

Cultural Manifestations in Oral Folklore: The Legend of Babad Alas Prigi (A Literary Anthropology Study)

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Article History:

Submitted January 14, 2026

Revised March 31, 2026

Accepted April 6, 2026

Published June 30, 2026

How to Cite:

Istantiani, M., Murliana.
(2026). Cultural
Manifestations in Oral
Folklore: The Legend of
Babad Alas Prigi (A Literary
Anthropology Study).
*Javanologi: International
Journal of Javanese Studies*.
9(1), 1-17.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.20961/javanologi.v9i2.114625>

ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the cultural elements in the Babad Alas Prigi legend and the Trenggalek Regency in East Java. The researcher uses qualitative research methods with an ethnographic framework, and the data were analyzed using a descriptive interpretative approach. The data analysis is based on the ideas of Koentjaraningrat, where culture is subdivided into three primary and interrelated components: ideas, activities, and artifacts. Out of the research conducted, the ideas that the legend presents such as harmony among brothers, the persistence to achieve a goal, and religiousness, reflects the community's beliefs, which are largely vocalized in the Larung Sembonyo ritual that is a part of the community's socio-religious activities as an act of thanksgiving and a spiritual communion with the environment. On the other hand, the legend is also a cultural artifact, the Goa Lawa in Watulimo. The Babad Alas Prigi tale is a functional cultural system that integrates meaning of the narrative, ritual, and the physical heritage, which is a vital part of the cultural identity preservation and the local wisdom in the modern Javanese society.

Keywords: Oral Tradition, Anthropology, Folklore, Trenggalek

INTRODUCTION

Cultural studies in each region are an interesting subject to research. Culture is very close to humans. However, not everyone has a deep understanding of humans and the things that surround them. It is not uncommon for people who adhere to a particular culture to not fully understand the ins and outs of their own culture. In fact, the cultures that surround humans have interesting aspects that need to be known by both local and outside communities. Therefore, anthropological studies in a region are an alternative solution. The cultures that surround humans should ideally be explored thoroughly so that a complete understanding can be gained, thereby increasing knowledge and love for the cultures that are inherent in human life.

Anthropology is part of a discipline that discusses human life from a cultural perspective. Culture encompasses all human activities, including knowledge, beliefs, morals, laws, customs, and other habits acquired through learning processes, including thoughts and behavior (Endraswara, 2013). Javanese cultural anthropology studies the origins of Javanese culture, its spread, and its history



(Endraswara, 2020). The emergence of human self-awareness in relation to many things is the focus of anthropology as a social science (Bates et al, 2023).

It is commonly known that folklore is a cultural expression of a community's collective memory, identity, and perspective. In anthropology, oral traditions serve as stories, but more importantly, as vehicles for the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge and socially accepted values and behaviors (Bronner, 2021; Bendix & Hasan-Rokem, 2022). More recent research has also pointed out that folklore, as a cultural system, integrates narrative traditions, rituals, and the material culture of a community (Blank, 2020; Foster & Tolbert, 2021).

People who understand anthropology have full awareness of the things around them. Anthropology is closely related to the process of self-discovery. Chen (2023) states that the mystery of anthropology lies in humans, and the secrets of humans lie in anthropology. Based on this idea, it can be concluded that the study of anthropology is a long one, in the sense that humans need to know about things or history in the past. Events that occurred in the past are then correlated with the culture that currently exists in human life. The connection between past and present events is a necessity.

Aligning with this, researchers plan to examine oral tradition in the Trenggalek region from an anthropological standpoint. Literary anthropology examines literature from the perspective of anthropology (Nurhuda, 2023). This study seeks to enhance the knowledge of anthropology in oral literature in the Trenggalek region, both for the local inhabitants of Trenggalek and for the wider audience. The community has less knowledge with regards to the anthropological aspects of oral folklore. For instance, the knowledge of folklore within the Trenggalek community is still at the rudimentary level. The community is only aware of a few folklore instances, and this remains unaccompanied by the anthropological reasoning. This is a topic worthy for research and study. One of the most vital reasoning is that society and culture always go hand in hand. Thus, it will certainly be of greater value if the community's grasp of folklore transcended the mere.

Judging from its etymology, anthropology comes from the words *anthropos*, meaning human, and *logos*, meaning science. Anthropology means the science of humans. In this sense, the science of humans is not limited. All kinds of things related to human life can be studied using an anthropological perspective. Anthropology is a social and cultural discipline that studies how humans live and behave (Endraswara, 2017). Javanese anthropology can focus on both visible and invisible cultures (Endraswara, 2020). In addition to examining human affairs, anthropology can also embrace other fields such as human goals and values as well as the ultimate goal of humanity (Chen, 2023). This is what makes anthropology unique because it holds cultural mysteries that are interesting to explore. Cultural mysteries that occurred in the past can be used as inspiration for humans to live their lives in the present and the future.

