

REACTIVATING LOCAL WISDOM VALUES AND RELIGIOUS RITUALS AS A MEANS TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL HARMONY AMONG RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

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Abstract: *This study explores examines local wisdom and religious rituals in the context of modernization and globalization, as well as the reactivation of traditional practices that have become alienated in society. The aim of the study is to understand the role of local wisdom and religious rituals in building cultural identity, social cohesion, and addressing conflicts between tradition and modernization. Local wisdom and religious rituals play a crucial role in strengthening social interaction and the sustainability of community values. However, modernization and globalization have led to the alienation of traditional practices, resulting in the loss of cultural identity and social cohesion. To achieve this goal, a qualitative approach was employed through library research methods. In conclusion, local wisdom and religious rituals play a significant role in shaping cultural identity and strengthening social cohesion. With an inclusive approach and the renewal of traditional values, communities can maintain valuable cultural practices while adapting to changing times. Dialogue between generations and multicultural education are important steps in creating a harmonious and tolerant society. The reactivation of local wisdom focuses on revitalizing traditional values and practices to remain relevant in the face of contemporary challenges.*

Keywords: *local wisdom, religious rituals, reactivation, tradition vs. modernity.*



INTRODUCTION

In the midst of rapid globalization, the world's society faces complex challenges in efforts to create social harmony among religious communities. The diversity of cultural backgrounds, traditions, and belief systems often triggers tensions and conflicts between various communities. In this context, local wisdom and religious rituals play a significant role as part of a cultural heritage rich in moral, spiritual, and social values. Local wisdom reflects a worldview and norms that have been tested over centuries, while religious rituals serve as practices that express the beliefs and identity of a community.¹

In the context of cultural and religious pluralism, the stigma of modernization often acts as a catalyst for social conflict. Multicultural societies face the dilemma of balancing traditional identity with global demands that tend to promote homogenization. Traditional values rooted in local wisdom and religious rituals are sometimes seen as incompatible with contemporary developments and even viewed as impediments to progress.² However, local wisdom and religious rituals play a crucial role in maintaining social cohesion and creating harmony among communities with differing beliefs. Some exclusive religious rituals can exacerbate tensions between religious groups, worsen segregation, and challenge efforts to adapt to pluralistic values.

In addressing these challenges, the reactivation of religious rituals becomes essential to ensure their relevance and alignment with the pluralism developing in modern society. This adjustment is a strategic step to create social harmony within increasingly complex diversity. Moreover, the integration of tradition with modernity often risks generating conflicts between the efforts to preserve traditional values and adapt to changing times. Reactivation aims not only to maintain the essence of local wisdom and religious rituals but also to ensure their relevance in a dynamic society. Thus, it is hoped that social harmony can be created among religious communities without disregarding existing religious identities.

This research aims to highlight the importance of traditional values in creating social harmony while aligning religious practices with the demands of an increasingly plural modern society. Through qualitative studies, this research presents a new perspective on how local wisdom and religious rituals can be reactivated without losing their traditional essence. Furthermore, this research opens the space for further discussion on the transformation of religious practices to align with pluralism and inclusivity values, which pose challenges in multicultural societies. The results of this study are expected to enrich the literature on social harmony and provide practical recommendations for the implementation of local wisdom and religious rituals in diverse social contexts.³ Overall,

¹ Dewi Anggraeni, Andy Hadiyanto, dan Ahmad Hakam, “Multicultural Islamic Religious Education Based on Local Wisdom: The Analysis of ‘SILAS’ Values in Sundanese Culture,” *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education Studies (IJIES)* 6, no. 1 (30 Juni 2023): 93–108, <https://doi.org/10.33367/ijies.v6i1.3649>.

² Siswanto Siswanto, “Strengthening Spiritual Leadership in Preserving Religious Culture and Local Wisdom in Madrasah,” *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 3 (9 Juli 2022): 907–20, <https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v6i3.3357>.

³ Abdur Rahman Nor Afif Hamid, “INTERTEKSTUALITAS ALKITAB DALAM TAFSIR QUR’AN KARANGAN ZAINUDDIN HAMIDY DAN FACHRUDDIN HS (Kajian Semiotika Intertekstualitas Julia Kristeva)” (masters, UIN SUNAN KALIJAGA YOGYAKARTA, 2023), <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/60721/>.



this research aims to explore how the reactivation of local wisdom and religious rituals can contribute to creating social harmony among religious communities while strengthening religious identity in the modern era. With the right reactivation, it is hoped that an inclusive and harmonious society can be created, where every individual can live side by side in peace and mutual respect, regardless of their religious backgrounds.

