

TEGAS DESA TRADITION: MANIFESTATION OF LOCAL CULTURAL WISDOM OF AGRARIAN COMMUNITY IN NGASEM SRAGEN INDONESIA

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: *Tegas Desa* tradition has been performed by the people of Ngasem Village for generations and is the heritage of the ancestors whose values are still upheld. This study aims to describe the *Tegas Desa* tradition of Ngasem village agrarian community, identify *Tegas Desa* tradition as local cultural wisdom, describe *ubarampe* or offerings needed in performing the tradition, and explain the procession of the *Tegas Desa* tradition.

Methodology: This study is a qualitative descriptive study with an ethnographic approach. The data were sourced from the informants including the caretaker, village officials, and villagers. The data used were in the form of texts from interviews with informants, videos, photographs, relevant studies, and relevant books. The data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies.

Main Findings: The results show that *Tegas Desa* tradition is a manifestation of gratitude for the rice yields of the agrarian community in Ngasem Village. The Ngasem Village community still believes in Javanese customs and culture whose values are still upheld. *Ubarampe* or offerings use a lot of different types of foods. There are some differences or reductions in the implementation of the present tradition and the past.

Applications of this study: The implications of the study can be social capital in preserving a culture that can be used as a reinforcement of the nation's character through mutual cooperation, unity, and harmony among citizens. *Tegas Desa* tradition can be used as a local asset to get the support of the local government to preserve cultural heritage as a form of local cultural wisdom of the agrarian community.

Novelty/Originality of this study: There is no or has not been any study that discusses *Tegas Desa* tradition carried out by the agrarian community of Ngasem Village.

Keywords: Tradition, Local Wisdom, Agrarian Community, Thanksgiving, Rice Harvest.

INTRODUCTION

Tradition refers to anything frequently done by a society that eventually becomes a habit. It is considered as a realization of culture. Culture is indicated as guidelines in which society believes in its truth (Wahyudi, 2011). As a realization of culture, tradition represents moments to express, maintain, and celebrate bonds between societies (Hardwick, 2017). The emergence of foreign culture due to globalization gradually results in a reduction in national cultures. As a consequence, to maintain and preserve local wealth for the sustainability of the life system in society, a study on local tradition is required in order to make national identity meaningful. *Tegas Desa* Tradition is one of the local traditions in Indonesia. This tradition usually focuses on regional governance, values or belief system, sustainability, and livelihood (Kah, 2014).

Tegas Desa tradition is one of the traditions in Ngasem Village, Gebang Sub-district, Masaran District, Sragen Regency, which is held on Friday *Pon*. *Pon* is one of the five-day names of the week in the Javanese calendar. The day used as a symbol of gratitude is marked by blessings such as a peace treaty, the end of an epidemic, and abundant harvests (Hardwick, 2017). Based on this, *Tegas Desa* is used as an expression of gratitude to God for the harvest. A ceremony is also a form of a request to God to always be given protection, easiness, and success in obtaining the necessities of life both food, clothing, and house. Food becomes a medium for interacting with others through cultures owned with the cultures in other parts of the world and the values and customs of others (Tarr, 2016). Besides, *Tegas Desa* tradition is also a form of respect for the ancestors.

Tegas Desa tradition has been carried out by the people of Ngasem Village for generations. The traditional ceremony is an ancestral heritage whose values are still held up to this day. In its previous implementation, there were Puppet or *Reyog* performances. But as time goes by, the ceremony was carried out simply. Now, there is only the peak event of *pènèkan* (climbing). Traditions can also be adjusted to meet daily needs and changes are acceptable as part of ancient traditions (Adekola&Egbo, 2016). In addition to differences in the implementation, there are also differences in *ubarampe* or equipment used. *Tegas Desa* tradition is a form of culture to be preserved. Culture is deemed to meet in reality as a symbolic aspect and way of life or a complete design for living in society (Ochapa&Folorunsho, 2017).

