

# The *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* Traditions at Petilasan Genuk Kemiri, Central Java: Strengthening Social Solidarity and Cultural Identity Amid Modernization

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## Abstract:

This study examines the role of the *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* traditions at Petilasan Genuk Kemiri, Kadipaten Pati, Central Java, in promoting social solidarity and preserving cultural identity amid modernization. The main objective of this study is to understand the social and cultural significance of these two traditions, as well as their contribution to strengthening social cohesion and harmony within the community. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, involving data collection through observation, interviews with community leaders, traditional leaders, village heads, and the use of related documents and literature as supporting data. The findings indicate that these traditions not only serve as a medium for cultural preservation but also strengthen social bonds and sustain local cultural values. These practices highlight the strong relationship between cultural habits and the historical awareness that continues to be upheld by the community. The *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* ceremonies combine spiritual, historical, and social aspects in a sacred ritual, contributing to the strengthening of cultural identity, social relations, and respect for local history. Based on Émile Durkheim's theory of social solidarity, this study demonstrates how these traditions enhance a sense of unity and social solidarity through cooperation and collective participation. The involvement of community members in contributing labor, material, or prayers illustrates the importance of these traditions in fostering social cohesion and preserving local culture. This study significantly contributes to the development of sociology, particularly in studies on culture, social identity, community cohesion, and social change. Through an in-depth exploration of the *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* rituals, this research enriches our understanding of social dynamics in local communities and emphasizes the crucial role of traditions in shaping social solidarity.

**Keywords:** Social Solidarity, Cultural Identity, *Sedekah Bumi*, *Tasyakuran*, Social Harmony.

## Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran tradisi *Sedekah Bumi* dan *Tasyakuran* di Petilasan Genuk Kemiri, Kadipaten Pati, Jawa Tengah, dalam mempromosikan solidaritas sosial dan menjaga identitas budaya di tengah arus modernitas. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah untuk memahami makna sosial dan budaya dari kedua tradisi tersebut, serta kontribusinya dalam memperkuat kohesi sosial dan harmoni dalam masyarakat. Penelitian ini menggunakan

pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif, yang melibatkan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara dengan tokoh adat, pemangku adat, kepala desa, serta menggunakan dokumen dan literatur terkait sebagai data pendukung. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi ini tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai media pelestarian budaya, tetapi juga memperkuat ikatan sosial dan menjaga keberlanjutan nilai-nilai budaya lokal. Praktik tradisi ini menggambarkan hubungan erat antara kebiasaan budaya dan kesadaran sejarah yang terus dipertahankan oleh masyarakat. Upacara Sedekah Bumi dan Tasyakuran ini menggabungkan aspek spiritual, sejarah, dan sosial dalam sebuah ritual yang sakral, yang berkontribusi dalam memperkuat identitas budaya, mempererat hubungan sosial, dan menghormati sejarah lokal. Berdasarkan teori solidaritas sosial Émile Durkheim, penelitian ini menunjukkan bagaimana tradisi ini memperkuat rasa persatuan dan solidaritas sosial melalui kerja sama dan partisipasi kolektif. Partisipasi warga dalam memberikan tenaga, materi, atau doa memperlihatkan pentingnya tradisi ini dalam membangun kohesi sosial dan melestarikan budaya lokal. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap pengembangan ilmu sosiologi, khususnya dalam kajian budaya, identitas sosial, kohesi masyarakat, dan perubahan sosial. Melalui eksplorasi mendalam mengenai pelaksanaan ritual Sedekah Bumi dan Tasyakuran, penelitian ini memperkaya pemahaman tentang dinamika sosial dalam masyarakat lokal dan menyoroti peran penting tradisi dalam membentuk solidaritas sosial.

**Kata Kunci:** Solidaritas Sosial, Identitas Budaya, Sedekah Bumi, Tasyakuran, Harmoni Sosial.

## INTRODUCTION

Amidst the currents of modernization and globalization, many local traditions are increasingly eroded by the passage of time, especially among younger generations (Mohyeddin, 2024). Traditions once considered sacred and vital in shaping cultural identity now face major challenges, including shifting values, generational gaps, and a growing tendency to prioritize economic interests over social and cultural values (Friedmann, 2005; Suharyanto & Wiflihani, 2024). One particularly interesting phenomenon is the continued practice of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* by the community at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, located in Kadipaten Pati, Central Java. Despite the tide of modernization, the local community maintains these traditions as an expression of gratitude for the agricultural bounty they receive and as a medium for preserving harmonious relationships between humans, nature, and ancestors (Aji, 2023).