DISCUSSION

Local Wisdom

Local wisdom is a cultural heritage that encompasses knowledge, values, and practices that have developed within communities over centuries. It reflects the way of life and cultural identity of a group and plays a crucial role in social interactions and decision-making. In an increasingly complex world, the presence of local wisdom becomes increasingly important for achieving social harmony, building identity, and facing the challenges of modern times.⁴ The moral and ethical aspects are significant dimensions of local wisdom, serving as guidelines for individual and community behavior. Values such as honesty, responsibility, and justice embedded in local wisdom influence individual and societal actions and serve as guiding principles in daily interactions and sustainable decision-making at both the individual and community levels.

Rituals and ceremonies are central practices in local wisdom that hold symbolic and spiritual meanings. In sociological and anthropological studies, rituals serve as a medium for communicating the social and cultural values of society. These practices are not only religious acts but also an integral part of the social structure that connects individuals with groups and their environment. According to Victor Turner's theory, rituals function as a "liminal" process that helps individuals or groups transition from one life phase to another. Furthermore, rituals strengthen social structures by creating a sense of togetherness and solidarity among community members.⁵

Local wisdom often reflects a society's belief in higher entities, such as deities or natural forces. In the study of religious anthropology, this is known as animism or polytheism, where societies believe these forces influence daily life.⁶ Research in cultural ecology shows that spiritual beliefs are often related to a harmonious relationship between humans and nature. For example, beliefs in forest or water spirits among indigenous communities in Indonesia encourage environmental conservation. In ethnobiology, these beliefs also assist traditional communities in sustainably managing natural resources. In addition to their religious function, local wisdom also meets social and psychological needs. From a psychological perspective, rituals provide security, identity, and meaning in life, especially in situations filled with uncertainty. Socially, these practices reinforce cohesion among community members. Emile Durkheim's theory states that religion and rituals

⁴ Sherli Aulia Marwantika dkk., "The Effectiveness Of Developing Social Studies Learning Modules Based On Local Wisdom To Improve Local Cultural Character In Mts Ar Rohman Tegalrejo Students," *The Indonesian Journal of Social Studies* 5, no. 2 (2022): 107–13, <https://doi.org/10.26740/ijss.v5n2.p107-113>.

⁵ Mathieu Deflem, "Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner's Processual Symbolic Analysis," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30, no. 1 (1991): 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387146>.

⁶ Ismail Pane, "FILOSOFI MUSLIM DAN IKATAN BUDAYA LOKAL PADA PEDALAMAN SUMATERA," *TAZKIRAH* 8, no. 2 (2023): 67–80, <https://doi.org/10.53888/tazkirah.v8i2.623>.



function to strengthen social solidarity and collective morality. In the context of local wisdom, rituals contribute to the preservation of group identity and uphold social and moral values.⁷

Symbolism in local wisdom is rich in meaning. Rituals use symbols that carry deep significance for society, such as elements of fire, water, or specific objects. These symbols function not only in a religious context but also as markers of cultural identity. According to Clifford Geertz, symbols in rituals help society understand their reality and build a collective understanding of the world.⁸ By understanding local wisdom through the frameworks of anthropology, cultural ecology, and sociology, we can observe how these beliefs serve to maintain balance in social and spiritual life. From a scientific perspective, local wisdom not only serves as behavioral guidelines but is also vital in building and strengthening social networks. The social aspects of local wisdom are reflected in togetherness and solidarity, as well as in the development of a sense of community, all of which contribute to social cohesion and conflict mitigation. Togetherness and solidarity are at the core of local wisdom, promoting cooperation and mutual support. This can be explained through social theories that emphasize the importance of social capital in creating cohesive societies.⁹

Local wisdom plays a crucial role in strengthening community sense, allowing individuals to experience emotional and social connections with fellow members. Through traditions and shared social activities, strong collective bonds are formed, enhancing the sense of belonging and reducing potential conflicts.¹⁰ The psychological theory proposed by McMillan and Chavis suggests that the sense of community is a vital element in building social cohesion, encompassing membership, influence, integration, emotional fulfillment, and collective bonding. Local wisdom also serves as a tool for resolving internal conflicts. The tradition of deliberation in various Indonesian societies is a way to address differences peacefully, encouraging open dialogue and reaching consensus, which contributes to strengthening social cohesion. Local wisdom not only builds solidarity but also reduces the likelihood of conflict by prioritizing collaboration in problem-solving.

In the modern era, local wisdom offers solutions to global challenges such as climate change and the loss of cultural identity. Given the increasingly interconnected world, these challenges impact society collectively. Local wisdom often provides relevant and sustainable solutions, with traditional resource management practices proving to be more sustainable than modern methods. Local wisdom helps communities maintain their

⁷ Encung Encung, “FUNGSI KEARIFAN LOKAL DALAM MENANGGULANGI FUNDAMENTALISME BERAGAMA DI MADURA,” *Reflektika* 18, no. 2 (23 Desember 2023): 312–45, <https://doi.org/10.28944/reflektika.v18i2.1466>.

