

Rituals on Archaeological Site in Leran, Gresik, Indonesia

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Abstract. Leran village has archaeological remains (tombs, menhir, stone mortar, dakon stones, mosques) that are scattered in several places. One of them is the oldest Islamic tomb in Indonesia, namely Fatimah binti Maemun 1802 A.D. These relics are until now visited by many people to hold religious rituals. This paper examines fundamental changes in pilgrimage ritual patterns, pilgrim activities and variable meanings established in religious rituals at archaeological sites. The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach. The results showed changes in the implementation of religious rituals at archaeological sites in Leran that influenced the community's view of the existence of these archaeological sites.

Keywords: ritual; archaeological site; pilgrimage

1 Introduction

Leran is one of the villages in Gresik Regency that plays an important role in the development of Indonesian cultural history. Leran is estimated to be the location of the spread of Islam in the archipelago since the 11th century with the discovery of the tomb of Fatimah binti Maemun who died on 7 Rajab 475 H or November 25, 1082. Other archaeological evidence in Leran is menhir, stone mortar, *dakon* stone, mosques, tombs of *panjang*, Chinese tombs, ceramic fragments, pottery fragments, beads, nutmeg shells, nutmeg, and deer antler pieces. This information is strong evidence of a crowded settlement in Leran [1], even being a crowded port since the XI century before being moved to Gresik in the XIV century due to the silting of the coast [2]. The current location of Leran is about 8 km from the city of Gresik and 15 km from the north coast. Archaeological remains in Leran that are still visited by the community, among others; the tomb of Fatimah Binti Maemun, the tomb of Panjang, the tomb of Maulana Malik Ibrahim's disciple, and Maulana Malik Ibrahim Mosque. Pilgrimage is an ancient practice and continues to grow among the wider community [3] in all religions [4]. Pilgrimage initially emphasized motivation on issues of spirituality that were sacral and *ukhrowi* [5], but later developed into a kind of profane tourism. Pilgrimage tourism is no longer only seen from the spiritual side, but also a place to increase prestige and increase regional income. This condition makes the government participate in preserving and maintaining archaeological sites that still function as pilgrimage tourism sites [6]. The establishment of pilgrimage tourism has resulted in more and more people coming to visit archaeological sites, especially the tombs of religious broadcasting figures. The concept of Muslim pilgrimage in Indonesia in general is a pilgrimage

that attends sites related to death, disaster, or *wingit* locations [5], which is termed as dark pilgrimage in pilgrimage studies [7].



Figure 1. Map of Leran,

Archaeological remains in the village of Leran can be classified as living monuments and dead monuments. Archaeological remains that are still used in religious ritual activities in the form of tombs (Fatimah binti Maemun, tomb of *panjang*, tomb of Maulana Malik Ibrahim disciple) and Maulana Malik Ibrahim mosques. Tombs in Indonesian Islamic culture is interpreted as *pasarean/sarean* or *astana* [8]. *Pasarean/sarean* means long bed, the deceased/buried person undergoes a long sleep. *Astana* is defined as *kasunyatan* (place of tranquility). Archaeological remains that are no longer used in Leran are generally in the form of remains that are not intact and detached from context, such as menhir, *dakon* stone, mortar stone, ceramic fragments, and pottery fragments. The existence of archaeological remains can be explained in two main contexts, namely the system context and the archaeological context [9]. System context is a collection of objects (artifacts, eco facts, and features) that occur in a system of community behavior. An archaeological context is a collection of objects that no longer play a role in a system of community behavior [10], [11]. Archaeological remains in Leran that include the context of the system include tombs and mosques, while remains in an archaeological context are menhir, mortar stones, *dakon* stones, ceramic fragments, and pottery fragments.

