# Sanggring Tradition as A Symbol of Religiosity of The Community of Java Indonesia : Regional Cultural Exploratory Studies

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# ABSTRACT

Sanggring is a food served every 23rd of Ramadan at the Jami' Sunan Dalem Mosque in Gumeno Village, Gresik Regency, as a joint iftar menu. The Sanggring tradition is unique and still exists today. Thus, researchers considered it essential to be studied further. This research focused on three issues, as stated in the problem formulation: The history of the Sanggring tradition in Gumeno Village, the implementation process, and symbols of religiosity, values, and functions. In the present study, researchers employed a qualitative research method. The findings revealed that the tradition of fast-breaking with the Sanggring menu was encouraged by Sunan Dalem's illness while doing da'wah (inviting or calling people to embrace Islam) in Gumeno Village, which was later reinforced by the community's magical experiences and beliefs. In the life of the local community, the Sanggring was initially an expression of gratitude for the recovery of Sunan Dalem. Nowadays, its functions have developed into social, cultural, and political.

Keywords: Sanggring, Meaning Of Symbols, Javanese Culture, History, Gumeno People

# A. INTRODUCTION

*Culture* is derived from the Sanskrit language, namely "Buddhayah" (Indonesian; *Budaya*), a pattern or way of life that continues to develop in each region and is passed down to the next generation. Culture is a complex element in the knowledge of beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and others that humans obtain as members of society (EB Taylor). People can learn about the natural surroundings concretely or abstractly without having to experience the occurrence by themselves (Rondiyah, Wardani, & Saddhono, 2017). It indicates that many village communities still carry out regional traditions and preserve them from a long time ago.

Javanese people believe that God has arranged everything in the universe (Mayastuti, Saddhono, & Sulaksono, 2023). Hence, the values and norms in society will still be relevant in the future. Religion and culture unite and develop into a symbiotic relationship in Indonesia (Rahmaniar et al., 2020). In preaching or conveying something, someone certainly needs a way to be accepted by the community (Saputra, Fauziah, & Suwandi, 2022). Therefore, culture and tradition are engaged in spreading a religion so that people can easily understand.

*Sanggring* is one of the traditions used to convey Islamic teachings in the northern region of East Java, precisely in Gumeno Village, Manyar District, Gresik Regency. Local communities often call it the *"Kolak Ayam"*. The event is held on the 23rd night of Ramadan at the Jami' Sunan Dalem Mosque, Gumeno Village. The agendas include a joint iftar with a menu of *sanggring* (chicken compote) and rituals in the form of prayers led by village elders. *Sanggring* is a word used by the community to commemorate the history of this tradition, which was started several centuries ago by King Zainal Abidin (also known as Sunan Dalem), the crown prince of Sunan Giri. He ruled in the Gumeno region, which was the territory of Giri Kedaton.

Many previous studies attempted to examine this tradition. For example, a research entitled *"Tradisi kolak ayam sanggring: Dokumentasi folklor"* (*"Kolak Ayam Sanggring* Tradition: A Folklore Documentation") by Sandi Machmudin, which analyzed the meaning and function of tradition for the people of Gumeno Village. The findings revealed that the *Sanggring* tradition intended to increase human piety to Allah SWT, maintain the heritage, and preserve ancestral culture. In addition, it reflected the value of cooperation to create a harmonious society and maintain cordial relationships. Another study entitled *"Aspek-Aspek Historis Tradisi Sanggring"* (*Kolak Ayam*) *di Desa Gumeno, Kabupaten Gresik"* ("Historical Aspects of the *Sanggring (Kolak Ayam)* Tradition in Gumeno Village, Gresik Regency") was conducted by Siti

Mufarohah, Kasdi, and Aminuddin. They discussed the history of the *Sanggring* tradition and found several precious historical values. This custom was believed to emerge in the XV-XVII centuries under the reign of Sunan Dalem.

Researchers decided to investigate the *Sanggring* tradition because it had distinct meanings, culturecultuand was passed on across generations. There were three research questions in the present study: 1) What is the history of the *Sanggring* tradition in Gumeno Village?; 2) How is the implementation of the *Sanggring* tradition?; 3) What is the meaning and symbol of religiosity of the *Sanggring* tradition? Correspondingly, the objectives of this research were to determine the history of the *Sanggring* tradition, to understand local cultural wisdom as a means of developing a dynamic society and love for tradition, and to enrich the repertoire and knowledge of symbols and values of local traditions in the environment (Trianingsih, Setiawan, & Saddhono, 2023).