⁸ Victor M. Pereira Rosa dan Leslie S. Laczko, “The Anthropology of Religion and Some Observations on Clifford Geertz,” *ARQUIPÉLAGO. Ciências Sociais* 6 (1991): 245–56, <https://repositorio.uac.pt/handle/10400.3/5666>.

⁹ Sigit Fitro Prasetyo, “Harmony of Nature and Culture: Symbolism and Environmental Education in Ritual,” *Journal of Contemporary Rituals and Traditions* 1, no. 2 (11 September 2023): 67–76, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jcrt.361>.

¹⁰ Ahmad Arif Widiyanto dan Rose Fitria Lutfiana, “Kearifan Lokal Kabumi: Media Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Karakter Masyarakat Tuban Jawa Timur,” *Satwika : Kajian Ilmu Budaya Dan Perubahan Sosial* 5, no. 1 (10 April 2021): 118–30, <https://doi.org/10.22219/satwika.v5i1.15929>.



cultural identity amid such pressures.¹¹ By preserving traditions and local values, communities uphold the cultural uniqueness that is important to them. For instance, the batik tradition in Indonesia remains a symbol of national identity. Local wisdom also supports social harmony. Universal values, such as tolerance and solidarity, help mitigate conflicts among community members with different cultures, religions, or social statuses. In multicultural societies, local wisdom becomes a bridge for dialogue and understanding, creating space for resolving differences without violence.

Local wisdom plays a crucial role in sustainable environmental management and contributes to the social and economic well-being of communities. By combining environmental knowledge with sustainable practices, communities can create ecological balance that can serve as a model for addressing modern challenges. However, in this modern era, local wisdom is often marginalized and seen as an obstacle to progress. It is essential to adapt local wisdom to remain relevant in the context of pluralism, where various beliefs and cultures can interact. Local wisdom plays a role in fostering a sense of community, solidarity, and conflict management.¹² By creating collective bonds through traditions and joint activities, local wisdom strengthens social cohesion and prevents conflicts. Local wisdom also offers sustainable solutions to modern challenges, supports cultural identity, and creates social harmony.

DEFINITION OF RELIGIOUS RITUALS

Religious rituals can be understood as a series of systematic and repetitive activities conducted in a religious context, often accompanied by symbols, verbal expressions, or actions that carry specific meanings. These rituals typically involve the participation of individuals or groups with the aim of achieving spiritual aspects, such as enhancing closeness to God, seeking blessings, or commemorating significant moments in religious teachings. The forms of religious rituals vary, ranging from simple ceremonies to more complex ones, and can be performed in places of worship, public spaces, or personal environments.¹³

Religious rituals serve various important functions in society, including:¹⁴

1. **Social Function:** Religious rituals contribute to strengthening social relationships among community members. When individuals participate together in rituals, they feel a connection with others who share similar beliefs and values. This creates a sense of unity and solidarity among members of the community.

¹¹ Kiki Ayu Arifah dan Meidi Saputra, "Strategi Konservasi Nilai Kearifan Lokal Di Era Modern Oleh Masyarakat Adat Osing Kemiren," *Jurnal Moral Kemasyarakatan* 8, no. 2 (6 November 2023): 191–203, <https://doi.org/10.21067/jmk.v8i2.8519>.

¹² Nur Farida dan Eggy Fajar Andalas, "Eksistensi Kearifan Lokal Madura di Era Modern dalam Celurit Hujan Panas Karya Zainul Muttaqin," *ATAVISME* 22, no. 2 (31 Desember 2019): 217–32, <https://doi.org/10.24257/atavisme.v22i2.581.217-232>.

¹³ Christoph Wulf, "Religion and Rituals," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, 2003), <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3732394>.

¹⁴ Sulthan Ahmad, "Totem, Ritual dan Kesadaran Kolektif: Kajian Teoritik Terhadap Pemikiran Keagamaan Emile Durkheim," *Al-Adyan: Journal of Religious Studies* 2, no. 2 (31 Desember 2021): 153–61, <https://doi.org/10.15548/al-adyan.v2i2.3384>.



2. Educational Function: Rituals often serve as tools for transmitting values and religious teachings from one generation to another. Through the practice of rituals, community members can understand the history, myths, and norms upheld by their group.
3. Psychological Function: Religious rituals provide emotional and psychological support for individuals. In difficult situations, such as the loss of a loved one or facing personal crises, rituals can offer solace and hope, helping individuals cope with various life challenges.
4. Cultural Identity Function: Religious rituals play a significant role in building and maintaining the cultural identity of a community. Through ritual practices, societies can express their cultural uniqueness, distinguishing themselves from other groups.

