

Views of Islamic Organizations on the Tradition of Not Slaughtering Cows in Kudus

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how the views of the two largest Islamic organizations in Kudus, NU, and Muhammadiyah, on the tradition of not slaughtering cows in Kudus. The background of this research is marked by the tradition of not slaughtering cows in Kudus which has existed since the time of Sunan Kudus. This type of research is qualitative research with a descriptive qualitative approach. Primary data were obtained through interviews with PCNU and PDM Kudus administrators. The results showed that the two organizations saw this tradition as a form of tolerance taught by Sunan Kudus long ago. However, regarding the preservation of this tradition, these two organizations have differences of opinion. Regarding this tradition, the NU's representative said that they prioritize morals, in this case, tolerance, compared to fiqh which is mostly *khilafiyah* also in this tradition, there is a value of tolerance that should be known and upheld, especially by the Kudus community. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah itself said that this tradition concerns Tadayyun and they think that the current situation of the Da'wah map is different.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic law is a set of rules that are determined directly and firmly by Allah or determined in principle to regulate the relationship between humans and their God, humans and each other, and humans and the universe. Islam is something that cannot be changed because it is a revelation from Allah that will continue to apply (Wirdyaningsih, 2017). Aside from being a social control (regulator of community life), the law also functions as social engineering (former of society). In terms of its flexibility, Islamic law is not something static, but something that can keep up with the times and the development of the minds of its adherents. This can be seen by the many *ijtihad* of the scholars to answer the times (Huda, Yusriyadi, Thohir, Miftahuddin, & Iqdami, 2022; Irfan, 2017).

Islam, which is a universal religion and regulates all aspects of the life of its adherents, has led to the birth of many Islamic organizations. Among them are SI (*Syarika Islam*) which focuses on politics, Muhammadiyah which is engaged in preaching and social religion, and Nahdlatul Ulama which is known for its tolerance of Indonesian traditions (Niam, 2019; Rohmah, 2016). These two largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia have a great influence on society, this is evidenced by their policies that affect the condition of Indonesian Muslims. In determining policies, these two Islamic organizations have differences, one of which is because NU tends to follow the Syafi'i School but recognizes three other schools, namely the Hanafi School, the Maliki School, and the Hambali School, while Muhammadiyah does not (Zamroni & Tsalatsa, 2021). Mubarak Jaih in Kasim H said, "*Islamic mass organizations such as Muhammadiyah and (NU), as well as several other Islamic mass organizations, have institutions whose job is to explore and recommend organizational opinions (even attitudes) towards (legal) problems that occur in society* (Kasim, 2016)."

In Indonesia, there are several institutions that represent the implementation of Islamic law, including the MUI which resolves religious issues with fatwas, the KUA which records marriages and endowments, and the Religious Courts which handles Muslim family law (*al-akhwal al-syakhsiiyyat*) (Cahyani, 2019; Islamy, 2021; M.A, 2022). Qur'an Surat At- Taubah verse 122 explains that there are two groups within every ummah regarding the task of understanding religious teachings and their experiences. First, a small part of a people whose job is to study religion and have the duty to convey it. Second, namely, the largest group of these people are those who do not participate in deepening religion, because of that, they need teaching from the first group which is called the mujtahid. This second group is called the "layman" group who are encouraged to ask people who understand more about religion. This is as stated by Allah in QS an-Nahl: 42 which means "*And We did not send before you, except men whom We gave revelation to them; So ask people who have knowledge, if you know.*" From here, the author means that the mujtahid group is one of the groups that understand and study religion, of which Islamic mass organizations are part of them. Meanwhile, the second group is ordinary people who lack knowledge religion than the first group (Sumbulah, 2012).

Asking for opinions from people who understand religion more is not only about procedures for worship but can also ask about the customs of the people who existed before the arrival of Islam to Indonesia but whose laws in Islam are still questionable (Madkan & Mumtahana, 2022). This applies to traditions that exist in Indonesia. Indonesia, which is rich in ethnic groups, has many traditions that generally have existed since ancient times. But the problem is that there are many traditions in Indonesia that were born before Islam came and we don't know what the laws are in Islam, therefore the role of the *ulema* (*people who understand religion*) is important to tell whether a tradition is contrary to Islamic law or not (Ferdian, Rusman, & Asrori, 2022; Maziyah & Amaruli, 2020; Rusmal, Widjajanti, & Sulisty, 2021).