In connection with the above, the tradition in Ngasem Village is very interesting, from the procession to the *ubarampe* or equipment used in the ceremony. This tradition is much more interesting with various symbols used. Therefore, this tradition needs to be preserved. Many customs, traditions, and beliefs rooted in history have valuable and interesting

meanings ([Ghaffarzadeh, Nazari, & Saadat, 2012](#)). *Tegas Desa* as a historical event that has become a tradition has very diverse philosophical meanings for each community. Variations in *Tegas Desa* meanings depend on how people understand it. *Tegas Desa* tradition in each region has its own characteristics and function and meaning for the local community. Rice harvest tradition in terms of *Tegas Desa* for Ngasem society is interpreted as gratitude toward God on the yield and hope for the better yield for the next harvest time. This tradition is different from others in terms of the existence of bamboo climbing in the center of the village. There is also a rice harvest tradition in terms of *Dedeng* in Langkat is used as a basic in maintaining religious values on the *Dedeng* rice harvest. This special feature shows that society hum while harvesting solemnly and sentimentally as a pray or mantra ([Harianto, Anwar, Saputra, Kartolo, Sutikno, Ruslina, & Saputra, 2017](#)). Besides, the ritual of the rice harvest in Kuningan, West Java, is associated with the set of traditional ritual in relation to fertility symbols, embedded to the Goddess of Mother, *NyiPwahAci Sang HyangAsri* ([Adisaputri&Widiastuti, 2015](#)).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditional festivals or festivities are a national history product. It is used to commemorate and remember important events in history ([Selase&Cristhoper, 2013](#)). A festivity can help form a common foundation for exchanging cultural activities, provide happiness and introduce devotion which is told as an important part of moral education ([Biswas, 2018](#)). The story told from generation to generation becomes an oral tradition in the community. In the world society, oral traditions are used by communities to maintain ancestral traditions ([Rahman & Letlora, 2018](#)). Most traditional festivities come from people's expectations for harvests in agricultural production, worship of the gods and nature, sacrifices for historical figures, and so on. After a long-term evolution, traditional festivities have become an integral part of the national culture. Through traditional festivals, diverse cultural characteristics and national spirits can be observed ([Gao & Wu, 2017](#)). In addition, traditional ceremonies can be used to preserve and represent the spirit of cooperation and togetherness of a community ([Setyawan&Saddhono, 2017](#)). For example, the Amu Festival (Amufest) is the heritage of an agricultural festival that is considered to have international quality, so it needs the stakeholder's concern in tourism activities ([Bormann, 2015](#)). Celebration of gratitude can also function as social control, social contact, interaction, integration, and communication in society ([Wahyudi, 2011](#)).

One of the traditional festivals is *Tegas Desa*. The *Tegas Desa* tradition is one of the products of Javanese culture that is still maintained by the agrarian community of Ngasem Village. Based on studies, Javanese culture can affect the cultural and social changes of non-Javanese and foreign people ([Saddhono, 2018](#)). *Tegas Desa* tradition which is a Javanese culture is a form of community gratitude for the rice harvest. The process of deliberately maintaining the harvest and celebrating food is not only part of a culture but also a form of culture in itself ([Tarr, 2016](#)). The existence of culture can create the values of all organizations that are used to determine whether the activities carried out are good or bad ([Jermisittiparsert&Srihirun, 2019](#)). Likewise, the *Seren Taun* annual harvest ritual is based on the value of people to respect the land as a natural trait. People must maintain harmony in life on earth and all its contents to maintain the balance of nature. Because the ritual is considered good to do, the next generation tries to understand the value and maintain it ([Pasya, Setiyorini, Andari, & Gitasiswara, 2016](#)). One of these values is local wisdom. Local wisdom values are important to preserve a custom and tradition in the community ([Wahyudi, 2011](#)). Local wisdom can be used as a source of materials and values that serves as a basis for determining the direction in action and behavior ([Uge, Neolaka, & Yasin, 2019](#)).