Religious rituals are profound social phenomena embedded within the structure of society. In anthropology and sociology studies, rituals are seen as means to reinforce social relationships and regulate individual behavior within a collective context. Participation in rituals allows individuals to interact socially, which is essential for building support networks. Involvement in religious activities can enhance feelings of interconnectedness and social solidarity, supporting community stability and transferring knowledge and values across generations through socialization.¹⁵

From a psychological perspective, religious rituals serve as channels for individuals to express emotions and receive support, especially when facing stress or traumatic events. Rituals also function as markers of group identity, differentiating one group from another and creating a strong sense of belonging within the group. Rituals contribute to social cohesion through interactions among individuals from diverse backgrounds to achieve common goals, creating a sense of togetherness and encouraging mutual support. In some cultures, rituals are also used to relieve tensions between groups or individuals by providing space for dialogue and reconciliation.

Additionally, participation in rituals reinforces societal norms and values, where individuals internalize these values, promoting harmonious and cooperative behavior. Rituals provide structure and routine, helping individuals understand their roles and providing behavioral guidelines within a social context. Overall, religious rituals play a crucial role in strengthening social cohesion and creating more harmonious societies.¹⁶ Rituals function not only as means of worship but also as tools for reinforcing cultural identity and relationships among community members, as well as supporting social stability in an increasingly complex world.

REACTUALIZATION OF LOCAL WISDOM

In the disciplines of anthropology and cultural sociology, the concept of revitalizing local wisdom highlights the necessity of renewing existing cultural values and practices.

¹⁵ A. Fatikhul Amin Abdullah, “RITUAL AGAMA ISLAM DI INDONESIA DALAM BINGKAI BUDAYA,” *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Islam Moderat I* (23 September 2018): 1–11, <https://ejournal.unwaha.ac.id/index.php/asdanu/article/view/231>.

¹⁶ Loso Judijanto, Siminto Siminto, dan Rahman Rahman, “The Influence of Religious Beliefs and Religious Practices on Social Cohesion in Modern Society in Indonesia,” *The Eastasouth Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 1, no. 03 (28 Juni 2024): 139–50, <https://doi.org/10.58812/esssh.v1i03.276>.



This revitalization process requires modifications to ensure their survival in the face of modernization and globalization. Local wisdom refers to the accumulated knowledge that specific communities have developed over long periods, which encompasses their ways of life, ethical frameworks, belief systems, management of natural resources, and social practices that are acknowledged as part of their cultural heritage.¹⁷ The process of reactivation is characterized by its dynamic nature; its goal is not merely to safeguard traditional values in a fixed manner but to modify them in response to social, economic, and technological developments.

According to Stuart Hall's theory of cultural identity, identity is always in flux, shaped by interactions with new external influences.¹⁸ Within this framework, the reactivation of local wisdom aims to preserve essential aspects of cultural identity that are grounded in local values while also adapting to ensure ongoing relevance. A relevant illustration of this reactivation is found in Indonesia's batik tradition. Once primarily recognized as a traditional garment, batik has now been incorporated into contemporary fashion, thanks to innovative designs and advancements in textile technology, which allows it to maintain its intrinsic local significance.

Local wisdom significantly contributes to enhancing social cohesion and fostering peace within communities. The Sedekah Bumi tradition in East Java serves as a prime example of reactivation, blending religious and social values.¹⁹ This custom expresses gratitude for bountiful harvests and seeks blessings for agricultural fertility. Contemporary adaptations include the integration of traditional rituals with Islamic values, alongside community-focused social initiatives aimed at aiding marginalized groups. Similarly, the Sedekah Laut tradition along East Java's southern coast illustrates how local rituals can evolve. Initially based on spiritual beliefs, this practice has shifted its emphasis to prayer directed toward God, while strengthening social bonds through acts of solidarity and support for impoverished fishermen. Furthermore, local governments have begun to endorse these cultural events as tourism initiatives, making them more attractive to younger generations and bolstering the local economy.

In this regard, the reactivation of local wisdom extends beyond simple preservation of cultural practices; it actively enhances cultural identity and social cohesion within diverse societies. By merging traditional values with contemporary elements such as tourism and social outreach programs, these customs continue to thrive and positively impact the community. This demonstrates that local wisdom can successfully adapt to the challenges of modernity and maintain its significance in an ever-evolving landscape.

¹⁷ Syamsul Bahri dan Al Musanna, "THE EDUCATION OF CHARACTER BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE GAYO COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL ACEH," *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran (JRPP)* 6, no. 3 (28 September 2023): 1233–46, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v6i3.26661>.

¹⁸ Symphony Akelba Christian, "Identitas Budaya Orang Tionghoa Indonesia," *Jurnal Cakrawala Mandarin* 1, no. 1 (11 April 2017): 11–22, <https://doi.org/10.36279/apsmi.v1i1.11>.