This context becomes even more significant when considering the existence of 2,161 *komunitas adat* (customary communities) scattered across Indonesia, with the largest concentrations found in Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Sumatra. These communities serve as custodians of traditional knowledge and local wisdom passed down through generations. Furthermore, as of today, the Indonesian government has recognized 1,941 cultural traditions and practices as part of the country's *Intangible Cultural Heritage* (*Warisan Budaya Takbenda*, WBTh), encompassing various rituals, folk arts, oral expressions, and traditional knowledge systems (Kemendikdasmen RI, 2024). This data underscores Indonesia's immense cultural wealth, which faces serious threats if not accompanied by systematic preservation efforts. In this light, the sustainability of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* in Genuk Kemiri holds not only local importance but also contributes to safeguarding the national cultural mosaic increasingly marginalized by modern forces.

Nevertheless, many other local traditions in Indonesia are gradually fading under the pressures of modernization. For instance, the *Kenduri* tradition in West Sumatra, once a medium for communal gathering and sharing, is now declining due to increasingly individualistic and consumerist lifestyles (Yeti et al., 2025). In Bali, the *Ngaben* cremation ritual, a central component of Hindu religious practice, while still observed, has undergone a shift in meaning due to tourism pressures that have commercialized the ritual and diluted its spiritual essence (Adhika & Putra, 2020; Raya et al., 2023). Similarly, the *Rambu Solo* funeral ceremonies in Toraja, known for their grandeur, are also under threat as fewer young people are willing to continue the tradition due to high costs and a preference for more practical modern lifestyles (Paganggi et al., 2021). These phenomena are worthy of deeper exploration. While many regions in Indonesia have experienced declining interest in such traditions, in *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, these rituals remain vibrant and function as a source of social strength that reinforces community cohesion. *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* are not merely religious rituals but also symbols of social solidarity that bind people together. Every resident, regardless of social status, participates in these ceremonies, highlighting the tradition's vital role in fostering unity within an increasingly plural and fragmented society.

Studies on *Sedekah Bumi* and similar rituals have been conducted, but most tend to focus on a single dimension—religious, social, or historical. For example, Afifah et al. (2015) explored the religious significance of

*Sedekah Bumi* in Tegalharjo Village, emphasizing communal gratitude to God. However, their research did not comprehensively analyze how the tradition also serves as a social force strengthening interpersonal bonds. Similarly, Arinda (2014) interpreted *Sedekah Bumi* as the product of cultural acculturation between Islam and Javanese traditions in Sratujejo Village, Bojonegoro, but did not delve into how the ritual functions as a symbol of cultural identity that fosters social cohesion.

In this context, *Sedekah Bumi* can be understood as a mechanism for actualizing social values such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), the preservation of local history, and reverence for ancestors—a function also evident in rituals such as *Grebeg Maulud* in Surakarta (Ayuningtyas et al., 2024) and the *Ya Qowiyyu Festival* in Jatinom (Sholihah, 2019), both of which integrate ecological, economic, and spiritual dimensions into collective practices. The adaptive dimension of such traditions is also seen in coastal communities such as *Tuturangjana Andala* in Sulawesi and *sea harvest* ceremonies in Probolinggo (Wulandari et al., 2024), as well as in the *Maddoa* ritual in Pinrang, which merges Islamic elements with local wisdom (Santalia et al., 2024). These examples affirm that tradition is not static—it continuously adapts to its social context and times.

Moreover, the fusion of spiritual, local, and modern elements is clearly demonstrated in communities such as the Nias people, who maintain ancestral death rites despite widespread adherence to Christianity (Zaluchu, 2023); the Osing people in Banyuwangi, who blend Islam with animism (Hadzantonis, 2019); and the Karonese of Sinabung, who retain traditional rituals within a Christian framework (Ginting et al., 2025). This research, therefore, seeks to fill a crucial gap in the literature by examining how *Sedekah Bumi* not only survives as a symbolic heritage but also actively shapes cultural identity and reinforces social solidarity amid the pressures of modernization.