Based on the historical context of Islamic culture in Java, Islam came to Java at a time when non-Islamic cultures and traditions, especially Hinduism and Buddhism, were deeply rooted in Javanese

society. It can be said that Javanese Islam has a unique character and religious expression. This is because the spread of Islam in Java is more dominant in the form of acculturation, both absorbing and dialogical.

Anita said, based on the findings of Islamic archaeological evidence in coastal and inland areas, it shows that what is described as culture is mostly the result of Islamic culture which grew and developed at the same time as its heyday until the decline of the Majapahit Kingdom and the growth of Demak as the first Islamic Sultanate. in Java. In the spread of Islam in Java, Walisongo (9 saints) have a very important role. Each of the nine saints spread Islam to several areas in Java in different ways. One such guardian is Sunan Kudus. Sunan Kudus is one of the wali songo who acts as a pioneer in the establishment of the Kudus Regency. Sunan Kudus, whose real name is Sheikh Ja'far Shodiq, is one of the figures who played a very important role in the spread of Islam in the Kudus area.

Like the other walisongo, Sunan Kudus has a very wise way of preaching. Among other things, he was able to adapt and indigenize Islamic teachings in a society that already has an established culture with the majority being Hindus and Buddhists (Muhajarah, Cahyaningrum, Tanjung, Kamaliah, & Norannabiela, 2022). The mixing of Hindu and Buddhist cultures in the da'wah is carried out by Sunan Kudus, one of which can be seen in the Menara Kudus mosque. This mosque was founded in 956 H or 1549 AD. This can be seen from the inscription (inscription) on a stone that is 30 cm wide and 46 cm long which is located on the mosque's mihrab which is written in Arabic (Sanusi, 2022). Another example of Sunan Kudus's preaching is by forbidding the Kudus people from slaughtering cows. One day, Sunan Kudus tied a cow in the courtyard of the Menara mosque. This also caught the attention of Hindus in Kudus. "After the Hindus came to the courtyard of the mosque, Sunan Kudus said happy greetings and welcome and then gave lectures, preached, and dialogued with each other" (Sri Indrahti in his book *Kudus and Islam: Local Cultural Values and the Pilgrimage Tourism Industry*, quoted from liputan6.com). At that time Sunan Kudus announced to all residents of Kudus not to slaughter and eat beef, even though this is not forbidden by Islam. The goal, according to Sri, is to honor Hindus who consider cows to be sacred animals. "With such a method, eventually most of the adherents of Hinduism became sympathetic to Sunan Kudus and were willing to convert to Islam," According to another source, the origin of Sunan Kudus forbidding the slaughter of cows was that Sunan Kudus, when he was thirsty, was helped by a Hindu priest by giving him milk. cow. So as gratitude, Sunan Kudus at that time forbade slaughtering cows whereas, in Hinduism, cows are venerable animals.

As a tradition that has existed for a long time, the tradition of slaughtering cows still exists today. The tradition, which was originally aimed at respecting the Hindu community in Kudus at that time, is now still sustainable even though the majority of the Kudus people are already Muslim. Until now there is no argument that prohibits it, but people who lay in religion need to know what the law preserves in Islam. In this case, the researcher wants to know the opinion of the two largest Islamic mass organizations in Kudus, both in terms of the number of followers and in terms of their influence on the general public. The aim of the researcher to carry out a field study regarding the views of Islamic organizations towards this tradition is to find out how the two Islamic organizations view this tradition and find out how they justify this view from the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence.

2. METHODS

This research uses qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research seeks to understand and interpret the meaning of an interaction event of human behavior in certain situations based on the researcher's own perspective. Research using qualitative methods aims to understand the object under study in depth (Creswell, 2012). A qualitative descriptive approach is a research approach that seeks to describe and interpret conditions or relationships that exist, opinions

that are growing, processes that are ongoing, and consequences that are occurring or trends that are developing (Arikunto, 2006).