¹⁹ Suci Prasasti, "Konseling Indigenous: Menggali Nilai–Nilai Kearifan Lokal Tradisi Sedekah Bumi Dalam Budaya Jawa," *Cendekia: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 14, no. 2 (31 Oktober 2020): 110–23, <https://doi.org/10.30957/cendekia.v14i2.626>.



INCLUSIVE RELIGIOUS RITUALS

Inclusive religious rituals involve adapting worship practices to engage all individuals within a community, irrespective of their religious, cultural, or belief backgrounds. The primary aim of these rituals is to enhance community cohesion and promote unity while honoring each person's distinct religious identity. Religious rituals are pivotal in society; they function as a means of establishing social bonds, reinforcing group identity, and providing avenues for spiritual expression. When these rituals embrace inclusivity, their effects transcend mere spiritual dimensions, fostering social harmony among diverse populations.²⁰

Social cohesion refers to the solidarity, trust, and harmony that exist among community members, particularly in contexts characterized by religious and cultural diversity. In multicultural societies, the inclusiveness of religious rituals is critical for cultivating an open and tolerant environment. By encouraging participation from various groups, inclusive religious rituals can diminish social polarization, foster solidarity, and avert potential conflicts. These rituals create opportunities for individuals with different beliefs to come together, thereby enhancing a collective sense of belonging.²¹

1. **Easter Celebrations in Indonesia:** In Indonesia, especially in regions like Jakarta and Bali, Easter celebrations often incorporate various religious communities. These celebrations may involve organizing social and cultural activities that highlight the diversity within the community, such as interfaith dialogues, community service projects, and cultural performances. By inviting participation from different faith groups, these events serve to build interfaith relationships and promote understanding, fostering a sense of unity despite differing beliefs.
2. **Sedekah Bumi:** The Sedekah Bumi tradition in Java exemplifies an inclusive religious ritual. Originally a local agrarian custom that expresses gratitude for the harvest, this ritual has evolved to incorporate individuals from various religious backgrounds. During Sedekah Bumi, community members, regardless of their faith, come together to offer prayers and share a communal meal, reinforcing their shared responsibility towards the environment and enhancing intercommunity relationships. This participation helps in mitigating divisions and promotes cooperative efforts toward sustainable practices.
3. **Interfaith Prayer Gatherings:** Interfaith prayer gatherings represent another example of inclusive religious rituals. These events typically bring together people from different faith traditions to pray for peace, healing, or communal well-being. For instance, during significant national or global events—such as natural disasters or peace-building initiatives—communities might hold joint prayer services. These gatherings not only offer a platform for collective spiritual expression but also serve to remind participants of their common humanity, fostering understanding and respect across religious divides.

²⁰ Khaerul Umam, “Konstruksi Nilai Inklusif Tokoh Agama Dalam Memandang Pluralitas Agama Di Kediri,” *Religió Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 9, no. 1 (20 Maret 2019): 44–76, <https://doi.org/10.15642/religio.v9i1.1233>.

²¹ Casram Casram, “Membangun Sikap Toleransi Beragama Dalam Masyarakat Plural,” *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya* 1, no. 2 (23 Agustus 2016): 187–98, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jw.v1i2.588>.



While the implementation of inclusive religious rituals is beneficial, it is not without challenges:²²

- a) Differing Views on Religious Teachings: Participants may hold varying interpretations of their faith's tenets, leading to disputes over the appropriateness of certain practices. For example, some religious groups may oppose the blending of rituals from other traditions, perceiving this as a dilution of their beliefs.
- b) Resistance from Certain Groups: There can be pushback from segments of the community that feel their religious identity is being compromised or threatened by inclusive practices. This resistance can stem from a desire to preserve traditional customs or fears about syncretism—where different beliefs are mixed to the point where individual identities are obscured.
- c) Concerns about Syncretism: The blending of various religious practices can raise concerns among traditionalists who fear that their core beliefs and practices may be overshadowed or altered. It is essential to find a balance that respects and honors individual religious identities while promoting inclusivity.

Inclusive religious rituals play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion within multicultural societies. They provide a platform for individuals of diverse backgrounds to come together, reinforcing social bonds and promoting mutual respect. However, the success of these rituals hinges on effectively navigating the challenges of differing beliefs, potential resistance, and the need to maintain the integrity of religious identities. By emphasizing inclusivity while respecting individual traditions, communities can create environments that celebrate diversity and enhance solidarity.

ALIENATION OF LOCAL WISDOM AND RELIGIOUS RITUALS

The alienation of local wisdom and religious rituals refers to the condition in which traditional values and practices that have existed in society are viewed as obstacles to growth or progress. This phenomenon often arises in situations of modernization, where the need to adapt to social, economic, and technological changes becomes increasingly urgent. In this discussion, we will analyze how local wisdom and religious ritual practices experience alienation and provide concrete examples to clarify our understanding of this phenomenon.²³ Alienation of local wisdom refers to the situation where communities begin to distance themselves from their traditional values and practices, often in response to foreign cultural influences, globalization, or modernization processes. In terms of religious rituals, alienation can occur when traditional religious practices are seen as outdated or irrelevant to modern life.