Local wisdom is a special characteristic that comes from an area that has cultural values and develops in local communities from generation to generation ([Priyambodo&Wulaningrum, 2017](#)). Local wisdom can be in the form of values, ethics, beliefs, customs, traditions, customary laws, and rules of regulation of a community. It has various functions, one of which is to regulate people's lives by utilizing the values contained in it ([Bolotio, 2018](#)). Local wisdom also functions to anticipate, filter, and change various forms of foreign influences so that it continues to be a characteristic of the local community ([Uge, Neolaka, & Yasin, 2019](#)). In this case, local wisdom such as the integration of sacred values and various values in a community in the form of local cultural superiority ([Parwati, Sudiarta, Mariawan, & Widiana, 2018](#)). Local wisdom as a value is defined as the values or behaviors of local people who live and interact with the environment in which they live wisely ([Martati, Suyaningtyas, & Hariyadi, 2019](#)). The interaction of the local community with the environment results in the implementation of gratitude.

The day of gratitude that comes from the celebration of the harvest relating to religion usually has a certain limit. The influence of agriculture on a celebration can fade and tends to be a celebration for the family and a form of gratitude to God ([Gao & Wu, 2017](#)). In various communities in Cameroon, there are still rituals related to agriculture, land, and food. The rituals are performed before planting or harvesting crops such as corn, beans, sweet potatoes, and *cocoyam*. The first ritual is usually performed before the planting season with the aim of asking God through gods, ancestors, and spirits for a good harvest ([Kah, 2016](#)). *Tegas Desa* tradition is performed after the harvest while the tradition of expressing gratitude in Cameroon is performed before planting or harvesting.

In the *TegasDesa* tradition, there is still a belief that considers nature to have a series of spirits stored in something visible or invisible that can affect human life ([Nasir, Suliaman, & Usman, 2019](#)). If the *Tegas Desa* tradition is not carried out, people believe that their yields are not satisfactory and there will be a disaster that befalls the villagers. In the belief of the

Javanese people, this is related to Dewi Sri, who is considered to be the Rice Goddess or the Goddess of Fertility. Abundant harvests are considered as a result of her grace, so people who believe must be grateful to her. In the practice of *Seren Taun*, the fertility symbol attached to Dewi Sri is known as the mother goddess or *NyiPwahAci Sang HyangAsri* ([Adisaputri&Widiastuti, 2015](#)). This is like Lohri Festival respected as a harvest festival and dedicated to God of Sun ([Biswas, 2018](#)).

In addition to the *Tegas Desa* tradition, there are many traditions, celebrations, festivals, and other expressions of gratitude related to agriculture, especially harvest time. In Japan, there is *Ohanami* celebration, which is a celebration of cherry blossoms and welcoming the spring ([Moriuchi& Basil, 2019](#)). Then, *Oro* Festival is held at the end of the harvest season, carried out mainly during the festival of yams in high stock ([Akanji& Dada, 2012](#)). In Ethiopia, there is a tradition of *Qoollee Deejjoo* which is the first harvesting of the harvested product to Qoolloo (forest spirit) as an expression of gratitude for its good intentions ([Zageye& Mariam, 2017](#)). *Laimbwe Ihneem* food production ritual in Africa is a ritual performed to increase crop yields (Kah, 2016: 54). In addition, there is a water festival in Asia that plays an important role in agricultural societies where regular and adequate rainfall is very important for people's welfare ([Agarwal, 2010](#)).

