

Punden Dorowati Revitalization as the Ancestor's Heritage of Rejosari Village, Bantur, Malang Society Cultural Study based on Phenomenology Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Fanatic behavior in religiosity has driven society to behave strictly in current days by ruling out religious interpretations. Meanwhile, it is needed in reality. Our social life has more important things than religious rhetoric. It is the culture that creates a feeling of God present in every movement. Thus, a group of society in Rejosari Village, Bantur, Malang attempts to reborn those feelings through a sacred place named *punden*. However, this phenomenon results in misconceptions for another group who see it as an abnormal practice. This issue attracts the researcher to study *punden* as one of the ancestor's cultural, spiritual, and religious perspectives. This study aims to present *punden* existence on its role as the ancestor's heritage and describe *punden* function for religious, cultural, and contemporary society. This study is a descriptive qualitative with a phenomenology approach. The researcher uses interviews and documentation to collect data; meanwhile, validity data is discussed with fellows and experts. Furthermore, the researcher uses Creswell's model as an analysis data technique. The results show that *punden*'s role as the ancestors' heritage keeps on a dynamic process. There are escalations and degradation of society awareness towards *punden*, which is essential for religious, cultural, and contemporary society.

Keywords: Ancestor's heritage, Culture, Punden, Religion

1. INTRODUCTION

Existing characteristics of local identity are not far from the existence of local figure who build the basics. The geographic java conditions brought out an extraordinary figure who destroyed wilderness land as a location to live in; it called a new civilization. This discriminator figure's existence attracted a group's attention from generation to generation for glorifying and placing it at the highest level in social fabrication. The society also used the figure's grave as a sacred place full of charismatic as respect form, named *punden* [1].

According to traditional societies, *punden* is an ancestral burial place, and an interaction medium between ancestors, humans, the universe, and God. In this context, the element of trust has an essential point in presenting respect form and inclination to improve welfare [2]. For them, many tolerance values and conservation in the *punden* tradition. *Punden* is medium for realizing socio-religious-cultural activities to increase the belief, brotherhood, and local cultural heritage. Therefore, ritual performance in *punden* is a simple respect illustration for local traditional heritage [3].

Tradition is part of a culture is created by group societies, but it is very influential for individual thinking in the social order of society [4], [5]. Soekanto also

defined tradition as an activity carried out by a group of societies repeatedly [6]. Here, culture and cultural differences appear where culture is related to arts, beliefs, or traditions by experiencing the environment. It is different from cultural (*kebudayaan*) including behavior patterns, everyday language, social organization, and society tradition [7]. That is why Punden Dorowati is a cultural heritage for Rejosari society, Bantur, Malang.

Punden Dorowati is *punden* located in Balewarti, Rejosari village, Bantur, Malang. A sacred grave accompanied by various Islamic rituals such as *slametan*, reciting *yasin* and *tahlil* to ask for prosperity. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) *slametan* stated that salvation is a feast that aims to ask for salvation to the God [8]. In the Javanese tradition itself, this salvation ritual has known since a person was born in this world. Every Javanese who is born will be introduced to a birth ritual with all the equipment [9]. The ancestors of Javanese people are very sure that supernatural things which guarded the territory of a certain area also had the same characteristics as human nature. Such as envy, anger, happiness, joy and so on. In order to maintain harmony and safety in living life, it seems that the ancestors of the Javanese people did not want to be bothered and preoccupied with various disturbances. Therefore, they then did this safety tradition [9].

Meanwhile, according to Puwaningsih and Hasim, *Yasinan* is a tradition that has been ingrained in Javanese society, especially among Nahdatul Ulama people. *Yasinan* is an activity of reading Yasin's letter which consists of 83 verses together led by an elder /Kyai [10].

In practice, *yasinan* activities will definitely be accompanied by *tahlilan*. According to Danusiri (in Purwaningsih and Hasim) *tahlilan* is a typical Islamic religious ritual of *santri*, both legal and cultural, which is carried out in a certain place and in the context of carrying out religious rituals that have become a habit of the Muslim community [10].

