



## An Ethnographic Review on the Reception of Sangir Community in Solok Selatan to Giving Alms

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**Abstract:** This article describes the date of the existence of an economic pillar in a community or ethnic group that is part of the culture in welfare. The economic pillars are zakat, infaq, and sadaqah (alms). In its development, it has its own existence and different practices, such as that of the Sangir community, which understands alms to be true, giving, and appreciating. Forms of practice such as; first, on normal days which can be seen from the number of weekly receipts of the Sangir mosque which reaches millions of rupiah, secondly on major Islamic holidays such as Ramadan and Eid al-Adha, and thirdly at certain moments such as the Malapeh tradition which is carried out during the hundred days and julo-julo custom at the time of walimah. The existence and persistence of this cannot be separated from the knowledge possessed by the Sangir community, as well as the role of religious and traditional leaders in cultural settings. The variety of alms receptions that have become part of the pattern of people's lives certainly has an influence, both on the environment and for the ethnic community itself.

**Keywords:** Reception; Ethnography; Living Quran; Sadaqah

### INTRODUCTION

The Prophet Muhammad SAW left the Qur'an and Hadith as guidance for his ummah, and they are guaranteed to continue in perpetuity. They have a variety of uniqueness, one of which is seen when someone interacts with the Qur'an, he will increasingly

understand and drift in the *kalam*. Theoretically, the interaction of a person with the Qur'an is sometimes referred to as a reception. It emerges from direct interaction with the Qur'an's text, whether through reading, listening, or studying it, but the assessment of reception theory is carried out through the historical background of the reader.<sup>1</sup>

The tradition of reading certain surah or verses during religious social ceremonies is one example of the social reception of the Qur'an. Meanwhile, the reception of the results of interpretation can be found in certain forms of community interpretation, both on a large and small scale.<sup>2</sup> This study is often called the Living Qur'an.

The study of the Living Qur'an which begins with the phenomenon of the Qur'an in everyday life contains the meaning of a text that is alive and entrenched in society, rather than a dead text.<sup>3</sup> According to Muhammad Yusuf, the Living Qur'an phenomenon emerges spontaneously amid society, due to awareness or the existence of religious emotional impulses toward the Qur'an, even though the Arabic language is not widely spoken in the non-Arab Muslim community; orally and through hearing. The revelation of the Qur'an in Arabic has sparked a plethora of theories on how to conduct experiments without jeopardizing the sacredness of the text. Furthermore, the Qur'an serves as a guide, mercy, medicine, and distinction, and the Qur'an is also a reading text. This is what causes the Muslim community's response to the Qur'an to differ.<sup>4</sup> Various religious customs in the community arose as a result of this reception process, such as the Sangir community's tradition of *basadakah* (giving alms).

Giving alms has become a part of the Sangir community's customs and traditions which is a manifestation of the reception

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<sup>1</sup> Nyoman Khuta Ratna.S.U, *Teori, Metode dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009), h. 22

<sup>2</sup> M. Mansur, dkk, *Metodologi Penelitian Living Qur'an dan Hadis*, (Yogyakarta: TH-Press, 2007), cet-1, h.xi-xiv

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Ali, "Kajian Naskah dan Kajian Living Qur'an dan Living Hadis", dalam *Journal of Quran dan Hadis Studies*, Vol. 4. no. 2, 2015, h.153

<sup>4</sup>*Metodologi Penelitian Living Qur'an dan Hadis*. 43

process. It is a part of the Sangir community's daily routine, beginning with normal days, Islamic holidays, and special occasions such as calamity and walimah. In its implementation, It also involves different aspects of society, including the appropriate customary provisions. Most processions, it may be argued, feature symbols that suggest religion is a part of the culture. In addition to the pattern of community life, ethnic factors also affect habits or customs which are also commonly referred to as ethnography.