This highlights a critical gap in local tradition studies—particularly regarding how *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* in *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* should be interpreted not merely as religious rituals, but as collective symbols of social solidarity that strengthen interpersonal networks, affirm local identity, and reproduce historical values across generations. Additionally, very few studies have directly linked the sustainability of this tradition with the local historical significance of the *Petilasan* site and its adaptive mechanisms in facing modernization, such as the integration of social media, contemporary entertainment, and youth engagement. Thus, this research intends to address that gap through a more comprehensive and contextual approach that unites ritual, social, historical, and adaptive dimensions into a mutually reinforcing cultural framework.

This study aims to fill the void in previous research by deeply exploring how the traditions of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* in *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* serve to strengthen social solidarity and preserve the community's cultural identity. It investigates the socio-cultural meanings of these traditions and analyzes their contemporary relevance in an era of rapid change. By examining the intersection of local history, tradition, and social transformation, this research seeks to provide new insights into how the community celebrates these rituals as acts of ancestral reverence and as a symbol of social strength that fosters harmony among residents.

Based on this objective, the study argues that *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* in *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* function not only as religious rituals but also as mechanisms for strengthening social solidarity and cohesion within the community (Durkheim, 2014). Through shared participation in these rituals, local people reinforce their social ties and preserve cultural values inherited from their ancestors. Moreover, these traditions serve as bridges connecting younger generations with their local history and culture while remaining relevant in navigating the challenges posed by modernization.

## METHOD

This study focuses on the traditions of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* practiced at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, located in Kadipaten Pati, Central Java. The unit of analysis is the cultural practices reflected in the ritual activities involving the local community. These rituals function as symbols of social solidarity, cultural preservation, and reverence for ancestors, all of which are deeply connected to the site's local history. The main objective of this study is to examine how these traditions contribute to strengthening social bonds and preserving the cultural identity of the community.

The research employed a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, allowing the researcher to explore and understand the social and cultural meanings embedded in the *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* traditions at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*. This qualitative approach was chosen because the study aims to deeply investigate how the local community interprets and practices these traditions within a dynamic social and cultural context (Lune &

Berg, 2017). Through this method, the researcher was able to extract detailed insights related to the meaning, social values, and adaptive aspects of long-standing local traditions. The method also enabled the identification of dynamics and transformations in the practice, especially those influenced by modernization.

This study collected both primary and secondary data. The primary data came from in-depth interviews with key informants who possess direct knowledge and experience regarding the implementation of the traditions. These informants included the *juru kunci* (site caretakers), customary leaders, community elders, village heads, and several visitors to the *petilasan*. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to allow for flexibility in exploring deeper insights into the participants' understanding of social solidarity, tradition preservation, and changes in ritual practice. The secondary data consisted of documents detailing the history of *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* and scholarly literature on the *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* traditions in Kadipaten Pati. Additionally, visual recordings and photographs of the ritual performances served as supplementary documentation that enriched the analysis.

The data collection techniques included participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Observation occurred in three phases: first, the pre-event phase (April 15, 2024), during which the researcher observed community preparations, such as offerings, coordination efforts, and stakeholder involvement. Second, the event phase (July 23, 2024), where the researcher documented each stage of the procession, including symbolic elements, community participation, and social interactions. Third, the post-event phase (August 8, 2024), in which the researcher explored the perceived meanings and social impact of the rituals, as well as community reflections on the tradition just performed.

The semi-structured interviews with key informants aimed to gather deeper information about the history, philosophical meanings, transformations, and adaptive strategies of the traditions. These interviews also sought to understand the community's acceptance of the traditions and their role in fostering social solidarity and preserving local cultural identity.

The data gathered from observations and interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis (Miles & Huberman, 2013). Thematic analysis involved reducing the data by filtering and categorizing relevant information into main themes, such as social solidarity, traditional values, the role of customary systems in daily life, and observed changes in the tradition's practice. The next stage involved grouping emerging themes to help the researcher draw conclusions about the social and cultural meanings embedded in the *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* traditions.

This analytical process allowed the researcher not only to describe the ritual facts but also to interpret the values underlying these traditional practices. Through this approach, the study aims to contribute to the preservation and development of local cultural heritage that remains relevant amid changing times.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Practice of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*

This study documents the various stages involved in the performance of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* held at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, Kadipaten Pati, Central Java. Believed to be the historical origin of the establishment of Pati Regency in 1292 AD, this *petilasan* is a sacred site highly venerated by the local community (Aji, 2023). The people of Sarirejo Village and surrounding areas carry out the *Sedekah Bumi* tradition annually, especially after the month of *Suro*, as an expression of gratitude to God for the harvest (Aji, 2023).

