



# NYADRAN TRADITION IN PULOKULON GROBOGAN: A FORM OF CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND STRENGTHENING LOCAL IDENTITY

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## Abstract:

*The Nyadran tradition in Pulokulon, Grobogan is a religious ritual that has been passed down from generation to generation and serves to preserve culture and strengthen local identity. In this tradition, the community performs a series of activities such as cleaning ancestral graves, sowing flowers, and praying together, which reflects the value of mutual cooperation and togetherness. This research aims to describe the implementation of the tradition and understand the cultural values contained in it. By preserving Nyadran, the younger generation is expected to appreciate cultural heritage and strengthen local identity in the midst of changing times.*

**Keywords:** Local Identity, Cultural Preservation, Nyadran Tradition

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelago that stretches from Sabang to Merauke, separated by straits and oceans. The diversity of these islands makes Indonesia rich, both in natural resources and cultural heritage. Each region has a unique cultural heritage. With the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, Indonesia has many ethnic groups such as Javanese, Batak and Dayak, each of which carries out traditions according to their beliefs and environment. For example, Javanese people associate important events with certain rituals, such as at birth, marriage and death. This tradition is an important part of preserving the nation's culture and identity (Mikaresti & Mansyur, 2022; Aryanti & Al Masjid, 2023; Alfaris, 2024). One tradition that is still often practiced today is the Nyadran tradition. The Nyadran tradition is a religious ritual that has been passed down from generation to generation and is still carried out today. This ritual arises as part of the dynamics of social relations, where there are changes in attitudes, approaches, and behavior of the community in accordance with common expectations. This tradition also serves to show philosophical meaning and moral values that bind relationships between individuals, and contains deep emotional elements (Jati & Mustopo Jati, 2022; Abidin *et al.*, 2023; Tathmainnul *et al.*, 2024).

This tradition is known through various traditional ceremonies that follow rules based on custom, religion or belief. In Indonesia, traditional ceremonies are still held to honor ancestors, usually on holidays and led by certain figures. In its implementation, this tradition always involves mutual cooperation, or *sambatan* in Javanese terms. *Sambatan*, whose origin means "Complaining," has evolved to mean helping each other, especially during calamities or house construction.



Nyadran is also synonymous with rituals and offerings, called ubarampe in Javanese culture (Baihaqi & Munshihah, 2022; Rosydiana, 2023; Alfaris & Supriyanto, 2024).

The Nyadran tradition in Pulokulon, Grobogan, as in many other areas in Java, includes cleaning the graves of ancestors, sowing flowers (Nyekar), and holding a feast or prayer together at the grave. The aim of this tradition is to pray for the ancestors, strengthen relationships between residents, and maintain the value of mutual cooperation in community life (Rahmawati & Aliyah, 2022; Musyhafiul Akhbab *et al.*, 2023; Husna, 2024). The sadranan tradition is actually quite simple, starting with cleaning the ancestors' graves, sowing flowers, then praying together, and ending with tahlilan. Every Ruwah month, especially on Friday night, tahlilan is held, which is filled with prayers for the spirits. Before the tahlilan begins, the sadranan leader gives a speech in Javanese, inviting gratitude for God's blessings, asking forgiveness for the spirits, and protection from the torment of the grave and hell. Prayers are also offered for health, safety, and sufficient sustenance (Fatoni, 2022; Prayoga & Wildan, 2023; Alfaris, 2024).

This tradition not only strengthens social relations and the spirit of mutual cooperation, but also becomes a tangible manifestation of efforts to preserve culture as a form of local identity in order to remain alive in the community. The preservation of the Nyadran tradition is important as part of an effort to maintain the nation's cultural identity. The acculturation carried out by the guardians shows that local traditions can be maintained by adjusting new values without eliminating their cultural roots. By continuing to preserve Nyadran, the current generation not only appreciates the history and heritage of the ancestors, but also strengthens the nation's identity in the face of changing times (Erawanto, 2022; Alfaris *et al.*, 2023; Nugroho, 2024).

This research formulates the problem of how the implementation and meaning of the Nyadran tradition in Pulokulon Grobogan as a form of cultural preservation and strengthening of local identity. The aim is to describe the course of the tradition and understand the cultural values contained therein. This research is useful for enriching the study of traditional cultural preservation and increasing public awareness, especially the younger generation, of the importance of maintaining cultural heritage.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is a qualitative research with a literature study approach. The data collection technique in this study was carried out by analyzing various information related to the implementation of the Nyadran tradition in Pulokulon Grobogan, as well as its influence on cultural preservation and strengthening of local identity. Data were collected from various literature sources, such as books, journal articles, and related research (Shi *et al.*, 2023). Data analysis refers to Miles and Huberman's theory, which includes three main stages: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data condensation involves selecting and simplifying information relevant to the research focus. Data presentation is done by organizing information so that it is easy to

understand. The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification (Rockmann & Vough, 2024), which ensures that the research results have a solid foundation and are relevant to the goals of cultural preservation and strengthening local identity.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The Nyadran tradition in Javanese society has existed since the Hindu-Buddhist era and aims to pray for the ancestors who have died. The term Nyadran comes from the Sanskrit word "Sraddha" which means belief in ancestors, which later developed into grave pilgrimage and salvation by giving offerings in the month of Ruwah. This tradition is thought to have originated in the Majapahit kingdom around 1284, and was first carried out by Ratu Tribuana Tungga Dewi to pray for her mother, Ratu Gayatri, and other ancestors. After that, the tradition was continued by King Hayam Wuruk. During his reign, the Sraddha tradition was performed in honor of Ratu Gayatri and lasted for one week with various dishes. After the teachings of Islam entered Indonesia, Wali Songo performed cultural acculturation by replacing the rituals of offerings and worship of ancestral spirits with prayers, tahlil, and reading verses of the Qur'an, so that the Nyadran tradition continued but with Islamic values. This tradition continues to be preserved by the Javanese community and is considered as local wisdom, which is passed down from generation to generation even though the times have evolved.