Ethnography, as Spradley put it, is an endeavor to deduce the meanings of acts from occurrences that happen to the individuals we are interested in.<sup>5</sup> Iskandar further explained that in order to understand and explain culture from an ethnographic standpoint, one must think about events and occurrences through their mental framework.<sup>6</sup>

Spradley presented various notions that evolved from the use of ethnography in research, including first, discussing the issue of language concepts since this has a significant impact on the research results to be disclosed because the informant and the interviewer communicate in two directions. Second, the informant, who serves as a source of information also aims to bring up abstraction and description of culture.<sup>7</sup> The typical interview procedure incorporates (1) complete enculturation, (2) direct involvement, (3) an unfamiliar cultural environment, (4) adequate time, and (5) non-analytical questions.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>James P Spradley, *Metode Etnografi Terjemahan Misbah Yulfa Elisabeth* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1997), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Iskandar, *Metodologi penelitian pendidikan dan sosial* (Jakarta: Gaung Persada Press, 2008), 208.

<sup>7</sup> Spradley, *Metode Etnografi Terjemahan Misbah Yulfa Elisabeth*, 35.

<sup>8</sup> Spradley, *Metode Etnografi Terjemahan Misbah Yulfa Elisabeth*.

Alm-related studies have been conducted by various researchers, such as Wendry,<sup>9</sup> Firdaus,<sup>10</sup> Hasan,<sup>11</sup> Rafi,<sup>12</sup> and Nofiaturrahmah.<sup>13</sup> Wendry, for example, investigated the meaning of this alms verse and hadith among the *Pakiah* community in Padang Pariaman. On the other hand, Firdaus examined it from thematic interpretation standpoints. This article discusses the significance of the alms verses and how they affect people's behavior in the Sangir community.

## PRESPECTIVE METHODOLOGY

This research employed a qualitative approach, using an ethnographic approach as a framework for data analysis, as well as the descriptive method to demonstrate how people respond to the Qur'an so that it becomes ingrained in their customs and traditions. The primary data originated from the Sangir Batang Hari community in Solok Selatan Regency, while secondary data sourced from related literature. This research aims to figure out how the Sangir community views alms and the foundations used, as well as kinds of alms practices and their influences on the Sangir community.

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<sup>9</sup>Novizal Wendry dan Sri Chalida, "PAKIAH AND SADAKAH: The Phenomenon of Mamakiah Tradition in Padang Pariaman," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 41, no. 1 (20 Desember 2017), <http://www.jurnalmiqotojs.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/jurnalmiqot/article/view/342>.

<sup>10</sup>Firdaus Firdaus, "SEDEKAH DALAM PERSPEKTIF AL-QURAN (Suatu Tinjauan Tafsir Maudhu'i)," *Ash-Shahabah* 3, no. 1 (2017): 88–100.

<sup>11</sup>Muhammad Zainul Hasan, "BERASPATI SEBAGAI SEDEKAH PENGOBATAN," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 5, no. 1 (14 Mei 2020), <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2020.2177>.

<sup>12</sup>Muhammad Rafi, "Living Hadis : Studi Atas Tradisi Sedekah Nasi Bungkus Hari Jumat Oleh Komunitas Sijum Amuntai," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 4, no. 1 (2 September 2019): 133–58, <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2019.1647>.

<sup>13</sup>"PENANAMAN KARAKTER DERMAWAN MELALUI SEDEKAH | Nofiaturrahmah | ZISWAF: JURNAL ZAKAT DAN WAKAF," diakses 14 Juni 2021, <https://journal.iainkudus.ac.id/index.php/Ziswaf/article/view/3048/2302>.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Meaning of Alms and its Foundation Used by the Sangir Community

Many people describe meaning in terms of interpretation, concepts, and ideas.<sup>14</sup> To understand means comprehending things word by word. Knowledge and understanding are two indicators of meaning. When a person has reached the level of knowledge, he can be classified as an understanding person. However, someone who knows something does not mean he understands it. An individual who understands something is capable of not just memorizing things to be taught, but also of capturing the significance of what is being studied so that he can comprehend the lesson concept.

Before exploring the Sangir community's interpretation of alms and the foundation, the researchers first analyze alms and their meaning in the Qur'an, because comprehending a result of understanding necessitates first understanding the original source, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. It also intends to make it easier for researchers to elucidate the evolving concept of alms in society.

