

SOCIO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS OF COASTAL COMMUNITIES OF NORTH WEST JAVA IN THE MIDST OF MODERNIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE NADRAN TRADITION IN COASTAL COMMUNITIES OF CIREBON

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Abstract

The Nadran tradition in the coastal community of Cirebon, West Java, is a form of local wisdom that has existed for a long time and is an integral part of their social and cultural life. This study discusses the socio-cultural dynamics of the coastal community of North West Java amidst modernization, with a focus on the Nadran tradition in the coastal community of Cirebon. This study uses a literature study method with a qualitative approach to explore how the Nadran tradition is maintained, changed, and integrated into the increasingly modern life of society. The findings of this study indicate that the Nadran tradition not only functions as a ritual of gratitude for fishermen for marine products, but also as a means of strengthening social ties and cultural identity amidst rapid social change. On the other hand, modernization brings challenges and opportunities for the sustainability of this tradition. The results of this study are expected to provide insight into efforts to preserve local culture in the context of sustainable modernization.

Keywords: *culture, nadran tradition, coastal, cirebon.*

INTRODUCTION

Coastal areas are areas that refer to transitional areas between land and sea ecosystems. This is in accordance with Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 27 of 2007 concerning Management of Coastal Areas and Small Islands, coastal areas are transitional areas between land and sea ecosystems that are influenced by changes on land and sea. Coastal areas include coastal areas that stretch from the lowest sea boundary to land where there are still sea influences such as tides, sea

breezes, and erosion. According to Dahuri (2002) the coast is a place of economic activity that includes marine and coastal fisheries, transportation and ports, mining, industrial areas, agribusiness and agroindustry, recreation and tourism as well as residential areas and waste disposal sites. The Indonesian people themselves live on around 17,000 islands, from the city of Sabang in the West to the city of Marauke in the East of Irian Jaya. They have various tribes and cultures. "Culture", according to anthropology, is the entire system of ideas, actions, and human works in the life of society that promise to be human

property obtained through education (Nur'Aini et al., 2013).

In the northern coastal areas of Java, such as Subang, Indramayu, and Cirebon, the Naran traditional ceremony is held. The purpose of this ceremony is to express gratitude for the abundant fish catch, hope for better results in the coming year, and pray that the seafarers do not experience difficulties. This is the main purpose of the Nadran Traditional Ceremony, which is held every year. A week-long night market, traditional arts, and traditional ritual ceremonies are also held.

According to Heriyawati in Hadid & Surtikanti, 2024, because Cirebon is a coastal city, a place where various regional currents gather, cultural acculturation is possible, so that coastal arts and culture can function as markers of the Indonesian archipelago. Culture is a depiction of a certain way of life that can convey certain meanings and values through everyday actions (Raymond Williams, quoted from Lismawanty et al., 2021)

The Nadran tradition in the coastal communities of Cirebon, West Java, is a form of local wisdom that has existed for a long time and is an integral part of their social and cultural life. This tradition not only serves as an expression of gratitude to God for the marine products obtained, but also as a means to strengthen social ties among community members. In the context of ever-growing modernization, Nadran faces significant challenges, especially

in terms of preserving cultural and environmental values. The coastal communities of Cirebon, who largely depend on marine products for their livelihoods, realize the importance of preserving this tradition to remain relevant amidst changing times.

Nadran is a tradition that originates from the acculturation of Islamic and Hindu cultures that has been passed down through generations for years. Some people believe that the word nadran comes from the word nazar, which in Islam means to fulfill a promise. Offering offerings to the lord of the sea, a Hindu ritual to honor the spirits of one's ancestors, is an important part of the nadran ceremony. It is also a ritual to ask for safety and an abundance of marine products.

Modernization has had a complex impact on coastal communities, including changes in the mindset and behavior of the younger generation. Many of them are more interested in modern entertainment than in carrying out the Nadran tradition, thus threatening the sustainability of this ritual. This can be seen from the decreasing participation in the Nadran ceremony, where the older generation is more involved than the younger generation. Research shows that although the community still holds Nadran every year, the original meaning and purpose of the tradition are starting to fade along with the increasing influence of outside cultures.

In the Nadran ceremony, various ritual elements such as throwing offerings into the sea become important symbols

of the community's hopes and gratitude. However, this practice must also be balanced with awareness of the environmental impacts it causes. Research shows that although the community understands the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness, there are still challenges in implementing the principle consistently. Therefore, synergy is needed between the community, government, and related institutions to ensure that the Nadran tradition is not only preserved as a cultural heritage, but also carried out in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. Overall, the socio-cultural dynamics of the coastal communities of North West Java in the context of modernization show the need for a holistic approach that integrates traditional aspects with the demands of the times. By understanding and appreciating local values such as Nadran, the community can find ways to adapt to change without losing their cultural identity. This study aims to explore more deeply how the Nadran tradition can continue and adapt amidst the increasingly strong current of modernization.