According to Mustafa (in Puwaningsih and Hasim) the rituals carried out in this *yasinan* and *tahlilan* activity are reading Yasin, reading Al Fatihah, Al Ikhlas, Al Falaq, Al Nas, Al Baqarah verses 1-5, Al Bagarah verses 163, Al Baqarah verses 284-286, Surah Al Hud verse 73, Al Ahzab verses 33 and 56, reads Hauqalah, *isgtigfar*, *tahlil*, *tasbih*, *shalawat*, and then closes with a prayer [10].

Beside Punden Dorowati, some springs are consumed to fill daily needs such as drinking, bathing, cooking, etc. Based on this phenomenon, society is divide into three groups are fanatical, neutral, and contra. Nowadays, around Punden Dorowati often arrange some religious activities such as reading sholawat and diba', reciting *manaqib*, and *tahlil* to eliminate harmful things such as *tayub* performances, cockfighting (*adu ayam*) etc.

Various activities inside *punden* tradition can increase the closeness between communities to be closer and more intimate. Some Rejosari society-owned this kind of awareness to care for Punden Dorowati as their ancestral heritage. Ironically, many Rejosari village people think that Punden Dorowati is one of the triggers for various problems in the community. The presence of Punden Dorowati progressively becomes a controversial matter. This process raises a view for specific Rejosari society as something abnormal and heretical.

Rejosari people has a unique routine where some Muslims conduct religious activities in winged and haunted place. Usually recitation of *dzikir* and *tahlil* arrange at worship places such as mosques or *musholla* but some Rejosari people hold these activities in a wild places. Kholidah and Nanang stated in their study that understanding local culture is not easy, especially for societies that have been affected by globalization [11]. In this case, there is a need for self-control and a deep understanding of local culture in their respective areas. Based on this explanation, the researcher is interested in explaining Punden Dorowati as an ancestral heritage in the form of a written idea entitled "the existence of *Punden* Dorowati as the ancestral heritage of Rejosari village, Bantur district, Malang.

Based on observation, several previous studies discussed *punden* including; 1) "*Perspektif Islam Mengenai Tradisi Manganan di Punden Mbah Rahmad Desa Gelang Kabupaten Jepara*" that aims to find out

Islamic perspective on the implementation of Manganan tradition in Mbah Rahmad's *Punden*. Tradition becomes a medium to give Allah thanks for the abundance of produce and present the prayers to keep away from calamities and diseases [12]; 2) "Implementasi Nilai Persatuan dalam Pancasila pada Tradisi Bersih Desa (*Punden*) Studi Kasus di Desa Tambakboyo Kabupaten Sukoharjo Kecamatan Tawang Sari" that aims to describe the implementation of unity values in pancasila on cleaning *punden* tradition in the village. Cooperation as an effort to strengthen brotherhood regardless of social status and the manifestation of developing unity based on Bhineka Tunggal Ika, developing a sense of national pride and love of country, also prioritizing mutual interests over personal matter [13].

3) "Relasi Agama dan Budaya Lokal: Studi Kepercayaan Masyarakat Islam Desa Watukenongo Terhadap *Punden* Sebagai Penyembuhan di Kecamatan Pungging Kabupaten Mojokerto" that aims to explain how society maintain values of their belief in *punden* as local culture, and Islamic view into *punden* as healing care in Watukenongo village. Watukenongo people always inherit the tradition from their ancestors and still ongoing nowadays. It because they believe in all proofs. Society has a positive view toward *punden* because they believe *punden* as problem solving [14].

Some previous studies above indicated that in-depth study of *punden* is necessary especially in contemporary social life. Besides contributing to cultural heritage preservation, this study will reveal the existence of *punden* dorowati as local heritage, and explain the contribution of *Punden* Dorowati amid religious, cultural, and contemporary societies.

2. METHOD

This study is descriptive qualitative with phenomenological approach. A reading of social state in phenomenon based on individual perceptions around it [15]. Raco also defined phenomenological approach aims to present social phenomenon fairly through public awareness to those phenomenon [16]. The value of *punden* identity will appear with its contribution to the society of Rejosari village, Bantur, Malang through various interpretative society perspectives [17]. *Punden* revitalization activities in Rejosari village, Bantur, Malang as primary data sources. It supports various literature related to *punden*, cultural heritage, social conditions in Rejosari village, Bantur, Malang, books, journals, or websites as secondary data sources [18], [19].

