BARITAN TRADITION IN ASEMDOYONG VILLAGE: HISTORY AND LOCAL WISDOM

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is one of the countries that has many diverse traditions and cultures. The Baritan tradition or sea alms is one of the traditions carried out by the Javanese community. As a form of culture, of course the *Baritan* tradition has a meaning in it. Meaning contains a message or mandate, main thought or idea, information, intention, or concept. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to know and understand what is contained in the Baritan tradition in Asemdoyong Village, Pemalang. The research method used in this research is qualitative, and the research approach used is using a folklore approach. The folklore method is used with the working steps of data collection, classification and analysis. The process of collecting data on the baritan tradition is carried out through direct observation or observation and not. journal articles and documents, and strengthened through interviews with sources or informants. The results of this study indicate that the Baritan tradition originated from the residents of Pemalang who were attacked by an outbreak of disease and believed to be a punishment for not giving honor to the ruler of the north coast. Baritan tradition also has values in it, namely religious value as gratitude to God, social value in the form of mutual cooperation, economic value in the form of economic improvement, and education in the form of knowledge in preserving culture. It is hoped that this research can help in maintaining Indonesia's cultural identity and local wisdom, as well as increasing public awareness about the importance of preserving and protecting culture as part of the national heritage.

Keywords: Baritan Tradition, Asemdoyong, Pemalang, History, Local Wisdom

ABSTRAK

Indonesia merupakan salah satu negara yang mempunyai banyak tradisi serta budaya yang beraneka ragam. Tradisi Baritan atau sedekah laut merupakan salah satu tradisi yang dilakukan oleh masyarakat jawa. Sebagai salah satu bentuk kebudayaan, tentunya tradisi Baritan mempunyai maksud di dalamnya. Makna mengandung pesan atau amanat, pokok pikiran atau gagasan ide, informasi, maksud, maupun konsep. Oleh karena itu tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui dan memahami apa yang terdapat dalam tradisi Baritan di Desa Asemdoyong Pemalang. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif, dan pendekatan penelitian yang digunakan yaitu menggunakan pendekatan folklore. Metode folklore digunakan dengan langkah-langkah kerja pengumpulan, klasifikasi dan analisis data. Proses pengumpulan data tradisi baritan dilakukan melalui observasi atau pengamatan langsung dan tidak. artikel jurnal dan dokumen, serta dikuatkan melalui wawancara terhadap narasumber atau informan. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tradisi Baritan berawal dari warga pemalang yang terserang wabah penyakit dan dipercaya sebagai hukuman karena tidak memberikan penghormatan kepada penguasa pantai utara. Tradisi baritan juga memiliki nilainilai di dalamnya, yaitu nilai agama sebagai rasa syukur kepada Tuhan, nilai sosial berupa gotong royong, nilai ekonomi berupa meningkatnya perekonomian, dan pendidikan berupa pengetahuan dalam melestarikan kebudayaan. Diharapkan penelitian ini dapat membantu dalam mempertahankan identitas budaya dan kearifan lokal Indonesia, serta meningkatkan



kesadaran masyarakat tentang pentingnya menjaga dan melindungi budaya sebagai bagian dari warisan nasional.

Kata kunci: Tradisi Baritan, Asemdoyong, Pemalang, Sejarah, Kearifan Lokal

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the countries that has many traditions and diverse cultures. Culture and tradition are two elements that are closely intertwined and coexist in society. This shows that there is something that must be passed down from generation to generation. In line with this. Bintari & Darmawan (2016) revealed that the role of youth in social life is needed to become a successor to the nation's culture that has high value, becomes a foundation and strength as capital to encourage better change. In this context, it is important for the younger generation to understand and respect the culture that has been left behind by previous generations, as well as to contribute to the development of a better culture that is more relevant to the future. Thus, the younger generation can become the successor of a culture that has high value and becomes a solid foundation for realizing changes for the better.