Modernization has brought significant changes to various aspects of people's lives, including in the northern coastal areas of West Java. Coastal communities in this area, especially in

Cirebon, have rich and unique traditions and cultures. One tradition that still survives today is Nadran, an annual ritual related to fishing activities and the hope for an abundant fish catch. The Nadran tradition not only reflects the community's gratitude to God, but

also functions as a social glue that strengthens togetherness and solidarity between residents.

However, along with the rapid flow of modernization and globalization, many changes have occurred in coastal communities. Modernization brings technological developments, economic changes, and shifts in social and cultural values. The presence of new technologies in the fields of fisheries and industry has changed people's way of life and livelihoods. Meanwhile, economic changes due to urbanization and industrialization have begun to erode traditional life patterns. In this context, it is important to understand how the coastal communities of Cirebon face and adapt to these changes, and how the Nadran tradition continues to survive and play a role in their lives.

This study aims to explore the socio-cultural dynamics that occur in the coastal communities of Cirebon in the midst of modernization. This study will highlight how the Nadran tradition is maintained and preserved, as well as the role of this tradition in shaping community identity and solidarity. In addition, this study will also examine how modernization affects the social, economic, and cultural structures of coastal communities, as well as the efforts made to maintain the sustainability of traditions amidst rapid change.

METHOD

This study uses a literature study method that aims to analyze the socio-cultural dynamics of coastal

communities in Cirebon. Secondary data were collected from various sources such as journals, books, research reports, and relevant scientific articles. The literature used includes studies on modernization, its impact on coastal communities, and socio-economic and cultural theories that support the analysis. Data analysis was carried out using a qualitative approach, where data obtained from various literatures were interpreted and synthesized to obtain a comprehensive picture of the socio-cultural dynamics of coastal communities. This method allows researchers to understand the patterns and trends that occur in coastal communities, as well as the factors that influence the socio-cultural dynamics of coastal communities. Thus, this study is expected to provide in-depth insights and relevant policy recommendations for the development of coastal communities in the era of modernization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Nadran tradition has been carried out for hundreds of years, since the Tarumanegara era in the 4th century. Some people believe that nadran comes from the influence of Islam from the vocabulary nadir, which means gratitude or kaulan. However, in the Hindu tradition, the nyadran ceremony also comes from the vocabulary srada (Lismawanty et al., 2021).

The Nadran tradition has been carried out from generation to generation by fishermen on the north coast of Java (Prasetya et al., 2023). This is done to

give thanks for their catch, expect more fish in the following year, and pray that they will not encounter obstacles while earning a living at sea (Deb, 2018). This is also a way to thank God Almighty for the sustenance and abundance given to them (Coe, 2023). One of the goals of the cultural and moral values contained in the Nadran Tradition is to build a society that has identity, noble character, and civilization.

The Nadran tradition is carried out routinely by fishermen on the coast of Cirebon once a year (Utami et al., 2018). The purpose of the ritual to ward off disaster is to avoid various challenges when fishing, which produces a lot of fish. Nararan is considered a sacred event and is carried out by the community as a way to show gratitude and share with each other.

The ritual process consists of several steps, such as: tahlilan or reading prayers and sholawat at night one day before the nadran ritual which is carried out at the sacred tomb of Gunung Djati Morning prayer together before the journey to the estuary; playing the tambourine musical instrument; sailing to the estuary to pray and throw offerings into the sea; returning to the Gunung Djati Tomb Site to watch a shadow puppet show with the budug basu play; arak-ar The focus of the ritual when praying and throwing offerings. Each series of ceremonies has a specific purpose, so each part must be carried out (Heriyawati et al., 2023).

To ensure that the implementation of customs or culture in society runs smoothly, every custom or culture that is still practiced by the community to this day cannot be separated from the requirements or rules (Lawelai, at al., 2021). A community leader from Cangkol Tengah Village, Lemahwungkuk District, Cirebon City said that the Nadran tradition is a Cirebon tradition from the past that is still carried out today. They said that it is only sunnah law to be carried out if community conditions do not allow it, but it is better to do it as local wisdom. The Nadran tradition in Cirebon has several requirements or rules in its implementation, traditional leaders said that these requirements or rules must be carried out during the Nadran activity process which lasts for three days and three nights, the requirements for the Nadran tradition in Cirebon City include: making anak boats, preparing agricultural products (offerings), buffalo heads, seven types of water flowers, and ruwat (shadow puppet show) (Sarifudin et al., 2022).