The legend of Babad Alas Prigi is part of Javanese folklore. Folklore is a form of human culture that has been passed down from generation to generation. Folklore is divided into three types, namely oral folklore, semi-oral folklore, and non-oral folklore. This study focuses on oral folklore. Oral folklore

itself is divided into several types, including community language, dialects, traditional expressions, folk poetry, folk prose, and folk songs. The focus of this study is to examine a type of folk prose in the form of legends from an anthropological perspective. Literary anthropology serves as a bridge to delve deeper into the aesthetic realm of human culture. In this case, literary anthropology is not only about modern literature, but also includes ancient literature and various oral traditions that are rich in values (Endraswara, 2016).

The researcher selected this legend due to the gripping story and the strong components of culture that warrant examination from the perspective of anthropology. A review of the literature revealed that no studies exist that specifically analyze Babad Alas Prigi legend from the perspective of anthropology. Thus, this study provides a new perspective that can be of greater value to both the academics and the general public. The central issue that this particular article attempts to address deals with the cultural expressions that the Babad Alas Prigi legend encapsulates. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine the cultural components of the legend. This research is anchored on the theory of literary anthropology, which studies literary works as cultural artifacts that portray the ideas, customs, and practices of a given society. Literary anthropology is essential in identifying the cultural dimensions in the literary and oral art (Nurhuda, 2023). This perspective is supported by Ratna (2017) who posits that literary anthropology encompasses the study of and the literature, the culture of the society that created and disseminated the work. In addition, this research integrates the notion of three forms of culture by Koentjaraningrat, which divides culture into three components: ideas (systems of values, norms, and beliefs), actions (social behavioral patterns), and artifacts (products of material culture). With this framework, the researcher is able to analyze the Babad Alas Prigi legend beyond a narrative text to a cultural system, comprising community values, ritual, and culture that is physically manifested.

In general, the Babad Alas Prigi legend narrates the story of how the Prigi area in Tasikmadu Village, Watulimo District, Trenggalek Regency came to be. The story recounts the clearing of the wilderness by five brothers, a story that sparked the creation of the area now called Prigi. This legend is one of the most prominent in Trenggalek Regency. From the interview with an artist and teacher in Watulimo Village, Mr. Suyasno, the author of the legend, Babad Alas Prigi, is said to be anonymous. The story continues to be passed down to the present day. The theory applied in this case is anthropology, the study that establishes a relationship between a human being and a certain culture. This is the theory that makes it possible to delineate the various manifested forms of a culture and the changes they undergo in a given society. Basically, culture and man develop simultaneously. From the perspective of anthropology, man is the most important element. The relationship between man and culture is fundamental.

Anthropological research on folklore has previously been conducted by Nurfitriana Maulidiah and Kundharu Saddhono (2019) entitled *Cultural Forms and Educational Values in the Folklore of Putri Jelumpang: An Anthropological Study of Literature*. The study examined cultural forms in folklore,

divided into three categories: ideas or concepts, character activities, and artifacts. The ideas obtained from the Putri Jelumpang story are ideas about human life and ideas about humans and nature. The activities of the characters in the story are activities related to human life tools and religious systems. Meanwhile, artifacts were not found in this study. Nurfitriana and Kundharu's research also examines the educational values in the Putri Jelumpang folk tale. The educational values obtained include moral values of doing good, fulfilling rights, and honesty. The similarity between this study and the study conducted by the researchers is that both examine folk tales, but the stories examined are different. Due to the difference in stories, the results obtained are also different.

Similar research was also conducted by Dyah Hanggraheni Purnamawati (2020) with the title *Anthropological Study of Literature in a Short Story Entitled "Mudhik Total"*. The results of this study are (1) elements of everyday language, nicknames, and character names, (2) religious elements in the form of activities carried out by characters and celebrated hearts, (3) social elements between characters in the form of obedience to parents and interaction with the surrounding environment, (4) cultural elements such as mudik, sadranan, and grave pilgrimage. The similarity between this study and the study conducted by the researcher is that both examine the topic from an anthropological perspective. The difference lies in the object of study. The object of Dyah's study is short stories published in *Panjebar Semangat* magazine, while the object of the researcher's study is oral literature that developed in Trenggalek Regency.