Javanese people have several traditions that are intended as a form of gratitude to God and to maintain peace, harmony and peace. According to Rhoni Rodin (2013), tradition is a cultural heritage and past habits that are still preserved and always carried out continuously until now. The Sea Alms ceremony is one of the heritages in the form of ceremonial activities that not everyone can carry out, but only certain people who have an interest in it (Ani & Suryanti 2017). The *Baritan* tradition or sea alms is one of the traditions carried out by the Javanese community. This tradition has existed since ancient times and is still going on today because it is hereditary. This *Baritan* tradition is one form of Indonesian local wisdom that must be maintained and preserved, because it is one of the weapons to maintain and protect the character of a nation. Moreover, local wisdom owned by the Indonesian people is now becoming extinct due to the negative influence of globalization that is so rapid in this modern.

The *Baritan* tradition is carried out by the local fishing population. The diversity of the Asemdoyong village community has a fairly high level of religiosity. The *Baritan* tradition is considered a relic of animism and dynamism traditions. Symbolic activities in the ritual almost always explain the belief in the existence of supernatural forces (supra natural) that are to be addressed or contacted with a series of special actions and special utterances such as the reading of sacred texts, prayers or dhikr performed by a person (personal ritual) or together (communal ritual).

The *Baritan* tradition in Asemdoyong Village, or in other areas known as *larungan*, is part of coastal culture. According to Thohir (2006), coastal culture is a culture that develops and lives along the north coast of Java. People who live in this area are called coastal communities. Baritan tradition or known as sea alms is a tradition carried out by fishermen (community) Asemdoyong Pemalang. The *Baritan* tradition is carried out and commemorated every year and is held on 1 Sura, the new year in the Javanese calendar or 1 Muharram in the Hijri calendar. One of the forms that exist in the *Baritan* tradition is the form of offering bouts. If the fishermen do not get offerings during the barging, they will water or clean their boats with sea water around the place of offerings (DKP Central Java Province, 2017). The *Baritan* ceremony

is considered necessary to preserve, because the people of Asemdoyong Village believe that if this tradition is not carried out, the fishermen's catch of fish will decrease. In addition, traders also believe that if the *Baritan* ceremony is not held, they will lose the opportunity to earn additional income, which in turn can affect the social and economic conditions of the Asemdoyong Village community.

As a form of culture, of course the Baritan tradition has a meaning in it. Meaning contains meaning or understanding, message or mandate, main idea or idea, information, intention, or concept. In a previous study by Rosida & Eny Kusumastuti (2012) described how the process and stages of the offerings in Asemdoyong village. So, to strengthen the urgency of this article, a broad research objective is needed compared to previous research, namely by linking the values inherent in human life with the implementation of the *baritan* tradition. With the values contained in it, this research does not only focus on ritualism, but teaches how the tradition can shape the character and collective awareness of the community in modern times.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to know and understand what is contained in the *Baritan* tradition in Asemdoyong Village, Pemalang. Thus, this research discusses the history, stages of implementation, symbolic meaning and values contained in the *Baritan* tradition. This research can also be used as evidence of the history of local wisdom in Indonesia, which remains relevant in modern times as a cultural forum in teaching the importance of cooperation, togetherness, and gratitude. In the present context, it is hoped that this research can help in maintaining Indonesia's cultural identity and local wisdom, as well as raising public awareness about the importance of preserving and protecting culture as part of national heritage.

METHOD

The research method used in this research is qualitative, and the research approach used is using a folklore approach. Folklore is a collective culture that is spread and passed down from generation to generation. Folklore was classified by Jan Harold Brunvand into three groups, namely oral, partially oral, and non-oral folklore (Danandjaja, 1997). The *Baritan* tradition is partly oral folklore, apart from being a folk ceremony, there are equipment or objects and symbols that have meaning. Symbols are markers that are based on convention or agreement. The folklore method is used with the working steps of data collection, classification and analysis. The process of collecting data on the Baritan tradition is carried out through direct and indirect observation or observation, journal articles and documents, and strengthened through interviews with sources or informants with a total of three people, with the criteria of being a native of Asemdoyong village, and having participated in a series of *Baritan* processes in Asemdoyong village. The research data on the Baritan tradition that has been obtained is then classified based on the research objectives, namely history, ritual, meaning, and values in the *Baritan* tradition. In addition, this study also took references from several sources such as journals to serve as reinforcement, then the data and information that had been collected were analyzed through techniques proposed by Miles and A. Michael Huberman (2014), namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Then related to data validity using source triangulation, namely matching data by comparing facts from one source with other sources (Sugiyono, 2016).