The Procession of Larung Sesajen in the Middle of the Sea



Figure 1. The Larung Sesajen Procession

The Larung Sesajen di Tengah Laut procession is an important part of the Nadran tradition on the coast of

Cirebon (Nurmalasari, 2023). This tradition is held as an expression of gratitude from fishermen for their catches during the year. The procession begins with a religious study and the making of a miniature ship containing offerings. The offerings are then taken to the ancestral graves before being paraded towards the sea. Upon arrival at the beach, the offerings containing agricultural products and other equipment are floated out to sea by decorated fishing boats. This procession is accompanied by various cultural arts such as burok and a dorong music stage, and many people attend to capture the moment (Hidayati, 2024).



Figure 2. Ancak Boat

Ancak boats (small boats) made for the pelarungan process (releasing offerings and buffalo heads and other agricultural products or offerings into the middle of the sea), begin to be assembled about one month to one week before the day of the Nadran tradition, the anak boats themselves are made of wooden frames, bamboo and coated with Styrofoam so that they float easily and are able to withstand the weight of food crops and buffalo heads that will be dissolved, but these materials are less environmentally friendly, especially marine biota, so fishermen replace Styrofoam with

cement paper which is more environmentally friendly.

Even the Cirebon City Tourism and Culture Office held an *ancak* boat making competition in areas that implemented Nadran in Cirebon City by considering the criteria of neatness, uniqueness, and uniqueness of the boat. After the *ancak* boat was assembled, the fishermen then prepared or collected agricultural products and slaughtered the buffalo heads. Filling the *ancak* boat is one of the assessments carried out by the Cirebon City Tourism and Culture Office, so this encouraged fishermen to fill the *ancak* boats with their agricultural products. Another social value contained in the Nadran tradition is economic value, this was expressed by community leaders in Cangkol Village, Lemahwungkuk Village, Cirebon City, that economic value is reflected in the agricultural products collected to be used as offerings in the *pelarungan* procession, the more agricultural products collected, the more it will be directly proportional to the economic conditions of the community, and vice versa. This shows that tradition or culture in a society will always be tied to the social system in it. Imam

Faturrchman also spoke about the economic value in the Nadran tradition, saying that the procession has economic value because people are encouraged to show off (sell) their agricultural products throughout time (Puspitasari, 2021). This is still ongoing and is a way to say thank you to the Cirebon City Youth, Sports,

Culture, and Tourism Office for making the Nadran tradition a national cultural festival and attracting domestic and foreign tourists (Sarifudin et al., 2022).

Cirebon Coastal Performing Arts



Figure 3. Klana Mask, Cirebon Mask Dance

Cirebon Mask Dance is a form of traditional performing art originating from the coast of Cirebon. This dance is unique because the dancers wear different masks for each character they play. Each mask has a deep meaning and symbolism, reflecting various aspects of local life and mythology. Cirebon Mask Dance is often performed in various traditional ceremonies, cultural festivals, and other important events. This performing art not only emphasizes dance and acting skills, but also combines elements of traditional music played by gamelan. Cirebon Mask Dance depicts classic and local stories, showing the roles of characters such as heroes, kings, and villains, all conveyed through expressive and symbolic dance movements.

Cirebon's Nadran Tradition Designated as Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2024

The Nadran tradition in Cirebon Regency has been designated as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indonesia (ICH) at the end of August 2024 (Utami et al, 2023). This designation is an acknowledgment of the importance of this tradition in the lives of the coastal communities of Cirebon, which involves processions, joint prayers, and the throwing of offerings into the sea as a form of gratitude for the sea catch¹. In addition to Nadran, Empal Gentong, a typical Cirebon dish made from beef and offal cooked in yellow coconut milk sauce with special spices, is also included in the ICH list. This recognition is expected to preserve and develop local culture, as well as improve community welfare. According to Sumarno, Head of the Cultural Division of the Cirebon Regency Culture and Tourism Office (Disbudpar), this decision is an important step in maintaining Cirebon culture. "We are trying to preserve culture by holding festivals in every sub-district." According to him, this is one way for people to learn more about and love their local culture.

CONCLUCION

The Nadran tradition plays an important role in the socio-cultural life of coastal communities. This tradition is not only a form of gratitude for marine products but also functions as a mechanism to strengthen social ties and cultural identity amidst the flow of modernization. Although modernization brings a number of challenges such as changes in values

and lifestyles, the coastal communities of Cirebon are able to adapt and modify the Nadran tradition without losing its essence. This study emphasizes the importance of preserving local traditions as part of a strategy for cultural sustainability in the era of globalization.

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