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative descriptive study with an ethnographic approach. A qualitative researcher is an observer in the world and always acts as an observer. It openly recognizes that the background and situation of the researcher influence the research process and shape the results of his research ([Markula& Silk, 2011](#)). The case in this study occurred in social communities, in which the researcher sees unique and meaningful sides in the surrounding social environment in a community in a society. One key component of social organization is ethnography ([Vorontsova, Salimgareev, M. V., Salimgareev, D. V., & Ramazanov, 2019](#)). [Patton](#) (2002) revealed that ethnography is the main method of anthropology as an early tradition that differs from qualitative inquiry. So, the notion of culture is central to ethnography. In this case, ethnography is the center of all major cultural ideas and methods in anthropology. Ethnography can inform the uniqueness of culture and cross-cultural comparisons can inform about what is generally true for some, many, or even all human cultures ([Ember, C. R., Ember, M., & Paregrine, 2014](#)).

This study was conducted in Ngasem Village, Gebang Sub-district, Masaran District, Sragen Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia. The data were sourced from the informants including the caretaker, village officials, and villagers. The data used were in the form of texts from interviews with informants, videos, photographs, relevant studies, and relevant books. In cultural marketing and consumer research, empirical analysis is based on textual and visual materials, all of which are analyzed as cultural texts. The texts can take a variety of forms, ranging from media texts, documentary materials, and clarity to surveys and texts produced through interviews, focus groups and projective techniques ([Moisander&Valtonen, 2006](#)). [Gray](#) (2003) concludes that texts must be seen as a product of certain social, cultural and historical conditions and as an outstanding agent. Data collection was done through observation, interview, and documentation. Participant observation was used. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain the desired data by giving questions directly to the informants. The document study was carried out in relation to the documents obtained.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Tegas Desa tradition of Agrarian Community in Ngasem Village

Ngasem Village is a community in Gebang Sub-district, Masaran District, Sragen Regency, Central Java Province. It is in the lowland which is quite hot. The Ngasem village area is an agricultural area in the form of rice fields. The community of Ngasem Village includes rural communities whose residents earn a living as farmers. In their social life, Ngasem villagers still believe in Javanese customs and cultural traditions. This can be reflected in the culture of mutual cooperation and kinship; for example, people help each other sincerely in the special agenda such as marriage, circumcision, and *aqiqah* (welcoming ceremony of a newborn). Likewise, if there are people who suffer a disaster; for example, when one of the residents passes away, the residents immediately flock to help. The assistance provided is in the form of making tents, digging graves, and preparing all the equipment for funerals.

The Ngasem community is mostly Muslim. However, they also still believe in spirits living around them. For example, they believe in the existence of a protective spirit or so-called *baureksa* or *dhanyang*. In Ethiopia, *dhanyang* is called *qooloo*. *Qoolloo* is a forest spirit that gives humans good harvest, fertility and guarantees meaningful life or protects from natural disasters that destroy the Ethiopian region ([Zageye& Mariam, 2017](#)).

TegasDesa is one form of cultural elements, especially among agrarian or farmer communities. This tradition is held after the farmers have harvested their agricultural products. These activities include *bersih desa* (village cleaning) activities that are mostly carried out by Javanese villagers with different names and methods. *Tegas Desa* tradition is a manifestation of gratitude of a group of people to everything that is considered to have more power than humans like the power that comes from God Almighty, Dewi Sri (Goddess of Fertility), and spirits or *dhanyang*. In the past, *Amu* festival in Ghana was celebrated to satisfy the God of Fertility known as *Ayamapor* when the rice planting season came ([Bormann, 2015](#)).

The practice of thanksgiving celebration culture is close to that of farmers of the Minahasa ethnic community in North Sulawesi, which is carried out after the harvest every year on Sunday (Bolotio, 2018). *Seren Taun* is also an important ceremony for the traditional agrarian Sundanese community. The ritual is the main form of offerings given to the Highest for the completion of the harvest time and implies hope for a better harvest in the following year (Adisaputri&Widiastuti, 2015). There is also an olive farmer in southern Tunisia making a pilgrimage to an old olive tree to celebrate the harvest festival (Kitagawa, 2017). In addition, Canada has traditions such as Blessings, which take the form of peace agreements, the end of epidemic, or abundant harvests, marked by days of thanksgiving (Hardwick, 2019).

