developed in Islamic tradition in Indonesia. Slametan role totally not contrary with doctrine of Islam, even slametan can create universal Islamic patterns and can be appreciated by some peoples. This was evidenced by the participation of some non-Muslim groups in slametan 1 *Suro* in Ngaringan village.

Further research expected to be a study of slametan more specifically again according to the type slametan developed in the community. This is important because more specifically studies will generate new findings which can support the development study of Islamic traditions and culture of Java, especially related with slametan tradition.

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