



Sawer on Eid al- Fitr Fitri Perspective Michel Foucault's theory

Jesika Prayuda¹ , Fikri Kriswandi² , Gita Wardani³ , Silva Rahmadani⁴ , Verdian Smarta Prayoga⁵ , Jela Faria Sri Harta⁶ 

¹²³⁴⁵⁶ *State Islamic University Sjech M. Djamil Djambek, Bukittinggi, Indonesia*

Abstract. Based on the discussion, three main points regarding Michel Foucault's theory can be inferred in the context of the Eid al-Fitr tradition. Firstly, the act of giving money during this celebration can be viewed as a form of implied power, where the individual offering the money assumes a more dominant or powerful role within the context of the event. This reflects the existing social hierarchy in public settings. Secondly, the practice of giving money can also be seen as a method to reinforce social norms and control behavior in public. Children or family members receiving the money are expected to respond politely and adhere to the existing social rules. Lastly, the tradition of giving money during Eid al-Fitr also reflects the construction of knowledge and identity within certain segments of the public.

Keywords : Sawer , Eid Fitri , Michel Foucault

1. Introduction

The Eid al-Fitr holiday holds great significance for Muslims worldwide, including Indonesia, the largest Muslim country globally. The spirit of Eid al-Fitr revolves around forgiveness and the renewal of friendships among individuals, including relatives, family members, and neighbors. This tradition is highly anticipated by many Muslims, as it involves large family gatherings and symbolizes a sense of gratitude within the community. It is considered a tradition that must be cherished and preserved (Silfia, 2023).

During Eid al-Fitr, besides the traditional attire and other customs, there is a deeply rooted tradition known as "Sawer" in Indonesian culture. This term refers to the act of pouring rainwater into a house due to wind blowing, especially during specific events like weddings, New Year celebrations, or other social occasions. It is a practice commonly observed in Indonesian culture, where individuals directly give donations, often by throwing banknotes into the air or attaching money to the clothes of the recipient. The term "Eid Fitri" originates from two words: "Idul," meaning to return, and "Fitra," signifying purity. Hence, Eid al-Fitr signifies a return to one's natural state after observing the religious duties prescribed by Allah SWT, such as fasting (Hanani, 2018).

"Sawer" on the day of Eid al-Fitr is a common tradition observed in several cultures in Indonesia and other countries that celebrate Eid al-Fitr. This tradition involves giving money or gifts to children or younger family members as a way of expressing happiness and joy on the day of the celebration.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using the method of bibliographic study. Sources for analysis are obtained through a review of references from books, news

articles, and scientific journals, which are accessible online via platforms like Google Scholar. Literature review is an activity aimed at thoroughly reviewing various literature published by academics or previous researchers related to the topic at hand. In this modern era, society still strives to preserve the tradition of "sawer," despite the influx of cultural influences from outsiders and rapid development (Trianingsing et al., 2023: 28).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Short Biography of Michel Foucault

Paul-Michel Foucault (15 October 1926–25 June 1984), better known as Michel Foucault, was a French philosopher, historian of ideas, social theorist, linguist, and literary critic. His theories explore the connection between power and knowledge, and how they are used to exert social control through institutions within society, particularly prisons and hospitals. While often labeled as a post-structuralist and postmodernist thinker, Foucault rejected these categorizations and instead preferred to position his ideas as critical of modernity. His work has been highly influential among academics and activists alike (Foucault, 1976).

Born in Poitiers, France, into an upper-middle-class family, Foucault received his education at Lycee Henri-IV and later at Ecole Normale Supérieure, where he developed an interest in philosophy under the influence of his tutors, Jean Hyppolite and Louis Althusser. After several years working as a cultural diplomat abroad, he returned to France and published his first famous book, "Madness and Civilization" (Khozin, 2012: 133).

After working at the University of Clermont-Ferrand between 1960 and 1966, Foucault produced two significant publications, "The Birth of the Clinic" and "The Order of Things," which displayed his deepening involvement with structuralism, a theoretical movement in anthropology. These works marked a departure for Foucault, distancing himself from this movement. These three histories serve as examples of Foucault's developing historiography, which he termed "archaeology" (Foucault, 2007).

At the age of 25, Foucault passed the Aggregation exam and obtained a diploma in psychology in 1952. In 1950, he began working at the Mental Illness Hospital, and in 1955.