Tegas Desa tradition is not solely performed by individuals because there is a common interest of more than one person. Therefore, *Tegas Desa* is performed jointly and with mutual cooperation so that it can be carried out as it should be. The existence of togetherness and mutual cooperation in the agrarian community of Ngasem Village can increase a sense of belonging and high brotherhood. This is a characteristic of the village people, especially the agrarian community. *Qoollee Deejjoo* in Ethiopia is carried out by a family or a community (Zageye& Mariam, 2017) while in *Kedjom Keku*, it tends to require family members to carry out the tradition (Kah, 2016).

***Tegas Desa* Tradition as a Form of Local Cultural Wisdom**

Every ceremony performed by a community certainly has a specific purpose and objective. In addition to being a culture that must be preserved, *Tegas Desa* is performed by the community as they believe that it is the heritage of ancestors. They believe that if it is carried out, it will bring good and if not, it will bring bad. In *Kedjom Keku*, there are also rituals related to agriculture, fertility, crops, and other related rituals. Mothers, grandmothers, and wife's sisters or friends in *Kedjom Keku* perform rituals that are rich in the symbolism of agriculture, women's body, and fertility. People generally believe that if family members do not perform these rituals, they tend to have a bad harvest (Kah, 2016).

According to the elders in Ngasem village, *Tegas Desa* ritual is a tradition of the local community that must be obeyed and carried out. The community believes that if *Tegas Desa* ritual accompanied by bamboo climbing is not carried out, something bad will happen to the community, for example, rice being attacked by pests, poor harvests, and people who suddenly die due to unreasonable things. In general, *TegasDesa* in Ngasem Village has similar basic principles as village thanksgiving does. The specific purpose of performing *Tegas Desa* is as an expression of gratitude to God for the blessings of the harvest given, to the spirits of the village ancestors and *dhanyang* or *pundhen* who help maintain the safety of the village, clean the village environment physically and mentally from the disturbance of evil spirits, and it is also aimed at asking for safety and prosperity of life together experienced in one harvest period.

Expression of gratitude in agrarian culture in Minahasa is due to the provision of fertile land so that people live on what is planted in nature. According to the belief of Minahasa people, gratitude for what nature has given is the provision of the Creator as the Preserver of the Universe. Therefore, it is a gift of God, so when the harvest is completed, it is necessary to be grateful (Bolotio, 2018). In addition, expressions of gratitude performed by people in Canada are moments to express, foster, and celebrate community attachments (Hardwick, 2019). Meanwhile, *Laimbwe Ihneem* ritual is intended to increase agricultural productivity through soil improvement and the provision of agricultural equipment (Kah, 2016). Traditionally, gratitude to tribal chiefs (Kubika Chiutsi) is also a form of expression of gratitude to the chiefs for the land cultivated by new subjects as a source of life (Rambe&Maware, 2012). The water festival is to make a reward from God and pray for good harvests in all countries where it is celebrated (Agarwal, 2010).

In connection with the above, the reasons for *Tegas Desa* tradition to be maintained are, among others, preserving the inheritance of the ancestors to the younger generation, expressing gratitude to God who has provided safety and not forgetting the ancestors who are considered to be able to provide protection of their villages, the ceremony for the abundant yields in the next harvest, and unifying community and fostering mutual cooperation and solidarity among villagers. Festival celebrations also carry messages of brotherhood, kindness, etiquette, and morality. Therefore, people welcome festivals as a mood lifter to bring happiness and enthusiasm into their lives (Biswas, 2018).

In contrast to China, America is an advanced country. With the rapid pace of industrialization in America, the characteristics of agriculture in traditional festivals gradually disappear. *Thanksgiving* as the festival most closely related to agricultural production is no longer a festival to celebrate the harvest, but a festival for family members' reunions to show their gratitude to God (Gao & Wu, 2017).