According to Mbah Legiman, the site's *juru kunci* (spiritual guardian), "Every year we conduct the *Sedekah Bumi* ritual here as an act of gratitude for the harvest, and *Genuk Kemiri* remains the center of this celebration, even though it has been damaged" (Interview, May 15, 2024). This ritual is not only a way to give thanks for agricultural abundance, but also a means to honor ancestors and the historical legacy tied to the site.

The ritual process begins with a community deliberation to determine the date and plan the preparations. During the preparation stage, residents prepare traditional offerings made from agricultural produce, such as *tumpeng*, *nasi kuning*, and various traditional cakes. These offerings are used in a communal feast (*kenduri*) and collective prayers during the ritual. As Sudiyono, a local customary elder, explained, "Together, we prepare food from our harvest, which will be offered as a form of gratitude to God" (Interview, May 15, 2024).



**Figure 1.** *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* as the Ritual Center



Source: Personal Documentation, 2024.

**Figure 2.** *Genuk Kemiri* Respected by the Broader Community



Source: Personal Documentation, 2024.

Figure 1 shows *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, the central site of the ritual, while Figure 2 depicts the *Genuk Kemiri*, which—despite being damaged by a fallen tree in 1960—remains a highly revered spiritual object.

During the event, the entire community gathers at the *Pendopo Situs Kemiri*, a historic pavilion. The main ritual involves a communal feast (*kenduri*), followed by collective prayers for safety, blessings, and future prosperity. The subsequent *Tasyakuran* marks a moment to celebrate the harvest and pay respect to ancestors. As Legiman emphasized: “Each year, we perform this ritual to express gratitude to God, and the community here holds *Genuk Kemiri* in high regard as a symbol of the ancestors who founded this village” (Interview, July 23, 2024).

The implementation of *Sedekah Bumi* at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* reveals a high degree of collective involvement from the local community. Regardless of social status, all villagers collaborate—from the initial planning to the preparation of offerings. Each resident contributes according to their capacity, whether by donating food, helping prepare the site, or supporting the ritual's execution. As Sudyono noted, “This spirit of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) is essential to us. Everyone, from the young to the elderly, takes part in preparing food, cleaning the site, and organizing the prayer rituals” (Interview, May 15, 2024). This reveals that the ritual is not only spiritual in nature, but also functions as a mechanism for reinforcing social solidarity and interdependence among community members.

Moreover, participation from outside the village has increased over the years. This is particularly evident during the *Kirab Budaya Sedekah Bumi*, where the prepared offerings are paraded through the village in the form

of *gunungan* (cone-shaped arrangements of food), involving residents and visitors alike. The public does not attend merely as spectators but actively participates—either by carrying harvest offerings or joining the prayer procession. Mbah Legiman added, “*This event involves many people, both from within the village and from outside the city. We feel more united through this togetherness, and it shows how essential solidarity is in our rituals*” (Interview, July 23, 2024). Through this active participation, *Sedekah Bumi* becomes a means of strengthening social networks—not only during the rituals but also in daily interactions and communal collaboration.

The implementation of *Sedekah Bumi* at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* consists of a series of activities that involve the community in an active and participatory manner. Each year, villagers gather to prepare food as offerings to God, which are then shared during the *kenduri*. The ritual serves to reinforce social bonds among villagers and to maintain harmonious relations with their ancestors. The sequence of events typically begins with community deliberation, followed by the preparation of offerings, and concludes with collective prayers that enhance communal unity.

Based on the data collected, several key patterns emerged. First, there is strong community involvement in the collective ritual. All segments of society participate in various stages, from planning to preparing offerings and performing communal prayers. This tradition becomes a platform for cooperation and social bonding. Second, symbolism plays a central role in the ritual. *Genuk Kemiri* remains a powerful symbol, despite its physical deterioration. Locals believe it retains a strong spiritual presence. The large banyan tree surrounding the site adds to its sacredness and peaceful atmosphere. Third, the ritual reflects a blend of tradition and modernity. While the core values of the ritual are preserved, modern elements such as *ketoprak* folk theatre performances have been incorporated. This indicates the tradition's adaptability to changing times without losing its essential meaning. Fourth, participation has become increasingly diverse. People from outside the village now take part in the celebration, turning the ritual into an inter-regional gathering.

