

The Structure and Functions of Prayers during *Ngalab Berkah* Ritual at Pesarean Gunung Kawi

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ABSTRACT

Pesarean Gunung Kawi is the burial site of two Islamic propagators in East Java, Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono. Pilgrims visit the place to perform *ngalab berkah* 'finding good fortune' rituals. In the ceremony, *sajen* 'offerings' are being served to God Almighty and prayers are being cited, mediated through the spirits of the two figures buried in the site. This study aims to reveal the structure and function of a prayer cited during the *ngalab berkah* rituals in Pesarean Gunung Kawi. Using qualitative method, we describe the structure and function of prayer in the performed rituals. Data used in this study are in the form of texts of prayers and photo documentation, which were taken during our visit as pilgrims. We also conducted interviews with *juru kunci* 'caretaker of the burial site', *pengujub* 'prayer reader', and other pilgrims. We interpreted the data using hermeneutic theory to reveal that the contents of the prayer can be categorized into opening, body, and closing. The prayer has two functions, individual and social. Individually, the prayer is a token of gratitude to the blessings from God and the two figures buried there. On the other hand, the prayer can socially function as a medium to foster tolerance and build solidarity between religious and ethnic communities.

Keywords: Function, Pesarean Gunung Kawi, prayers, rituals, structure.

1. INTRODUCTION

Pesarean Gunung Kawi in Malang, East Java, is the famous burial site of Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono. Both figures were described to have been powerful with magic and helpful, as they taught farming to the community around the area. The existence of the tombs has attracted thousands of people from across the country to come there and perform *ngalab berkah* 'finding good fortune' or enjoy religious tourism. *Ngalab berkah* is a type of *selamatan* 'salvation feast' ritual, performed by people who believe that Pesarean Gunung Kawi is home to a supernatural power, magical elements that possess powers beyond humans.

The supernatural power comes from Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono, as their burial site is believed to be closely located to nirvana, enabling their spirits to ascend to *Swargaloka*. Pesarean Gunung Kawi is located in the middle slopes of Mount Kawi, which is at *Bhuwarloka* level (Sulistyorini, 2021), one level below *Swargaloka*. According to Munandar (2016), mountain areas are divided into three levels, based on a *Triloka*, the

foot of the mountain is *Bhurloka*, the middle area is *Bhuwarloka*, while the peak area, where the gods reside, are called *Swargaloka*. People believe that the spirits of both Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono, buried in *Bhuwarloka*, will help deliver prayers of the pilgrims to Sang Hyang Widhi or God.

Ngalab berkah is an effort to seek for blessings and find good fortunes to achieve a better life (Nugroho, 2020). In Arabic, seeking blessings is referred to as *tabarruk*. According to Sakinah (2019), *tabarruk* or *ngalab berkah* rituals are usually carried out in sacred places which are believed to have supernatural powers such as in *pesarean* or the tombs of holy or pious people. The purpose of visiting the graves of the ancestors and pious people is to send prayers to those who are buried in the place. However, influenced by tradition, people also perform the ritual to pray for safety, wealth, position, and power. Traditional rituals are related to traditional customs that are still practiced by the community today. People believe places that are considered sacred and historic can connect them with the spiritual power of their

ancestors (Marwoto, Soetomo, Setioko, & Musaddun, 2018). In this case, Pesarean Gunung Kawi is a suitable place to pray and ask for blessings.

There are rules that must be obeyed by the pilgrims in performing *ngalab berkah* at Pesarean Gunung Kawi, including bringing offerings for the feast and several complementary items. Offerings are usually served in a place that is believed to have supernatural powers or a liaison between the real world and the invisible realm (Nugroho, 2020). In this way, offerings are seen as a means for praying, given to the spirits who reside in an invisible realm. The *ngalab berkah* rituals can be carried out at any time, but the *selamatan* ritual is normally conducted inside the *pendapa* 'hall' accompanied by tomb guard and *pengujub* 'prayer reader'. This traditional ritual is the embodiment of people's belief in the existence of invisible natural spirits that can protect humans and move nature beyond their reach.