Alms is derived from Arabic words such as *shad*, *dal*, and *qaf*, which mean honest, truthful, and sincere offering.<sup>15</sup> Terminologically, alms means something given or done by a Muslim in the form of material or non-material goods to draw closer to Allah SWT. According to Yusuf al-Qardawi, alms are proof of the truth of faith and affirmation of the existence of the Day of Judgment.<sup>16</sup> The gift of a Muslim to another without expecting anything in return is called a *hibah*; if the Muslim receives something in return, it is referred to as buying and selling.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Abdul Chaer, *Linguistik Umum*, (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1994), h. 282

<sup>15</sup> Hasan Ahmad Al-Hammam, *At-Tadawi bi shaum At-Tadawi bi shodaqoh*, Terj. (Solo, AQWAM, 2010), cet-1, h. 95

<sup>16</sup> Yusuf Qardawi, *Fiqhu Az-Zakah*, terj. Didin, dan dkk, *HUKUM ZAKAT*, (Pustaka Litera Antar Nusa: Jakarta, 2011), cet. 12., h. 39

<sup>17</sup> Abdul Aziz Muhammad Azzam, *Fiqh Muamalat Sistem Transaksi Dalam Fiqih Islam*, (Jakarta: AMZAH, 2010), h. 435

Alms does not just include tangible goods, but also non-material things as recounted by the prophet Muhammad SAW in a hadith:

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ أَنَّ نَاسًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالُوا لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ذَهَبَ أَهْلُ الدُّنْيَا بِالْأَجْرِ يُصَلُّونَ كَمَا نُصَلِّي وَيُصُومُونَ كَمَا نَصُومُ وَيَتَصَدَّقُونَ بِفُضُولِ أَمْوَالِهِمْ قَالَ أَوْ لَيْسَ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ مَا تَصَدَّقُونَ إِنَّ بِكُلِّ تَسْبِيحَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَكُلِّ تَكْبِيرَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَكُلِّ تَحْمِيدَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَكُلِّ تَهْلِيلَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَأَمْرٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ صَدَقَةٌ وَنَهْيٌ عَنِ مَنكَرٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَفِي بَضْعِ أَحَدِكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّهَا أَجْرٌ قَالَ أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ وَضَعَهَا فِي حَرَامٍ أَكَانَ عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا وَزْرٌ فَكَذَلِكَ إِذَا وَضَعَهَا فِي الْحَلَالِ كَانَ لَهُ أَجْرًا.

From Abu Dharr RA, he said, "Some of the companions of the Prophet SAW said to him, 'O Messenger of Allah, rich people can get more rewards, they pray as we pray, they fast as we fast, and they give charity with their wealth.' He said, "Has not Allah made what you have as charity? Verily, every tasbih is charity, every takbir is charity, every tahmid is charity, every tahlil is charity, every call to good deeds is a charity, preventing evil is charity, and on every person's genitals from you is charity.' They asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, if one of us comes to his wife's lust will get a reward?' The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, 'Do not you see that if a person puts his genitals on what is forbidden, he will get a sin, and if he puts it on what is lawful, he will get a reward' (H.R. Muslim no. 83)<sup>18</sup>

According to the preceding interpretation, alms is a flexible kind of worship, meaning it is not constrained by time or other constraints, and it can take any shape, material or non-material. In other words, all good deeds are alms. If it is understood from the hadith that the Qur'an also mentions alms in non-material forms.

According to Mawardi, alms can be stated to be zakat, and zakat can also be said to be alms, with distinct names but the same meaning. This is based on Allah SWT's word:<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup>Abu Hasan Muslim bin al-Hajjaj bin Muslim al-Qusyairi al-Naisaburi, *Shahih Muslim*, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1983), h. 92

<sup>19</sup> Yusuf Qardawi, *Fiqhu Az-Zakah*, terj, Didin, dan dkk, *HUKUM ZAKAT*, *op.cit*, h. 36

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا

“Take alms out of their riches and thereby cleanse them and bring about their growth” (Q.S. at-Taubah verse 103)

From the verse above, it is obvious that alms has a broad meaning, it can refer to zakat and infaq as mentioned in Q.S. al-Baqarah verse 264:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى كَالَّذِي تُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِثَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

“O, you who believe! Do not render vain your charity (sadaqah) by reminders of your generosity or by injury (the feeling of recipients), like him who spends his property to be seen of men and does not believe in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is the likeness of a smooth rock on which is a little dust, then heavy rain falls upon it, so it leaves it bare. They are not able to do anything with what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people”.