These findings suggest that *Sedekah Bumi* is not merely a spiritual ritual, but also a social practice that strengthens solidarity within a community that is growing more plural and diverse. The ritual becomes a space for reinforcing interpersonal relationships and for reminding people of the importance of unity and mutual cooperation. Although modernization has influenced the event through entertainment and more festive elements, the core values of *Sedekah Bumi*—gratitude, togetherness, and reverence for ancestors—remain firmly intact. This ritual continues to play an important role in maintaining local cultural identity and ensuring its relevance in a rapidly changing world.

### The Role of Genuk Kemiri as a Spiritual and Historical Symbol

In addition to the local community, Genuk Kemiri also attracts visitors from outside the village who either participate in the rituals or come to see the historical site. Based on interviews with several visitors, they expressed that Genuk Kemiri is not merely a historical site, but one imbued with deep spiritual significance.

Mbah Legiman, the *juru kunci* (spiritual guardian) of the *petilasan*, explained that Genuk Kemiri holds profound spiritual meaning for the local community. Interestingly, even visitors from outside the area often report similar impressions. Several visitors mentioned that while they did not directly encounter supernatural phenomena, they felt a distinct “energy” surrounding the site. One such visitor, Arif, who came from another city, shared: “*I can’t explain it, but I felt a deep sense of peace while I was here. It felt as though there was something greater connecting us to our ancestors*” (Interview, July 23, 2024).

Other visitors with deeper spiritual sensitivity reported experiencing certain sensations while near Genuk Kemiri, such as seeing shadows or hearing unexplained sounds. Siti, a visitor from a different city, stated: “*At night, I felt as though someone was watching me around Genuk. Even though no one was there, I strongly sensed a presence*” (Interview, July 23, 2024).

Genuk Kemiri also plays a significant role in the *Sedekah Bumi* ritual performed by the local community. Many visitors who attended the *Sedekah Bumi* celebration admitted that they felt spiritually connected to the site, even as mere observers. They reported that participating in the cultural procession and communal prayers offered them a new understanding of the tradition's importance—both spiritually and socially.

Based on the data collected, Genuk Kemiri serves not only as a historical site and ritual center for the local community but also as a place that evokes profound spiritual impressions for outside visitors. Although not all visitors experienced supernatural phenomena firsthand, many felt an “energy” that made them feel connected to the ancestors and the site's spiritual force. This indicates that Genuk Kemiri holds a spiritual appeal that goes beyond its physical history, establishing it as a significant symbol for both local residents and visitors.

Several patterns emerged from the data. First, Genuk Kemiri functions as a historical and spiritual symbol. Despite its damaged physical condition, it remains a highly sacred site and a spiritual icon for the community. For visitors, Genuk Kemiri offers an experience that connects them with the past and their ancestors, even if they do not witness supernatural events directly. Second, there is a widespread belief in supernatural energy. Both locals and spiritually sensitive visitors reported a sense of peace or an awareness of a metaphysical presence near Genuk Kemiri. Some even described sensing a subtle energy or spiritual guardian around the site, which adds a mystical dimension to the *Sedekah Bumi* celebrations. Third, the community's perception of Genuk Kemiri reinforces its spiritual significance. Locals believe the site serves as a bridge between the physical and spiritual worlds. Visitors who join the rituals often feel a connection to their ancestors through the shared prayers and ceremonies. Fourth, there is a strong association with ancestral ties. Genuk Kemiri is believed to be linked to a key historical figure—Adipati Raden Kembangjoyo—which enhances its cultural and spiritual importance.

These findings illustrate the dual role of Genuk Kemiri as both a historical and spiritual symbol. Despite its deteriorated state, the site is still revered as a conduit between the earthly and spiritual realms by both the local community and visitors. The belief in supernatural energy around Genuk Kemiri deepens the spiritual dimension of the *Sedekah Bumi* ritual and strengthens the community's connection with their ancestors. This highlights that Genuk Kemiri is not just a historical monument, but also a vital part of maintaining spiritual and cultural values that have been passed down through generations. The presence of visitors who report feeling peace or spiritual energy at the site further suggests that Genuk Kemiri holds significance beyond its physical legacy and continues to shape the spiritual identity of the Pati community.

### **The *Sedekah Bumi* Tradition: Confronting Modernization and Strengthening Community Solidarity**

The traditions of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* held at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, Kadipaten Pati, have evolved into events of great social and spiritual significance. The local community observes these traditions as expressions of gratitude for the agricultural bounty they receive throughout the year. Although these rituals have long existed, they have gradually adapted over time to maintain their relevance amid modernization and social change.

*Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* are typically held twice a year: during the month of *Suro* and in August to commemorate the anniversary of Kadipaten Pati. Each year, *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* serves as a gathering place for people from various backgrounds—both local villagers and visitors from outside the area. During the preparation stage, Sudiyono (a customary leader) explained that one of the most notable changes has been the increasing participation of people from outside the village, indicating the growing importance of this tradition in uniting diverse social groups.

*"In the past, only local villagers participated in this event. But now, people from other cities also come to take part. This shows how important Sedekah Bumi has become in weaving together our sense of togetherness" (Interview, August 8, 2024).*

One key element of this adaptation is the inclusion of modern entertainment in the celebration. Originally, *Sedekah Bumi* was a strictly religious and sacred event, but over time, traditional performances such as *ketoprak* and folk music have been added to appeal to younger generations increasingly influenced by modern entertainment culture. Mbah Legiman, the site's *juru kunci*, noted, *"The ketoprak performances are not just for entertainment; they are a way to connect younger generations with our cultural traditions"* (Interview, August 8, 2024).

During the *Kirab Budaya Sedekah Bumi*, offerings in the form of *gunungan* (tower-like arrangements of agricultural produce) are paraded throughout the village. This ritual reflects how modern cultural elements have been blended with the tradition's spiritual and social meanings. Figure 3 illustrates the *Kirab Budaya*, attended by people from various backgrounds, with traditional entertainment included to create a more engaging atmosphere for the youth.



**Figure 3.** *Kirab Budaya Sedekah Bumi at Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*



Source: Personal Documentation, 2024.

Beyond entertainment, the ritual preparation process also demonstrates how the tradition has adapted to modern societal needs. The community does not merely replicate the same ritual each year, but also uses social media to inform the public and encourage youth participation. According to Tugimin, a local figure, “We now use social media to spread information about the event. We invite the younger generation to get involved in preparing and participating in the rituals” (Interview, August 8, 2024).

Amid rapid social changes, the *Sedekah Bumi* tradition has also become a platform for sharing agricultural knowledge and techniques. Community members often exchange ideas on how to improve farming practices and achieve better yields. Sudyono emphasized, “One of the most valuable aspects of this event is the opportunity to share insights and experiences on more efficient farming methods” (Interview, August 8, 2024).

**Figure 4.** Youth Participation in the *Sedekah Bumi* Tradition



Source: Personal Documentation, 2024.

Figure 4 depicts youth involvement in the *Kirab Budaya*, where they help prepare food, carry the *gunungan* offerings, and document the events through social media. The image also reflects the sense of togetherness fostered through cooperative efforts, showing how social solidarity grows when all segments of society—including the younger generation—participate actively.

The data reveal that *Sedekah Bumi* has successfully adapted to the times. The ritual not only retains traditional elements centered on gratitude and community, but also integrates modern forms of entertainment such as *ketoprak* theater and traditional music to attract youth attention (Uswatun Khasanah et al., 2022). Broader



community participation, including from outside the village, demonstrates the tradition's role in strengthening social solidarity and preserving local cultural identity. By engaging the younger generation through both digital platforms and hands-on involvement, the tradition remains relevant amid the pressures of modernization.

Several key patterns emerged from the findings. First, changes in entertainment and arts. The inclusion of *ketoprak* and other performances shows cultural adaptation that resonates with younger audiences, enabling the preservation of traditional values while incorporating modern appeal. Second, youth participation. Young people contribute not only to the entertainment aspects but also to the preparation and implementation of the event. The use of social media to engage them demonstrates how the tradition has embraced modern technology to strengthen youth involvement. Third, the integration of tradition and modernity. Although modernization introduces new influences, the core values of *Sedekah Bumi*—gratitude, community, and social solidarity—remain intact. This proves that the tradition can evolve without losing its foundational meaning.

These findings indicate that *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* have successfully adapted to modern community needs while preserving their spiritual and social essence. The fusion of tradition and modern entertainment ensures the ritual's continued relevance among younger generations, while upholding core values such as togetherness, gratitude, and ancestral reverence. This suggests that the tradition does not merely survive on its historical and spiritual merit but thrives through its adaptability to shifting social contexts. In doing so, *Sedekah Bumi* continues to serve as a pillar of social solidarity, binding all members of the community without compromising the inherited values that define it.