This study used to interview and documentation techniques as data collection. Usage of unstructured interviews in this study tries to extract data in detail through in-depth interviews [20]. Meanwhile, the documentation technique focuses on internal objects such as some activities around *Punden* Dorowati either images or videos [21]. After collecting data, the researcher used heterogeneous validity data through discussion with

peers, and experts. Form of data credibility test to provide justified evidences scientifically [22].

In data analysis, researcher used Creswell model there are several steps including; transcribing interviews as well as sorting data from interviews and documentation as needed [23]. Researcher also reads all data deeply and taking notes on each data that contain *punden* elements in frame society of Rejosari village, Bantur, Malang. After that, researcher codified a suitable data with subthemes through labelling [24]. The researcher also interpreted findings inductively as main instrument in this study, then represented these qualitative narrative results.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Rejosari village is one of the areas located in Bantur district, Malang regency, East Java. That village was still thick with tradition and made its society a cultured society in the middle of the contemporary era. *Punden Dorowati*'s existence is clear evidence that Rejosari people still adhere to the traditional heritage of their ancestors. So, how important is the existence of *Punden Dorowati* in contemporary society? The more detailed explanation is as follows:

3.1. *Punden Dorowati as Ancestral Heritage*

In a cultural framework, Indonesia has various traditions that become characteristic of each ethnic group. These traditions become a necessity in the survival of cultural, social, and religious life. This matter also applies to Rejosari people who still maintain and preserve ritual tradition in *punden* called *Dorowati*. Following with Taylor statement that human create all knowledge, beliefs, arts, traditions, laws, and habits as members of society named culture [25].

Ironically, this phenomenon raised various perspectives among public. There are three significant perspectives including; 1) fanatic, 2) neutral, 3) contra, and the explanation as below:

Table 1. Society's Perspective about *Punden Dorowati*

Perspectives among society		
Fanatic	Neutral	Contra
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol of devotion to ancestors • Commemorating ancestral services • Enjoying blessing on ancestors • Making an important part of survival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect <i>punden</i> as cultural heritage • Regard <i>punden</i> as tomb of their parents • Confess without following tradition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only a graveyard • Causes misunderstanding (misguided) • Reflect to society division

Based on the classification above, some Rejosari people adhere to tradition in *Punden Dorowati* (fanatic). According to them *Punden Dorowati* is a historical

symbol of the hero in their life circle. The figure of pedestal destroyer who brings a new civilization across generations. *Punden* is a manifestation of every consummation in Rejosari village. The existence of *punden* that adjacent a spring called *sumber kali kucur*. Even though long dry season, this spring never dries up. *Punden Dorowati* is a symbol of the beginning of life. When spring becomes an intermediary for the universe's life, then *punden* becomes an intermediary for the civilization life. In this case, civilization is the Rejosari people's life (field notes). This phenomenon is main reason why they continue to preserve *Punden Dorowati* by organizing various activities around *Punden Dorowati*; one of them is Islamic celebration. Following Soejono perspective described a mutualism with nature where element of beliefs has an essential role in presenting respect forms, and improving welfare. This declaration reinforces that *Punden Dorowati* is very influential for their individual life, even a need to be met for their survival.

Slightly, it differs from previous society, there some Rejosari people view that *punden* is a cultural heritage that needs to be recognized for its existence. For them, *punden* is folklore whose story was told by their elder from mouth to the mouth. So that, they don't care if various activities aimed at honoring ancestors. However, they did not make *Punden Dorowati* a sacred thing, until they needed to carry out several rituals, especially religious rituals. Their opinions are just like graveyard without bodies (*jasad*). Forms of preservation realization are presented by caring for areas around *Punden Dorowati* to keep it beautifully and naturally (field note). This phenomenon showed that some people of Rejosari village have neutral views of *Punden Dorowati*. It can be proved through sensitivity to surrounding environment which formed an impression and judgment during the interaction process (*salito*). Thus, they accept the existence of *Punden Dorowati* but not entirely, only a cultural heritage.