The position of alms in the above verse is the same as infaq, i.e. the reward of alms and infaq will be lost if there is a purpose to be seen by others, not accompanied by faith, and hurting the recipient. Furthermore, both alms and infaq have the same position, that is giving. After learning about the meaning of alms in the Qur'an, the researchers looked into the meaning of alms and the foundation used by the Sangir community.

From an interview with Jahrial, a religious figure in the area who was also a preacher, it was found that alms means truth according to the origin of the words shad, dhal, qhaf which means truth. It becomes proof of a servant's faith by donating some of his property to a mosque or someone, and those who are reluctant to give alms will face regret, as he gained this perspective from the QS al-Munafiqun verse 10.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Jahrial, a preacher, field interview on 07 February 2020 at 16.13.

Syamsi, a religious figure, and an Imam, echoed the same viewpoint. He said that alms is derived from the Arabic *siddiq*, which means truth. Allah SWT strongly encourages humans to give alms. This is known from the positioning of advice for alms in Surah al-Baqarah, with successive verses discussing the problem of alms.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, alms can also be interpreted as giving. This interpretation emerged from an interview with Badrus, the Sangir village secretary, who considered alms as giving to those in need and the mosque, as evidenced by his deeds.<sup>22</sup> This perspective was also shared by one of the youth leaders, Zikril Hakim, who highlighted putting money in the charity box as a type of practice of giving alms, which his parents instilled in him from an early age and which may be used as savings for the afterlife. From that habit, he interpreted alms as giving.<sup>23</sup>

One of the factors in which alms are understood by giving is the existence of habituation to the attitude of giving that is imparted by parents from a young age. According to the researchers, cultivating such an attitude teaches children how to become sociable, non-selfish people. Aside from the significance of giving alms to the truth and giving, the researchers discovered something new, namely that alms is associated with goodness.

Buya Lahmuddin, an IAIN IB Padang alumnus, equated alms with goodness, citing a hadith from the prophet, namely: *kullu ma'rufin shodaqoh*, every good deed is alms, and every good deed intended for Allah SWT is alms.<sup>24</sup>

A similar attitude was voiced by Neli Sakdah, a surau-based Quran teacher. She stated that the purpose of this charity is to offer Allah SWT what is best without fear of being poor or lacking in wealth

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<sup>21</sup> Syamsi, a religious figure and Imam, field interview on 09 February 2020 at 20.21.

<sup>22</sup> Badrus, Village secretary, field interview on 10 February 2020 at 10.22.

<sup>23</sup> Zikril Hakim, Youth, field interview on 07 February 2020 at 14.22.

<sup>24</sup> Lahmudin, Religious figure, field interview on 08 February 2020 at 17.15



because Allah SWT has already promised to replace what was previously donated.<sup>25</sup>

The various interpretations of alms that the researchers found in the Sangir community show that some associate alms with truth based on the word's origin, namely *siddiq*, others associate alms with giving based on the form of their actions, and finally some people associate alms with goodness based on its nature. This understanding is part of the stock of knowledge that underpins the Sangir community's ability to understand alms.

### **The Interpretation of Verses of Alms by Sangir Community**

A cultural system can be defined as the presence of religious values that pervade the community, whether through practices or traditions. Clifford Geertz is an anthropologist who examines religion and culture and is frequently cited by researchers when examining religious phenomena. In his thinking, Geertz defines religion as: first, a system of symbol which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.<sup>26</sup>

In other words, religion is a system of symbols that works to create strong, pervasive, and enduring moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of the general order of existence and wrapping these conceptions in an aura of factuality, making moods and motivations appear uniquely realistic.

From this definition, it can be defined that religion is a systematic succession of symbols. These symbols, according to him, encompass objects, actions, events, qualities, or everything else related to the

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<sup>25</sup> Neli Sakdah, surau-based Quran teacher of Suku Melayu Kampung Dalam, field interview on 09 February 2020 at 16.02.