## DISCUSSION

This study focused on the traditions of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* held at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, Kadipaten Pati, Central Java, as part of the community's expression of gratitude for the annual agricultural harvest. The key findings indicate that these traditions not only function as religious rituals to express thanks to God, but also play a crucial role in strengthening social solidarity within the community. These rituals involve all elements of society—from planning to execution—with active participation from villagers, including the younger generation. Although the traditions have been practiced for a long time, they have clearly adapted to modernity through forms of entertainment such as *ketoprak* and through the use of social media to engage youth.

Moreover, *Genuk Kemiri* serves as both a historical and spiritual symbol that connects the community to their ancestors. Both local residents and outside visitors report experiencing spiritual energy at *Genuk Kemiri*, despite the site's physical deterioration. The rituals of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* go beyond religious expression; they function as platforms for reinforcing communal unity and for sharing agricultural knowledge and more efficient farming techniques.

The findings show that *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri* have been sustained and developed due to their capacity to adapt to changing times. This adaptation is particularly evident in the incorporation of modern entertainment, such as *ketoprak* performances, which aim to capture the attention of younger generations increasingly immersed in modern entertainment culture. The use of social media to promote the event and invite youth participation also reflects how the tradition embraces modern technology without losing its core essence.

This adaptive process is driven by the need to ensure continued youth involvement in the *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* rituals. By making the event more appealing and inclusive, the community has managed to preserve the tradition's relevance in an increasingly modern social context. Additionally, the tradition serves as a medium for strengthening social solidarity, encouraging all community members—young and old—to share experiences, knowledge, and agricultural yields.

Theoretically, Durkheim (2014) explains that traditional societies are held together by mechanical solidarity, in which social bonds are strong because of shared norms, values, and roles. In the context of *Sedekah Bumi*, the community operates within such a framework, where each member contributes to the same shared goal: celebrating the harvest, maintaining harmony with nature, and preserving tradition. However, in facing modernization, this tradition evolves toward a form of organic solidarity, where despite role differentiation (e.g., youth drawn to modern entertainment), individuals remain connected by deeper shared values such as togetherness, gratitude, and social harmony.

This research aligns with various previous studies on the adaptation and sustainability of local traditions in Indonesia, particularly in the context of ritual practices like *Sedekah Bumi*. Sulistiyowati et al. (2022), for example,

observed how communities in Gunungkidul use local culinary traditions to conserve biodiversity—integrating 43 plant species into traditional rituals—demonstrating the adaptability of tradition in line with modern ecological agendas. This parallels the findings from *Sedekah Bumi* in *Genuk Kemiri*, where modern entertainment and social media are integrated without eroding the tradition's spiritual and social core.

Afifah (2015) and Laksana (2016) made similar observations in their studies in Tegalharjo and Central Java, noting that modern entertainment has become part of celebrations, enhancing youth participation without diminishing the ritual's symbolic value. This supports Durkheim's analysis of mechanical solidarity, where social cohesion is built through collective participation in symbolic practices. In this context, *Sedekah Bumi* serves as a mechanism for realizing social values such as *gotong royong*, local history, and ancestral reverence—much like the *Grebeg Maulud* in Surakarta (Ayuningtyas et al., 2024) and the *Ya Qowiyyu Festival* in Jatinom (Sholihah, 2019), which unify ecological, economic, and spiritual dimensions.

Furthermore, the adaptive dimension of tradition is evident in coastal communities such as *Tuturangjana Andala* in Sulawesi and *sea harvest* rituals in Probolinggo (Wulandari et al., 2024), and in *Maddoa* rituals in Pinrang (Santalia et al., 2024), which combine local rites with Islamic theology. Similar to *Sedekah Bumi*, these traditions maintain their core spiritual and social structures while remaining open to changing forms and media of expression. The blending of Islamic and indigenous elements—such as in rituals in Nias (Zaluchu, 2023), the Osing community of Banyuwangi (Hadzantonis, 2019), and the Karonese of Sinabung (Ginting et al., 2025)—shows how many Indonesian communities preserve tradition as a way of building adaptive and resilient hybrid identities.