Data collection is done through several methods or known as data collection techniques. In qualitative research, the data can be obtained by means of interviews, observation, and documentation. The interview is a question and answer regarding the object of research by asking several interviewees questions appropriate to the problem being researched. The interviews in this study were conducted by involving the PCNU Kudus management, PDM Kudus and Public Relations staff of the Menara Mosque Foundation, and the Tomb of Sunan Kudus as resource persons. Observations were made by looking directly at the object of research and systematically recording all the data obtained. Observations were made to match the data obtained through interviews with the actual situation, in order to obtain more reliable and accurate data. Documentation is done by collecting data in the form of physical evidence (writing or pictures).

Data validity is carried out to ensure the accuracy and credibility of research data. For this reason, researchers used data triangulation techniques. Triangulation is a way of obtaining truly valid data using a multiple-method approach. Triangulation is a technique for checking the validity of data by utilizing other things outside the data itself, either for checking purposes or as a comparison of the data. There are several types of data triangulation, namely source triangulation, time triangulation, theoretical triangulation, researcher triangulation, and method triangulation. The triangulation used by researchers is source triangulation, namely by comparing and re-checking the degree of trust in information obtained from different sources. For example, by comparing the results of observations with interviews; compare between what is said in general with what is said privately, and compare the results of interviews with existing documents. Data cross-checking was carried out by comparing data obtained from interviews with PCNU Kudus administrators, PDM Kudus administrators, Public Relations staff of the Menara Mosque Foundation and the Tomb of Sunan Kudus with data from articles, journals, and other literature.

In qualitative research, categorization, conceptualization, and description are developed on the basis of "events" encountered during fieldwork. Therefore, it is impossible to separate the activities of collecting and analyzing data from one another. Noeng Muhadjir in Rijali (2018: 84) suggests the notion of data analysis as "an effort to systematically search for and organize records of observations, interviews, and others to increase the researcher's understanding of the cases studied and present them as findings to others. Meanwhile, to increase this understanding, the analysis needs to be continued by trying to find meaning (Lincoln & Denzin, 2005). Based on this understanding, there are several implicit things that need to be underlined, namely, (a) data search efforts are a field process with various pre-field preparations, (b) systematically organize findings in the field, (c) present findings in the field, (d) search for meaning that is carried out continuously until there is no other meaning that can turn it away, here it is necessary to increase understanding of events or cases that occur for researchers.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Research Overview

The tradition of not slaughtering cows is a tradition that has existed since Sunan Kudus preached Islam in Kudus. In spreading Islam, Sunan Kudus and other propagators of Islam set an example first. When people are interested, then they provide materials on Islamic teachings.

When Sunan Kudus spread Islam, he made more cultural approaches. One of the methods of spreading Islam Sunan Kudus is not slaughtering cows. Because at that time the majority of the local Kudus community were Hindus, in which cows in Hinduism have venerated animals and there were several sects of Hindu society who made cows their worship. In their teachings, the cow is a god's ride,

a noble animal. In order to attract the sympathy of the Hindu community to embrace Islam, finally Sunan Kudus did not slaughter a cow and at the time of sacrifice replaced the cow with a buffalo. Sunan Kudus did not prohibit the Kudus people from slaughtering cows, but gave an example for the people not to slaughter cows to respect the local people of Kudus at that time (Putra, 2019).

Mr. Denny as the public relations staff of the Menara Kudus Mosque Foundation and the Tomb of Sunan Kudus said that until now, in the area of the Menara Kudus Mosque at the time of sacrifice or iftar, they do not slaughter cows, but slaughter buffaloes as Sunan Kudus did. At that time, actually, Sunan Kudus did not prohibit it, he only gave an example for the community not to slaughter cows to respect the local people of Kudus at that time. Regarding the Kudus people who have slaughtered cows, Mr. Denny dares to say that those who slaughter cows in the Kudus area are mostly not native Kudus, but migrants who have lived in Kudus for several generations, whereas according to him the original Kudus people still adhere to what was done by Sunan Kudus at that time.

The tradition of not slaughtering a cow can actually be seen as more than just an ordinary tradition, because there is value in it that can be taken. One of the lessons behind this tradition is tolerance taught by Sunan Kudus. Apart from the value of tolerance, this tradition has also given rise to culinary trademarks in Kudus, namely food made from buffalo, such as buffalo soup, buffalo satay, pindang, and others.