Current trends in folklore studies research the interrelation between the oral story, the rituals, and the environment. Folklore, we must remember, is not simply a story. It is an instrument for communities to work through their issues of selfhood, spirituality, and collective memories (Howard, 2021; Kligman & Dorian, 2022) and, hence, warrants an anthropological analysis. Such an analysis reveals the extensive role of the story in the cultural setting of the community. Most previous research on Javanese folklore has concentrated on the analysis of texts, the structure of the narratives, the morals (if any) of the narratives, and the historical (if any) explanations of legends. Very few researchers have analyzed Javanese folklore in the context of a cultural system that is still alive and integrates the community's symbolic, social, and material practices. To date, the legend of Babad Alas Prigi has not been analyzed from an anthropological view that examines the interrelationship between the legend and the community's cultural values, the ritual customs of the community, and the material culture of the community. This is an important lacuna, for oral traditions should not merely be seen as stories, but as vehicles of culture through which communities transmit their collective memories, social order, and local identities and memories to generations.

In Trenggalek society, the legend of Babad Alas Prigi is integrated into the community's rituals, such as the Larung Sembonyo, as well as the local historical sites like Goa Lawa. Although the local legend has relevance in the community, there is a shortage of studies to academically demonstrate how the community legend reflects and shapes the cultural practices of the society. Therefore, there is a significant need to study the legend using the anthropological perspective of how oral traditions create

and preserve the community's culture and local wisdom. This study also aims to fill the gap in the field of anthropology when studying Indonesian folklore, and how to study the Babad Alas Prigi legend in the context of Koentjaraningrat's cultural framework of ideas, activities, and artifacts. This perspective enables the legend to be studied as a text and as a cultural system within the community. The uneasiness of anthropological studies may produce a certain type of understanding founded upon the truths of alternative realities. Therefore, the need for new perspectives remains great, and, above all, the need for new perspectives remains great (Utama et al., 2023).

METHOD

The anthropological study in the Legend of Babad Alas Prigi is classified as qualitative research. Qualitative research methods are used to examine the natural conditions of the object, where the researcher acts as the key instrument (Sugiyono, 2020). Ethnography focuses on the cultures that exist in the present day (Endraswara, 2020). This study uses an ethnographic approach. Ethnographic design is useful for describing and analyzing various cultural groups in relation to patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language that have developed and been used by communities over time (Creswell, 2012). The ethnographic approach aims to obtain in-depth descriptions and analyses of culture based on intensive field research (Yusanto, 2020).

In terms of data collection, direct observation and extensive interviews were utilized. Since the researchers were from other communities, they relied on a colleague from the informants' village who was in contact on a regular basis with the local community. Data collection lasted two weeks. During this period, researchers and community members interacted on a daily basis through participatory observation and informal conversations. This immersion, together with the in-depth interviews, enabled the researchers to frame and interpret the community's cultural context.

The researcher studies cultural phenomena in her immediate environment. Among the activities in the collection of data are interviews with Mr. Suyasno, an artist and educator in Watulimo Village, Trenggalek Regency. The interview was done through listening, note-taking, and the recording of the interview, to capture as much detail and accuracy as possible. The researcher was in a position to capture detail explanation of the interviewee's response, and thus increase the chances of her capturing all the vital information. To ensure the validity of her data, the researcher practiced data triangulation, in this case, source triangulation and technique triangulation. Of source triangulation, data from interviews was cross-referenced with data from observations and literature. While for technique triangulation, interviews, field studies and document reviews were cross-referenced to measure the consistency and reliability of the data. The data were analyzed descriptively qualitatively, and organized in a sequential order. The researcher analyzed data of the interviews and observations, organized the data with reference to the focus of the study, and interpreted the meanings of the data in relation to the culture represented. From this process, the researcher understood the cultural expressions contained in the Babad Alas Prigi legend, supported by empirical data obtained during the fieldwork.

A multi-phase process following Miles and Huberman's qualitative analysis framework, with modification for application to the narrative data of the Babad Alas Prigi legend, guides this study's analysis of data. The author describes the steps followed, starting with the transcription of the interview recordings, which enabled the author to capture the oral history of the account in its entirety, as a written account of the record. The author then isolated and selected narrative sections related to specific events, values, practices, or material artifacts related to the legend. At this point in the analysis, the narrative was divided into smaller elements for analysis, where thematic elements of the narrative were present.

In the analysis, the author categorized each narrative unit according to the framework of cultural manifestations developed by Koentjaraningrat. Narrative segments containing the belief, morals, or values of a given culture are classified as cultural ideas. Narrative sections that describe the community practice, ritual, or socially active spirit of a culture in a repetitive way, as is the case in the Larung Sembonyo tradition, are classified as cultural practices. Narrative sections that describe the material aspects of culture, such as the sites that reference Goa Lawa, are classified as cultural relics. For the fourth stage, the researcher developed the descriptive narrative detailing the relationships uncovered among the legend and the community's cultural facets. Then, the researcher evaluated the findings to capture the cultural manifestations inherent in the Babad Alas Prigi legend.