2 Methods

This study looks at the basic shifts in pilgrimage ritual practices, pilgrim activities, and the varying interpretations given to archeological sites. This study employs a case study approach in qualitative descriptive research methodology. The phases of research are gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. Field observation, interviews, and a review of the literature were used to gather data. Field observation was conducted by direct observation at the research site, interviews were conducted with the community in Leran village, and literature Studies are carried out by searching for data related to research problems in libraries. To comprehend the level of knowledge, important discoveries, ideas, and advancements regarding religion-based phenomena, particularly in the Indonesian context, a survey of the literature was also done. To obtain a more complete research image, the content analysis method is used. The results of further data analysis are interpreted to draw conclusions.

3 Discussion

Archaeological sites are not just sites of relics of past human cultures but can be sacred sites that become unifying symbols for a region and country [12], and the identity of regional or state identity [13], [14]. This sacral function is a major factor that plays a role in social life or society as a whole [15] but will increasingly shift to become less sacred when the current of modernization becomes more urgent [16]. Archaeological sites that are still functioning sacral are known as living monuments and are still used in certain rituals by the community or a group of people. Rituals connect and unite each member and provide a tempestuous feeling of totality [17] that sets one's course in the cosmos and gives creative meaning [18]. Islamic archaeological sites in Leran (tombs and mosques) are still crowded with people and used in certain rituals (pilgrimages, *khaul*, and religious events). Ritual performers are not only from the surrounding community but come from various regions in the archipelago. These rituals attest to the existence of a sufistic tradition in Islamic teachings that developed [19]. The journey of Islamic teachings from Arabia to Java went through a long road and was influenced by Sufi teachings from various regions that matched the thought and religiosity of the Javanese [20]. The success of Islamization in Java is not only in terms of religious worship but penetrates its socio-cultural life. This is due to the cultural and socio-political acculturation that is going well, thus paving the way for Islam to be more widely accepted by Javanese society as the main religion [21]. This cultural acculturation can be seen in archaeological remains that can still be seen today.

Archaeological remains not only function as artifacts but also function as *ideo-facts*, namely archaeological remains which in the context of their function as part of the ideology of the social system related to religious and supernatural things. The use of rituals indicates the existence of a syncretism of indigenous beliefs, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam in Leran society. Syncretism refers to the fusion and mixing resulting from cultural contact of different nationalities and religions. Syncretism is the localization of foreign cultures [20], where the foreign culture needs to find local cultural roots so that it can live and develop [22]. Localization that occurs not only in the form of rituals (non-physical), but also in material aspects (physical), such as the form of Islamic tombs in Leran.

Archaeological remains that still play an active role show that these archaeological remains are in the context of the system [10], [11]. Especially the Tomb of Fatimah binti Maemun is not only a ritual activity in the form of a pilgrimage but developed into rituals and ceremonial events involving many people, such as haul, grand recitation, *khataman* of the Qur'an, and commemoration of Islamic holidays. The rituals carried out are pre-Islamic traditions combined with Islamic religious teachings. The ritual essentially gives thanks and asks for salvation to Allah SWT which in pre-Islamic tradition is known as *slametan*. *Slametan* is not only in search of a better life, but rather a maintenance of cultural order and restrictions [20]. Archaeological remains that are no longer used are included in the context of archaeology. Remains that fall into this category often become damaged, lost, and extinct.

Muslims from Java travel for a variety of reasons, including seeking enlightenment, mystical abilities, divine favor, and even spiritual ways to become wealthy [23]–[25]. The holy tomb houses a wide range of pilgrims, from those who abide by the rules of Islamic law, to those who practice mystical practices [24]. The pilgrimage has a compelling narrative that connects the present with the past, provides purpose, and involves a series of ceremonies during the pilgrimage to signify the beginning and end of the pilgrimage [26]. A person can undergo transformation through pilgrimage by being able to "see" another, unreachable reality. Before the trek, pilgrims may have unimagined notions, perceive the world in new and unusual ways, or even have life-altering experiences that leave them with unanticipated insights. This