The ritual aims to maintain a balance between the macrocosm and the microcosm (Saputra, 2007). In order to maintain this balance, it is necessary to read prayers and conduct *selamatan*. The prayers at the Pesarean Gunung Kawi are led by a *pengujub* 'prayer reader' assigned by Ngesti Gondo Foundation. The prayers contain certain messages, such as requests from the *ngalab berkah* pilgrims, added by Islamic and Javanese prayers. Prayers are addressed to God Almighty through the intermediary of the two figures buried in the site.

The *ngalab berkah* pilgrims have diverse backgrounds, they come from various ethnicities, beliefs, and regions. Their motivation in performing the ritual is driven by their belief to pray to God or Sang Hyang Widhi, guided by the *pengujub*. In the beginning of the procession, they hand over their personal wishes written on a piece of paper to the prayer reader, along with some offerings (usually a basket of chicken and rice), a small basket of flower petals, and incense.

Once everything has been given to him, the *pengujub* will read a prayer according to the wishes of the pilgrim. The prayer begins with an opening, asking permission from the invisible spirits of nature and the prophet of Allah, continued by the wishes of the pilgrims, the main part, and then the closing part. This prayer contains a series of words that are neatly structured so that they can carry away the pilgrims as they listen carefully to their own wishes. The structure of *ngalab berkah* prayer is clear, straightforward, and is able to accommodate the request of the pilgrims.

In this modern era, with the development of technology, there are still people who believe in *selamatan* rituals and in supernatural powers. They really do believe that reading the prayer can lead them to all their desired wishes. As the prayer is seen as magical and powerful, our research aims to reveal the interesting structure of meaning and function in it. We aim to

discover what makes the *ngalab berkah* prayer at Pesarean Gunung Kawi different from other prayers.

Previous research has discussed the functions of prayer or mantra in other ceremonies. Olang, Astuti, and Jubang (2018) discuss the structure and function of the Dayak Suru'k mantra in south Putussibau district. The study found that the mantra contains elements such as title, opening, and purpose. This spell serves to protect oneself from harm, it can also bring fatality to the opponent immediately. In addition, the mantra also functions as a prayer, asking for salvation to God. Anita, Syam, and Muzzammil (2019) examine the structure and function of healing spells in the Malay Sambas community in Sepinggan Village and Singaraya Village, Semparuk District, Sambas Regency. They found that the words used in the healing spell came from Sambas Malay, Indonesian, and Arabic. Within the spells, concrete and imaginary words and diction are interrelated. The flat intonation of the mantra is shown to be related to the purpose of the mantra. The function of the healing spell includes religious, social, cultural, and economic functions. In addition, Hidayatullah (2016) discusses the structure, form, and function of the Abal mantra. The mantra contains elements such as title, opening, purpose and suggestion, as well as closing. Abal mantras are in the form of poetry, rhymes, or lyrical prose and their functions are as a projection system, a tool of ratification in cultural and educational facilities, as well as a coercive and supervisory tool.

No previous study has revealed the structure and function of *ngalab berkah* prayers in Pesarean Gunung Kawi. In addition to the words uttered during the prayers, this study also looks at the offerings brought by the *ngalab berkah* pilgrims in discussing the function of the prayers. In this study, words in prayers are seen as an integral part of the structure of the text and may contain hidden meanings. Teeuw (1988) asserts that as the total structural integrity of the unique meaning implied in the text is realized, a structural analysis will be able to explore the whole integrated meaning within the text in depth. In this way, in order to study the meaning of a prayer, it is necessary to reveal its whole structure and connect each interrelated part uttered by the prayer reader.

2. METHOD

This research employs qualitative design with a structural and functional approach. Data collected for the study include texts of *ngalab berkah* ritual prayer, a recording of the ritual, and written documents on offerings. The recording was then transcribed and transliterated.

Supporting data are interviews with key informants: *juru kunci* 'caretaker of the burial site', *pembaca doa* 'prayer reader', and other pilgrims. We also took part in

the *ngalab berkah* ritual as pilgrims, observed the ritual, and documented some photos and videos. The photos and videos were taken with permissions and consents from the involved parties.