The researcher's evaluation was also reinforced with the aid of literature and journals, aiding the framework for the evaluation. Thus, the evaluation was thorough in consideration of other works. This research, in part, follows the outline presented by Spradley (1997), which includes six steps, namely, (1) choosing an ethnographic project, (2) posing the problem, (3) gathering the evidence, (4) constructing the ethnographic records, (5) interpreting the ethnographic records, and (6) presenting the findings and drawing conclusions. The researcher, in consideration of the above, implemented a systematic approach to help delineate the steps of the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Legend of Babad Alas Prigi

Around 1500-1600, the Mataram Ngayogyakarta kingdom had five royal sons. The eldest son was Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara, the second was Raden Yauda, the third was Raden Yaudi, the fourth was Raden Pringgo Jayeng Hadi Logo, and the youngest was Raden Prawira Kusuma Sarana. The sons wanted to explore the eastern coastal region, but their father could not bear to let all five of them go alone. Therefore, he sent his officials and Yang Pamong Amad Adi Wirya as elders to accompany them.

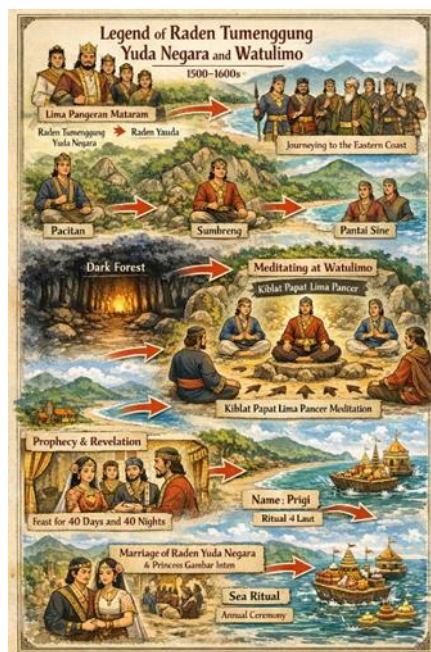


Figure 1. Illustration of the Legend of Raden Tumenggung

The journey began in Pacitan. In that area, they successfully cleared the land that is now known as Pacitan. The Pacitan area was entrusted to Raden Yauda and accompanied by several officials. Then Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara walked east until he finally succeeded in clearing the land that is now called the Sumbreng area, Munjungan District. The area was entrusted to Raden Yaudi and also accompanied by several officials. Then the group continued their journey. On the way, they encountered a pitch-black area where nothing could be seen and which was impassable to humans. Finally, the group continued their journey eastward. There, they successfully cleared the forest of Sine Beach (Sine Bay), which is now a famous tourist destination in the Kalidawir area, Tulungagung Regency.

After that, the royal son Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and his five soldiers remained behind. However, the group continued their journey to the pitch-black place. When they arrived, the place was still pitch-black and impenetrable, as if it were a place of death. Finally, Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and his soldiers meditated at that place. The meditation site was divided into five parts, namely kiblat papat lima pancer. The one who meditated in the southwest was Raden Putra Wijaya, in the northwest was Raden Sutirto, then in the southeast was Raden Wirya Udara, then in the northeast was the elder Yang Pamong Amad Adi Wirya, while in the center was Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara. During their meditation, they hoped to receive divine guidance on how to clear the dark forest in a peaceful manner. There were five meditation stones, and Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara said that the place was named Watulimo as a reminder, which is now the name of a village and sub-district in Trenggalek Regency.

In carrying out his meditation, Yang Pamong Amad Adi Wirya received a revelation from *Hyang Maha Wikan*. He then quickly ended his meditation and reported the contents of the revelation to Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara. The contents of the instructions were “you can easily open Prigi

Bay as long as Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara is willing to marry the princess of the Andong Biru Duchy, named Putri Gambar Inten.”

After listening to the prophecy received by Yang Pamong Amad Adi Wirya, Raden Tumenggung immediately summoned the *jaka sentana* who were meditating to discuss this matter. However, Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara had a wish that on the day of the wedding, there should be a *kembul bujana andrawina* party from the Andong Biru clan with *langen tayub* entertainment for 40 days and 40 nights. In fact, Adipati Andong Biru accepted this wish with great happiness. The wedding day fell on Monday Kliwon in the month of Sela. Raden Tumenggung then told the *sentana* (royal family) of his wishes, which were, first, that the wedding celebrations should begin with the opening of the desired area, and second, that after opening the area, it should be named Prigi, because at that time there was a water source called *parigih* and it was hoped that the area would become a source of livelihood for the residents. Finally, the couple's wedding must be commemorated once a year with a sea offering ceremony, which is now known as *larung sembonyo*.