<sup>26</sup> Clifford Geertz, " *Religion as a Cultural System*" *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (America: Fontana Press, 1993), h. 90

conception. In other words, conception is a symbol. Even if it is just a conception, symbols are inextricably linked to empirical events.<sup>27</sup>

Geertz's concept of religion as a cultural system has relevance to a cultural concept expressed by James P. Spradley. According to James, culture is a system of symbols that have meaning, with the argument that a concept of culture of this kind has similarities with the symbolic interactional view, which is a theory that seeks to explain human behavior in terms of meaning. There are three premises as the basis for symbolic interaction cited by James from Helbert Blumer, namely:<sup>28</sup> To begin with, humans act based on the meanings that objects provide. Second, the meaning of these things is derived from or generated by one's social relationships with others. Third, people utilize an interpretative process to handle or modify meaning in response to various things they encounter.

When it comes to religion as a cultural system, it means that symbols embedded in people's behavior patterns can elicit intense feelings and motivations. Feelings and motivations are easily spread and do not vanish in a person by developing a general order conception, which then becomes a feeling and motivation realized in a unique form, as the researchers discovered in the Sangir community, which makes religion a part of the culture.

The existence of a religious reception in the life of the Sangir community can be seen in the customs and traditions that still exist today. First, it can be observed on a typical day. The weekly mosque financial reports showed that the Sangir community understood the importance of alms. Every week, the Sangir mosque received millions of rupiah in revenue, and sometimes exceeding ten million rupiahs in a single week. If we examine closely, we can see that this was not found in Nagari adjacent to Nagari Sangir, such as Abai, Lubuak Malako, and

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<sup>27</sup>Novizal Wendry, "MENIMBANG AGAMA DALAM KATEGORI ANTROPOLOGI: Telaah Terhadap Pemikiran Talal Asad," *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 4, no. 1 (13 Agustus 2016), <https://doi.org/10.21274/kontem.2016.4.1>.

<sup>28</sup> James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*, (Belmont California Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997), h. 7-8

Dusun Tengah, and that it was only found in Sangir. This was due to several causes, including the fact that many people from the local community and outside the area paid intentions (vows) to the mosque, as well as the fact that the majority of the Sangir community worked as gold miners.<sup>29</sup>

This was demonstrated when the researchers interviewed Udin, a gold miner. Whenever he returned from gold mining, he usually sent alms to the mosque as a token of thanks, hoping that Allah will protect him when he works in mining sites.<sup>30</sup> Then, the researchers interviewed Dedi Mega Putra, who was one of the key players in the rise of the number of mosque revenues to million rupiahs.

Dedi Mega Putra said in his narrative that if someone intends (makes a vow) to go to the Sangir mosque, it will undoubtedly come true. He did it when his child was sick for days and did not recover, then he made a vow to give alms to the mosque if his child was healthy, and it was proven that the child was gradually getting better and returning to health.<sup>31</sup>

What was conveyed by Dedi Mega Putra indicates that alms are also a medium for treatment. The number of occurrences and success stories of the Sangir community after making a vow to give alms to the Sangir mosque, to the point that the story became a motivation for others to give alms to the Sangir mosque, and the news spread outside the area. This, according to the researchers, is because there is an assumption that the Sangir mosque is a sacred mosque, which is reinforced by several mystical stories that occurred during the mosque's construction.<sup>32</sup>

Armen, the treasurer of the Sangir Mosque, confirmed that there were people from outside the region who paid their vows and gave alms to the Sangir Mosque. He said that it was true that there were

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<sup>29</sup>Interview data obtained from the informant.

<sup>30</sup>Udin, gold miner, Interview, 09 February 2020.

<sup>31</sup>Dedi Mega Putra, Jorong Head of Padang Beringin, Interview, 8 July 2020.

<sup>32</sup>Interview data and observation data since July 2019.

people from Dharmasraya, Pekanbaru, Malaysia, Palembang, and Medan who came and gave alms to the Sangir Mosque. After the Ramadhan of 1441 H, a man from Medan arrived in Sangir to pay alms, having promised himself that if he met his dream girl, he would donate two million rupiahs to the Sangir mosque.<sup>33</sup>

According to Dedi and Armen, the practice of paying intentions, also known as vows, is something obligatory, and if it is not, someone must pay kafarat. The vows of prayer, fasting, i'tikaf, and almsgiving are the most popular types of vows. If we consider what Dedi and Armen said, in which he said he paid his vow by offering alms, this action is classified as a type of obligatory alms.