I taught at Uppsala University in Sweden. From 1966 to 1968, Foucault continued his studies at the University of Tunis in Tunisia before returning to France. His first major work, "Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason," was submitted for his doctoral degree in 1959 under the supervision of Georges Canguilhem and was published in 1961. In 1970, he was appointed as a lecturer in the History of Systems of Thought at the Collège de France in France (Hanani & Nelmaya, 2022).

He then became the head of the philosophy department at the new experimental university, University de Paris VIII Vincennes – Saint-Denis. He also became active in several left-wing groups involved in anti-racist campaigns, anti-violation of human rights movements, and struggles for penal reform. He continued to publish "The Archaeology Of Knowledge," "Discipline and Punish," and "The History of Sexuality." In these books, he developed the methods of archaeology and genealogy to disclose the existence and relationships between knowledge and power in society. Foucault died in Paris due to neurological problems aggravated by HIV/AIDS. He was the first public figure in France to die as a consequence of AIDS. After Foucault's death,

his partner, Daniel Defert, founded a charitable foundation to help AIDS sufferers in memory of Foucault.

"Sawer" refers to the customary act of giving gifts (rumpaka) typically sung or chanted in a distinct tone by a skilled ceremonial giver. Structurally, sawer takes the form of poetry, pupuh, and satire, often containing proverbs (Iskandarwassid, 2003:144). According to the KBBI, "sawer" entails giving money or items to others, typically in large amounts.

"Sawer" often embodies advice, counsel, or wishes from parents that are conveyed through the intermediary of the sawer (Supinah, 2005: 87). The objective behind giving money during traditional occasions like Eid al-Fitr can vary depending on the perspective and social context. Some common objectives of giving money through sawer include:

- 1) Money given through sawer is often used as a way to convey congratulations, especially to children or younger family members, as a symbol of joy and celebration on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr.
- 2) Practically, giving money through sawer can help strengthen social bonds among family members or within a community. It serves as an opportunity to strengthen familial connections, express affection, and foster a warm atmosphere of togetherness.
- 3) Giving money as sawer also aims to build happiness and make the recipient feel appreciated. Children or family members who receive money often feel happy and cheerful because they perceive it as a reward.
- 4) Following traditions and social norms, money sawer can also be considered as part of existing traditions and social norms in society. This method helps maintain cultural practices that have been passed down through the years and creates continuity in cultural inheritance.
- 5) Showing prosperity, giving money as sawer can also serve as a method for individuals to demonstrate their prosperity or economic sufficiency to others, as well as to share sustenance with those who might be in need.

Overall, the goal of giving money as sawer is to convey joy, strengthen social bonds, and create an atmosphere of togetherness during the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, while also upholding existing traditions and social norms within the community. Social issues that arise during this time often stem from the social interactions that occur as people visit each other's homes and exchange money with relatives.

Common forms of sawer during Eid al-Fitr in Indonesia can vary depending on the local culture and customs. Here are some common forms of sawer that often occur:

- 1) The most common form of sawer is giving cash to children or younger family members as a way to convey happiness on Eid al-Fitr. This cash is usually given in small envelopes and often accompanied by well-wishes. Money is typically associated with public consumption (Alfitri, 2007: 3).
- 2) In addition to cash, people can also give other prizes such as candy, toys, or other items to children as part of the Eid al-Fitr sawer tradition. These gifts are often accompanied by congratulations and good wishes.
- 3) Sawer can also take the form of giving food or pastries to neighbors, relatives, or visitors as part of the Eid al-Fitr celebration. This can include typical Eid al-Fitr foods such as ketupat, chicken opor, or traditional pastries.

- 4) Some families also choose to give new clothes to children or other family members as part of the Eid al-Fitr sawer tradition. These new clothes are often worn during the Eid al-Fitr celebration and symbolize happiness.
- 5) In addition to giving to family members, some people also choose to provide social funds to those in need, such as the poor or orphaned children, as part of the Eid al-Fitr sawer tradition. This is a form of social concern carried out as part of the Eid al-Fitr celebration.

Local cultural traditions reflect how people live, move, and uphold their customs and values. They offer insights into the way of life of a community and provide glimpses into their daily activities (Yanti , 2019: 6).

3.3 Sawer Eid Fitri from Michel Foucault 's theoretical perspective

From the perspective of Michel Foucault's theory, we can interpret the tradition of giving sawer on the day of Eid Fitri as a practice that reflects the social dynamics of power, control, and the construction of public knowledge. There are several points to consider in this regard.

3.3.1 Power and Control

According to Foucault, power is one dimension of relationships. Where there are relations, there is power. Sawer on the day of Eid Fitri can be seen as a form of implied power, where the individual giving the money holds a more dominant or powerful role in the context. This reflects the existing social hierarchy in society, where older people or those with higher economic status have the strength to give presents to younger individuals or those with lower social status (Bertens, 1996: 302).