Cultural Manifestations in the Babad Alas Prigi

Contemporary folklore studies increasingly highlight the relationship between oral narratives, ritual practices, and cultural landscapes. Folklore is not merely a narrative form but also a medium through which communities negotiate identity, spirituality, and historical memory (Howard, 2021; Kligman & Dorian, 2022). Therefore, examining folklore through an anthropological perspective allows researchers to understand how stories function within the broader cultural system of society. Cultural manifestations are given more space in this section as they represent the central cultural significance of the Babad Alas Prigi legend. As manifestations of culture in the form of ideas, they embody the essential principles of life that the Watulimo people have internalized. They serve as ethical anchors and guiding value systems which structure the peoples' comprehension of the social order, faith, and the overarching self.

The ideas expressed in the legend, which likely contains several narrative divisions and employs various symbols to either meld or juxtapose cultural elements, makes them more sophisticated and complex than cultural practices and cultural artifacts. Therefore, the various components of the cultural ideas in the legend include detailed explanations of cultural values like the perseverance, religiosity, and brotherly harmony). The cultural values in the legend's narrative and messages are also interpreted by the society as ethical paradigms that are practiced on a daily basis. For the above reasons, this section attempts to expound on the various cultural ideas signified in the legend and the interconnected values in the socio-cultural practices of Watulimo's community. The cultural aspects in the Babad Alas Prigi legend are further classified into three elements: ideas, activities, and artifacts. The ideas found in the story including:

Harmony among brothers and sisters

The idea found in the Legend of Babad Alas Prigi is harmony among siblings. Harmony means not arguing, being peaceful with one another, and not fighting. Harmony arises from the willingness to suppress personal desires for the common good (Khumaira, 2023). Harmony will not be achieved when each person prioritizes their own egoism. Sirait and Istinatun (2022) add that harmony will not occur if one does not view others as siblings.

In the Legend of Babas Alas Prigi, there is a depiction of the close harmony between five brothers, namely Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara, Raden Yauda, Raden Yaudi, Raden Pringgo Jayeng Hadi Logo, and Raden Prawira Kusuma Sarana. The harmony among the five princes was reflected in their shared intention and commitment to clear the forest and establish a new territory. Although they encountered various obstacles along the way, this did not dampen their enthusiasm to continue the mission they had set out on together. After successfully clearing the forest, the area was divided equally among the five brothers so that each received a share. Harmony among siblings is a good idea or concept in order to realize a great mission. Something difficult will be easy to achieve if it is done together and with hard work. Goals will be achieved quickly when there is synergy among the people involved.

Harmony can be achieved when each individual is tolerant and does not put their ego first. This was demonstrated by the five princes when they set out to complete a mission they had undertaken together. This behavior shows that it is better for siblings not to put their personal egos first. When one sibling is in difficulty, the others are ready to help overcome that difficulty. Harmony and cooperation that are well established will bring about the victory that is shared by all.

Harmony among siblings in the context of Javanese people is in line with the idea that siblings are of the same blood. The meaning of the same blood is that they come from the same parents. They are born from the same parents, so ideally, they should help and love each other. Therefore, as blood relatives, harmony is a priority so that there is no division or even civil war. Javanese culture highly values good morals and does not want division. On the contrary, harmony creates harmony in life. People who are able to live in harmony will create harmony and balance in society. Harmony cannot be achieved without unity. Harmony among siblings is an important foundation for creating harmony within the nation and state. Unity is easily achieved when harmony is established. In the Javanese language, there is a term *nyawiji* or *bersatu*, which can be interpreted as unity in goodness, struggle, and the realization of harmony in life.

Focus on the Goal

Another idea found in the Legend of Babad Alas Prigi is the focus on goals. The story depicts the difficulties faced by Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and his brothers when they wanted to clear new land. The legend also tells that the five of them reached a dead end when they wanted to clear the land. This was because the forest they were passing through was very dark and difficult to penetrate.

However, this did not change their goal to continue clearing the forest and opening up new areas. They overcame these obstacles together and did not give up. The obstacles they encountered were seen as challenges to continue the mission they had planned.