Because of various factors, including the fact that most people make a living as gold miners and many people pay their vows from within and outside the region, it can be concluded that the Sangir community practices alms on typical days, as evidenced by the number of weekly mosque revenue reaching millions of rupiah. Perhaps Geertz's statement about religion being a part of culture inspired some Sangir people to give alms.

Second, during Ramadan 1441 H, Masjid Nurul Barkah Sangir received an income of 48 million rupiahs, which was counted one day before Eid al-Fitr and then opened again in the afternoon before the feast for a total of 2 million rupiahs. During the Eid prayer, the number of alms accounting for 7 million rupiahs.<sup>34</sup>

According to Jahrial, a religious figure in the area, the large amount of alms collected during the fasting month is rightfully so, because fasting is full of forgiveness and Allah SWT multiplies the reward of every deed done by a Muslim, so it is not surprising that during the month of Ramadan, the people of Sitapuis compete in doing good, including giving charity. When the researchers examined the Sangir community's mentality of competitiveness to do good, it can be seen in the Qur'an's letter al-Baqarah verse 148, namely:

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<sup>33</sup>Armen, treasurer of Masjid Nurul Barkah Sitapus, Interview, 10 July 2020.

<sup>34</sup>Kasman, member of Masjid Nurul Barkah Sitapus, interview, 08 July 2020.

وَلِكُلِّ وُجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّئُهَا فَاسْتَثَبُّوا الْحَيْرَاتِ أَيْنَمَا تُكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And for everyone (for all the nations, communities) there is a direction toward which he turns; so vie with one another in good works. Wherever you may be, Allah will bring you together. Truly, Allah is Powerful over all things.<sup>35</sup>

There is a command to compete in goodness is in addition to the command to do good itself, which includes refining practice and application as perfectly as possible. This *fastabiqul khairat* statement instills a faith principle in the hearts of Muslims, namely, to hurry and compete in seeking Allah SWT's pleasure. This, according to the researchers, is what motivates society's basic foundations to compete for good deeds, such as charitable giving during Ramadan.

It is completely different during Eid al-Adha, when most people host a prayer event at their homes after the Eid al-Adha prayer, inviting *Kali*<sup>36</sup> to pray to every house in his clan in the hopes of sending rewards to those who have died before them.<sup>37</sup> According to Tri Sumardi, a religious leader (*Kali*), it has been a regular practice for the Sangir community to send *tahlil*, or prayers, to the spirits of the family members following Eid prayers on Eid al-Adha.<sup>38</sup>

What was conveyed by Tri Sumardi shows that this tradition can be categorized as part of the practice of practicing non-material alms. It deals with the Qur'an's explanation about praying and asking forgiveness for those who have died. Every prayer of the Muslims for other Muslims is very beneficial, including for those who have died.<sup>39</sup> This is approved by *ijma'* based on the word of Allah SWT in Surah al-Hashr verse 10:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

<sup>35</sup>Al-Qur'an and its translation, *op.cit*

<sup>36</sup>*Kali*, a religious figure in the village.

<sup>37</sup>Observations during KKN 45 in Nagari Sitapus in 2019.

<sup>38</sup>Tri Sumardi, religious figure, interview, 08 July 2020.

<sup>39</sup>Wahbah al-Zuhailly, *Al-Fiqh Al-Islamy wa Adillatuh*, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1985), h. 550

And those who come after them will pray, "Our Lord! Forgive us and our fellow believers who preceded us in faith, and do not allow bitterness into our hearts towards those who believe. Our Lord! Indeed, You are Ever Gracious, Most Merciful."<sup>40</sup>.

Third, special occasions, such as walimah, calamity, or misfortune (sickness or death). As one of the *nagari* (village) which is very dense with Minangkabau customs, the Sangir community has a tradition that is still strong today, *ringan samo dijinjiang barek samo dipikua*, which describes the spirit of togetherness, the attitude of helping each other in the Sangir community. When a young man or woman wants to marry, they will go through several processions known as "*diparalek an suku*," beginning with the *batando* procession, there is a term called *julo-julo*, meaning that every member of the society assists in the form of basic materials such as; coconut, cooking oil, and sugar with a nominal amount of one hundred and fifty thousand rupiahs or adjusted to mutual agreement.