Contrary to two previous perspectives, a group of society does not fully accept *Punden Dorowati*. They thought that *Punden Dorowati* could lead to misunderstanding especially in trust (field notes). *Punden Dorowati* is an ambiguity for them, because of various activities, especially religious activities in *Punden Dorowati* area. Before carrying out religious rituals, its implementation has several questions that its adherents have to answer, including; who is *Dorowati*? Where does she comes from? What is her religion? If these questions cannot be answered, then presenting religious rituals in *Punden Dorowati* is just heresy. Because all of it just a fabrication. This is why they think that such a phenomenon can affect the young generation, it is continuously carried out as a habit (tradition), and it is feared that it can lead to heresy and division.

Besides, *Punden Dorowati* is considered to not effect individual life, especially in the middle of this contemporary era. Because, as far as possible *Punden*

Dorowati has be like that. It is why, they discriminate against the existence of *punden* in Rejosari society's life.

Based on the elaboration of interview results, *Punden* Dorowati has brought its polemic for Rejosari village community. The emergence of different perspectives that are not in harmony also created different attitudes toward *Punden* Dorowati entity. Simultaneously, some Rejosari village people maintained and upheld this tradition as a form of cultural preservation. On the other hand, some people are indifferent to *Punden* Dorowati, even discriminate against its existence in their life. However the implementation of tradition is influenced by these environmental conditions. It is also supported by elements of animism and dynamism of local society [26].

Here, *punden* entity brings a natural awareness that has to be accepted by Rejosari people, and make it happen through the revitalization movement of *Punden* Dorowati both physically and non-physically.

3.2. Function of *Punden* Dorowati for Contemporary, Cultural And Spiritual Society

Based on the existence of *Punden* Dorowati that currently exists in Rejosari village. It is proof that cultural heritage is maintained in Nusantara. That is why researcher need to deeply examine the function of *Punden* Dorowati and its role in society.

Based on interview results, three perspectives describe the function of *punden* and its role for Rejosari society. There are cultural, religious, and social perspectives.

- First, cultural perspective; Rejosari society regard *Punden* Dorowati as a cultural heritage. It proved that there is a legacy from their ancestors. A legacy that characterizes Nusantara and part of culture namely tradition. Everything that comes from the ancestors can be understood into two sides. There are eternal and temporal [27].

In this context, *Punden* Dorowati tradition is eternal that has not changed for an extended period. That is why, tradition is maintained in order to honor the ancestors through special offerings to ancestors. On the other hand, Rejosari society's position occupies its role as cultural society, especially Javanese. This role upholds cultural values. Even though it is conservative by preserving of cultural heritage. in this context, preservation of the cultural heritage proves the urgency of *Punden* Dorowati identity itself.

It is not apart from cultural side,; folklore also has an essential role in realizing the preservation of *punden* which still exists today (contemporary era). Folklore manifestation contains society views across generations to represent the figure of Dorowati as a glorified ancestor. This is the main function of folklore as medium for conveying social values of certain group of society, even it can be

power of certain rules have to be accepted by society [28], [29]. Thus, folklore also plays an important role in preserving *Punden* Dorowati for the society of Rejosari village, Bantur, Malang.

- Second, spiritual perspective; *Punden* Dorowati in the spiritual frame is a medium when humans interact with god. An attempt to increase individual spirituality towards the existence of the universe. Such as Akhyar stated that society's religious system is considered an important thing [1]. The existence of *punden* becomes vital as evidence of civilization in the village. Society always feels afraid of karma,; then, they respect the existence of *Punden* Dorowati as a sacred thing.

According to them, some Rejosari people pray and offer sesajen to *punden* when they have a celebration. The existence of this tradition aimed to pray for the ancestors and gratitude forms for the almighty. Based on its implementation in cultural frame, tradition is a symbol of behavior emergence presented by a group of society and oriented to society rules itself. Tradition is the essence of culture that has not to be separated from symbolism elements [12]. In this context, the function of *Punden* Dorowati entity focuses on increasing individual spirituality to interpret life as good as possible with a taste.

This tradition is manifestation of symbolism about feeling pleasure of interacting with god, as well as beautiful sense of communicating with their ancestors. Here, they feel that their life being directed. It because of the encouragement of the divine soul as well as their ancestor's guidance. It showed a phase of Nusantara society can enjoy life in comfort and prosperity. It is equivalent to the meaning of spirituality that explained a consciousness correlates between human and god or source of existence and essence of life [30], [31].