Data analysis was conducted by intensively reading the prayer texts, translating it carefully, and identifying each part in the prayer's structure. We then interpreted the data using hermeneutic theory to reveal that the contents of the prayer can be categorized into opening, body, and closing, and that the prayer has two functions: individual and social.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Our observation shows that people come to Pesarean Gunung Kawi to because they believe in the supernatural power of the site. Performing prayers in there and using the spirits of the figures buried there as intermediaries to reach God give them more hope. The prayers offer strength and power to protect them, give them peace, and help realize their wishes, which then lead to fortunes and blessings. Therefore, the *ngalab berkah* pilgrims conduct the *selamatan* ritual and prepare all the necessary offerings as an expression of gratitude.

This ritual is carried out as a driving force for the belief that there is a power beyond that of humans. This is symbolized by the offering items (food, flowers, incense) and the chanted prayer. The prayer consists of opening (including greetings), body, and closing. The utterances in the prayer ensure the pilgrims that what they wish for will come true. The string of words in the prayer are neat and coherent. The prayer is bilingual, combining a mixture of Javanese and Arabic. Inside the prayer, the names of Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono, who were buried in the ritual site (Figure 1), are mentioned.

3.1. Structure of Prayers in Ngalab Berkah

Prayers in Pesarean Gunung Kawi are interpreted as chants filled with wishes to God that are accompanied by offerings. Our analysis found that the prayer chanted at the *pendapa* of Pesarean Gunung Kawi market consists of an opening prayer (including greetings), body (main content), and closing. The opening prayer shows that before asking Sang Hyang Widhi or God, the pilgrims must excuse themselves (ask for permission) and acknowledge the existence of God and the spirits of the invisible world. The following Excerpts (1) to (6) are following this convention: Javanese words are in **bold**, Indonesian words are *italicized*, while the English translations are in normal typeface. Excerpt 1 is an excerpt from the opening prayer.

(1) *“Assalamualaikum wr wb, dhumateng Gusti Maha Kuwaos lan para leluhur ingkang jagi donya mriki....”*

“Assalamualaikum wr wb, kepada Gusti Maha Kuasa dan para leluhur yang menjaga dunia ini.”

“Assalamualaikum wr wb, to Gusti the Almighty and the ancestors who guard this world”.

Excerpt (1) shows that before praying at the *pendapa* ‘hall’, pilgrims must ask for permission first. They must also state that they believe in God and the invisible ancestors who watch over them. The aim of the opening prayer is to make the ritual run smoothly. The ancestors are mentioned to acknowledge two realms: the visible (material) realm and the invisible (non-material) realm. Prayers performed in a sacred place are special, pilgrims need to have permissions from all the elements that exist in there.

The opening of *ngalab berkah* prayer also contains a greeting addressed to Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono. This part is important and cannot be left out because the two figures, buried in the site, are believed to be the intermediaries in conveying the prayer to Sang Hyang Widhi.

(2) *“Kula nyuwun matur dhumateng sederek kula ing dunya lan kula suwun panjenengan rahayu wilujeng mugi dipun rencang dhumateng alam sakiteripun panggonan punika uga sholawat lan salam kagem Eyang Djoego lan R.M. Iman Soedjono uga dhumateng Rasulullah, bilih ingkang wayah badhe adedungo dhateng Gusti dhateng papan menika.....”*

“Saya sampaikan kepada saudara saya yang ada di dunia dan saya mohon saudara sekalian sehat juga saudara yang ada di sekitar tempat ini juga sholawat dan salam kepada Eyang Djoego dan R.M. Iman Soedjono juga kepada Rasulullah bahwa cucu panjenengan akan berdoa kepada Gusti di tempat ini...”

“I communicate to my brothers and sisters in the world and I hope that all of you are healthy, those of you who are around this place as well, I also cite *sholawat* and greetings to Eyang Djoego, R. M. Iman Soedjono, and the Prophet. I want to say that the grandson of yours would pray to *Gusti* ‘God’ in this place...”