According to Imam Syamsi, a religious leader in the Sangir area, the *julo-julo* tradition, which has become part of the custom, exists to assist young people who are ready to embark on a new life, and it is necessary for humans in social life to assist one another.<sup>41</sup>

The existence of the *julo-julo* tradition, according to Mardodi, is highly beneficial since it made things easier and aided him while he arranged a wedding party (walimah). In total, he received around 10 million rupiahs.<sup>42</sup> According to a mutual agreement, the nominal sum of *julo-julo* is normally a hundred and fifty thousand rupiahs and a maximum of two hundred thousand rupiahs.<sup>43</sup>

As the phrase goes, "*ringan samo di jinjiang barek samo dipikua*," it is understandable that the inhabitants of Sangir have made it a habit to aid one another. Furthermore, *julo-julo* has become customary law in

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<sup>40</sup>Al-Qur'an and its translation, *op.cit.*

<sup>41</sup>Syamsi, interview, 08 July 2020.

<sup>42</sup>Mardodi, the secretary of Bamus, Interview, 09 July 2020.

<sup>43</sup>Neli Sakdah, interview, 08 July 2020.

the village, implying that individuals who do not follow the customary laws would not be granted the same rights when a member of their family gets married, and the researchers have not discovered any infractions of customary law so far.<sup>44</sup> Unconsciously, this attitude of helping is a form of non-material alms, as illustrated in the Qur'an, surah al-maidah verse 2:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

“And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression.”<sup>45</sup>

Although the verse above does not contain the word alms, it is implied that this phrase refers to non-material alms, as the researchers indicated in the previous chapter that alms might be both material and non-material.

Then, during the *Baralek* event, every member of society is obligated to perform it at his tribe's house called *Rumah Gadang*; people who break this and perform the *Baralek* event at their own homes would be fined. In *Nagari Sangir*, the bride and groom are aided by *niniak mamak* in meeting their home furnishing requirements. Economic concerns are also a driving force for the Sangir community's decision to start and maintain the practice, to make it easier for every resident ready to marry.<sup>46</sup>

Furthermore, when something bad happens, such as a death, the society follows the principle “*kaba baiak baimbauan kaba buruak bahambauan*,” which is reflected in individuals arriving to pay their respects even if they were not invited. However, the researchers discovered something unique, namely a “*Malapeh*” tradition observed on the one-hundredth day after death, referred to as “*manyaratuih*” in the local dialect. This procession differs from “*manujuah*” (the seventh day of death) or “*maampek puluah*” (the forty-day of death), which is

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<sup>44</sup>Mardodi, Interview, 08 July 2020.

<sup>45</sup>Al-Qur'an and translation, *op.cit*

<sup>46</sup>From interviews with several informants during research

attended by all Sangir people, while others are only attended by the tribe's kin.

According to Kasman, a resident of Sangir, the *Malapeh* tradition is similar to the *Baralek Gadang* event (party) because the event begins with *Balamang*, one day before the event, continues the next day with a meal together, then a prayer for the dead, and a procession of handing over the deceased's goods to colleagues of the deceased, it ends with a *shalawat dulang*<sup>47</sup> that is done until before the dawn prayer.

The existence of alms of the deceased's goods given to friends in the form of clothing, toiletries, mattresses, pillows, and other items to allow the deceased's remains to be used for worship and channeling the reward to the deceased, but this tradition is not always followed by all communities because it is considered too burdensome for some families. The goal of this procession is to donate the deceased's belongings as the *sadaqah jariyah*, in the hopes that the reward will continue to flow to the deceased. The emergence and longevity of these practices, according to the researchers, cannot be isolated from the role of religious and traditional leaders in cultural settings.

Perhaps what Geertz meant when he said religion is a cultural system is one of the causes in the Sangir community's acceptance of almsgiving as part of their culture, because it is more than just an expression of social life or economic tension. The impact of religion enters the Sangir community's life gap through ideas, symbols, rituals, and customs. This not only exemplifies religious beliefs but also demonstrates the presence of traditional and cultural values. This is illustrated in the analysis process as well as the researchers' description.

### **The Influence of Alms on the Sangir Community**

Influence, according to KBBI, is the power that exists or arises from something, whether it is an object or a person, that helps shape a

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<sup>47</sup>Shalawat dulang is a Minangkabau art form that involves the recitation of sholawat and the beating of a drum to the rhythm of the prayer.



person's character, beliefs, or behaviors<sup>48</sup>. In carrying out their role as social beings, humans are motivated to act by two factors: first, an internal urge without a desire to be seen by others, and second, environmental stimulation with a desire to be seen by others.