# **B. METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative method. The results were in the form of descriptive data regarding the fact presented as it was. This research engaged several aspects, including data collection, to obtain complete information. It was conducted by administering interviews with scholars, elders, community leaders, and local communities and observations by visiting the event.

The processes were carried out to describe the tradition as a whole and to comprehend the history, which was the root and background of the emergence. In addition, the results were expected to provide information on the value and function of the *Sanggring* tradition in the development of society, facilitating the understanding according to current conditions. The following is a description of several stages of the research method.

#### **Observation**

Researchers conducted observations to obtain information in the form of descriptions of the investigated aspects by being directly involved in implementing the *Sanggring* tradition in Gumeno Village.

# Interview

Researchers administered interviews to obtain data from the informants by asking questions about the formulation of problems. The informants or resource persons involved were community leaders, Jami' Gumeno Mosque administrators, village officials, and local communities.

#### Documentation

In research, documentation is required to support primary data. It was done by recording the speakers' voices and the events and taking pictures.

# C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### The History of the Sanggring Tradition

The *Sanggring* tradition, commonly called the *Kolak Ayam*, was annually performed by the people of Gumeno village in the month of Ramadan, precisely on the 23rd night. It was conducted after the Asr prayer until after the Maghrib prayer or fast-breaking.

The history of the *Sanggring* tradition was closely related to the arrival of Sunan Dalem, Crown Prince of Sunan Giri, to Gumeno Village. According to the Gresik Chronicle, Sunan Dalem ruled Giri Kedathon and died in 1506 AD. During the reign of Sunan Dalem, Giri Kedathon was attacked by Adipati Senggaruh, a noble guard from the Majapahit Palace. Knowing that Giri Kedhaton would be attacked, Sunan Dalem immediately informed and gathered his relatives. He ordered his soldiers, Panji Idris and Panji Laras, to go to Lamongan to welcome Adipati Senggaruh and his troops.

In the Gresik Chronicle, it was narrated that on Friday night, Sunan Dalem dreamed of meeting his father, Sunan Giri. In his dream, his father told him not to retaliate against an attack from the Duke of Senggaruh and go to Gumeno Village to evacuate. As a result, Sunan Dalem discussed it with his uncles, Ki Syekh Koja and Ki Syekh Grigis. After discussing, the two uncles agreed to Sunan Giri's message conveyed through Sunan Dalem's dream. Sunan Dalem immediately sent four of his troops to Lamongan and ordered them to stop the war with the Duke of Senggaruh, disband, and return to Giri Kedathon.

Accompanied by his troops, Sunan Dalem and his family evacuated to Gumeno Village. Kyai Ki Dang Palih, the *Kyai* (a Javanese Islamic cleric or expert on Islam) of Gumeno Village, welcomed their arrival. He was surprised and did not expect that his village would be visited by Sunan Giri's son, Sunan Dalem. Thus, he was very attentive and fulfilled all their needs.

When Sunan Dalem and his family fled to Gumeno Village, Adipati Senggaruh and his troops went to Giri to dismantle Sunan Giri's tomb. At the same time, Sunan Dalem's uncle, Ki Syekh

Koja, was kneeling at Sunan Giri's grave. When Adipati Senggaruh asked Ki Syekh Koja to leave the tomb, he did not care and sat still, facing down. Finally, the Duke of Senggaruh could not bear slashing his sword at Ki Syekh Koja until he died. Afterward, the soldiers pulled and moved his body while Adipati Senggaruh dismantled the tomb of Sunan Giri.

When Adipati Senggaruh was dismantling the tomb, thousands of ferocious bees, often called *Tawon Endas*, appeared from the inside and attacked the troops. Adipati Senggaruh tried to run fast and avoid, but his efforts were in vain because the wasps continued to strike fiercely.

All the troops were killed while Adipati Senggaruh was still trying to save himself. Nevertheless, the Duke of Senggaruh still got a sting from the bee king. He was in so much pain that he groaned and repented to God. After experiencing this incident, Adipati Senggaruh finally realized and respected Giri more, eventually promising not to attack the area.

Sunan Dalem finally ordered Kyai Ki Dang Palih and his troops to go to Giri and check the situation after knowing that the Duke's troops died and Adipati Senggaruh repented. Afterward, Kyai Ki Dang Palih rushed to the tomb of Sunan Giri and was shocked to see Ki Syekh Grigis die from the sword slash. Kyai Ki Dang Palih buried the body of Ki Syekh Grigis on the east side of Sunan Giri's tomb. After that, He and other troops backfilled the tomb of Sunan Giri before leaving for Gumeno Village.