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History of Baritan in Asemdoyong Village

The word *Baritan* comes from the Javanese language, from the word mbubarake peri lan satan, which means to disperse the fairies and demons. The Baritan tradition, also known as larungan, is a tradition of sea alms performed by fishermen (the community). The Baritan tradition in Asemdoyong Village is a tradition or culture of fishermen to give offerings at sea so that fishermen are given safety or blessings. The Baritan Tradition procession is held every 1 Sura or 1 Muharram every year which is passed down from generation to generation. The baritan tradition can be interpreted as a form of cultural expression of the community and a form of gratitude for the results of work or abundant fish catches. In addition, this procession is believed to make their fish income increase. Making life in the world safe, widada nir ing sambekala, is one of the main ideals in the Javanese view of life. Selamat or safety is a state of avoiding disaster, being safe, healthy, happy, prosperous physically and mentally in living life in the world and the hereafter. In relation to the safety of life, there are reasons that underlie humans craving safety, including because when they are safe, they can carry out various activities and obtain benefits. Javanese people, especially in Asemdoyong Village, believe that the form of safety is when they can minimize life disturbances. Even the smallest disturbance in life will have a negative impact on life. The Baritan tradition at the sea border is the answer for some people to continue to carry out the tradition.

According to research by Rosida & Eny Kusumastuti (2012), the origin of the *Baritan* ceremony is the forbidden love story between Buduk Basu and Dewi Sri. Buduk Basu and Dewi Sri are siblings who love each other. Dewi Sri as his brother and Buduk Basu as his sister, because the siblings love each other finally Buduk Basu an Dewi Sri are punished and cursed by God. Dewi Sri turned into a latitude and Buduk Basu turned into a buffalo. However, there are other sources that say that the *Baritan* tradition originated from the residents of Pemalang who were attacked by an outbreak of disease and then believed to be a punishment for not paying homage in the form of offerings to the ruler of the North Coast named Dewi Lanjar. Therefore, the residents of Pemalang held a sea alms tradition.

The cultural event or activity "Baritan" carried out by the people of Asemdoyong Village, Pemalang Regency is an event that has a history. The emergence of Baritan does not have a definite source, but as stated by a village elder named Mahmud that Baritan began in 1951, but written sources have not been found until now. The absence of a written source means that the exact date of Baritan's inception is unknown. This is indeed a problem for historical studies as it also affects the underlying context of the event. Nevertheless, Baritan is a cultural event that continues to be practiced by the people of Asemdoyong Village.

Stages of Baritan Implementation

The *Baritan* tradition is held on the 1st of Sura, before that date there are usually a series of activities that accompany the *Baritan* event. Such as soccer competitions held a week before *Baritan*, dangdut entertainment on the night before *Baritan* and recitation held three days before *Baritan* and there is a night market with various rides.

There is also gift-giving to orphans, and providing groceries to elderly widows. *Baritan* in Asemdoyong Village consists of ancak making, arak offerings, boat drawing, offerings throwing and shadow puppet show. First, ancak is a small ship (miniature ship) made of wood and bamboo which is decorated using a red and white flag made of plastic and coconut leaves. Second, *Arak sesaji*, which are offerings that have been neatly arranged in the *ancak* which are placed in a pickup truck and then paraded from Asemdoyong Village Hall and ended at the TPI (Fish Auction Place), and enlivened by tambourine musicians, marching bands, burok art, lumping horses, and clowns. Third, the drawing of the ship, which is a lottery using a paper roll made by the committee followed by the fishermen and all visitors to the offerings. Fourth, the Fighting of offerings, which is a ceremonial procession where offerings that have been neatly arranged in a decorated *ancak* are ready to be floated to the middle of the sea. This is followed by visitors who come, both from Asemdoyong villagers themselves and from other villages. It has two main events, namely masrahaken sesaji (the handing over of offerings) which is followed by the committee and the visitors, the second is manganan, which is done after the masrahaken sesaji is finished. Fifth, the shadow puppet show, which is a performance of a puppet made of leather and shaped to resemble a certain character played by a puppeteer.