3.2 NU Views The Tradition of Not Slaughtering Cows in Kudus

NU according to Wari is a *jam'iyah Diniyyah islamiyah* (Islamic religious organization) and *ijtima'iyah* (association) which is a forum for scholars and their followers which was established based on social awareness on 16 Rajab 1344 H which coincides with 31 January 1926. The organization has aim is to maintain, preserve, and practice Islamic teachings in accordance with the teachings of Ahlussunnah wal jama'ah in order to create the benefit society and the advancement of human dignity (Aizid, 2015).

In the Holy City itself, the Nahdlatul Ulama organization was brought directly by Kiai Haji Raden Asnawi who is a scholar of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja). His closeness to NU itself was none other than because he was a teacher of NU pioneers, namely Hadratusyekh KH Hasyim Asy'ari and KH Abdul Wahab Hasbullah, namely the founders and activists of NU.

Mr. Nur Said Chair of LAKPESDAM NU Kudus and a lecturer at IAIN Kudus as the NU representative we were able to interview, gave his opinion on this tradition. He argues that with this tradition, the Kudus city can become an example for Indonesia and even the world regarding tolerance between religious communities and is a form of preserving the values of the friendly da'wah strategy developed by Kanjeng Sunan Kudus. He also added his views on how smart Sunan Kudus's strategy was in preaching in an area where the majority of the people were Hindu.

"In India, the majority are Hindus, but Indian Hindus are different from Balinese Hindus. They really sanctify cows and are very militant. Cows are glorified because they are considered as one of the vehicles of the gods. So that anything related to cows is considered sacred, even its droppings. There, even if there are cows in the middle of the road, they are willing to beat them. That is Kanjeng Sunan Kudus' intelligence when preaching. He understands the culture first. So, if you already understand the culture, conveying Islam becomes easier because you already know what the cultural conditions of society are like. Because of Sunan Kudus' intelligence in capturing the cultural construction of Hindu society, that's why Islam easily entered Kudus and its surroundings."

Islam is a value system that must be accommodated so that the face of Islam becomes friendly. One of the containers is the culture in which Islam was developed. In the Holy City itself, at that time the culture that stood out was Hinduism, in which cows were sacred in that religion. So that Hindus actually sympathize with Islamic teachings because until now the people of Kudus are still trying to

preserve the tradition of not slaughtering cows, instead of slaughtering buffalo instead. This is a distinct characteristic in Kudus, where many of the city's culinary specialties are made from buffalo, for example, buffalo soto and buffalo pindang. This is actually a cultural continuity from Sunan Kudus's da'wah strategy.

Regarding NU's view of this tradition in Islamic fiqh, Mr. Nur Said is of the opinion that in fiqh, slaughtering a cow or buffalo is not a problem, both animals are halal to be slaughtered. However, from a cultural point of view, we must understand the sociology of the society in which we live. Institutionally, the PCNU itself has not yet given its views, but Mr. Nur Said as part of NU and chairman of LAKPESDAM often writes about the tradition of slaughtering buffalo and none of the NU officials rejects these writings, which means that NU has the same vision as Mr Nur Said.

Islam that has been passed down to the Ahlus Sunnah wal jama'ah community is historical Islam, namely Islam which has a clear history and sanad starting from the Messenger of Allah, companions, tabi'in, auliya', guardians and kyai. Thus, the things that the saints do when delivering their da'wah, such as in Kudus which does not slaughter a cow during Eid al-Adha, are actually examples of things that make the saints a model in their da'wah strategy. That is, in preaching the saints must first understand the cultural side where the da'wah was developed. Because at that time what was developing in Kudus was the Hindu tradition, local culture did not have to be eliminated because the most important thing was the content of that culture. For example, local traditions are likened to a vessel for preaching. The container may vary, the most important does not conflict with Islamic beliefs, but is filled with monotheism and Islamic values.