Focus on goals is also represented in Javanese life. In Javanese life, there is a term called *madhep manteb*, which means to focus and persevere on what has been planned. People who are *madhep manteb* will find it easier to realize their dreams and life plans than those who are easily swayed. Focused people devote all their thoughts and energy to doing things that are in line with their life goals. Any obstacles will not deter them from achieving their dreams.

The hard work and focus of Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and his brothers enabled them to achieve their goals. They successfully cleared several areas of wilderness and turned them into a region. Some of the areas they cleared were Sine, Bagusan, and Watulimo. Their determination led them to become figures who contributed greatly to the formation of the region.

Focusing on goals can also be interpreted as meaning that nothing that happens will shake a person's commitment. This is a good principle, considering that external forces cannot be controlled. However, because of a complete focus on goals, everything will be done to achieve them. This focus will also open up opportunities for possibilities that may arise in the future. Optimism needs to be cultivated along with applying a focus on goals.

Religiousness

Religiousness is related to a person's belief that there is something beyond humans that has great and extraordinary power. They are aware that there is something that drives human life. Religiousness is defined as a value that arises from a person's relationship with God and with other people. Praying is one form of religious value (Safar, 2022). Praying is a manifestation of a person's servitude as a creature.

In the context of theology, a power beyond human power is called God. Humans have faith in God. This is also true of the Javanese people. The Javanese believe that there is a power beyond themselves that is greater than human power. In theological terms, this is called God. God is the mover of the universe who rules the world and all its contents. Anything is possible before God if He so desires. In line with religiosity, this concept is also reflected in the Legend of Babad Alas Prigi. One event described is when Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and his brothers were experiencing a deadlock, they then meditated to ask for guidance. The story mentions that they meditated to seek divine guidance.

In the process of meditation, patience and focus on what is expected are required. The process also requires seriousness. When related to life in the present, humans also need to pray in living their daily lives. Praying shows our position as servants and our belief that there is a power greater than that of servants. Therefore, human life cannot be separated from the process of praying. By praying, it is also represented that humans are not perfect beings. There are weaknesses within humans. In addition, there are also events outside of ourselves that cannot be controlled by humans. There is nothing wrong

with humans asking for strength and guidance from the Giver of Guidance.

Every religion has its own rituals of worship that cannot be compared. These differences are not negative, but rather contribute to diversity. Differences do not divide this nation; rather, they are interpreted as diversity that characterizes this country as multicultural. Diversity in religious activities or worship is not a problem. Human diversity is something that should be studied. Diversity that is well maintained will create harmony in society.

Javanese society recognizes the term *sangkan paraning dumadi*. *Sangkan paraning dumadi* means that humans know the origin and return of their eternal life. Humans will return to God as their origin. In the concept of religiosity, belief in God is manifested through worship. There are many things that can be done as a form of human servitude to God. One of them is praying. This is what Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and his brothers did when they encountered difficulties while attempting to open up new territory. They prayed to Sang Hyang Maha Wikan for guidance on how to clear the forest and turn it into new territory. Not only the five of them, but Yang Pamong Amad Adi Wirya, their companion, also participated in the meditation. The meditation ended when Yang Pamong Amad Adi Wirya received a revelation from Sang Maha Wikan. He immediately went to see Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and conveyed the contents of the revelation. The revelation stated that the area could be opened by the group on the condition that Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara agreed to marry the princess of the Andong Biru Kingdom, named Putri Gambar Inten. The content of the revelation provided a solution to the problem faced by Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara's group. Based on this legend, it is clear that the concept of religiosity was also applied to the story. Religiosity led them to be able to find a solution to the problems they were facing.

Activities in the Legend of Babad Alas Prigi

The legend of Babad Alas Prigi contains the activities of characters that are embodied in the story. These activities have now become a tradition that has developed in the community, namely larung sembonyo. Larung sembonyo is a sea offering performed by the people of the Prigi area. The sea offering is carried out by floating food and agricultural products to Prigi Beach. The food is floated in the form of offerings (*tumpang*) to express gratitude to Yaudi and Yauda, who are believed to have opened up the Prigi Bay (Wijaya & Jaladri, 2018). Permadi (2017) adds that the larung sembonyo tradition is an expression of gratitude to God Almighty. In addition, the larung sembonyo ceremony also represents the fishermen's gratitude for the abundant fish catch and is a manifestation of their prayers for safety while fishing (Saputri & Sasanadjati, 2018). The series of events in larung sembonyo includes religious practices such as *ambengan*, expressions of gratitude, and prayers (Samudra & Khusna, 2023).