The process of throwing offerings is carried out in several stages, including: preparation, implementation, and closing. In addition to the procession of throwing offerings in the middle of the sea, the *Baritan* tradition in Asemdoyong Village is also colored by the procession of *nyajen* which is carried out personally on the border between the river and the sea. Generally, each person who owns a boat will do *nyajen* by providing various foods. The place that is usually used to put offerings is usually a place that is considered sacred. The Asemdoyong community (fishermen) believes that life in the world consists of two realms, namely the human and supernatural realms. They believe that by giving offerings in places that are considered sacred and at the border of the river and the sea, supernatural beings can enjoy the offerings they offer. Usually the offerings offered for the *nyajen* procession are rice dish, market *dodol*, and various porridge. If they enjoy the offerings that have been given, then the risk of disaster during the sea can be avoided. In addition to placing offerings, they also offer prayers according to their respective beliefs.

First, preparation, by holding a committee meeting so that the implementation of the offerings can run well and smoothly. The meeting is held at Asemdoyong Village Hall and attended by the Village Head and fishermen. Preparations were made such as preparing the place used for the offerings. The month used for the offerings is the month of Sura or Muharram, because the Javanese believe that the month of Sura is a month to ask for a request or ask for blessings, so that what is desired can be achieved. The fight for offerings is carried out starting at 09:00 WIB. In addition to the place, the preparation of the offerings is also preparing the place for slaughtering buffaloes, making ancak, a place to put offerings, making and determining the route of the offerings, the place for drawing boats, the place for boats to the shoreline, notification to the Regent and Deputy Regent of Pemalang.

Second, the implementation, the offerings that have been prepared are placed in a pickup truck. After that, the procession starts from Asemdoyog Village Hall. The offerings that have been placed in the pickup car walk first, followed by tambourine

musicians, then marching bands, *burok* art, lumping horses and clowns. In addition, there are also many visitors and residents who accompany behind it to the destination, namely the Fish Auction Place (TPI). After the offerings arrive at the TPI, a drawing is held for the fishing boat that will carry the offerings. After the draw, the offerings are carried by six people to the boat that carries the offerings by the sea. There are three types of offerings to be thrown, namely *ancak cantrang, gemplo, and garok*. After everything is ready, the offerings are immediately thrown into the sea and accompanied by boats carrying visitors. In the middle of the sea, the boats that accompany the offerings crash into each other and then the water splashes between the visitors of one ship and another ship. After the *sirat-siratan*, the offerings are ready to be floated to the middle of the sea, which is called Karang Subali which is considered sacred. Before being floated, there is a prayer first and then the offerings are floated to the sea.

Third, the closing, the offerings end with manganan sesaji in the sea. The offerings in the masting become a bone of contention for the visitors, because people believe that if they eat the food offerings, what they want will be achieved. For example, fishermen want to get a lot of fish, visitors want to get a mate, other visitors want their merchandise to be in demand and so on. The *baritan* tradition event is closed with a prayer together to ask for safety and prosperity for all residents.

Symbolic Meanings

Symbolic is a concept that involves the use of symbols or signs to convey messages or deeper meanings. In various aspects of life, symbols can be found and used for various purposes, whether in art, religion, language, or culture. The implementation of a tradition is certainly inseparable from the symbolic meanings contained in it, as is the case with the *baritan* tradition. The symbols contained in the offerings such as buffalo heads, market snacks, rice, bananas, and *kupat lepet*.

First, two buffalo heads, the Asemdoyong community (fishermen) make buffalo heads as the main symbol of offerings that are floated at sea in the *Baritan* tradition. The buffalo head itself has the meaning that the head indicates the main core. The buffalo head has a symbolic meaning, namely as a symbol of strength and leader so that fishermen and the people of Asemdoyong village are always strong in facing obstacles at sea, such as facing big waves at sea and hoping that fishermen can become good family leaders and can provide for their families by fishing at sea. Then some people (fishermen) of Asemdoyong, interpret the buffalo head as a symbol of prosperity. The community is expected to work hard and diligently when fishing at sea, so that their economic life will improve and prosper. The community (fishermen) also analogizes the buffalo head meat as food for fish in the sea. The more fish in the sea, the more results obtained and enjoyed by fishermen. In addition, buffaloes are also considered favored stars in the sea and are used as vehicles.