paradigm shift occurs by experience, and not by argument [27]. A pilgrimage is not the same as a religious vacation. Religious tourism does not have the same elements of a pilgrimage, which include faith, penance, fellowship, sacred space, rituals, votive offerings, celebrations, and endurance [28]. Religious tourism begins the minute a person travels due to doubts about their faith. All religions are covered by religious tourism [29]. Religious tourism may aim to carry out religious affairs or pilgrimages, or simply visit other tourist attractions or other religious places [30]. The benefits of the presence of sacred places, religious rituals, customs, convenience offices, shopping openings, visitor attractions, and accomplishing peace of intellect and otherworldly existence make it more alluring in religious tourism [31]. Religious tourism centers on going to devout locales or goals to solidify certain convictions, and the advancement of personalities that allude to otherworldly or devout illumination [30].

One of the activities that is routinely carried out at the Fatimah binti Maemun Grave Site is the *haul* (death celebration) of Fatimah binti Maemun. *Haul* comes from the Arabic "*haul*" which means "year", what is meant by the celebration of *haul* is the event of commemorating the anniversary of death [32]. *Haul* has become a phenomenon that influences religious expression in Indonesian Muslim society [33] and commemorate the birth of religion and the religious spirit through religious celebrations [34]. The tradition of *haul* seems to be a must for Indonesian Muslims in commemorating the death of a cleric who inspired many people's lives, especially in terms of religion [32]. *Haul* celebrations are relatively new, although they have become increasingly prominent. The first *haul* celebration in Java occurred in the late 19th century or early 20th century ritual originating in Hadhramaut, part of present-day Yemen [35]. *Haul* is different from the grave pilgrimage, *haul* is more of a tradition reflective of history, those who perform *haul* try to bring back a deceased figure with various struggles that can inspire them [32]. The *haul* ceremony in Javanese society has cultural and religious values because there is a combination of local cultural and religious elements [36]. Another archaeological relic used in rituals is the tomb of Maulana's disciple Malik Ibrahim. The tomb is visited by pilgrims on certain days to pray and seek blessings (*ngalap barokah*). The rituals held at the tomb of Maulana Malik Ibrahim's disciples are generally carried out by individuals or small groups simply, in contrast to those carried out at the tomb of Fatimah binti Maemun.

The community's interpretation of archaeological remains in Leran has a "distortion" from the meaning of the past. Cultural change is a change in the concept, form, function and nature of culture that adapts to many aspects of life, including art, science and technology, organizational life and philosophy [37]. The meaning of archaeological finds to society can be long-lasting or changeable, depending on the region and locality. These changes not only occur in archaeological remains that are no longer used (dead monuments), but also to archaeological remains that are still used (living monuments). The meaning that changes from dead monuments is for example the meaning of phalluses to ship mooring stones. The changed meaning of the living monument is Fatimah binti Maemun as a successful Islamic broadcaster in Java, so that his tomb is crowded and religious rituals are often held.

4 Conclusion

The existence of varied archaeological remains proves the existence of various communities that have existed since the past in Leran. The existence of Leran in the archipelago civilization can be proven by its function as one of the ports that became the main gateway in northern Java. The number of Islamic archaeological remains that are still used (living

monuments) form the identity of the surrounding community as an Islamic community that combines local culture with Islamic values. Archaeological remains in Leran are included in the context of the system in the form of the tomb of Fatimah bint Maemun, the tomb of Panjang, the tomb of Maulana Malik Ibrahim's followers, and Maulana Malik Ibrahim's mosque while other archaeological remains are included in the context of archaeology. Religious ritual activities at archaeological sites confirm the existence of Sufistic Islamic practices characterized by respect for teachers (both living and deceased), recitation of *shalawat*, and the tradition of recitation of tahlil (*tahlilan*). The implementation of religious rituals in archaeological sites has developed, not just a pilgrimage, but has developed into a large activity that is routinely held periodically. The change affected the community's view of the role of the figures buried in these sites.

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