Even though until now the majority of the Kudus people are Muslim, this tradition still needs to be preserved because this tradition of not slaughtering cows is a medium for learning for the next generation that Sunan Kudus's da'wah at that time was very friendly. Regarding people who no longer carry out this tradition, Mr. Nur Said argues:

"If there are people who feel there is no need to preserve this tradition anymore because the majority of the Kudus people are already Muslim, it means they are thinking in the short term. Beef is indeed cheaper, but if people only think about the economy, it means they think materialistically. Meanwhile, our spiritualism and materialism must be balanced. Because basically, the main nature of humans is their spiritual aspect, so these values must be developed. Thus, the tradition of not slaughtering cows in Kudus needs to be maintained by the next generation as a medium for character education, especially character education in an effort to develop a character of tolerance, tepo sliro, mutual respect and mutual respect for people of other religions. This needs to be conveyed to the world."

Important value from this tradition of not slaughtering cows, namely value Behind this tradition there is a message that most people rarely realize. Actually, in a bowl of buffalo soup there is tolerance, behind a plate of boiled buffalo or buffalo satay there is a tolerance value.

Regarding sharia issues, Mr. Nur Said said that *"Slaughtering a cow is not a problem, but we live not only using fiqh. Islam was revealed " لَأْتِمَمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ "* which means we were sent to perfect morals. So if the consideration is slaughtering a cow there is no problem, that is a fiqh consideration, but if the tolerance consideration is moral. So, prioritize morals over fiqh, because fiqh has many *khilafiyah*, but morality is universal. So, do you want to prioritize fiqh or morals? " Mr. Nur Said himself said that he prioritized morals. In closing, Mr. Nur Said said that village clerics should convey the values of tolerance taught by Sunan Kudus, if necessary, include this in the local curriculum. *"It seems that this tradition is local, but its value is universal,"* he said.

Until now, the majority of the Kudus people still slaughter buffaloes for the reason of respecting and carrying out the teachings of Sunan Kudus, even if someone has slaughtered a cow, it is only casual and most likely immigrants.

3.3 Views of Muhammadiyah The Tradition of Not Slaughtering Cows in Kudus

Mr. Noor Muslikhan as vice chairman of PDM Kudus is a Muhammadiyah representative who gave his opinion regarding this tradition. He is of the opinion that the tradition of not slaughtering cows in Kudus is Tadayyun (diversity) which shows tolerance in living side by side with other people who have different understandings or beliefs. They saw Sunan Kudus's message or suggestion as a fatwa as a cleric' or preacher in the midst of the Kudus community, who at that time were predominantly Hindu by not insulting their worship. This is as contained in QS Al-An'am verse 108

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلُهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Meaning: *And do not curse those they worship besides Allah, because they will later curse Allah by transgressing without knowledge. Thus We make every nation consider good their work. Then to their Lord, they will return, and He will tell them what they used to do.*

Apart from that, Muhammadiyah believes that this tradition may be preserved as long as there is no argument against it. They have great respect for the Ulama' inheritors of the Prophets, in this case, Ijtihad Da'wah Sunan Kudus with his Fatwa. However, because this concerns *Tadayyun's* affairs, some may think that the current missionary map situation is different. Regarding the people who still carry out this tradition, Mr. Noor Muslikhan said: *"We appreciate those who still carry out this tradition as a symbol of religious harmony in Kudus without insulting each other's understanding or followers of various religions."*

4. CONCLUSION

The tradition of slaughtering a cow is still preserved by the majority of the people of Kudus City. This is because the Kudus people still adhere to what was conveyed by Sunan Kudus and still follow Sunan Kudus himself. Apart from that, what is interesting and very important is that this tradition is an example of tolerance which can be used as an example for other cities and countries in dealing with diversity, especially religious diversity.

Regarding the views of the two Islamic organizations in Kudus, namely NU and Muhammadiyah, they have different opinions regarding the preservation of this tradition. NU feels the importance of preserving this tradition for several reasons, the first is based on the hadith of the prophet *إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ* which means "Indeed I was sent to perfect good morals." According to the NU, slaughtering a cow is not a problem in fiqh science, but if tolerance is considered, it is moral. So that the NU side adheres to prioritizing morality over fiqh, because according to them, fiqh is more *khilafiyah*, but morality is universal. Apart from that, they also argue that behind this tradition there is a message of tolerance that should be maintained by the people of Kudus so that it can become an example for other urban communities or even other countries.

Furthermore, Muhammadiyah's view regarding this tradition is that they respect the ulama', which in this case is the ijtihad of Sunan Kudus's da'wah, but they argue that this concerns Tadayyun and they consider that the current map of da'wah is different.

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