Second, market snacks, usually containing money in the form of hundreds (Javanese: satus) symbols that have the meaning of sat (asat) and atus (resik). Satus money is interpreted as a symbol of humans being clean from sin (Endraswara, 2003). Quite a lot of offerings in ancak or jolen are market snacks. The snacks include children's food, apem, fruits, layer cakes, black sticky rice, coffee, tea, ketupat, and bananas. The Asemdoyong community interprets market snacks as a symbol of

harmony between residents or called *sesrawungan* (harmonious and peaceful human relations). In addition, some Asemdoyong people interpret market snacks as a symbol of food for rulers and dwellers in the sea. The market snacks are intended as a form of offering to the inhabitants of the sea with their respective levels, such as *dayang*, Dewi Lanjar (north sea of Java), *jin* and others.

Third, rice is the staple food consumed daily. Many Asemdoyong people are not only fishermen but also farmers. They view rice as a symbol of prosperity and tranquility, even considering it as the embodiment of Dewi Sri, the goddess of prosperity. When rice is available in abundance, they feel safe and prosperous. The availability of sufficient rice allows fishermen to concentrate well on their work, so it is expected that the abundant catch of fish will also bring prosperity to their families.

Fourth, plantains are generally classified as market snacks. In the *Baritan* tradition, the offerings also include bananas, as they are considered the main element of the offerings as well as a symbol of high expectations by the people of Asemdoyong. They see the banana as a symbol that is expected to bring benefits not only to themselves, but also to others. Therefore, in the implementation of the Baritan tradition, plantain is the top priority because it is considered to have a deeper meaning than other types of bananas. However, the use of plantains is not mandatory; if they are not available, regular bananas can be used instead. The people of Asemdoyong also hope to emulate the plantain's positive characteristics, such as justice, courage, noble character, and accuracy in keeping promises.

Fifth, kupat lepet, in the offerings of the baritan tradition is separate from the market snacks. Kupat lepet is usually placed on top of other offerings (hanging position). Kupat lepet is a symbol of apology for all mistakes (Giri, 2010). Asemdoyong people interpret the symbol of kupat lepet as an apology (ngaku lepat). The analogy of kupat lepet is that the fishermen when working for fish in the sea cannot be separated from mistakes. These mistakes include littering and polluting the environment. If the environment is dirty, it will affect the income (fish catch). By apologizing, the fishermen hope to always be given safety and avoid various disasters while at sea.

Values in the Baritan Tradition

In essence, value is a substance inherent in society that has an important role in human life. Value is something that humans need to pay attention to as a subject regarding good and bad behavior. Value is a benchmark that is used as a basis for humans to do things in life. Value is considered as something valuable because of its normative nature (containing expectations, elements of desire, and a necessity to do so). The *Baritan* tradition has values in its implementation, namely: social value, spiritual value, economic value, and educational value.

First, social value, the Baritan tradition has a strong social value in building togetherness and a spirit of mutual cooperation in the community. More than just a ritual of throwing offerings, this tradition emphasizes the importance of cooperation in preparing the various equipment needed. The spirit of solidarity that grows among residents has a positive impact, both for the smooth running of the sea alms tradition and for the community itself. This is reflected in the enthusiasm of Asemdoyong villagers in preparing all the needs from the beginning to the end of the event. However, there are some negative impacts of the tradition, namely the number of visitors who

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throw garbage in any place. This causes the surrounding environment to become dirty and not kept clean. Scattered garbage, especially plastic food waste can pollute the sea and disrupt the surrounding ecosystem. So, it takes awareness from all visitors who come to maintain cleanliness during the implementation of this tradition. In addition to the cleanliness issue, there are also some people who take advantage of this opportunity to commit crimes, namely pickpocketing, because in this implementation there are so many visitors who come so that they have the opportunity to commit crimes. Then during the dangdut performance, there were some visitors who got drunk drinking alcohol, which does not reflect someone who is guided by religious values and Pancasila (Narimo, 2017).