The practice of sawer can be analyzed as a manifestation of implied power: a hierarchical power structure in the context of sawer, where the person who gives money holds relative power over the recipient. They have the ability to influence or control the recipient's behavior through the act of giving money. Although it may be perceived as a small and friendly gesture, beneath the surface lies the hidden dynamics of power that the money giver exerts control over the situation (Ayuningtyas, 2019: 78).

In terms of normative control, the practice of sawer can also be utilized to reinforce existing social norms in society. The recipients of the money may feel obligated to provide an adequate response or adhere to certain norms when accepting the sawer. This dynamic creates a normative control where an individual's behavior related to receiving the sawer can be influenced by the prevailing social norms.

In terms of identity formation and perception, sawer can also influence the formation of an individual's identity and perception. The giver of the money may strengthen their position in the social hierarchy or reaffirm their self-image as a generous or powerful individual. Conversely, the recipient of the money may feel compelled to appreciate or respect the giver, which can influence how they perceive themselves and others in society.

By analyzing the tradition of sawer on the day of Eid Fitri through the lens of implied power, we can understand how a simple practice like giving money can have broader implications in terms of power dynamics, social control, and identity formation in society. Control doesn't always manifest in physical or direct forms but can also extend to mental or psychological control.

3.3.2 Discipline and Supervision

The practice of sawer can also be seen as a method to reinforce social norms and control behavior in public. Children or family members receiving money are expected to respond politely and adhere to existing social rules. This creates a dynamic of social

discipline where individuals must conform to established expectations and norms. Sawer on the day of Eid Fitri can serve as a mechanism to reinforce these social norms. For example, in Indonesian culture, giving money to children or family members as part of sawer is considered an appropriate action on Eid Fitri. This practice is then internalized by the public as a part of the social norms that must be followed.

Saweran usually takes the form of paper money or coins tossed towards the performers during a moderate *sintr* dance. The person giving the money may not directly expect a specific response from the recipient, such as a show of affection or a display of respect. However, by giving money, the giver influences the behavior of the recipient and amplifies the expectation for certain behaviors deemed appropriate according to social norms (Atmadibrata et al., 2006: 46).

3.3.3 Construction Knowledge and Identity

Sawer on the day of Eid al-Fitr also reflects the construction of knowledge and identity within the public sphere. This tradition reinforces the meanings associated with social and cultural issues related to Eid al-Fitr, while also contributing to the formation of individual identity as part of a larger group or celebratory community (Syafiuddin, 2018: 150). The practice of sawer on Eid al-Fitr involves giving money to children or younger family members as part of the celebratory tradition. Through this practice, knowledge about expected behaviors and social norms related to giving and receiving money on Eid al-Fitr is formed and strengthened (Eriyanto, 2001: 65).

Participation in the practice of sawer can influence the construction of somebody's identity in public. The individual who gives the money may perceive themselves as generous or having sufficient economic power to give, while the recipient of the money may see themselves as a respected member of the family or receiving appropriate attention (Kamahi, 2017).

4. Conclusion

Based on the discussion, several points regarding sawer from the perspective of Michel Foucault's theory are as follows:

- a. Sawer on Eid Fitri can be seen as a form of implied power, where the individual giving the money holds a more dominant or powerful role in the context. This reflects the existing social hierarchy in public.
- b. The practice of sawer can also be viewed as a method to reinforce social norms and control behavior in public. Children or family members receiving the money are expected to respond politely and adhere to existing social rules.
- c. Sawer on the day of Eid Fitri also reflects the construction of knowledge and identity within the public sphere.

References

- Achmad , F., & Putri, FF (2022). Study Critical Islamic Cultural Values " Study Case Ramadan & Eid Traditions Fitri In The Village Pageraji Regency Banyumas ". *Journal Scientific Knowledge Social And Religion* , 7(2).
- Alfitri , A. (2007). Culture Urban Consumerism . *Empirica Philips Unsri* , 11(1).
- Aprilisa , HA & Setyawan , BW (2021). Meaning Philosophical Tradition Ambengan On Eid al-Fitr Fitri and Eid Adha For the Tulungagung Community . *Sumbula : Journal Studies Religion , Social and Culture* , 6(2).
- Arief . (2009). *Method and Epistemology Aesthetics : Work Essential Foucault 1954*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra

- Atmadibrata , Enoch. (2006). *Performing Arts Treasures West Java* . Bandung: Department of Culture and Tourism West Java .
- Ayuningtyas , R. (2019). Power Relations in the Novel Anak Rantau by Ahmad Fuadi : A Study of Michel Foucault's Theory . *Sarasvati* , 1(1).
- Bariroh , M. (2016). Review of Islamic Law Against New Money Exchange Ahead of Eid Fitri . *IAIN Tulungagung Research Collections*, 2(2).
- Bertens , K. (1996). *Western Philosophy of the XX Century: Anglo-Germany* . PT. Scholastic.
- Eriyanto . (2001). *Analysis Discourse : Introduction Media Text Analysis*. LKIS Yogyakarta.
- Foucault, M. (2007). *Archeology Science - Science Humanity* . Yogyakarta: Student Library
- Foucault, M., & Muzir , I.R. (1976). *Sue History Idea* . IRCiSoD .
- Hanani , S. (2011). *Dig Interrelation Sociology and Religion*. Bandung: Humanities .
- Hanani , S., et al . (2023). Dynamics Solidarity Mechanics and Solidarity Organic in Educational Management : An Emile Durkheimian Perspective . *Bima Journal : Publication Center Language and Literature Education*, 1 (4).
- Hanani, S. (2018). Women's newspapers as minangkabau feminist movement against marginalization in Indonesia. *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah*, 8(2), 75–83. <https://doi.org/10.7187/gjat122018-7>
- Hanani, S., & Nelmaya. (2022). Ecological ethics in the theological teaching of Arat Sabulungan in Mentawai Island Indonesia. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 43(1), 102–107. <https://doi.org/10.34044/j.kjss.2022.43.1.14>
- Iskandarwassid . (2003). *Dictionary of Literary Terms* . Bandung: Shaken Sun.
- Kamahi, U. (2017). theory Michel Foucault's Power : The Challenge for sociologist Politics . *Journals Al- Khitaba* , 3(3).
- Khozin , A. (2012). Draft The Power of Michel Foucault. *Journal Sufism and Islamic Thought* , 2(1).
- Kusmayadi , Y. (2018). Tradition Sawyer Sundanese Bride in Parigi Village , Parigi District Regency Pangandaran . *Agastya: Journal of History and Learning* . 8(2). Liliweri , Hello .
- (2014). Introduction Studies Culture . Bandung: Nusa Media.
- Mustagfiri , M.R. (2023). Sawyer Tradition In Bogor: A Sociological Analysis Of The Dynamics Of Social Relationships In Traditional Weddings. *QURU: Journal of Family Law and Culture*, 1(3).
- Ningrum , WO, & Adiyanto , W. (2022). Understand Interaction Tradition Kupatan on Islamic Holidays in the Village Banjeng , Journal Communica Islamika : *Journal Knowledge Communication And Study Islam* , 9(2).
- Nurdiani , H. (2016). Implementation Function Management According to Robbins and Coulter at the Amil Zakat Infaq Laboratory Alms Management Da'wah (LAZIS MD).
- Nurholis , N. (2016). Description Ciomas Community Identity In Oral Literature Machete Ciomas in the Regency Attack Banten. *At- Tsaafa : Journal Scientific Islamic Civilization* . 13(02).
- Silfia, H. (2023). *Rancangan Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan (Cetakan Kedua)*. LP2M IAIN Bukittinggi Press.
- Sulistian , A.T. (2018). Tradition Nyawer Bride As Sundanese Language Teaching Materials in High School. *LOKABASA*, 9(1).
- Supinah, P. (2005). Sawyer : Communication Symbolic in Tradition Inner Sundanese tribe Ceremony After Marriage . *Mediator: Journal Communication* , 7(1).

- Syafiuddin , A. (2018). Influence Power Over Knowledge (Understanding Theory Michel Foucault's Power Relations). *Reflection Journal Islamic Philosophy and Thought* , 18(2).
- Trianingsih , H., Cahya , C., & Setyobudi , I. (2023). Commodification Tradition Sawer In Sundanese Wedding Customs in the City of Bandung (Study at Padepokan Guruminda). *Journal Culture Ethnicity* . 7(1).
- Wijaya, DR, Supriatna , M., & Peniasiani (2023). Value of Harmony In Sawer Panganten in the Village Lebak New Pasawahan Regency Purwakarta . *Journal Education Indonesia* , 12(1).
- Yanti , F. (2021). Deep Social Communication Build Communication Ummah (Meaning Study Tradition Eid (Eid) in the Muslim Community in Bandar Lampung). *Communica* , 2(1).