The entity of *Punden* Dorowati also strengthened the morality of Rejosari people. There are respective forms by sending prays and giving offerings (sesajen) when society has agendas such as wedding ceremonies. It showed that the society of Rejosari village always respects their ancestors.

As the same as Abimanyu statement, Javanese believe in the concept of divinity with the term "rasa". This word is used to describe mystery, which refers to the most subtle and latent human conscience element. Divine principles in Javanese mystical text is called "rasa". but it is not an ordinary taste, not a feeling inside the body, but precisely a feeling that is lived inside the heart [32].

Also, received folklore showed that the figure of Dorowati is a sacred ancestor for rejosari society. Some rejosari people think that their rituals are following religious activities generally. However it is just presented in Javanese culture. This

phenomenon proves that important point of ritual in *Punden* Dorowati in spiritual of individual enhancement. The same as spirituality occupies its role as a dimension of divinity and becomes the potential for each individual's heredity without any dogma [33]. Thus, the existence of *Punden* Dorowati also has a significant impact on individual spirituality.

- Third, social perspective; based on this perspective, *punden* is the center of society's socio-cultural space. It becomes a forum for human activities with bonds of feeling, impression, and creativity between spaces and society that are rooted for generations. The existence of social life aspect and cultural traditions aspect have a causality relationship [7].

Punden Dorowati in the middle of contemporary society becomes a medium to increase the humanistic side of Rejosari society, especially tolerance in belief. It is like society life that synonymous with a plurality where diversity functions to created unity and harmony [34]. That is why, diversity views do not cause Rejosari society to live side by side to create a harmonious life.

In this context, it appears to be a form of mutual respect and appreciation in preserving *Punden* Dorowati. The emergence of shared ownership sense is represented through an attitude of cooperation both materially and non-materially. This phenomenon strengthened that *Punden* Dorowati makes special contribution to social life of Rejosari village, Bantur, Malang.

The manifestation of social reality is formed cannot be separated from the individual's role and its causal relationship with universe [35]. The existence of *Punden* Dorowati become historical social construction that applies in the past, present, and future. Thus, *Punden* Dorowati tradition is an actualization of Rejosari society toward long-established reality.

Punden Dorowati also has functions to increase society's harmony through nature conservation by caring for natural resources around *Punden* Dorowati such as a spring. It showed that, society's awareness of the surrounding environment is a positive attitude and becomes a symbiotic mutualism for them, namely natural resources usage around *Punden* Dorowati. On the other hand, *Punden* Dorowati preservation's philosophical form can provide lots of lessons for Rejosari people such as strengthening relationship among society, knowing the importance of unity and how beautiful togetherness.

Based on the diversity of *Punden* Dorowati functions either from the cultural side, spiritual and social perspective. It is so clear that *Punden* Dorowati still contribute to Rejosari village society in the middle of the contemporary era. Based on this reason, the researcher

considered that the revitalization of *Punden* Dorowati is clear evidence that Rejosari society still preserve cultural heritage that belongs to Nusantara. even though Rejosari people occupy their position as a contemporary society.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on this study's result, the researcher can conclude that *Punden* Dorowati has an urgent position for some rejosari society with upholds the conservative side as an icon of Javanese society. Here, *punden* occupies its position as cultural heritage that needs to be preserved. The function of *Punden* Dorowati for rejosari society includes several aspects such as religious, social, and cultural aspects. However the existence of *punden* still brings dynamics to the escalation and degradation of public awareness in maintaining and preserving cultural heritage.

Based on the relevance of the cultural approach applied to the *Punden* Dorowati phenomenon, this approach can reveal the extent of urgency *punden* entity amid the contemporary era, and the contribution to the social life of rejosari society. Therefore, the researcher considers that this study applicable to society's social symptoms or literary work such as films, novels, even poetry

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Hasan Basri: Conceptualization, Investigation, Validation, Interviewer. **Ifi Erwhintiana:** Writing Original Draft, Methodology, Writing review & editing, visualization. **Abdul Muntaqim Al Anshory:** Resources, Supervision, Reviewer, funding acquisition. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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