When they arrived, Kyai Ki Dang Palih immediately told Sunan Dalem what had happened in Giri. Subsequently, Sunan Dalem ordered all the families to pack their things and prepare to go to Giri. Arriving at Giri, Sunan Dalem noticed no property was lost or taken, so he was relieved and grateful to Allah SWT.

After a while, Sunan Dalem returned to Gumeno Village accompanied by several bodyguards as he wanted to build a mosque. Kyai Ki Dang Palih discussed this plan with his citizens and asked them to be ready to help and prepare the equipment for the construction process.

In this study, researchers discovered a relationship between the construction of the mosque and the origin of *Sanggring*. There were two relevant arguments on the year the Sunan Dalem mosque was built, namely:

The first argument was that, according to Babad Gresik, shortly after Senggaruh's defeat to Sunan Dalem, he returned to Gumeno Village, intending to build a mosque. The completion of mosque construction was marked with the Javanese year "*Jalma Mara Karya Masjid*, 1461 *Saka* or 1539 AD."

The second argument, according to the interview with Mr. Muchtar, was as described below:

"wektu mbangun masjid iku pembangunane direwangi karo Sunan Giri, Sunan Drajat, Sunan Ampel tahun 1451 Masehi. Kebukti wektu pembangunan masjid ketulis ana ing papan nama Masjid Jami' Sunan Dalem".

(The mosque construction was assisted by Sunan Giri, Sunan Drajat, and Sunan Ampel in 1451 AD, as proven on the nameplate at the Jami' Sunan Dalem Mosque.)

Meanwhile, Mr. Muslichin added:

"Tahun pendirian masjid iki miturut tahun Jawa iku kasebut Condrosengkolo "Jalma Mara Akarya Masjid, 1461 Saka"

(According to the Javanese year, the year of establishment of the mosque was named *Condrosengkolo*; "Jalma Mara Akarya Masjid, 1461 Saka".)

The statement of Mr. Muslichin and the evidence written in the Gresik Chronicle were consistent; the mosque was built in 1461 *Saka* or 1545 AD.

The mosque, which was named the Sunan Dalem Mosque, was built magnificently. The mosque was three-tiered, with a spire of 21 feet or 6.4 m, a supporting pillar of 12 feet or 3.66 m, and a widening pillar of 5 feet or 1.52 m. There was a pool with an area of 5.85 m<sup>2</sup> in front of the building.

Shortly after the construction was completed, Sunan Dalem suffered a severe illness. No medicine could cure his disease, making him go to several places or find doctors for medication. He visited many areas but found nothing. Sunan Dalem prayed to Allah SWT for his recovery and received guidance in his dream while asleep. In his dream, he met Sunan Giri, who told him to make a dish consisting of chicken, brown sugar, coconut milk, cumin, and scallions, to cure his illness. The dish was called *Kolak Ayam* or *Sanggring*. After cooking and eating it, Sunan Dalem was healed and grateful to Allah SWT.

As he recovered, Sunan Dalem passed on the will in his dream to the residents of Gumeno Village and the students who had now become his followers. It was maintained until now because they believed it had a significant influence as a *tombo* or medicine for illness.

## The Implementation of Sanggring Tradition

All procedures of the *Sanggring* tradition were never separated from the Islamic teachings. This custom has been carried out since 1541 AD when Sunan Dalem was sick and received a will to make the chicken compote. No community members of Gumeno Village disregarded the *Sanggring* tradition because they were very protective of the mandate of Sunan Dalem. In this tradition, there were procedures of *ubo rampe* as well as the specific implementation time.

The broader community recognized the *Sanggring* tradition because of the uniqueness of its food called *Kolak Ayam* (chicken compote). Many people were curious about its name, as compote was categorized as a sweet food, while a chicken dish was usually savory or salty. Thus, they wondered about the cooking process. Another unique thing was that the *Sanggring* menu should be cooked by men. As stated by Mr. Muchtar in the following excerpt:

"sak marine Sunan Dalem merintahno warga desa kanggo nggowo ayam jago, Sunan Dalem ngongkon para pengikute sing mayoritas lanang kanggo masak ayam iku mau nggunakno bahan-bahan sing wis dirancang Sunan Dalem". (After Sunan Dalem ordered the villagers to bring a rooster, he asked his male

followers to cook it using the prepared ingredients.)