Figure 1 The situation in front of the *Pendapa*, where the tombs are located.

Excerpt (2) shows that the praying ethics at Pesarean Gunung Kawi market include permissions from Eyang Djoego and R.M Iman Soedjono as they possess supernatural powers. This is in line with Pamungkas (2006), traditions and behaviors of Javanese people embody their belief and respect toward the existence of the invisible realm. The greeting also mentions the Prophet of Allah who guides the Muslims, indicating that the figures buried in the site are Muslims.

The next part of the prayer is the main content, containing the intent and purpose of the pilgrims, which is to be read by the *pengujub* 'prayer reader'. It was read solemnly in order to show sincerity. Several examples of wishes are shown in excerpt (3).

(3) a. *Dari bapak FH sekeluarga mohon sehat selamat, usahanya bisnis online di Jakarta mohon lancar dan banyak rejeki.*

From Mr. FH and his family, please be healthy and safe. His online business in Jakarta needs to be successful and profitable.

b. *Dari Ibu F, Bapak HS di Sidoarjo mohon selamat sekeluarga dan mobilnya segera laku.*

From Mrs. F, Mr. HS in Sidoarjo, a safe family and that their cars are sold quickly.

c. *Dari Ibu RZ, Ibu DS, Bapak R di MLG mohon selamat sekeluarga, kerjanya lancar, rejekinya lancar.*

From Mrs. RZ, Mrs. DS, Mr. R at MLG, a safe family, successful work, and good fortunes.

d. *Dari bapak BS di BWI sekeluarga mohon selamat, seger kewarasan, usahanya lancar*

From Mr. BS at BWI and family, please be safe, stay healthy, have a successful business.

e. *Dari CV PS di KT mohon usahanya lancar, segenap pimpinan dan karyawan mohon selamat, seger kewarasan lan tentrem.*

From CV PS at KT, business run smoothly, all leaders and employees please be safe, healthy, sane and peaceful.

Excerpt (3) shows that the pilgrims may pray various wishes to God. The desired requests are written on a piece of paper which is handed over to the *pengujub* in the beginning of the procession. The language structure used is clear, straightforward, and easy to understand. It directly states what is requested. Most of the requests concern safety, economic sustenance, wealth, successful business, health, and peace for the family.

As the pilgrims sit in front of the *pengujub*, they are directed to face the tombs and the set of offerings are placed in front of them. The offerings may include basket(s) of rice and *ingkung ayam* 'whole chicken' or beef, along with a small basket of flower petals, and incense. The offerings are considered a medium in the ceremony and they must be present when the prayers are read. Afterwards, the intent of the prayer and offerings

brought by the *ngalab berkah* pilgrims is also read, as shown in excerpt (4).

(4) ***"Inggang wayah dinten menika sami caos muli metri inggang dipun mulinipun metri Kanjeng Eyang panembahan sekaliyan. Pramila dipun muli metrinipun suwun wangsulanipun pandunga rahayu wilujeng. mugi piningan lancar, sukses, kasil, aman boten wonten gangguan punapa lan sageto kathah rejekipun inggang wayah sedaya sami syukuran wilujengan mawi ulam ayam sekul suci kagem caos dhahar Kanjeng Eyang Panembahan sekaliyan mugi kanjeng Eyang panembahan sekaliyan kersa nampi hajatipun Ibu RZ, Ibu DS, Bapak R saged kabul kajatipun. Sageto kabul sedaya usaha lan kerjaan saged icala sengkalan tebia bilaine cepaka rejekine lelantaran kanjeng Eyang panembahan sekaliyan inggang wayah saminga bekti wonten pesareanipun kanjeng Eyang"***

"Hari ini cucunya Eyang memberi muli metri (makanan) yang disenangi oleh Eyang berdua. Oleh karena itu, melalui muli metri ini terjawab doanya dapat selamat, sehat, dan diberi kelancaran, sukses, berhasil, aman dan mendapatkan rezeki yang banyak, cucunya Eyang sedang syukuran dengan daging ayam, nasi suci untuk memberi makan kanjeng Eyang panembahan berdua semoga Eyang panembahan berdua berkenan menerima hajatnya Ibu RZ, Ibu DS, Bapak R dapat terkabul dan semua usahanya dan perkerjaannya dapat dijauhkan dari segala marabahaya melalui Eyang panembahan berdua dimana cucunya sekarang berdo'a di pasarean Eyang".