Nyadran tradition is a cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation, so it can be categorized as folklore. Folklore is part of a collective culture that is traditionally passed down through oral means, examples with gestures, or aids to memory. Classifies folklore in three categories: oral folklore, partially oral folklore, and non-oral folklore. Oral folklore includes purely oral forms, such as traditional expressions, folktales, and songs. Partially oral folklore is a combination of oral and non-oral elements, such as beliefs, games, customs, ceremonies, and folk festivals. Meanwhile, non-oral folklore includes cultural objects that are not in oral form, although they are made by oral means, such as architecture, handicrafts, clothing, jewelry, food, musical instruments, and weapons.

The Nyadran tradition in Pulokulon Grobogan is a form of cultural preservation that also emphasizes the value of mutual cooperation in society. In the implementation of this tradition, people work together, maintain harmony, and support each other. These values not only strengthen the relationship between citizens, but also strengthen the local identity of the local community. By preserving the Nyadran tradition, the Pulokulon community is helping to maintain the cultural heritage and local identity that has been passed down from generation to generation, while introducing the value of togetherness that characterizes the local community.

Nyadran tradition in Pukulakon, Grobogan is a form of cultural preservation and strengthening of local identity that holds various important values in people's lives. These values can be used as guidelines for life, including:

1. Religious Value, Nyadran tradition contains deep religious values, such as

generosity, piety, and servitude to God and ancestors. Javanese people perform ritual prayers together as a form of gratitude, such as night recitation or prayers with offerings for the ancestors, which aim to obtain blessings and safety.

2. Social Value, Nyadran has social value reflected in the togetherness and solidarity of the community involved in various activities, such as working together to clean the area, making offerings, and organizing events. This shows the importance of social interaction, such as *silaturahmi*, helping, and harmony.
3. Cultural Value, The Nyadran tradition reflects the cultural identity of the Javanese people who live in simplicity and honor the cultural heritage of the ancestors. The community explores old cultural values that may have been forgotten, and maintains performing arts as part of the celebration.
4. Educational Value, Nyadran teaches the importance of gratitude, kindness towards others, and respect for ancestors. In addition, Javanese people are also taught to maintain harmony with nature and live in harmony in society.

Thus, the Nyadran tradition is not only a religious ritual, but also a means to strengthen social ties, maintain culture, and shape community character, which is in line with efforts to preserve culture and strengthen local identity in Pukulakon, Grobogan.

In the Nyadran tradition, people perform various rituals such as praying together, working together, and serving offerings for the ancestors, which reflect religious, social, cultural and educational values. In addition to being a form of gratitude, the Nyadran tradition also strengthens social ties between citizens by involving all elements of society, from village officials to ordinary people. By involving the younger generation and maintaining cultural values, the Nyadran tradition plays a role in maintaining local culture in the midst of globalization. Through this activity, the community can continue to recognize and appreciate their cultural heritage, while strengthening the sense of community and local identity that is an integral part of everyday life in Pukulakon.

Indonesia's national identity is formed from various elements such as culture, heritage, religion, law and shared values. National identity includes political community, history, territory, citizenship and tradition. Myths, values and symbols also play an important role in distinguishing one nation's culture from another. The Nyadran tradition in Pukulakon, Grobogan, contains moral values both vertically (relationship with God) and horizontally (relationship with others, nature, and living things). Nyadran teaches the values of deliberation, environmental care, communication, harmony, and religiosity, which strengthen national integration. In the midst of modernization, the preservation of local cultures such as Nyadran is very important to maintain national identity. Such as maintaining traditional values helps counter the negative impact of modernization.

Nyadran tradition is a very important form of cultural preservation for the Javanese community, because through this tradition, ancestral values and customs that have been passed down from generation to generation remain alive

and appreciated. In addition, Nyadran also serves as a reinforcement of local identity, because it illustrates the cultural wisdom that has been inherent in the lives of Javanese people since ancient times. By continuing to carry out this tradition, the community can maintain a spiritual connection with ancestors and strengthen a sense of community and cultural identity that characterizes the community. As a cultural heritage, Nyadran also shows how important it is to maintain and care for traditions so that they remain relevant to the times without losing their original meaning and purpose.

## CONCLUSION

The Nyadran tradition in Pulokulon, Grobogan, is an important cultural heritage for the Javanese community, involving rituals that honor ancestors and reinforce the value of mutual cooperation. This tradition reflects local identity as well as religious and social values, and demonstrates the ability of cultural acculturation without losing the roots of tradition. Through the preservation of Nyadran, the younger generation is taught to appreciate cultural heritage while strengthening a sense of community, making it important to maintain the sustainability of the nation's cultural identity in the midst of changing times.

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