Uniquely, this study adds to existing literature by highlighting the role of social media as a bridge between tradition and youth. This supports Ganesa et al. (2023), who found that digital platforms are crucial for transmitting cultural values and increasing participation in community rituals. Even in the context of Timor Leste (Sousa, 2022), technology has been used to introduce traditional customs to urban and diaspora generations. Therefore, *Sedekah Bumi* at *Genuk Kemiri* can be understood as a model of dynamic cultural sustainability—one that leverages contemporary media while preserving its symbolic and social power.

From a cultural sociology perspective, these findings reinforce Pfeiffer et al.'s (2006) thesis on the importance of diverse practices in maintaining tradition amid social change. Comparing previous studies confirms that adaptation does not signify a loss of values but rather a cultural strategy for survival and relevance. In the context of *Genuk Kemiri*, the integration of spirituality, local history, digital media, and modern art demonstrates that tradition can serve as a platform for both preservation and social transformation.

This study provides deeper insights into how the *Sedekah Bumi* tradition not only survives but also adapts in the face of rapid social and technological change. Adaptation here extends beyond entertainment to include new forms of participation—such as the use of social media—that actively engage the younger generation (Sari, 2022). This shows that the tradition endures not solely on the strength of its historical and spiritual values but also through its transformation in response to evolving social contexts.

The implication is that *Sedekah Bumi* represents a strong example of how cultural values can adapt to modernization without losing their fundamental essence. The tradition reinforces social solidarity within a society that is increasingly plural and diverse and reminds younger generations to maintain their connections with ancestors and the natural world. It also demonstrates that mechanical solidarity in traditional societies can transition into more complex forms of organic solidarity, where differentiated roles and contributions remain interconnected within a larger collective goal (Kriesberg, 1997).

These findings reflect the importance of balancing tradition and modernity. On the one hand, traditions like *Sedekah Bumi* strengthen social bonds and build a sense of togetherness within communities. On the other hand, rapid modernization can threaten these values if not met with adaptive strategies (Qodim, 2023; Raya et al., 2023). This study shows that one way to sustain tradition is by incorporating modern entertainment elements—such as *ketoprak* theater—and utilizing social media to reach younger audiences. The social solidarity formed through *gotong royong* and collective participation creates social networks that reinforce community resilience amid the challenges of changing times (Desiana et al., 2021).

Based on these findings, several policy or action recommendations emerge for strengthening and preserving the *Sedekah Bumi* tradition: First, education and youth engagement: develop educational programs that involve young people in the tradition, including the use of social media to promote cultural values. Second, strengthening the integration of cultural and modern entertainment: encourage the inclusion of modern entertainment such as *ketoprak* performances to make the event more attractive to youth while preserving its spiritual and social meaning.

Third, developing tradition preservation programs: support initiatives such as digital documentation or public exhibitions that introduce the tradition to a broader audience.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the traditions of *Sedekah Bumi* and *Tasyakuran* practiced at *Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*, Kadipaten Pati, are not merely religious rituals, but also serve as symbols of social solidarity that strengthen communal bonds amid the rapid pace of modernization. Despite facing the challenges of modernity, these traditions have endured by adapting through the incorporation of modern entertainment elements, such as *ketoprak* performances, and by utilizing social media to engage younger generations. The main finding of this research is that *Sedekah Bumi* encompasses not only spiritual values but also functions as a platform for fostering unity and maintaining social cohesion within an increasingly pluralistic society. *Genuk Kemiri* plays a significant role as a spiritual symbol that connects the community with their ancestors, while the rituals remain relevant by involving various social and cultural elements suited to contemporary needs.

This research makes a valuable contribution to studies on the preservation of local traditions in the face of modernization. One of the main contributions lies in providing a deeper understanding of how *Sedekah Bumi* functions not only as a religious ritual, but also as a social mechanism that reinforces solidarity among community members. The study also proposes a more inclusive and modern approach to tradition preservation, by integrating entertainment and technology to attract the interest of younger generations. Through these insights, this study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how local communities can preserve their cultural heritage while adapting to social transformation without losing the essential core of their traditions.

However, this study also has its limitations. One major limitation is that it focuses solely on a single location—*Petilasan Genuk Kemiri*—which means the findings may not fully represent the situation in other areas with similar traditions. Furthermore, time and resource constraints limited the number of interviews with younger generations, which could have offered broader perspectives on their relationship with the tradition. For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope by including more locations and engaging a wider range of youth participants in order to gain deeper insight into the dynamics of tradition and modernity across diverse communities in Indonesia. Further studies may also explore the role of social media more extensively in either sustaining or transforming traditional celebrations in a broader social context.

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