"Today Eyang's grandchildren give muli metri 'food' that both of you liked. Therefore, through this muli metri, hopefully their prayer will be answered, they will be safe, healthy, successful, gaining a lot of fortunes. Eyang's grandchildren are celebrating with some chicken and holy rice to feed both of you, Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono. Hopefully both of you are pleased to accept the wishes of Mrs. RZ, Mrs. DS, Mr. R, their wishes can be fulfilled, and all of their efforts and work can be kept away from all harms through Eyang Panembahan both, now that your grandchildren are praying at the site."



Figure 2 A member of the community helped the researchers carry small baskets of flower petals before entering the site.

Excerpt (4) indicates that by giving offerings as a medium of the prayer, one's prayer can be conveyed and answered through Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono as intermediaries. The excerpt specifically mentions a prayer for safety and peace so that the pilgrims can avoid calamity and disaster. As mentioned by Rasyid (2021), *selamatan* has an important value in human's life because it can provide peace and comfort in their lives. Such request is directed towards God and the spirits of the ancestors.

In this part of the prayer, *muli metri* (food) as offerings for *selamatan* is also mentioned. According to Endraswara (2003), offerings are the realization of the pilgrims' intent, they symbolize their wishes and desires to be closer to God. In addition, offerings are a medium to spiritually negotiate with the guardians of the invisible realm. The presentation of *sesaji* 'offerings' is meant to ask the invisible spirits to be unobtrusive. Flowers and incense are used as *ubarampe* 'special things' in *selamatan* in order to entertain the ancestors because they smell good (see Figure 2 and 3). Koentjaraningrat (2003) mentioned that offerings in religious ceremonies are carried out by presenting food and objects as a means of communication.

The closing section contains an apology to Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono in case there is something that is less pleasing during the ceremony.

- (5) *“Panembahan sekaliyan bilih wonten kekikarangan anggen kula ngekraken ingkang wayah wilujeng nyuwun pangapunten ingkang ageng”*



Figure 3 Two baskets of flower petals as part of the *ubarampe*.

“Panembahan berdua jika ada kekurangan saya dalam melantarkan doa dari cucunya Eyang, saya mohon maaf yang sebesar-besarnya.”

“Panembahan both, if there are any shortcomings from me in offering prayers as your grandson, I apologize profusely.”

As previously mentioned, excerpt (5) mentions an apology in case something displeasing is uttered during the ceremony, which may upset Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono. The structure of the prayer in Pesarean Gunung Kawi is in accordance with Islamic teachings, that prayer always ends with a closing. It is through the closing prayer that one hopes Allah will forgive and guide them to be able to maintain *habluminallah* 'human vertical relationship with God' and *habluminannas* 'horizontal relationship between humans' (Azizah, 2021). This underlines the expression of apology between humans and humans to God.

Afterwards the closing prayer is continued with an Islamic prayer as follows.

- (6) *“Assalamualaikum warohmatullohi wabarokatu. Bismillahirrohamanirrahim. Alhamdulillahirrabbi laamin. Hamdanyakirin, hamdan na'imin, handam yuwafi ni'amahu. Wayukafi mazidah. Rabbana lakal hamdu kamaya'bahilana lillalhi wajhika waadini sultoni'. Allahumma sholliala wassalim ala sayyidina muhamadin waalaalihi syayidina muhamad. Allahumma firlahu warhamhu waafihi wa'fuanhu. Allahumma anjili rohmatana wamafirotan khususon almarhum Eyang Kyai Zakaria yang njaga ahli kubur, khususon almarhum Eyang Raden Mas Imam Sujono ahlli kubur. Minal muslimin wal muslimat, wal mukminina wal mukminatir balaumuddarojat.wa dha'if lahumul hasanaati wa kaffir 'anhumus sayyi-aati wa adkhihumul jannata ma'al aabaa-i wal ummahaati. “ya innalaha wa malaikata.... Ya ayyuhaladzina amanuu shollu 'alayhi wasallimuu taslima Allahumma inna nas aluka salamatan fiddiini wa 'aafiyatan fil jasadi waziaadatan fil'ilmu wabarakanat firrizqi wataubatan qablal maut warahmatan 'indal maut wamaghfiratan ba'dal maut allahumma hawwin'alainaa fii sakaraatil maut wa najjata minanaari wal'afwa indal hisaab, Subhana rabbika rabbil 'izzati 'amma yasifuna wa salamun 'alal mursalina wal hamdulillahi rabbil 'alamina. Sampun cekap sedaya. Mugi-mugi sedaya panyuwunanipun sageto tinabulan.”*