In the *Sanggring* tradition, all residents, especially the younger generation of *IPNU* (Nahdlatul Ulama Student Association) administrators and the mosque's *takmir* (manager of a mosque), formed the event committee two months before the implementation. They discussed their duties, including cooking, ordering raw materials, determining residents to participate or buy chicken compote, and other tasks.

In the past, not many people lived in the Gumeno region, so implementing the *Sanggring* tradition did not require much time and money. Since then, the number of residents of Gumeno Village has been increasing, making the preparation more extended and thorough. Likewise, the number of chicken compote servings for the joint iftar at the Jami' Sunan Dalem Mosque could reach 2,200 portions.

The cooking method, utensils, and ingredients have never changed until today. The community preserved this tradition following what Sunan Dalem did. They still used the traditional stove instead of the gas-heating one, the same kind and amount of ingredients, and even the same place of the event, the Jami' Sunan Dalem Mosque. The processions of the event were the reading of prayers and verses of the Qur'an, fast-breaking with the *Sanggring* menu (*Kolak Ayam*), and a closing prayer.

## The Meaning and Symbol of Religiosity in the Sanggring Tradition

A traditional ceremony or tradition carried out regularly must have a symbolic meaning that affects the local community. In this regard, the *Sanggring* tradition had some meanings related to its history and phenomenon. The religious meaning of this tradition was related to the elements of the Islamic religion. Starting from its early history, most of the population was Muslim, affecting the procession of the events. Apart from the religious context, there were many other meanings, including social, cultural, and economic.

## **Religious Meaning**

The Gumeno Village community regularly carried out the *Sanggring* tradition as a sense of obedience to Sunan Giri's son, namely Sunan Dalem, which was somehow also considered a form of worship to Allah SWT. In this context, the *Sanggring* tradition was carried out in the holy month of Ramadan, on the 22nd or 23rd night. Muslims believe these final dates (above the 20th) are better than a thousand months; they call it by the nights of *Lailatul Qadar*, in which people do more worship and good deeds.

The place used to carry out the *Sanggring* tradition was the Jami' Sunan Dalem Mosque, a legacy of Sunan Dalem. A mosque is a holy place of worship for Muslims to do the *da'wah* and other positive activities related to Islam. The Sunan Dalem Mosque has an essential role for the people of Gumeno Village because it is a historical heritage from Sunan Dalem. Hence, all community activities were carried out there, including the implementation of the *Sanggring* tradition. Therefore, the village community frequently repaired the mosque to keep it maintained.

### Social Meaning

The *Sanggring* tradition initiated a social phenomenon in the form of cooperation, such as the division of tasks in cooking chicken compote. The residents were selected based on their expertise in preparing utensils and ingredients, cooking, organizing events, etc. In addition, this routine ceremony led to a new social ethic, including the expectations to realize.

#### Cultural Meaning

Culture can be in the form of artifacts or sociofacts (Rondiyah, Wardani, & Saddhono, 2017). It can take part as habits and forces that eventually become a community tradition. This tradition eventually became a social identity, as a culture considered a way of life to be

inherited, studied, preserved, and developed across generations following environmental conditions.

# Economic Meaning

In this context, buying and selling transactions were inseparable from the market. In implementing the *Sanggring* tradition, there were roles of the traders of chicken, Javanese sugar (palm sugar), coconut, and others to meet the needs in making chicken compote. Therefore, there was a budget covering the income and expenses. The fee was obtained from village residents' contributions through coupons to purchase chicken compote. In its implementation, Gumeno people never complained about high prices or anything else. It was because their only intention was to participate in the *Sanggring* tradition, which was held once a year.

As a typical condition of the Javanese tradition or ceremony, several rituals must be prepared, such as sacrifices, offerings, and *uborampe* (a form of offerings or trinkets to symbolize gratitude to God Almighty). The *uborampe* and its symbolic meanings in *Kolak Ayam* (chicken compote) were:

- 1. Chicken; a mandatory *uborampe*. The type of chicken used was free-range chicken; however, due to many requests and its high price, native and domestic chicken were used as the alternatives.
- Coconut; a symbol of life's perfection. Coconut has four elements: fiber or *sepet*, shell or *bathok*, flesh, and water. Like a coconut, humans have four aspects of life: spiritual, physical, mind, and feeling. In the *Sanggring* tradition, people only used coconut milk.
- 3. Palm sugar or Javanese sugar. It symbolized the element of human life, namely blood. Moreover, it also had a philosophy, namely a hope that we would always be given happiness in our lives.
- 4. Spring onions or shallots. Philosophically, it represented that humans are like soil, signifying that when they are trampled on and exposed to dirt, they remain humble and never become angry or emotional.
- 5. Cumin; a product of the earth. It would make a better taste if added to the dish.
- 6. Sticky rice; it is derived from the Arabic word *khatha-an* (Indonesian; *ketan*), which means error. Hence, sticky rice was added to the *Sanggring* cuisine to ensure that God forgives the community's sins and mistakes.