Ubarampe or Offering in the Implementation of *Tegas Desa* Tradition

Ubarampe or equipment used in *Tegas Desa* tradition is placed on a container called *tampah*. *Tampah* is a kind of place or container made of woven bamboo. Equipment (*ubarampe*) in the form of food is placed on it and given a base of banana leaves, paper or newspaper. The offerings are arranged in a circular way to adjust the shape of the container. In *Ohanami*, the food equipment sometimes takes the form of a lunch box or a special *bento* that includes decorations such as cherry-shaped vegetables or pink or green dumplings (Moriuchi& Basil, 2019). In *Kubika Chiutsi* tradition, community members will get along with beer, eat chicken and pap to induct and involve newcomers into the community through customs and traditions (Rambe&Maware, 2012). *Tegas Desa* tradition does not involve intoxicating or alcoholic drinks.

The offerings used in *Tegas Desa* include: *The first* is tumpeng rice (rice cone). People call it *buceng*. Tumpeng rice is one of the cultural heritage which is still believed to be presented in a celebration, both symbolic and ritual. Tumpeng rice is shaped like a cone-like a mountain. It has the meaning of a noble goal or ideal. Tumpeng symbolizes all human efforts based on their belief in God. Humans know that God is the source of their livelihood. *The second* is the cracker. Crackers are foods made from the mixture of shrimp, salt, and onions mixed with flour. It shares a philosophical meaning that human growth in living life can be like crackers. After fried, crackers can develop into a more perfect form than the previous. *The third* is the banana. Bananas are a symbol of justice. They will not die before they bear fruit. King banana symbolizes greatness like a king. *The fourth* is *panggang* (roast). *Panggang* is a young one-tailed chicken that is slaughtered and whose feathers and dirt are cleaned. The chicken breast is split and cleaned and everything inside is removed and not used. The chicken is then stabbed at the bottom until it reaches the end using a bamboo, smeared with spices and roasted. For the community, *panggang* is used as a symbol of an apology for all residents in Ngasem Village.

The Fifth is *serundeng*(shredded coconut). *Serundeng* is a side dish made from grated coconut that has been given spices. After that, it is roasted until it turns brownish-yellow dry. *The sixth* is *peyek/rempeyek* (crisp). *Peyek* or commonly called *rempeyek* is a kind of food made from flour with a mixture of seasonings and added with nuts/anchovies. *The seventh* is *Rengginang* or *Ceriping* (rice cracker). *Rengginang/ceriping* is a food made from sticky rice which is steamed and mixed with spices and then made into a spherical round shape. Sometimes, in the middle of *Rengginang* are given food coloring. *The eighth* is *jangan lombok* or chili soup. *Jangan lombok* is a kind of soup with chili as its main ingredient. *The ninth* is rose. Roses have many meanings or steps in developing Javanese culture or traditions. The tenth is incense. Incense, as an intermediary between the *wadag*/hard body with a soft body (spirit). In addition, incense has the meaning to show noble character to God. The fragrant smell of incense is intended to invite people or supernatural beings to come.

Tegas Desa Tradition Procession

The preparation of *Tegas Desa* involves deliberations, making food needed in the procession, till the main event. Deliberations are intended to discuss things relating to preparation for series of *Tegas Desa* activities. This includes discussing financing, fund sources of *Tegas Desa*, and the implementation of voluntary work. The funds needed for *Tegas Desa* come from the village treasury and voluntary contributions from the people. After that, the committee collects funds from community contributions. The funds collected are then used to carry out *Tegas Desa*, especially *pènèkan*(climbing). The offerings are the thing needed in the *Tegas Desa* ritual or ceremony. Making offerings requires raw ingredients, such as seasonings, rice, etc., usually prepared two days in advance. In preparing offerings, the community must prepare the ingredients needed. The offerings are tumpeng rice with side dishes and roasted chicken. In the afternoon or early morning before *bancakan* (ritual feast), people personally carry out cooking activities and prepare offerings.