“Assalamualaikum warohmatullohi wabarokatu. Bismillahirrohamanirrahim. Alhamdulillahirrabbi laamin.....khusus

almarhum Eyang Kyai Zakaria yang menjaga ahli kubur, khusus.....almarhum Eyang Raden Mas Imam Sujono ahli kubur..... wal hamdulillahi rabbil 'alamina. Sekian semoga semua permohonannya terkabul. Aamiin."

"Assalamualaikum warohmatullohi wabarokatu. Bismillahirrohamanirrahim. Alhamdulillahirrabbi laamin.especially for the late Eyang Kyai Zakaria who took care of the spirits in the grave, especially.....the late Eyang Raden Mas Imam Soedjono the spirit in the grave..... wal hamdulillahi rabbil 'alamin. I hope that all of your requests will be granted. Amen."

Excerpt (6) shows that the closing part is an Islamic prayer, delivered in Arabic. The use of both Javanese and Arabic in the *ngalab berkah* ritual indicate that the two important figures buried in the site are Muslims and that they came from Java, precisely Mataraman Java (Solo and Yogyakarta Courts). Note that both Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono names are mentioned in the Islamic utterances. These Islamic and Javanese prayer utterances can be accepted by the pilgrims, even though they might have other religions and come from different ethnic groups. The *selamatan* ritual is meant to include everyone from various regions, ethnicities, and beliefs. Once the *pengujub* finishes his prayer, the pilgrims will reply with the word "Amen". This indicates acceptance from the pilgrims, a sign that they have followed the ritual smoothly and listened to the prayer solemnly.

3.2. Functions of Prayers in *Ngalab Berkah*

There are two main functions of *selamatan* ritual, including the individual and social functions. The individual function refers to the belief of the pilgrims to the blessings of God and the supernatural powers of Eyang Djoego and R. M. Iman Soedjono. Meanwhile, the social function refers to pilgrims' interactions with the community, solidarity between individuals and groups, and how religious and ethnic communities can foster togetherness and tolerance. Both of these functions affect the behavior of the community that is involved (Sulistyorini & Andalas, 2017).

3.2.1. Individual Function

The individual function of *selamatan* in *ngalab berkah* aims to satisfy instincts related to the pilgrims' personal life. The belief in the supernatural powers of Eyang Djoego and R. M. Iman Soedjono and the gratitude to God or Sang Hyang Widhi for His blessings are partly motivated by their individual desires. During their lifetime, Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono were known to be powerful with magic, they were able to heal various diseases, teach religious and agricultural knowledge, and were generous to others. These qualities

led to the perpetual belief that prayers that are intermediated by the two figures will be answered by God.

As a result, the names of the two figures are mentioned a number of times in the prayer during the *ngalab berkah* ritual. It is really belief that the mention of the names ensures that the prayer will be delivered to nirvana and Sang Hyang Widhi. The request submitted by the pilgrims must be a positive request, such as having successful business and having a blessed marriage and family, etc. Pilgrims must realize that the site they visit is the burial place of respected Muslim leaders, they were spiritual teachers who always did good when they were alive, so that positive prayers from pilgrims will be answered.