²² Pille Valk dkk., *Teenagers' Perspectives on the Role of Religion in Their Lives, Schools and Societies. A European Quantitative Study* (Waxmann Verlag, 2009).

²³ Mohamad Misbah, "AGAMA DAN ALIENASI MANUSIA (REFLEKSI ATAS KRITIK KARL MARX TERHADAPAGAMA)," *KOMUNIKA: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 9, no. 2 (2015): 196–206, <https://doi.org/10.24090/komunika.v9i2.849>.



Several factors contributing to this alienation include:²⁴

1. **Globalization and Modernization:** The rapid development in the flow of information and culture brings in new values that often conflict with local traditions. Communities tend to prefer adopting values that are seen as more progressive or modern, thereby abandoning local wisdom perceived as archaic. An example, in East Java, the rise of modern consumer culture has influenced traditional agricultural practices. For instance, younger generations may choose to adopt industrial farming techniques or embrace new technologies, such as genetically modified crops, believing they are more efficient and profitable. This shift can lead to the abandonment of traditional farming rituals, such as the "Selamatan" (a gratitude ritual performed at harvest time) that were previously essential in connecting the community with their agricultural heritage. As a result, the local wisdom embedded in these practices is diminished, and younger farmers may lose the cultural significance that these rituals once held.
2. **Urbanization:** The process of people moving from rural to urban areas often leads to a loss of connection with traditions. In this context, ritual practices related to local wisdom may be neglected as they are considered incompatible with urban lifestyles. An example, cities like Surabaya, the capital of East Java, many residents who have moved from rural villages may find it challenging to maintain traditional practices like the "Sedekah Bumi." This ritual, which involves giving thanks for agricultural abundance, may be seen as incompatible with the urban lifestyle, where many individuals work long hours in jobs that do not relate to agriculture. Consequently, as urbanization progresses, younger generations may lack the knowledge or interest to participate in such traditions, leading to a gradual decline in these important cultural practices.
3. **Dissatisfaction with Tradition:** Some individuals, particularly younger generations, may feel that local wisdom no longer meets their needs, both socially and spiritually. This condition encourages them to seek alternative paths that are more relevant to the realities of modern life. An example, in East Java, many young people are increasingly attracted to modern spiritual practices or globalized religions that offer them a sense of identity or community that they feel local traditions cannot provide. For instance, some youth may gravitate towards new-age spirituality or international religious movements, viewing traditional practices like the "Kuda Lumping" (a traditional dance and performance often tied to spiritual beliefs) as irrelevant to their current lifestyle. This shift may also be seen in the rise of social media influencers who promote lifestyles and beliefs that prioritize individualism and self-expression over communal traditions, further driving a wedge between the youth and their cultural heritage.

The interplay of globalization, urbanization, and dissatisfaction with tradition significantly impacts the preservation and practice of local wisdom in East Java. As communities adapt to changing values and lifestyles, there is a risk of losing rich cultural

²⁴ Patrisius Seran dan David Samuel Latupeirissa, "AGAMA SEBAGAI ALIENASI MANUSIA (Refleksi Kritis Atas Kritik Agama Karl Marx)," *Lumen Veritatis: Jurnal Filsafat Dan Teologi* 12, no. 1 (31 Oktober 2021): 39–64, <https://doi.org/10.30822/lumenveritatis.v12i1.1305>.

practices and the wisdom they embody. To mitigate these effects, it may be beneficial for local leaders and communities to create initiatives that bridge traditional practices with modern values, ensuring that local wisdom remains relevant and respected in contemporary society.

The alienation of local wisdom and religious rituals can result in several negative impacts, including:²⁵