The implementation of *Tegas Desa* includes *bancakan* and voluntary work. After the time of *bancakan* comes, the people of Ngasem Village carry rice in *tampah* complemented with side dishes and roasted chicken to the tomb which is considered as the *dhanyang* of the village. In addition, there are also those who bring flowers and incense. The execution time is on Friday *Pon* in the last rice harvest every year. The tomb is the tomb of Mbah Denok considered as a sacred place. The tradition is not only as a banquet, but it also has a ritual meaning. They believe that the ritual will be more useful if accompanied by offerings. The more people join the ritual, the more likely their request (prayer) will be granted. Some people and groups in the *Ohanami* festival in Japan also bring their own food to open places ([Moriuchi& Basil, 2019](#)).

After arriving at the tomb, all the food brought is put together on a mat stretched next to the Mbah Rara Denok's tomb. Some people who bring incense and flowers burn the incense and scatter the flowers at the tomb. The spread of flowers is the same as that of the grave pilgrimage by the Javanese. In North Africa, there is a tradition of pilgrimage. The tradition in this country is carried out by the olive farming community integrated with the sacred practice of worship which is now a unique form of pilgrimage to the old olive tree ([Kitagawa, 2017](#)). Individually, they pray according to their request after burning incense and continue with spreading the flowers. This is done as a form of worship, praying, making offerings, communicating with the gods or just wanting to feel the power of the place and charging their spiritual batteries ([Rots, 2019](#)).

Furthermore, burning incense is carried out as an *ujub* ritual and a prayer for salvation led by a customary elder. The prayer goes to Ngasem Village and ends with the recitation of the *Alfatihah* given to Allah SWT, the Prophet Muhammad, the Companions, and the reading of short prayers. In the *dedeng* rice harvest in the community of Timbang Jaya, Langkat Regency, it is also found about the use of God's name related to the community and humans from the point of view of His creation. So, this concerns the greatness of God and gratitude to God ([Hariantoet al.,2017](#)). In the tradition of pilgrimage to the old olive tree, incense *orbukhooris* also used ([Kitagawa, 2017](#)). After reading the prayer, people take their own food collected. The food owner takes a little food and leaves it at the tomb. In the tomb of Mbah Denok, there is a large stone, on the top of which people place their food. After finished, they return to their homes with some food.

Voluntary work is a mutual cooperation activity in the context of voluntary cooperation for the public interest. This activity involves all members of the community who take part in cleaning roads and ditches. In addition, the people of Ngasem Village work together in making the *pènèkan*(climbing) bamboo in the center of the village, which is the middle intersection of the village. This voluntary work of the village cleaning is described as a physical village cleaning

ceremony. In this case, all the impurities of the village are cleaned so that all members of the community are free from the epidemic. Voluntary work to clean the village also aims to make the village look clean, healthy, neat and beautiful.

The main or closing event includes *pènèkan* and thanksgiving of the village. *Pènèkan* or climbing is held at the intersection of the village which is the center of Ngasem Village. The climbing material is made of bamboo. The form of bamboo for climbing to enliven the *Tegas Desa* event is the same as that used for the August event (Indonesian Independence Day). However, the form of the hung prizes is different. In the August event (Indonesian Independence Day), the prizes are in the form of clothing, household furniture, bicycles, and other objects. In *Tegas Desa*, the prizes are in the form of food, such as roasted chicken, bananas, rice, and side dishes. The roasted chicken is the most popular prize for climbing participants. People believe that the roasted chicken brings its own blessing to those who get it.