If their prayers are answered, the pilgrims of *ngalab berkah* will perform further *selamatan* 'feast' at the site. They will be bringing *berkat* 'package of food', which will be distributed to others after a prayer is read by the *pengujub*. This is an expression of gratitude to God as the prayers are answered and blessings are received by the family. These blessings and fortunes, obtained by the pilgrims, are driven by their sincere belief that there is a supernatural power that has helped mediate their prayers when praying at the site. This is in line with Harta (1998), whether or not prayers can change one's life depend on their respective beliefs. This statement suggests that when someone believes in the power of a prayer, the prayer will eventually come true.

3.2.2. Social Function

The *ngalab berkah* ritual at Pesarean Gunung Kawi cannot be done individually, but it involves other people including the pilgrims, providers of offerings and *selamatan* packages (see Figure 4), as well as the ritual's *ubarampe*. The togetherness helps each other and creates social interaction. This shows that *ngalab berkah* has social functions, namely increasing solidarity between individuals and groups. Those who are blessed with fortunes share with others, fostering togetherness and tolerance between religious and ethnic communities.



Figure 4 A number of big red plastic bags that contain *berkat* packages from pilgrims placed in front of the tombs.

Solidarity between individuals and groups of pilgrims during *ngalab berkah* is apparent in the form of good cooperation in helping one another. People who are involved in the ritual usually inform and help each other in preparing and carrying out *selamatan*. The tradition of mutual cooperation and togetherness has been passed on by Eyang Djoego and R. M. Iman Soedjono for generations. In this way, the tradition of the Gunung Kawi community which prioritizes togetherness as a legacy of the two figures buried in the site has been manifested in social life. After the prayer is finished, the pilgrims can take the food offerings home or distribute them to residents or those who are present in the ritual.

The pilgrims in Pesarean Gunung Kawi come from various regions, ethnicities, and beliefs, but they respect each other. The conflict management in the area is good because all the rituals can run smoothly, everyone supports each other so different ethnic groups, races, and religions can coexist in harmony. The *ngalab berkah* ritual shows the existence of togetherness between religious communities. For example, the *pengujub* 'prayer reader' reads a prayer with Islamic and Javanese utterances but the pilgrims may include a Chinese group with different beliefs. Despite the differences, they still follow the rules in the site.

The *selamatan* ritual displays tolerance between religious communities. Tolerance between religious communities is a social mechanism carried out by humans in responding to religious diversity and plurality (Faridah, 2013). The nation's motto *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* 'unity in diversity' can be seen in the *ngalab berkah* ritual. People may have diverse beliefs, traditions, and knowledge, but during the *selamatan* they merge into one, to respect each other, and to obey the existing rules, and to maintain harmony. Local wisdom maintains togetherness and mutual cooperation, in such a way that ancestral heritage is well preserved. This tolerance fosters harmony in Gunung Kawi's community life.

4. CONCLUSION

Throughout the paper we have shown that during the *ngalab berkah* ritual at Pesarean Gunung Kawi, prayers are read and uttered by a *pengujub* 'prayer reader'. The structure of prayer in *ngalab berkah* ritual includes opening, body, and closing. The opening section contains the pilgrims' permission to the guardians of the place and greetings addressed to God and His Prophet. In the body or main content section, the pilgrims express their main intentions. It is hoped that their wishes will be granted through the intermediary of Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono, two figures who are believed to have supernatural powers and can connect prayers to nirvana and Sang Hyang Widhi. The closing section contains an apology in case the ritual displeases both respected figures. The closing also includes an Islamic prayer delivered in Arabic.

There are two perspectives with regard to the function of *ngalab berkah*: individual and social functions. Individual function is related to the belief of the pilgrims who believe in the power possessed by Eyang Djoego and R.M. Iman Soedjono, which was beyond the power of ordinary people, the belief that their prayers would have been answered, and the gratitude to God for His blessings. The social function is related to the interaction between individuals and others in carrying out the *selamatan* ritual, from preparation to completion. The harmony in maintaining togetherness and religious tolerance between the pilgrims is also evident because despite having different religions, ethnicities, and traditions, they still adhere to the rules imposed on rituals at Pesarean Gunung Kawi.

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