7. Prayers; a means to convey the intention or request. Prayers in the *Sanggring* tradition (such as *Al Fatihah*, *Al Ikhlas*, *Al Falaq*, *An Nas*, and the beginning of *Al Baqarah*) were directed to the prophet Muhammad SAW, the soul of Sunan Dalem, people of Gumeno Village, and all Muslims.

It was perceived that the name *Kolak* has the meaning of rejecting. In this context, it was meant to reject all despicable behaviors and be close to God. The *Sanggring* tradition was carried out as a gratitude to God Almighty for His blessings in health and safety. In addition, it served as a prayer for all Muslims, especially the people of Gumeno, to be protected from disease, trouble, and distress. In the *Sanggring* tradition, the community also prayed for Sunan Dalem, who spread Islam and significantly influenced the Gumeno community.

There were various traditions of making food to express gratitude, one of which was the *Nyangring* tradition in Tlemang Village, Lamongan Regency. It was held on the 27th day of *Jumadil Awal*. It was better known as the *Haul Ki Buyut Terik* event. He was a highly respected figure in the village; Ki Buyut Terik could be considered the *Dhanyang* (spirit) of the village. This tradition was aimed to commemorate Ki Buyut Terik for his services in reducing crime in the Tlemang area (Ludfidianto, 2017: 2). There were similarities between the *Sanggring* and *Nyanggring* traditions, such as the names, the use of chicken and coconut milk as the dish's main ingredients, and the role of men in cooking. The difference was that the reading of prayers accompanied the *Sanggring* tradition in Gumeno Village. Meanwhile, a *wayang krucil* performance was presented in the *Nyanggring* tradition in Lamongan Regency.

# **D. CONCLUSION**

The history of the *Sanggring* tradition could not be separated from Giri Kedaton. The XV-XVII centuries became the early history of Gresik's development, which Sunan Giri controlled afterward. Giri Kedaton, under the reign of Sunan Dalem, had a significant role and influence on the Gumeno Community. It was because he had introduced and taught Islam in the area, built a boarding school, and made a new history in the form of the *Sanggring* Tradition, which persists until today.

The *Sanggring* tradition was closely related to the events at Giri Kedaton. Thus, it was preserved by the local community by introducing and teaching it to the younger generation, following what Sunan Dalem did. However, the *Sanggring* tradition has undergone many changes over time. For example, the clay stove was no longer used as a cooking utensil, and

free-range chicken was not the only kind of chicken being cooked. These modifications were affected by the community's logical reasons, justifying that they were accepted as long as the taste did not change.

The *Sanggring* tradition itself could be categorized as an art in culture. Everything was combined in a dish called *Kolak Ayam*. The arts involved ritual implementation time, beauty in tradition, *lafadh*, presentation, and cuisine.

In its implementation, the *Sanggring* tradition had a solid religious value. Sunan Dalem often got instructions from Sunan Giri through his dreams. Moreover, the event could not be separated from the holy verses of the Qur'an and prayers addressed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW and his followers. This tradition was carried out in the month of Ramadan, precisely on the night of *Lailatul Qadar*, as the community preserved it as a representation of obedience. Furthermore, it also had social values reflected in social activities. Economic value was depicted from buying and selling transactions by traders, which certainly benefited each other.

# **E. SUGGESTION**

Cultural resources must involve religion, as it contains spiritual values that significantly influence thought and culture fostering in Indonesia. Moreover, it can fortify us to continue respecting, implementing, and preserving regional traditions without decreasing our faith in Allah SWT.

Historic relic such as the Jami' Sunan Dalem Mosque proves that religion is the foundation of human life. The *Sanggring* Tradition conceptualizes the idea that we must mutually benefit each other and work together, starting from the executive committee, traders, and the local community. Therefore, discussing public awareness of religion, especially among Muslims, is necessary by providing religious studies, deepening knowledge about Islam, and seeing the long history of the struggle of *Waliyullah* (Arabic; Supporter of God) to spread Islam in the archipelago to remote villages. People need to be more aware and open that they live with an Islamic spirit; a peaceful life without fear of being threatened does not just exist out of nowhere but has gone through a complicated struggle.

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