1. **Loss of Cultural Identity:** Disregard for local wisdom can lead individuals and communities to lose their sense of identity and pride in their culture. This situation has the potential to cause social fragmentation. Example in East Java: The traditional art of *wayang kulit* (shadow puppetry) is at risk due to the increasing popularity of modern entertainment forms, such as cinema and television. As younger generations gravitate towards these modern mediums, they may not engage with or learn about the cultural significance of *wayang kulit*, resulting in a diminished appreciation for this unique art form and its connection to Javanese identity.
2. **Breakdown of Social Relationships:** Religious rituals often function as a binding force for communities. When the values of these rituals are no longer appreciated, social relationships among community members may weaken, resulting in diminished solidarity. Example in East Java: In many villages, communal ceremonies like *slametan* (a Javanese feast) are vital for strengthening social bonds. However, as urban migration increases, younger individuals may move to cities and neglect these communal practices. This disconnection can weaken relationships among community members, leading to a lack of cohesion and support systems.
3. **Social Dissatisfaction:** Communities that are alienated from their traditions may experience deeper dissatisfaction, which could trigger social conflict or identity crises. For example, the Asmat Tribe in Papua possesses rich local wisdom, including carving arts and rituals related to their lives. However, due to external influences, particularly through education and evangelization, some community members have begun to neglect traditional practices. Example in East Java: The *bromo* festival, which celebrates the relationship between the Tenggerese people and their natural environment, faces challenges as tourism and modernization grow. Younger generations, drawn to modern lifestyles, may feel disconnected from the festival, leading to frustration among older generations who feel their cultural practices are being overlooked. This tension can foster identity crises within the community.
4. **Influence of Christian Missions:** Some traditional values and ritual practices are viewed as contradictory to Christian teachings, leading to alienation from rituals that have been part of their identity. This results in a reduction in practices like traditional funeral ceremonies that should involve all community members. Example in East Java: In certain areas of East Java where Christianity has gained a foothold, traditional rituals such as the *Merti Desa* (a village purification ritual) may

²⁵ Nufi Ainun Nadhiroh, "ALIENASI MANUSIA MODERN KRITIK MODERNITAS DALAM PEMIKIRAN ERICH FROMM," *Refleksi Jurnal Filsafat Dan Pemikiran Islam* 15, no. 1 (1 Januari 2015): 16–29, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ref.v15i1.1076>.



be viewed as incompatible with Christian beliefs. This perception can lead to a decline in participation in these rituals, creating a divide within communities that once celebrated these practices as part of their cultural identity.

5. Impact of Modernization: With the advent of modernization, Asmat children tend to choose to attend institutions that teach a Western-based curriculum. Consequently, their involvement in traditional practices and local wisdom values diminishes. Example in East Java: Many children in rural areas of East Java are increasingly attending schools that emphasize English and Western education over local languages and traditions. This shift can lead to a lack of engagement with local customs, such as traditional dances or agricultural practices, resulting in a decline in the transmission of local wisdom and cultural practices to future generations.

In the context of rural communities in Indonesia, many ritual practices related to agriculture, such as "Sedekah Bumi," have begun to be abandoned. With agricultural modernization introducing new technologies, farmers are focusing more on economic outcomes than on long-standing traditions, which affects traditional communities, including:

- a. Dissatisfaction with Rituals: Farmers influenced by modernization may feel that rituals like Sedekah Bumi are no longer relevant for improving agricultural productivity. They prefer adopting modern farming techniques that are considered more efficient.
- b. Loss of Tradition: When these practices are abandoned, younger generations no longer understand the meaning and importance of the rituals, leading to the loss of valuable knowledge and traditions.

The alienation of local wisdom and religious rituals poses significant challenges in the context of modernization and globalization. Communities alienated from their traditions are at risk of losing cultural identity and strong social connections. Therefore, it is essential to strive for the reactivation of traditional values and practices to remain relevant and accepted by future generations. Building awareness of the importance of local wisdom and religious rituals in shaping identity and social cohesion is a crucial step in addressing this alienation.

CONFLICT BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNIZATION

The conflict between tradition and modernization is a phenomenon that often arises in societies striving to balance cultural heritage with the need to adapt to contemporary developments. This tension can occur in various fields, including social, economic, and political spheres, and can affect the overall way of life of communities.²⁶ Tradition refers to the practices, values, and beliefs that are passed down from generation to generation within a culture or community. Traditions often reflect the identity and unique characteristics of a society. On the other hand, modernization is the process by which societies transform from traditional ways of life to newer lifestyles inspired by

²⁶ Li Zonggui, *Between Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the Modernization of Chinese Culture* (Chartridge Books Oxford, 2015).



technological, scientific, and social advancements. Modernization often involves changes in social structure, mindsets, and societal behavior.²⁷

The tension between tradition and modernization arises from several sources, including:

1. **Changing Values and Norms:** Modernization often brings new values that may conflict with traditional norms. For example, the emphasis on individualism in modern societies can contradict the collectivist values often upheld in traditional communities.
2. **Economic Changes:** With the advancement of technology and industrialization, traditional ways of working and earning a living may become irrelevant. This can lead to a shift from long-standing agrarian practices to an economy based on industry and services.
3. **Education and Information:** Broader access to education and information through modern media can change individuals' perspectives on tradition. Younger generations may be more open to new ideas, which can create conflict with older generations that adhere firmly to traditions.

The tension between generations that uphold tradition and those that support modernization can lead to social divisions and conflicts among groups. This can be observed in debates about religious practices, customary ceremonies, or lifestyles.