The bamboo climbing performance is the main event in the *Tegas Desa* ceremony in Ngasem Village, as an offering to Mbah Rara Denok who is considered to be the guardian *dhanyang* of the village. In *Seren Taun*, the main procession is accompanied by traditional art performances, such as sacred dances, harp-flute or *monggang*, and fireworks (Adisaputri&Widiastuti, 2015). Formerly, the tradition of *Tegas Desa* was also accompanied by *reyog* or puppet shows, but they no longer exist today. Bamboo climbing is the only ritual that is still considered sacred and should not be left behind. *Laimbwe Ih'neem* ritual has also been modified and there are some processions left behind because the emergence of Christianity, Islam, and other religions in Africa brought influence on the practice of rituals among several agricultural communities. In Cameroon, Africa, and other regions of the world, there are several fertility rituals related to agriculture and food production that is still preserved from generation to generation with little or no significant modification (Kah, 2016).

The old, large, and tall bamboo is selected for climbing. The selected bamboo is peeled until smooth, so it looks brownish-white because the green skin has been peeled off. People work together to scrape and clean the bamboo. After the bamboo is cleaned, the top of the bamboo is made into a circle which will be used to the prize hanger. The prize hanger is decorated with coconut leaves and banyan leaves to make it more festive. Then, the food used as a prize is also hung. After the bamboo climb is ready, the stem is plugged into the ground very deeply. This is done to ensure that the bamboo stem will not fall or falter when the participants climb it. The last stage is the bamboo is smeared with cooking oil or machine oil to make it slippery and the participants do not easily reach the top.

The village thanksgiving is a series of activities in the *Tegas Desa* ceremony in Ngasem Village. This activity is held in the afternoon. It is carried out at the intersection where the bamboo climbing is held. The series of the *Tegas Desa* ceremony ends with the thanksgiving or *bancakan*. The form of offerings used in the village thanksgiving is almost the same as those used in the Tomb of Mbah Denok. The difference is in the container and the number. In the village thanksgiving, the container used is *ceting/ancak* (woven bamboo which is not made tightly) and the number is fewer. The procession involved all the people of Ngasem Village, from children to the old. In the *cubica chiutsi* tradition, all villagers will participate in a socialization process that involves singing, dancing, and drumming (Rambe&Maware, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This study implies that the people of Ngasem Village are an agrarian community because there is an agricultural area in the form of rice fields, so most of the residents earn a living as farmers. Most of Ngasem people embrace Islam. They also still believe in the spirits living around them. In social life, the people of Ngasem Village still believe in Javanese customs and culture. This can be reflected in the culture of mutual cooperation, unity, togetherness, and kinship.

The reasons for the agrarian community of Ngasem Village still maintain and preserve the tradition of *Tegas Desa* are, among others, preserving the traditions of the ancestors handed down to the younger generation, expressing gratitude to God and the *dhanyang* of the village who have provided safety, remembering the ancestors who are considered to be able to provide protection for their villages, requesting Dewi Sri for abundant yields in the next harvest, and unifying community and fostering mutual cooperation and solidarity among villagers. *Ubarampe*/offerings in the tradition of *Tegas Desa* take the form of tumpeng rice, crackers, bananas, roasted chicken, *jangan lombok*, *serundeng*, *peyek*, and *rengginang*. Apart from food offerings, this tradition also requires incense and roses. The *Tegas Desa* procession includes the preparation (holding deliberations and making offerings), execution (*bancakan* and voluntary work), and the main/closing event (climbing and thanksgiving).

There are differences between today's procession of the tradition and the past. In the past, there was a puppet or *reyog* performances in *Tegas Desa* tradition, but now there is only bamboo climbing. The enthusiasm of Ngasem Village community in organizing *Tegas Desa* tradition is social capital in preserving culture. Besides this tradition can also be used to strengthen national characters, such as mutual cooperation, unity and harmony. Local cultural wisdom is an asset of a country, so its existence must be maintained. The existence of *Tegas Desa* tradition in the Ngasem Village community is a form of cultural heritage preservation by the people.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

As a research product and recognizing the absence of the analysis of values contained in *Tegas Desa* tradition and its

relevance to other fields of study such as education and language. These limitations can serve as a basis for further studies and provide topics for various fields such as education, used as teaching material, and language, used to analyze speech in prayer spoken by the caretaker, and so on.

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