Ritual practices associated with folklore often function as expressions of collective memory and cultural continuity. Anthropologists note that rituals derived from local legends frequently serve to strengthen social cohesion and reaffirm community identity (Bendix & Hasan-Rokem, 2022; Howard,

2021). *Larung Sembonyo* is an annual tradition carried out by the local community as an expression of gratitude for the clearing of land in the Prigi Beach area. The people of Watulimo believe that if the *Larung Sembonyo* ritual is no longer performed, various misfortunes may occur, such as disasters at sea, fish shortages, crop failures, or other calamities (Soyomukti & Subekti, 2016). This belief reflects the community's spiritual relationship with nature and the sea as the main source of livelihood. In line with the legend of *Babad Alas Prigi*, the *Larung Sembonyo* tradition also commemorates the marriage of Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and Putri Gambar Inten. The ceremony is held during the Javanese month of Selo, specifically on the Kliwon market day. The offerings that are floated into the sea consist of staple foods, fruits, traditional snacks, and other symbolic items. The ritual usually takes place in the morning at Prigi Beach and concludes at noon, accompanied by festive community celebrations.

Similar sea-offering traditions can also be found in other coastal communities in Java, such as the Larung Sesaji ritual in the south coast of Yogyakarta and Sedekah Laut practiced by fishing communities in Central Java and East Java. These traditions share a common function as expressions of gratitude and requests for safety and abundance from the sea. However, *Larung Sembonyo* has a distinctive characteristic because it is closely linked to the local historical narrative of the *Babad Alas Prigi* legend, particularly the story of the marriage between Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and Putri Gambar Inten. This connection between ritual practice and local legend strengthens the cultural significance of *Larung Sembonyo* as both a communal ceremony and a manifestation of cultural memory in the coastal community of Watulimo.

Based on the above description, it can be seen that larung sembonyo is related to traditions that exist today. The larung tradition described in the legend inspired the larung tradition practiced by the people of Prigi. Larung sembonyo is also interpreted as a tradition routinely practiced by the community so that the queen of the south sea does not become angry with the people in the area. As a routine tradition, larung sembonyo cannot be separated from the lives of the community. The existence of Larung sembonyo continues to this day. Not only that, larung sembonyo is also widely known by the people of Trenggalek Regency. Larung sembonyo is witnessed by the people in the Trenggalek region without exception. The event is also witnessed by people from outside the region. This tradition can also be witnessed by outsiders who want to visit there. The event is held very lively and many people document the event as part of their personal enjoyment.

Artifacts in the Legend of Babad Alas Prigi

Material culture, including ritual objects and cultural sites, represents the tangible dimension of folklore traditions. Anthropological studies show that artifacts connected with oral traditions often function as symbolic landscapes where historical narratives and collective memory are preserved (Blank, 2020; Kligman & Dorian, 2022). Artifacts constitute the most tangible manifestation of culture because they represent material objects created and used by humans in their social life. In anthropological studies, artifacts are understood as the physical forms of culture that reflect the ideas,

values, and social practices of a community. According to Koentjaraningrat, artifacts are part of the cultural system that can be directly observed because they appear as concrete objects produced by human activity. In the context of the *Babad Alas Prigi* legend, artifacts serve as cultural symbols that connect the narrative tradition with the everyday life of the Watulimo community.

Within the cultural tradition related to the legend, several artifacts appear in ritual practices and communal ceremonies. One of the most prominent artifacts is the offerings used in the Larung Sembonyo ceremony, which consist of agricultural products, fruits, traditional foods, and other daily necessities. These offerings are not merely ritual objects but symbolic representations of gratitude and respect toward nature and supernatural forces believed to guard the sea. From an anthropological perspective, such ritual objects function as mediators between the human world and the spiritual realm.

Another artifact reflected in the tradition is the ceremonial equipment used during the procession, including containers for offerings, traditional clothing worn by participants, and decorative elements used in the ritual procession. These objects reinforce the symbolic meaning of the ceremony and strengthen collective identity among the coastal community. The use of traditional attire and ritual objects demonstrates how material culture becomes a medium for expressing cultural continuity and communal memory.

Furthermore, artifacts in the context of the *Babad Alas Prigi* legend illustrate how cultural narratives are preserved through ritual practices. The objects used in ceremonies embody historical memory, particularly the story of Raden Tumenggung Yuda Negara and Putri Gambar Inten, which continues to be commemorated by the community. Through these artifacts, the legend is not only transmitted orally but also materialized in ritual activities that are repeatedly performed each year. Thus, the artifacts associated with the *Babad Alas Prigi* legend function not only as physical objects but also as cultural symbols that maintain the relationship between myth, tradition, and the social life of the Watulimo community. Their presence demonstrates how material culture plays an important role in sustaining cultural values and collective identity across generations.