Second, spiritual value, the Baritan or sea alms tradition in Asemdoyong Village has a fairly strong element of spiritual value. This can be seen from the beginning of the implementation procession, where before the tradition begins, a recitation is first held which is addressed to Allah SWT, the owner of the world in its entirety, then after that it is followed by reading tahlil and reading selected letters which are indeed read during the recitation procession. After the recitation of the recitation the night before the procession begins, on the next day of the event, a series of prayers are also offered from the beginning and end of the procession. During the procession of the offerings, religious leaders say Bismillah which is then followed by reading Allahuma solli alla Muhammad, then after the event ends, usually religious leaders will read the Ba'dal Al-Fatihah prayer as a sign of the end of the Baritan tradition procession. Initially, the Baritan tradition was carried out as a form of respect to the ruler of the sea (Mbaurekso) by giving offerings as an expression of gratitude. The goal is for the ruler of the sea to provide abundant sustenance and protect fishermen and coastal communities from various disasters. The community believes that if this tradition is not carried out, the fishermen's fish catch will decrease, which also affects the interest of buyers. However, along with the increasing level of religiosity among the people of Asemdoyong Village in the modern era, the implementation of the *Baritan* ceremony is now more interpreted as an expression of gratitude to Allah SWT for the sustenance received.

Third, economic value, the implementation of the *Baritan* tradition is almost the same as other activities that involve many people and bring crowds to see the rituals of the tradition, with many crowds coming, traders usually set up food stands in the area of the tradition. Various foods are sold at higher prices, which is not surprising because some people consider that the *Baritan* tradition which is attended by many people is an advantage in itself or called aji mumpung. Aji mumpung is a moment when people take advantage of an opportunity for themselves, with *aji mumpung* the traders will get more money than when they sell on normal days. In addition to food stands, there are also night market rides such as Ferris wheel, kora-kora, ombak banyu and so on that enliven the *Baritan* event. In addition, the *Baritan* tradition is also a place to introduce tourism in Asemdoyong village, namely Muara Indah Asemdoyong Beach, where visitors not only enjoy the beauty of the sea, but can capture moments in that place with interesting photo spots. With the development of the tourism sector, it can provide opportunities for the community to improve the economy by setting up food stands in the beach area. Thus, the implementation of this tradition not only has an impact on social and spiritual aspects, but also has an impact on tourism development. Fourth, educational value, the implementation of the rituals of the Sea Alms tradition has educational value for the wider community. Local wisdom has enormous potential to be introduced to the realm of education. In curriculum delivery, historical learning materials are presented, such as the origin of a region and its customs. Then in language lessons, students can learn expressions or terms in local languages from ancestors. In art lessons, students can be invited to play regional musical instruments or practice traditional dance. Furthermore, students can study Pancasila and citizenship education to strengthen their love for their homeland. In this way, students not only gain academic knowledge, but also understand and preserve local values in their environment. This integration of education can be an important step in preserving cultural heritage and introducing it to the younger generation in the midst of modernization.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion, the *Baritan* Tradition in Asemdoyong Village is a hereditary cultural heritage carried out by the fishing community as a form of gratitude and hope for safety and abundance of sea products. In addition, *Baritan* contains various values, including social values in the form of togetherness and mutual cooperation, spiritual values reflected in prayers and recitations, economic values with increased trading activities, and educational values in the form of cultural preservation and moral learning for the community. However, in its implementation, there are challenges such as environmental cleanliness due to garbage from visitors and potential security disturbances. Therefore, collective awareness is needed to maintain the sustainability of this tradition so that it continues to provide positive benefits to the community.

The Baritan tradition in Asemdoyong Village has an important role in shaping cultural identity. However, along with the development of the times, there are several challenges such as the declining participation of the younger generation in preserving the tradition. Therefore, a cultural education program is needed for the younger generation, namely by integrating material about local wisdom in the school curriculum, both in history, language, cultural arts, and Pancasila education subjects. In addition, the government needs to support cultural activities through regulations and funding allocations by holding annual cultural festivals involving various elements of society to foster awareness and love for local wisdom in their environment. Furthermore, related to the era of sophisticated technology, documentation in the form of videos, articles, and photos that are packaged attractively to be disseminated through social media and other platforms is needed, so that local wisdom can be recognized by the wider community. With the implementation of some of the above strategies, it is hoped that local wisdom in the environment around us can be preserved and continue to grow, not only as a cultural heritage, but also as a social and economic force for the community.



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