1. **Identity and Cultural Pride:** This conflict can also lead to a crisis of identity, where individuals feel trapped between societal expectations to uphold traditions and pressures to adapt to modern values. This may result in a loss of pride in their cultural heritage.
2. **Shifts in Cultural Practices:** In some cases, modernization can lead to the neglect of traditional practices. Societies affected by globalization often adopt foreign cultures and forget local traditions that have existed for centuries.²⁸
3. **Rural Society vs. Urbanization:** In many rural communities, traditions like mutual assistance in agriculture may be displaced by more individualistic modern agricultural systems. This shift can lead to dissatisfaction among communities that feel they are losing their values of togetherness.²⁹
4. **Religious Rituals:** In some communities, long-standing religious ritual practices may be considered outdated and abandoned by younger generations who prefer forms of worship that align more closely with modern values.

To address the conflict between tradition and modernization, inclusive approaches are needed, such as:

- a. **Intergenerational Dialogue:** Encouraging dialogue between older and younger generations to understand each other's perspectives can help find common ground between traditional values and the demands of modernity.

²⁷ Rachmah Ida, *Budaya Populer Indonesia: Diskursus Global/Lokal dalam Budaya Populer Indonesia* (Airlangga University Press, 2019).

²⁸ Dr Alo Liliweri, *Prasangka dan Konflik ; Komunikasi Lintas Budaya Masyarakat Multikultur* (Lkis Pelangi Aksara, 2005).

²⁹ Michael Dear dan Allen Scott, *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society* (Routledge, 2018).



- b. Reactivation of Traditions: Adapting traditional practices to make them relevant to modern contexts without losing their essence. For example, local traditions can be integrated into modern practices in ways that respect original values.
- c. Multicultural Education: Educating communities about the importance of valuing traditions while remaining open to innovation can help create a more harmonious and tolerant society.

The conflict between tradition and modernization is a complex and multidimensional process. Although this tension can lead to significant challenges, wise and inclusive approaches can help societies find ways to maintain their cultural identity while embracing the advancements offered by modernity.³⁰

CONCLUSION

Local wisdom is an essential part of cultural heritage that encompasses knowledge, values, and practices that have existed for centuries. In an increasingly complex world, local wisdom plays a vital role in creating social balance, building identity, and facing modern challenges. The moral and ethical values contained within local wisdom influence the behavior of individuals and communities, such as honesty and responsibility. The rituals and ceremonies that are part of local wisdom have profound symbolic and spiritual meanings, helping to connect individuals with their communities and environments, as well as strengthening solidarity among community members. Local wisdom also reflects beliefs in higher powers and supports harmonious relationships between humans and nature.

Additionally, local wisdom provides emotional support and a sense of identity in uncertain situations, aiding in the preservation of group identity and reinforcing moral values, as well as enhancing social cohesion. The symbolism in local wisdom strengthens the relationships among community members, encourages cooperation, and provides ways to resolve conflicts, all of which support overall social stability.

In the face of modern challenges, such as climate change and the loss of cultural identity, local wisdom offers sustainable solutions based on traditional practices. By adapting to current values, local wisdom can continue to play a significant role in maintaining cultural uniqueness and promoting social harmony. A focus on universal values like tolerance and solidarity helps create dialogue and understanding in multicultural societies, reducing tensions and conflicts.

The revitalization of local wisdom is crucial for remaining relevant amid modernization and globalization. This process must involve adjusting cultural practices to ensure their sustainability while retaining key elements of cultural identity. Examples such as Indonesia's batik tradition demonstrate how local wisdom can integrate traditional values with modern influences, thereby supporting social cohesion and peace within communities.

³⁰ Muhammad Najib, “KONFLIK SOSIAL DAN PEMECAHANNYA (Studi Historis Konflik Akibat Modernisasi Keagamaan Di Gresik 1930 – 1960),” *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 1 (29 Juni 2019): 80–93, <https://ejournal.kopertais4.or.id/pantura/index.php/jipi/article/view/3448>.



The interaction between inclusive religious rituals and the alienation of local wisdom creates a complex situation where communities strive to maintain cultural identity while facing modernization challenges. Inclusive rituals serve to enhance social cohesion and unity among diverse groups, as well as to create spaces for collective spiritual expression and mutual respect. The alienation of local wisdom often occurs as a result of globalization and urbanization, leading communities to drift further away from their cultural heritage. This can result in the loss of traditional practices that once provided identity and a sense of belonging.

The conflict between tradition and modernization adds complexity to this situation, where younger generations may seek new identities that align more closely with modern values, while older generations strive to uphold traditions. This generational tension can lead to a crisis of identity and cultural pride, with individuals feeling trapped between their heritage and the opportunities presented by modernization. To face these challenges, communities need to adopt inclusive approaches that promote intergenerational dialogue and support multicultural education. By balancing respect for local wisdom and modern advancements, communities can create an environment that celebrates diversity, strengthens social cohesion, and preserves cultural identity for future generations. This approach will enable societies to thrive in a rapidly changing world while remaining rooted in their rich traditions and values.

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