After an area was formed in Watulimo as described in the Babad Alas Prigi Legend, there was a large cave in the area. Inside the cave, there were many bats, hence it was named Goa Lawa. Goa Lawa is located in Watuagung Village, Watulimo District, Trenggalek Regency, East Java. In addition to being a historical discovery, the cave is now used as a tourist attraction. According to Kompas, Trenggalek Regent Arifin stated that, according to French researchers, Goa Lawa is one of the longest caves in Southeast Asia. He noted that Goa Lawa spans approximately two kilometers. However, not all areas are accessible to tourists. Only about 850 meters of the cave can be explored by visitors.

Many people from Trenggalek Regency and other areas visit there to enjoy Goa Lawa tourism. Goa Lawa tourism is an attractive tourist destination because it has its own uniqueness. In the cave, we can also find several bats living there. Goa Lawa tourism is open from morning to noon. The fees charged to visitors are also very affordable. This attraction can be used as a historical site and to introduce children to artifacts as part of their culture.

Goa Lawa is currently maintained by designated personnel. This serves as motivation to preserve Goa Lawa's authenticity and increase its popularity among the wider community. Not only can the public visit this tourist destination, but there are also several snack vendors in the Lawa Cave area. This is certainly something to be happy about and has the potential to boost the economy of the local community. It would be good to optimize the existing destinations in the local area so that residents can also directly enjoy the benefits of tourism.

Goa Lawa is not merely a natural tourist attraction but also a cultural space that reflects the historical memory and social dynamics of the Watulimo community. The physical characteristics of the cave darkness, narrow passages, and a quiet atmosphere create an experiential environment that symbolically connects visitors with the past. In an anthropological perspective, such spatial characteristics contribute to the formation of collective memory because physical places often function as sites where historical narratives and local legends are preserved and reinterpreted by the community.

The existence of Goa Lawa in the cultural landscape of Watulimo indicates that natural sites can function as cultural markers that link present-day society with historical events. The cave is frequently associated with stories and historical traces that circulate in local narratives, suggesting that the site plays a role in maintaining the continuity of cultural memory. In this sense, Goa Lawa can be interpreted as a symbolic landscape in which natural formations are imbued with cultural meaning through storytelling and communal belief.

Beyond its symbolic and historical significance, the transformation of Goa Lawa into a tourist destination has also produced socio-economic implications for the surrounding community. The increasing number of visitors has encouraged the emergence of small-scale economic activities, such as local vendors selling food, souvenirs, and other goods around the cave area. This phenomenon illustrates how cultural and natural heritage sites can generate economic opportunities for local residents while simultaneously strengthening community engagement with the site.

From an anthropological viewpoint, this interaction between cultural heritage and tourism reflects a process of cultural commodification, in which elements of local history and landscape are integrated into economic activities. However, rather than diminishing cultural meaning, this process can also reinforce the community's attachment to the site, as the economic benefits derived from tourism motivate residents to maintain and promote the cultural significance of Goa Lawa. Consequently, the cave functions simultaneously as a historical symbol, a cultural landscape, and a resource that supports the livelihood of the Watulimo community.

CONCLUSION

This research expands the anthropological study of oral traditions, especially pertaining to the regional traditions of Trenggalek Regency. More precisely, this research attempts to provide an anthropological analysis of the Babad Alas Prigi legend, as a way of describing culturally contextualized manifestations of the legend's narrative, or of culturally constructed ideas, culturally

constructed activities, and culturally constructed objects. This study uses an anthropological approach to show that oral folklore, and specifically the folktale, is not just a narrative tradition, but also a cultural system of the society's abstract and formal manifestations of the Watulimo people. This research examines the cultural factors of the Babad Alas Prigi legend and provides an analysis for the first time in the literature, focusing on the cultural specifics of the legend and the connection to socio-cultural activities, traditions, and identities of the locales. The research, in this case, adds to the documentation and ensures the preservation of folklore and demonstrates the relevance of the legend to the contemporary cultural life. This research proves that the anthropological methodology, when applied to oral literature, can successfully reveal the social reality the narrative of the oral literature traditions. The focus of the research is on the analysis of folklore and the anthropological definition of cultural elements, which is an approach to examine the oral story within the elaborated cultural system. This research showcases the exploitation of Indonesian folklore in the analysis of local legends, arguing that they can be studied as literary texts and as cultural constructs embodying the interplay of community practice, tradition, and cultural identity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to Universitas Negeri Surabaya and Universitas Jabal Ghafur for the opportunity they have given us. We would also like to thank our source, Mr. Suyasno, for the information he provided during the interview process.

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