The existence and persistence of the habit of giving alms in the Sangir community are inextricably linked to the influence of these behaviors, which affects the perpetrators, the surroundings, and urges others to do the same. As a result, the researchers divide it into two categories: first, environmental impact, and second, social impact. To find out, the researchers interviewed numerous Sangir communities who were both perpetrators and eyewitnesses to how these practices affect the environment and the group as a whole.

As the researchers previously stated, the amount of alms received by the Nurul Barkah Sangir Mosque per week exceeded millions of rupiah, and in Ramadan 1441 H, the Sangir mosque obtained an income of 48 million rupiahs, indicating that alms have a significant impact on the environment. It affects the mosque's finances, which is extremely beneficial to the mosque's renovation. A large amount of alms received each week was used by the mosque management and the village government to manage the mosque's finances by carrying out mosque renovations and which began in early February 2020 with a budget of 500 million rupiahs.<sup>49</sup> This is a positive habit that will not only benefit the surroundings (mosque), but also the mosque's long-term prosperity.

Second, the impact of alms on society. Rambun, a teacher at SDN 07 Sangir, said that if he had not given alms, he felt restless, but that after giving alms, he felt relaxed and calm, especially if he offered alms to impoverished people and witnessed his help being used.<sup>50</sup>

Kasman expressed a similar idea, saying that there is other people's part in one's sustenance, thus he was delighted if he could help

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<sup>48</sup>KBBI online, accessed from <http://kbbi.kemendikbud.go.id> on 17 August 2020 at 10.16.

<sup>49</sup>Observations conducted in February 2020

<sup>50</sup>Rambun, interview, 08 July 2020.

the poor, orphans, and elderly. This was done, according to his story, since he had experienced how it felt when he did not have money.<sup>51</sup>

According to Rambun and Kasman, alms are employed as a kind of gratitude, and their impact can make the doers feel peaceful and relieved since they have granted other people's rights to their property. It can also bring joy because it can provide benefits to others. This second influence, according to the researchers, can be seen in the various forms of alms practices that exist in the Sangir community, such as in Islamic holidays, walimah, and calamity, because it can effectively become a forum for regulating the Sangir community's welfare, as described previously.

According to the interview, the importance of alms as one of the pillars of economic development not only shapes attitudes and patterns of good living, but it also shapes or has an impact on the perpetrators or those who receive the benefit from these actions, because the Sangir community essentially uses alms to regulate welfare. Furthermore, alms should become the foundation of people's economies in the current time to support equitable distribution of wealth.

## CONCLUSION

Using an ethnographic review, this research attempts to understand the Sangir Batang Hari community's reception of the Alms verses in Solok Selatan. In a nutshell, the Sangir community can be divided into ethnic groups that have maintained and passed down their ancestral tradition from prior religious leaders.

This can be seen in the way they interpret and define alms in terms of truth, giving, and goodness. The presence of this understanding is inextricably linked to a set of knowledge held by the society, which, while not entirely, incorporates alms into their daily life. From the informants, the following types of alms practice are found: first, on normal days, as evidenced by the number of mosque charity

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<sup>51</sup>Kasman, interview, 12 November 2019.

boxes each week, which total millions of rupiah since most people make their living as gold miners, and also because many people pay their intentions (vows) to the Sangir mosque.

Second, during Islamic holidays such as Ramadhan, where the Sangir mosque got revenue of 48 million rupiahs in 1441 H. Following that, on Eid al-Adha, there was a procession of sending blessings by *tahlil* reading and prayers performed by each community after Eid prayers were completed. Third, at specific occasions, such as the *malapeh* ceremony which is held on the 100th day of death, and there is a procession of handing over the deceased's goods to colleagues for ongoing charity. In addition, there is also *julo-julo* tradition, given to community members who will carry out *walimah* (wedding) in the form of cooking oil, sugar, and coconut following the agreed nominal. The existence and persistence of these habits cannot be separated from the role of religious leaders and traditional leaders in cultural settings. The variety of alms receptions that have become a part of the pattern of people's lives undoubtedly influences both environment and community.

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